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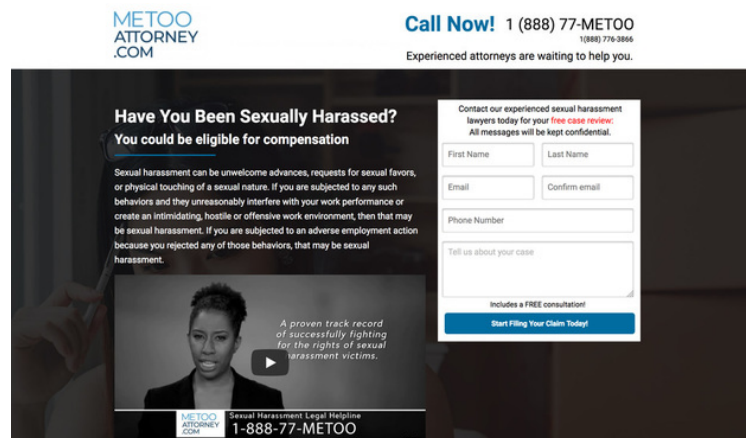
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Plaintiffs Bar Looks to Cash In on #MeToo

In an effort to capture legal work emanating from the #MeToo movement, plaintiffs firms across the country are registering website domain names and funding television commercials in their quest for big paydays.

By Meghan Tribe | April 18, 2018

For years, plaintiffs attorneys have advertised their services



The screenshot shows the homepage of metooattorney.com. At the top left is the logo 'METOO ATTORNEY .COM'. At the top right is the text 'Call Now! 1 (888) 77-METOO' with a phone number '1(888) 776-9886' and the tagline 'Experienced attorneys are waiting to help you.' The main content area has a dark background with white text. It asks 'Have You Been Sexually Harassed?' and states 'You could be eligible for compensation'. Below this is a paragraph of text defining sexual harassment. There is a video player with a play button and a testimonial: 'A proven track record of successfully fighting for the rights of sexual harassment victims.' To the right is a contact form with fields for 'First Name', 'Last Name', 'Email', 'Confirm email', and 'Phone Number', followed by a text area 'Tell us about your case'. At the bottom of the form is a blue button that says 'Start Filing Your Claim Today!'. A small note above the button says 'Includes a FREE consultation!'.

Screenshot from metooattorney.com, a website operated by Napoli Shkolnik.

(<http://www.law.com/sites/almstaff/2017/06/14/plaintiffs-lawyer-advertising-proves-ever-bolder/>) on bus stops, billboards and television commercials in their never-ending bid for all kinds of legal work, from medical malpractice suits to divorce cases.

The rise of the #MeToo movement isn't just generating client engagements for Big Law (<http://www.law.com/americanlawyer/sites/americanlawyer/2017/11/13/whos-getting-the-legal-work-as-weinstein-metoo-roil-hollywood/>). The plaintiffs bar is also seeking to cash in on the call for workplace accountability.

In a commercial that recently made its way to the airwaves, New York-based Napoli Shkolnik, famous for its work representing first responders in the 9/11 terrorist attacks (<http://www.law.com/americanlawyer/2018/02/22/quinn-gay-email-dust-up-is-tame-compared-with-these-firm-splits/>), pitched its services to men and women who may be victims of sexual harassment.

"The MeToo movement has brought sexual harassment in the workplace to the center stage. Victims are taking a stand and fighting back," the commercial states. "The people committing these horrific acts must be held accountable for their actions."

A version of the commercial appears on MeTooAttorney.com (<http://www.metooattorney.com>), a website domain name anonymously registered to the firm (<http://whois.icann.org/en/lookup?name=www.metooattorney.com>) last October, just when the #MeToo movement began to gain momentum following the publication of Pulitzer Prize-winning stories by The New York Times (<http://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/16/business/media/new-york-times-pulitzers.html>) and The New Yorker (<http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/the-new-yorker-and-the-new-york-times-win-the-pulitzer-prize-for-public-service>), about disgraced movie mogul Harvey Weinstein.

The website also contains information about what actions might comprise sexual harassment, as well as information on how to file a claim and a number to call for a free consultation. Napoli Shkolnik name partner Marie Napoli, who has written about Weinstein's impact (<http://www.lawdragon.com/2017/10/16/lawyer-viewpoint-marie-napoli-law-sex-addicts-weinstein/>) on the workplace, said the #MeToo movement is not just an opportunity for her firm to capitalize on sexual misconduct claims.

“I have been handling sexual harassment cases well before insurance companies covered such claims, which made them, for the most part, the least lucrative type of lawsuit,” Napoli said. “Although their status as a covered claim has changed, what has not changed is my belief in what we do in protecting human rights, seeking gender equality and protecting both women and men from sexual discrimination and harassment in the workplace.”

Napoli Shkolnik isn’t the only firm getting in on the action in the #MeToo legal ad space.

Since late last year, domain names such as [metoolawfirm.com](http://www.metoolawfirm.com) (<http://whois.icann.org/en/lookup?name=www.metoolawfirm.com>) and [metoolawyers.com](http://www.metoolawyers.com) (<http://whois.icann.org/en/lookup?name=www.metoolawyers.com>) have all been registered by different plaintiffs firms. Excellaw, whose website identifies it as a “reformist” boutique based in Ashburn, Virginia, even applied to [trademark the phrases #MeToo](http://www.trademarkia.com/metoo-87705568.html) (<http://www.trademarkia.com/metoo-87705568.html>) and [#MeToo Claims](http://www.trademarkia.com/metoo-claims-87705576.html) (<http://www.trademarkia.com/metoo-claims-87705576.html>) on Dec. 1. Jeffrey Weaver, the founder of Excellaw, did not immediately return a request for comment on the matter.

The increase in women—and some men—coming forward to share their stories about workplace misconduct does figure to create more opportunities for plaintiffs firms pursuing employment-related actions, some of which can be profitable. Earlier this month, plaintiffs firm Sanford Heisler Sharp secured [nearly \\$1.1 million in attorney fees](http://www.law.com/newyorklawjournal/2018/03/14/chadbournesettlessexbiascase) (<http://www.law.com/newyorklawjournal/2018/03/14/chadbournesettlessexbiascase>) after settling a [high-profile gender bias case against Chadbourne & Parke](http://www.law.com/newyorklawjournal/2018/03/22/chadbournelauds) (<http://www.law.com/newyorklawjournal/2018/03/22/chadbournelauds>), now part of global legal giant Norton Rose Fulbright.

With similar suits pending against other large firms, such as Proskauer Rose (<http://www.law.com/americanlawyer/2018/04/17/discovery-mediation-scheduled-in-proskauer-gender-bias-suit/>), and efforts like the Time's Up initiative enlisting the services (<http://www.law.com/americanlawyer/sites/americanlawyer/2018/01/02/legal-heavy-hitters-line-up-behind-times-up-launch/>) of various types of firms and spurring the creation of like-minded organizations (<http://www.law.com/americanlawyer/sites/americanlawyer/2018/01/29/ex-boies-schiller-associate-launches-campaign-to-end-sexual-harassment/>), there should be plenty of work to go around and fund more #MeToo-related ads and marketing endeavors.

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