

## Ten Tips for How to Design Effective Online Media Rooms

More and more often, we are getting asked by Webmasters and Web designers what we would recommend for online news or press rooms. All seem to agree that having a permanent entry point for the media to reach experts is critical to meeting journalists' deadlines. We hope that the following outline will help you to create or update your own online presence.

1. Review leading industry Web sites to find unique and effective ideas for your online pressroom. For example, in the legal industry, the American Bar Association has an incredible site at <http://www.abanow.org/reporter-resources/>.
2. Make online pressrooms easy to find and one of the main links from a company's home page.
3. Be sure to start with basic company or firm information such as the executive team; updated company financials and any other data possible; publicized strategies such as mission, diversity policy and commitment to social responsibility; and, of course, the name and 24-hour phone numbers for public relations contacts.
4. Press rooms enable seamless, integrated marketing that further expresses a corporate identity. Include company logos, executive photos and videos, as well as press releases and other media directed information.
5. Distribute "Media Contact Cards" by snail mail and email, and recycle that content by posting it online. Categorize material based on journalists' beats and needs, not based on company divisions, service lines or practice areas. Be sure to include a sign-up area for journalists to opt-in to future correspondence.
6. The best pressrooms are updated daily – and immediately upon breaking news. Have a standard and easy to read format for providing experts to comment on the latest news topic. Include three-to-five quotable legal points related thereto with the experts name, title and contact information. Distribute this information to a media list by email with a return link to photos and backgrounders. This can also be sent by wire service as a press release.
7. Be sure to maximize traffic to a press room by linking to it in as many communications as possible, including direct email campaigns, press releases, blogs, social media pages, client and customer alerts, etc. For professional service firms, consider repackaging emailed client alerts into a separate Media Briefing that is mailed to appropriate reporters based on content and beats.
8. Place all collateral and press kits as virtual press kits online. Also, include usable photographs and videos as much as possible.

9. Maintain an updated calendar of events that is searchable by specific topics. Create a searchable library of past presentation materials made by your professionals or executives to serve as backgrounders. Alert media to new materials posted there by email.

10. And once you've made it useful, updated and effective, try to review it once again to see if anything can be added to make it fun and interesting for visiting journalists. For example, for law firms, include a humorous law blog or lawyer joke of the day on the Web page.