

BEST PRACTICES FOR SOLO PRACTICES

Promote a Court Decision Through News, Client Alert, Social Media and More

You've brought a case to a higher court and now await that momentous decision. While the oral arguments are still fresh in your mind, take time in the next week to prepare materials you can use for marketing.

Plan to magnify the impact of the decision by following these media relations and marketing suggestions. You can tee up some tactics in anticipation and be ready to go when the court decision is announced; other activities can be executed shortly thereafter.

Here's your game plan to promote the decision, assuming you prevail.

Advance Preparation

- **Draft a Press Release** and prepare for outreach to the legal press and the media in the client's industry. Compose an announcement of the decision, with a focus on the impact it will have for individuals, businesses or corporations. Your quote should address how their lives or operations will be affected. Arrange for this draft to be reviewed and approved internally, including consent and a quote from the client. Assemble a list of reporters and editors at key legal and client industry publications and be ready to start distribution as soon as possible. Reporters who follow court decisions will likely receive the news at the same time you are notified. They will write their news stories shortly thereafter, so your quick response time is critical to getting your quote cited in their stories.

- **Contact reporters at publications covering the client's market sector**, and industries affected by the decision. They

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may not monitor the courts closely. These reporters are the primary targets for your announcement. When sending the press release, include a cover note explaining the importance of the decision in a way that will catch the attention of those reporters. This introductory text may even copy the press release's quote from the client regarding the big picture or the long-term impact the decision will have on their business and perhaps on the industry.

Compose an announcement of the decision, with a focus on the impact it will have for individuals, businesses or corporations.

- **Compose a client alert.** Review the decision in layman's terms and explain the context of the case. Provide guidance so other clients may confirm they are in compliance with the regulations specified in the decision. Also, indicate how businesses or individuals may now take advantage of any change in the status quo.

- **Prepare an article** for your individual profile on LinkedIn, similar to the client alert. Save it as a draft until the decision is announced. Add an appropriate image (not the scales of justice) to accompany the text.

When the Decision Is Announced

This is the moment you have waited for. Set everything in motion, as quickly as possible.

- **Immediately read the decision closely and refer to it in**

your three draft documents: press release, client alert and article for LinkedIn. Review the decision in terms of its impact and context for the legal and non-legal audience, respectively and edit the drafts accordingly.

- **Execute the distribution** of the press release and client alert. Post them on your website, consistent with your usual practice. These are high-priority activities to get the word out to legal, industry and market participants, as well as to your own clients, in advance of other attorneys in the same practice area publishing theirs.

According to appellate attorney Zara Watkins of On Point Expertise, "Many other lawyers may be familiar with the issue of the matter and likely have set a case alert in their legal research database. They are also watching for the decision and will pounce to write a client advisory when the decision is published."

You, however, will have the advantage of a prepared draft which, with a modest sprinkling of references to the published decision, will already be on its way via the press release and client alert, while other lawyers are starting to compose their analysis.

Now that you have announced the decision and its impact to the media and clients, expand your reach through LinkedIn.

- **Publish your article on LinkedIn.** As you do so, write a post on your LinkedIn profile. Provide a link to the article in the comment section, as the LinkedIn algorithm favors that placement. Post this write-up on your company page on LinkedIn as well.

- **Ask a question** in LinkedIn groups and on Twitter to which your client alert or LinkedIn article is the answer. Attorneys with a similar practice and industry participants may read a discussion on social media sooner than a news story in the legal or trade media. Many legal publications are

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Alert

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dailies, but a weekly or monthly industry publication in the client's sector may not publish news of the decision for a few days, depending on its production schedule.

Additional Marketing Activities

You have extended the initial announcement to your LinkedIn connections and group members. Build upon that outreach with these promotional ideas:

- **Create a checklist.** Will individuals, businesses or corporations need to take steps to ensure they are in compliance with the new ruling? If so, provide that guidance with a checklist or guidance of *do's and don'ts*. Post it on the firm website and share it, similar to the client alert.

- **Propose an article** for a trade publication, such as *The Future of Subject X After the*

Name of Y Decision to spread the word to the industry sector. Consider collaborating with the client to write the article. Doing so increases the likelihood that the media outlet will agree to publish the article, plus your client will provide the perspective and language of the industry. As co-author of the article, your client will receive enhanced stature as a *thought leader* in the sector. Finally, in your work together on the draft, you strengthen your relationship with the client.

- **Record a video interview** with the client on the impact the decision will have on their business operation. Prepare a few questions and rehearse in advance of the videotaping session. Mention the client alert and checklist in the discussion or in a text slide at the conclusion. When the video is produced, distribute the interview appropriately, with links to the client advisory and checklist.

- **Suggest a panel** where

you and the client speak to a professional membership association or business organization about the situation before the ruling and what lies ahead. Again, this collaboration enhances the client's thought leadership status in the industry and bolsters your relationship.

- **Conduct a workshop or webinar** on how to implement best practices consistent with the ruling, and the checklist. Enlist the client and perhaps have another attorney moderate the discussion. Reference the client alert, and the checklist, in the invitation, as well as in the follow-up note with a link to the recorded presentation.

Congratulations on your great oral argument. Now, use the hiatus before the decision announcement wisely; get to work to anticipate spreading the news and notifying clients and others of the court decision and its consequences. When the decision *is announced*, you'll be positioned to have an extensive impact by using as many of these tactics as appropriate.
