

A Day in the Life ... Atlanta's Media Tells it Like it is

The LMA Conference is *the* place for legal marketers to get together and share war stories and marketing tips. For those working in PR, the media panel is another highlight. This year's guests were [Kate Brumback](#), The Associated Press; [Meredith Hobbs](#), *Daily Report*, and [Chris Marr](#), *Bloomberg Law*, with Dechert LLP's [Erin West](#) moderating.

It doesn't matter how many of these I attend, I always take away new [PR tips](#). Before the glow of LMA fades, along with my memory, I wanted to share a few of the nuggets I gleaned this year.

Do you have a bow?

Anyone who has worked with reporters knows they are stretched thin. But the real story is that most are expected to produce a quota of articles each day or week. How do quotas affect reporting? Reporters have less time, and less time means those deep-dive articles are getting harder to develop.

For PR professionals, this means you have to provide reporters with as much detail as possible. Make their lives easy! The best way to help a reporter out with a story is to provide as much information as possible – quotes, statistics, visuals and details. Put a bow on it.

You can also increase your chances of coverage by giving reporters as much advance notice as possible. You can provide information on background at first to give them a heads-up. With a little advance notice of what to expect and when, the reporter can hold time on their schedule. You might have great information, but Marr pointed out that without advance notice, it's possible the reporter will not have time to cover your story that particular day.

No, I don't want to do lunch

[Building a relationship with a reporter](#) is ideal, but it can be hard to do. Your reporter contact is short on time and while they might love to meet your lawyer for lunch, getting out of the office in the middle of the day is just not an option for many.

Have you thought about suggesting a breakfast or coffee meeting before the reporter hits the office? If you can find someplace on their way into the office, you might have better luck in getting some facetime with a reporter. It is easier to keep an appointment before they make it into the office, when they are not being bombarded by the news of the day.

For Brumback, background meetings with lawyers not only help her develop a stable of



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legal sources for the future, but might also help her develop stories for today. She often finds that what a lawyer thinks is boring is really the most important nugget.

Don't fret if you can't line up an in-person meeting — all of the panelists agreed that a quick phone call can work.

The remote factor is also at work — your firm might not be where a reporter is located, so in-person meetings might not even be doable.

Call me during your midafternoon snack

Later in the afternoon is often the best time to reach reporters, once they have filed for the day. Hobbs suggested that if you want to reach out by phone, you do so after 3:30 p.m. By then, she has filed her stories for the day, has a bit of breathing room and is thinking about her next stories.

But don't call me just because

My experience with check-in calls and emails is mixed.

Some reporters are happy to tell you what they are working on and what type of sources they are likely to need; others, not so much. Hobbs falls into the latter camp: Don't call her and ask her what she is working on and whether she needs any sources. Instead, she suggests you just send her a pitch.

I'm ready to learn

We know a great way to get lawyers into a room is to offer CLE credit. It works for journalists, too. You might find yourself dealing with a reporter who is a reformed lawyer and still needs CLE credit. If not, reporters are often interested in firm CLE topics, so invite them when you can.

Not all CLE sessions are suitable for media contacts, but more often than not, you will find that what is of interest to your clients is also of interest to reporters. Brumback recounted a story of a recent CLE she attended at King & Spalding LLP. She didn't write anything directly after or about the event, but the information should lead to several stories in the future. It was a simple way for the firm to stay top of mind and help her generate new story ideas.

What is your favorite tip for dealing with reporters? Have you found one thing that makes life easier for reporters? Send me a note at mmccormick@jaffepr.com to share or tweet me [@MichelleMcCorm](https://twitter.com/MichelleMcCorm).