

**SPECIAL REPORT**



75 Second Avenue • Suite 430 • Needham, MA 02494  
Phone: (800) 970-LAWYER • BetterLawPractice.com

## How Lawyers Can Get Press Coverage

By Irwin Pollack, Esquire

Selecting the media to target is somewhat similar to deciding where to run an ad. Some publications will run your press releases or articles with a byline as a quid pro quo for your advertising, but these tend to be special purpose journals, such as those organized around a trade conference. Most responsible journalists erect a “Chinese Wall” between editorial and advertising. Being an advertiser does not automatically entitle you to news coverage (although it certainly doesn’t hurt).

Below, you’ll find the strategies I’ve seen work over the years. Put them to work and you’ll work effectively with the press:

- 1. Be positive at all times.** Adversarial relationships will not go far. Reporters are not the enemy. They have stories to write and deadlines to meet. What is important to you may not be important to them. Make sure you and your spokespeople deal with every reporter objectively and honestly.
- 2. Know the publication and it’s target audience.** It is important to read back issues of the publication to understand the audience and make sure your message will be relevant to the readers.
- 3. Take time to know** the kind of information the reporter will be looking for. Review the reporter’s past stories. What type of detail do they like to include?
- 4. Take time to build** a relationship. Don’t just go to a publication when you have something to say in the interest of your own business. Be willing to serve as an industry expert, to provide someone from your firm, or even to refer a reporter to your competitor if appropriate.
- 5. Know the difference** between news and information. Make sure you call reporters only when you have something that is newsworthy. Not everything your company does is worth shouting off the rooftops. A note on your credibility: If you get the reputation of self-serving leads, you’ll notice how your relationship with the press can go south!

**6. Don’t use industry jargon** or acronyms. A reporter doesn’t have the time to interpret what you’re saying.

**7. Know what you are going to say** before you call a reporter, editor, or producer. Before you get on the phone, jot down some notes. Introduce yourself and be clear and concise when pitching your story over the telephone.

**8. Never promise** what you can’t deliver.

**9. Determine whether graphs,** charts, or illustrations might be appropriate. The press likes it as a way to “break-up” a story.

**10. When possible,** make executives available for questions.

**11. Follow-through intelligently.** It is a good idea, after sending a press release, to follow up with a phone call. Editors can get hundreds, even thousands, of press releases every day!

Above all, be ethical. Never misinform, and be careful about what you omit in the service of spinning your story. If you don’t know the answer, say so, and get the answer. If you can’t reveal certain information, just say so.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Irwin Pollack'.

© 2006 Irwin Pollack

**“No matter what type of law you practice, or the size of your firm, we will mastermind your marketing programs and become the driving force behind your results-oriented business development program.”**

**– Irwin Pollack  
1-800-970-LAWYER**