



Highlights of *Using Public Relations as a Proactive Strategic Legal Tool*

How might Public Relations be used strategically by attorneys as a tool to raise their profile? When and how is it appropriate to speak about a client case to reporters? Following is a summary of a podcast discussion on Media Relations, strategy and digital tools broadcast by Michael Meyer on *The Legal Marketing Studio* July 25, 2016 (<http://bit.ly/2ao6Exl>, 22 minutes).

1. Public Relations is a strategic process of communication with a law firm's publics; these include:
 - a. Current clients
 - b. Prospective clients
 - c. Employees
 - d. Vendors
 - e. Competitions
 - f. Regulators
 - g. Industry trade associations
 - h. Elected officials: municipal, state, federal
 - i. Philanthropic and nonprofit groups
 - j. Referral sources

Look up and down the food chain and all around the circle of people sitting at the table: who is there now, how do you maintain communication with them and who is *not* there.

2. To reach these publics, consider that each has an agenda that may align with you.
3. Using a digital marketing/communication process, a firm communicates externally, where the public is looking for information and resources. This may be newsletters and LinkedIn. Use Twitter to post a link to drive people to your website.
4. Understand who your audience is and where they are looking for information. Then broadcast there.
5. Goal is engagement and interaction. Provide additional information or perspective. Get the audience to take the next step. Drive to get more details. Explain why *you* are a resource.
6. Strategic use of media coverage to alert the audience and use that to put pressure on different target and influencers.

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7. Two case studies of litigation. Announce the litigation was filed. State the details and use publicly available documents.
8. Firms recognize the opportunity to use media. A firm may classify new matters as able to talk about to media, use for marketing or not appropriate for communication.
9. Promote the win or transaction, in three situations:
 - a. Trends in the industry
 - b. Create a news event by announcing a win, filing litigation or completing a transaction
 - c. Breaking news opportunity to comment
10. Reporters and diverse audiences look for sources in the digital sphere. Creatively use communication tools to be an advocate for clients. Attorney offering information and resources can be presented as trustworthy, authoritative, available and responsive.
11. Understand your audience, their agenda, their source of referral and their source of information.