

# Use PR Piggybacking to Increase Your Reach

An effective PR strategy that a firm can incorporate into outreach is "PR piggybacking" – the act of elevating a brand's awareness and audience engagement by harnessing hot topics or events that are already generating media attention, and adding your thoughts and opinions. You join a trend or news story that is already taking place and making headlines, and use the existing buzz to position your firm and attorneys as knowledge leaders for stories relevant to the news event. This tactic can be an effective tool in your [PR strategy](#).

There are [two ways](#) to piggyback on the news. First: planned PR stories, based on calendar events. Second: reactive stories where you secure coverage on unexpected news stories that have grabbed the public's attention. This is also called "newsjacking."

The opportunity to comment on unexpected news stories usually only lasts a day or two. However, some unexpected news stories, like the arrest and trial of a high-profile celebrity, may last for several months. The biggest, most unexpected news story of at least this century was the COVID pandemic, for example. The pandemic affected every industry and created legal challenges and issues that continue until this day.

No one predicted the pandemic, but calendar events allow firms to plan ahead.

## Identify the Event

First, select the event. Two major events are taking place in the last half of this year that may provide numerous media opportunities for your firm.

There's no doubt the upcoming Summer Olympics taking place in Paris and the fall presidential election are exactly these types of events. In the months leading up to them, the media will leave no stone unturned to create as many story angles as possible. This provides an opportunity to promote your firm's practice areas and position your attorneys as thought leaders.

Shallot Communications recently released "[The Communicators Have Spoken: How Companies are Approaching Communications for the 2024 Election](#)," a new report that includes notable findings and recommendations for how to approach the upcoming 2024 election. As part of those communications, one-fifth of companies (21.6%) are planning content and partnerships related to the election – news hooks, surveys on policy topics, and ways to plug in an employee as an election-related expert. I'm not suggesting your firm taking a stance on any candidate or political issue, but rather, stick to neutral topics, such as what commercial real estate can expect under another Biden term, whether we can expect changes to the United States Patent and Trademark Office under a Trump



**Carlos Arcos**  
Senior Vice President  
Public Relations  
713.826.5195  
[carcos@jaffepr.com](mailto:carcos@jaffepr.com)

presidency, or whether we will see more or fewer government investigations in the next term.

## Identify the Topics and Sources

Second, identify possible topics related to the event that you think will be of interest to the media, as well as the attorneys interested in speaking on these topics. I recommend soliciting possible topics from key practice groups.

To get your juices flowing, here are some possible media topics relevant to the Summer Olympics:

- Hospitality – Claims against airlines, hotels and short-term vacation rentals
- Energy – Role of renewables during the Olympics
- IP – Intellectual property rights involving Olympic properties
- Employment – Employees taking time off to watch Olympic games

## Media Outreach

Finally, identify outlets you would like to target, as well as journalists who may already be covering the event. Don't forget to include trade publications if the topic is of interest to a specific industry, such as commercial real estate or hospitality. For any local media outlets, be sure to include a local news hook.

## Conclusion

The key to piggybacking is using the news cycle to your advantage and staying up to date on current trends. If there's a natural, fun way to engage and join the conversation, **humor and lightheartedness** will always be a positive approach for your firm. Looking for help on how to piggyback in PR? Reach out to me, Carlos Arcos at [carcos@jaffepr.com](mailto:carcos@jaffepr.com).