

Want to Win at Law Firm Media Relations? Be More Like Amazon.

Amazon made big retail industry [news](#) recently with its plan to offer one-day delivery of most items for its U.S. Prime members – an evolution of its two-day shipping program that helped entrench the retail behemoth in consumers' lives. Whether you like Amazon (and I do, for the most part) or not, the company certainly is a model of successful [marketing and PR strategies](#) for beating the competition and maintaining its status as retail's go-to source for consumer shopping. We appreciate and patronize Amazon for delivering (both literally and figuratively) on its mission.

Law firms should be more like Amazon. I'm not suggesting law firms should start selling products like packets of live [ladybugs](#) or [roast beef au jus bath soak](#) (did you know you can buy those things on Amazon? I mean, really?). I'm talking about law firms, lawyers and public relations professionals engaging with the media like Amazon engages with and serves its customers.

When Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos founded Amazon, he reportedly offered what he viewed as the foundation for a winning marketplace strategy: a virtuous cycle. It revolves around a fantastic customer experience that drives traffic and attracts customers. Providing a fantastic experience for media also can fuel winning PR for law firms.

Speedy Customer Service

Amazon's fast customer service is exemplified by one-day shipping. If you want to get attorneys quoted in the press and make your firm part of the conversation about breaking news, you have to [act](#) quickly:

- Recognize the opportunity,
- Pitch the attorney, and,
- Deliver substantive content to the media.

The cliché "the early bird gets the worm" really does apply here. (By the way, you can buy 200 composting [red wiggler worms](#) on Amazon for \$23.99.)

Superior-Quality Service

Amazon's mission statement includes words to the effect of "be Earth's most customer-centric company," and the company is arguably very successful in bringing that mantra to fruition. We know attorneys and law firms are our clients, but it definitely pays dividends to laser-focus on [serving the media](#) and their needs as well. That means:

- Providing useful content,
- Treading lightly on obvious advertising messaging,



Randy Labuzinski

Vice President
Public Relations
773.405.7583

rlabuzinski@jaffepr.com

- Answering all media emails and calls,
- Responding quickly and completely to media inquiries,
- Ensuring law firms and attorneys are accessible to the media (especially when proactively pitching them as sources), and,
- Communicating appreciation for interviews, stories and responsive reporters.

Connecting with Customers Whenever, However and Wherever They Want

To illustrate this point, Amazon has a mobile-first approach that is as convenient as possible and accommodates the needs and lifestyles of today's shoppers. Its online platforms are streamlined and easy to navigate, including features such as auto-fill, useful shopping and wish list options, one-click ordering, and multiple payment options.

In the business of law firm media relations:

- If a reporter asks to only receive a certain type of information in a certain manner, respect and honor that. Don't send attorney rankings and accolades news to reporters who specifically say they don't want that information and won't report it.
- If a reporter only wants to be pitched via Twitter or requests a unique format for PR submissions, make that your habit.
- If an editor says to always send photos of new lateral hires at a firm, don't force him or her to follow up to ask for those.

(To appreciate how good we've got it today as media pitchers, check out this old-timey, [rotary dial phone](#) on Amazon.)

Wide Assortment of Inventory

Amazon's claim to retail word dominance can largely be attributed to its huge assortment of products available in all sorts of varieties, styles, colors, sizes, shapes, functionalities, etc. (Where else but on Amazon can you find costumes for your cat, from [doctor](#) to [pirate](#) to [cowboy](#); in small, medium or large, of course).

Likewise, law firms can be most successful at the media placement game by offering thought leadership, insights and commentary to reporters on a wide array of topics, cases and industry trends. It's also most helpful and compelling if a firm can give journalists access to a diverse group of attorneys (including focus areas; experience levels; and gender, culture and race).

Amazon also is great at keeping its deep inventory updated to ensure customers come back for new options, styles and models of products. Let that serve as a reminder to marketing professionals to keep rolling out fresh content, including client alerts about breaking news and regularly refreshed blog posts and website articles.

Complete and Compelling Product Descriptions

Probably no retail shopping website provides more descriptive, up-to-date and compelling descriptions of products than Amazon. The website's writers build in as many keywords as possible while posting multiple photos of products – basically covering every base to help trigger a purchase.

PR professionals can take a cue from Amazon's approach by producing well-written press releases and story pitches that are as complete and informative as possible, including all the facts. Omitting key information, whether intentionally or not, only forces reporters and editors to do more work (which hints of shoddy "customer service" to media) or gloss over some topic that might otherwise have piqued interest with a more-compelling treatment. Photos are also as useful to prospective buyers of legal services as they are to purchasers of products; images of attorneys and law firm events help "sell in" a story for media looking for usable and meaningful content.

Verifiable Product Reviews

Finally, a product or seller becomes highly rated on Amazon by garnering positive feedback from customers, and that helps merchants move their products. (According to one [report](#), San Francisco Bay OneCup Breakfast Blend Coffee recently was the best-reviewed product on Amazon.)

Law firm clients and, to a slightly lesser extent, lawyers' peers, serve a similar role for attorneys when their praise is effectively marketed to key audiences. Building and promoting website content based on client testimonials (although they may be limited by local professional conduct rules), along with driving awareness of the most-credible and influential (non-pay-to-play) lawyer and law firm rankings, can be a chore for law firm marketers. However, there is demonstrated value and purpose to making sure that prospective clients can easily see that a firm or lawyer is a trusted and acknowledged leader in specific areas of the law.

Want PR tips for other ways to work most effectively with media to help your firm gain PR success? Contact me at rlabuzinski@jaffepr.com.