

A Successful Website Includes a Robust Newsroom

I am still surprised by how many professional service firms, including law firms, do not have online newsrooms. Even if they do exist, they often seem to be more of an afterthought with little serious attention paid to the content. Many just contain a listing of press releases or a small gallery of images.

An online newsroom – a section of a website that contains current news and information about the company – is a powerful marketing tool for any organization. For professional service firms, this tool is especially powerful because it can create authority and credibility with website visitors simply by presenting the firm's people and the work done on their clients' behalf. An online newsroom is often the first place visitors go to learn about the latest activities at a firm.

A newsroom also lets a business speak to audiences as varied as clients, referral sources, members of the media, and current and prospective employees – all through a single piece of information.

An effective and successful online newsroom includes these key elements.

Talk about the work you do for your clients

Firms should tell visitors about the substantive work they do for their clients. It's best to be as specific as possible, but when providing this information, be mindful of the rules that govern your industry. Unless a client gives permission, it's best to provide general information, such as the industries served and the type of work done for each client, rather than client names. For instance, "Served as lead counsel in copyright infringement case against major healthcare provider."

Show how you solve problems for your clients

It is one thing to discuss the work you do for clients, but it's also important to explain how your efforts helped that client's business. This is a perfect opportunity to **include a case study** that doesn't focus only on the favorable result you secured for a client, but also explains how the client benefited from a particular outcome. Did you help them increase profits? Avoid costly litigation? Increase operating efficiencies? Videos can help showcase your work for clients, so consider posting explanation videos that focus on answering prospective clients' questions and client testimonial videos that reinforce your work. Create your video content as you would your written content – with your visitors' needs in mind.



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Highlight your thought leadership

Use your newsroom to publicize all activities that position you or your team members as thought leaders. This will build their authority and credibility with visitors. Prospective clients and referral sources are likely to perceive your firm and its members as knowledgeable – and perhaps reach out for more about your services – if they see a track record of [speaking engagements](#) and publications.

If you are quoted in an article or blog post about an issue relevant to your industry, there should be a blurb in the newsroom with a link to the article/post. Did you speak at a conference or deliver a CLE session? If so, there should be a blurb in the newsroom with a link to the event's web page if possible.

Remember to address the press

Journalists work under extreme time pressure and are thankful for any source that helps make their research easier. When you gather all press-related items and present them in one place, journalists can easily find firm assets – from brand materials and press releases to media contacts and social updates. When your website is seen as a reliable resource, journalists are more likely to contact you for a quote or opinion. Don't forget to provide a media contact for your company.

Create separate sections for firm news and media coverage

If your firm is small and not generating enough news and news coverage, this may not be necessary, but if your firm is generating enough news coverage then creating a separate section in your newsroom to showcase your coverage is a good idea.

Keep your newsroom current

Update your newsroom regularly with news about the organization. Nothing looks worse than a "recent news" post that is more than a year old – that tells the world the firm has nothing going on or doesn't care about being current. Either way, it creates the wrong impression.

The challenge is to have news that you can promote consistently. This could include a team member being selected to serve on the board of an industry-related organization, or receiving a prestigious professional recognition or ranking. Consider commenting about news stories or new regulations that affect your clients' industries. A recent court ruling in intellectual property law might be of interest to your clients. This will show that your firm is out in front on important stories.

Your newsroom should be seen as a recruitment tool, so don't forget to showcase your firm's culture. [Show the human side of your firm](#). Maybe someone in the company ran a charity marathon? Consider sharing news about employees that isn't explicitly tied to the firm or your business. Of course, sharing work done on behalf of a nonprofit is always an excellent way to show how your firm feels about giving back to its community.

Creating and publishing content on a regular basis is of the utmost importance, along with ensuring that content is relevant and shareable. Make sure it contains some multimedia elements such as photos or videos. Driving traffic, generating media coverage, bringing in new business and staff, and ultimately enhancing the bottom line are all the result of an amazing online newsroom.

Need help with getting your website's newsroom up to speed? Contact me, [Carlos Arcos](#), at carcos@jaffepr.com.