

## Famejacking: A Primer

You're probably not familiar with the term "famejacking." In fact, we're sure you're not since we just made the term up. Even so: it's a useful concept if you're looking to get noticed.

Famejacking is the act of using another's notoriety to your own benefit in a publicity effort.

The celebrity endorsement is perhaps the purest method of famejacking. For an example that's particularly—ahem—provocative, see below.



Where were we? Right, we were about to say that a paid endorsement is not a necessary, and hardly the most effective, method of famejacking your way to publicity. For instance:

- Michael Moore [certainly got noticed](#) when he posted bail for one of 2010's most controversial names, Julian Assange.
- Sarah Palin, a famejacking savant, has kept her profile up for cycle after news cycle by stoking her numerous feuds (incredibly, she has had [76 of them](#)) with celebrity personalities like [David Letterman](#), Family Guy creator [Seth McFarlane](#), and [Aaron Sorkin](#).

- Lady Gaga used the opening of the New York Mets Citi Field to [expose herself](#) (in more ways than one) to baseball fans.
- Jenna on *30 Rock* cooked up a [fake romance](#) with James Franco to put her star on the rise.

Set aside, for the moment, your feelings about these controversial (and in the last case, fictional) figures, as well as any judgments about their tastefulness. Because the fact is that while famejacking can be practiced in unseemly ways, it can also be classy, fun, and highly effective in promoting professional service providers.

Take, for instance, HBC's approach in putting together a recent panel on securities law. Sound boring? It sure could have been—we've attended scads of legal panel discussions that put attendees to sleep. Instead, we famejacked. We took our event attendees to see *Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps* and used the movie as a starting point for a discussion about changes in securities law since the time of the original *Wall Street* two decades ago.

The tie to a pop culture phenomenon gave [the event](#) some sizzle, attracted an amazing panel, and secured coverage by the exact journalists we had targeted.

Just yesterday, we noticed another example. An entrepreneuring [legal researcher and writer](#), knowing Supreme Court advocate Tom Goldstein to be a celebrity name in legal writing circles, created a video addressed to him. Because her video is about Tom Goldstein, it's instantly notable—and it will live on the Internet forever in searches for Tom's name.

The video plays on a previous series of funny videos that Tom—himself a savvy self-promoter—had made about his practice.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=TT2yZ2ZFDeU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TT2yZ2ZFDeU)

Here's the writer's effort:

<http://vimeo.com/18571355>

The execution could be improved—the video is slower-paced and not as witty as Tom's. Still, it's a game effort, and it will get ten times more views than if she hadn't gone the famejacking route.

Think about how you might use famejacking for your own practice. If it works, you'll feel as fabulous as Lady Gaga.