

Don't Forget to Use PR to Leverage Your Litigation Results

I recently received a request from a client to promote a recent litigation success for their firm by getting the victory placed in the news. But by the time I received the information, the victory was days, if not weeks, old.

When I explained that this type of news has a short shelf life with the media, the client asked how to be better at handling promoting their wins.

For litigation firms and practice groups, promoting your wins can be an uphill battle. Client confidentiality, multi-year timelines, last-minute rulings, and complex legal ideas and maneuverings make litigation promotion challenging. But don't be discouraged. Highlighting your litigation wins should be an essential part of your [law firm's marketing strategy](#) to earn new business by promoting your knowledge, experience and successes.

Law firms can use proactive media outreach to showcase their prowess in obtaining victories for their clients and stay top of mind with prospective clients who face similar business risks. But time is of the essence.

To earn media coverage of your successes, notifying your marketing or business development manager, or your PR firm, about the upcoming matter **before or on the day of the matter's resolution** is key. News becomes stale within about two days, and journalists will not be interested in covering the story or your firm's role in the case.

I created a checklist that marketing and communication managers or directors, or even business development managers, can share with litigation group leaders to get all of a firm's attorneys poised to place firm victories in the news.

The Litigation PR Checklist

Step 1: Provide information to marketing *well in advance* of the case resolution.

Here is information that should be sent to marketing about an ongoing case:

- Client name
- A brief description of the issue in dispute
- Lawyers working on the matter
- Anticipated milestones or dates when you expect a settlement/verdict/motion/ruling/decision

Marketing can use this information to begin tracking progress. The department will keep this information confidential, and will stay in touch with you as a case progresses.

Step 2: Get client permission in writing.



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Speak to your client early on to ask for permission to promote the litigation win. If they agree, get the permission in writing – an email will do. Assure the client that you will not distribute a press release or otherwise promote the win until they have reviewed and approved of all press materials that the marketing department would develop. However, make it clear that this approval will be time-sensitive, and you will need the client's review conducted as quickly as possible.

Note that an outside marketing team, such as Jaffe's, can work in tandem with the client's own PR people to collaborate on a [press release](#).

Step 3: Send the marketing department a summary of the case.

Include the names, titles and offices of the firm attorneys involved. In the summary, point out the significance of the matter – for example, its impact on the industry, the law, the client's business, etc. Highlight any unique legal strategies. Include a copy of the ruling or opinion, if applicable.

Step 4: Plan the media strategy with marketing.

The marketing team will talk with you about the best timing for announcing the litigation news, who should be quoted in a press release, how much information to disclose and the journalists who will receive the press release. The lawyer quoted in the release must be available on the distribution date in case reporters request interviews. Marketing will discuss the process of obtaining media coverage and what you need to know about interview opportunities that may arise.

To maximize awareness of your work, use [social media](#) and [email distribution](#) to get the story directly in front of your legal and business audiences.

The most important takeaway of this process is that *timing is critical*. Do not wait until the matter resolves before you begin to think about publicizing the outcome. Litigation requires strategy, and publicizing the news of your win should be included in your plans.

The objective is to increase visibility of your practice groups, your attorneys and your firm's capabilities as often as possible. By following this system outlined, the litigation team can work closely with marketing to achieve the goal of raising awareness.

If you need guidance for your next litigation PR strategy, reach out to me, Carlos Arcos, at carcos@jaffepr.com.