

Adding Public Relations to your Strategic Communications/Marketing mix Part 3 of 3

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In the previous post, I offered some reasons why you should consider public relations as part of your marketing mix and some tips on selecting a PR professional. This post concludes the discussion.

So I got the story – What do I do now?

Getting the story is the most difficult part of the process. Because you do not control what goes into the news media, there is a great deal of work that goes into a good pitch, interview and follow-up to an interview or series of interviews. That is where PR counsel is so valuable. They can anticipate what is needed to make the story complete, and can stay in contact with the reporter without being “heavy-handed” in the approach. Once you have successfully landed the story, the critical marketing phase begins.

If we assume your story was in a print publication, we can assume that X numbers of readers had the opportunity to see the story. But there are a significant number of individuals, including your prospects, referral sources and current clients, who may not have seen the story. They may not receive that publication. They may have been ill or out of town that day or just didn’t take the time to read the publication in its entirety.

There are several ways to get more mileage out of your story. First, if the publication has an internet version of the story; you can link to their site. Not all websites leave stories up indefinitely, but you can capture the link and email it to your list of clients, referral sources and prospects with a little note saying “I thought you might be interested in reading this. Call me if there is anything I can do to help you in this area.” That little touch will send it to those who may have missed it, and remind those who saw it that you are the expert in that arena.

You can also pursue reprint options. Every publication has its own reprint policy, and the costs vary widely. Some require you to use their in-house printer and the costs can be quite high. Others charge a nominal fee and require that you add credit to the publication at the bottom of the page. Another trend that is growing is the production of .pdf files by the publication for reprint purposes. The in-house graphics department becomes a profit center and produces a clean .pdf file for which you pay a fee. You are then free to use that file according to their terms of use, but typically that allows you to print and mail, and post on a website. All of the required copyright credit information will be already placed on the .pdf file, so there is nothing more for you to add.

If you get reprint permission, you can use the articles as part of your marketing materials and include a copy there. You can also mail it to your clients, referral sources and prospects with a brief note to keep yourself “top-of mind” with your referral sources and prospects. A regular system of mailings to your prospects and referral sources can keep you at the top of their list

when they have a need or have a colleague in need of legal assistance. And you have established your credibility through a third-party, in this case the publications who have written about you.

Conclusion

Obtaining positive media coverage is not an easy task, but it is one that with a well-designed and well-executed plan can obtain a great deal of positive coverage for a relatively low cost in PR counsel. Leveraging that positive coverage through the use of reprints, web site links and email can further extend the reach of your program. It takes time, and may not show instantaneous results, but it is worth the effort once the stories begin to take shape.

There is still time to register for the [Rainmaker Retreats](#) coming this fall to a city near you. This 2 day marketing book camp for attorneys is full of information that will boost your referrals and increase your bottom line.

Our schedule is:

Chicago - Friday, October 16 & Saturday, October 17

Orlando -Friday, October 23 & Saturday, October 24

Los Angeles - Friday, November 13 & Saturday, November 14

Las Vegas - Friday, December 4 & Saturday, December 5

The schedule for each retreat is Friday – Registration at 8:00, Retreat begins at 8:30, and breaks for the day at 5:30. Saturday begins with breakfast at 7:30 and the retreat runs from 8:00 – 2:00 p.m.

To register for a Rainmaker Retreat or for more information, please visit our <http://www.rainmakerretreat.com/>

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Stephen Fairley is a nationally recognized law firm marketing expert and has helped more than 6,000 attorneys from hundreds of law firms across the

country to discover the secrets of generating more referrals and filling their practice. He is the international best-selling author of 10 books and 5 audio programs.

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