

## Letter from the Editor

This month's *Marketing The Law Firm* presents a new column: "Meyerowitz on Marketing" written by Steven Meyerowitz, a regular contributor to this publication. This column will alternate with Andy Havens' column "A Haven for Straight Talk" which will appear next month. Steve Meyerowitz is President of Meyerowitz Communications, Inc., a law firm marketing communications consulting company that works with some of the largest and most successful law firms in the country. Mr. Meyerowitz specializes in helping lawyers write, produce and place their bylined articles, newsletters, brochures, and other marketing materials, and in integrating publications into a firm's overall marketing program.

I also wanted to bring to your attention a new book. For serious marketing professionals, every day is ripe with new challenge and fresh wisdom. *365 Marketing Meditations: Daily Lessons for Marketing & Communications Professionals* is an invaluable companion for this journey. Written by Richard S. Levick and Larry Smith of Levick Strategic Communications LLC, this wonderful book offers a different cogent insight for each day of the year. The daily tips range widely in scope, from strategic planning to media relations, from how to build internal credibility to how to send an email without losing your job. Worried about cost sensitivities?

*continued on page 2*

## P.R. Professional Inside and Out: How to Get the Most Value From Your P.R. Dollar

*Recapping LJN's December 7<sup>th</sup> Web Audio*

By Stephen J. Ruben

On Dec. 7, 2004, LJN's Web Audio Conference Division presented a Web audio entitled "P.R. Professional inside and out: How to Get the Most Value from your P.R. Dollar." The program focused on topics including the advantages of an inside public relations (PR) person, what outside public relations firms have to offer and how their services are impossible to duplicate. The session's moderator, Joshua Peck, Senior Manager, Media Relations at Duane Morris in Philadelphia, opened the program with a clear and concise definition of public relations.

"Public relations is the tool that makes expertise, large and small, a public matter fit for the consumption of the business public."

Led initially by the retention by law firms of large and small outside PR agencies, law firms have, over the last 10 years, begun to hire PR professionals from those agencies and from corporate PR departments. Even those law firms staffed with their own full time people will often engage the services of outside PR firms as well. Peck led the discussion among a seasoned panel of PR experts on the role and place of the PR professional inside the firm, outside the firm and the areas of overlap. The panel included:

- Jason Dinwoodie, Director of Marketing and Communications, Dewey Ballantine LLP, New York, NY
- Sheila Turner, Media Relations Manager, Mayer Brown Rowe & Maw, Washington, DC.
- Elizabeth Lampert, Elizabeth Lampert PR, Bay Area, CA.
- Jay M. Jaffe, President and CEO, Jaffe Associates, Washington, DC.

### JASON DINWOODIE

Jason Dinwoodie discussed the need to develop an effective communications organization from the perspective of three principal components:

*continued on page 4*

### In This Issue

How To Get The  
Most Value From  
Your P.R. Dollar . . . .1

Media & Communications  
Corner: Mastering  
'Reporter Speak' . . . .2

Meyerowitz on Marketing:  
Advantages of  
Seminar Marketing . .7

## Mastering 'Reporter Speak'

### How to Convey the Story and Get It in Print

"I have always depended on the kindness of strangers." (Blanche Dubois in Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*)

It may have worked for Blanche Dubois, but nobody ever received good press based on the kindness of

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## Letter from the Editor

*continued from page 1*

On February 3, we're reminded: *Sixty years ago, Pepsi Cola tried to outsell Coca-Cola by being the "cheaper cola." They have been playing catch up ever since. Market on value, not price.* Tempted to dodge the press because one of your partners just bolted the firm? On May 1, we're reminded: *Four out of five reporters agree: When you don't return our phone calls, you're saying, "Write whatever you want."* Going to a big meeting tomorrow? On November 30, we're reminded: *A business card can be a turning point. What does yours convey?* The book is a real career-builder and immense fun as well.

And last but certainly not least, I wanted to make you aware of an upcoming Web audio conference "**Crisis Management Avoidance**" which will take place on February 11<sup>th</sup> from 12 noon to 2 pm ET. Moderated by Jason Dinwoodie, Director of Marketing and Communications, Dewey, Ballantine LLP, New York, NY, the conference features a high-profile panel of experts including: Lanny Davis, Partner and Chair, Legal Crisis Communications Practice Group, Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe,

an editor or reporter. No, press coverage — at least the kind you want, not the kind that happens because you screwed up — comes about through hard work and knowing what the media want.

Impossible, you say? How can we ever hope to predict what will move a reporter to put fingers to keyboard, and what won't?

One word: Specifics.

The one conversation I have with attorneys that I dread the most usually goes something like this:

Attorney: I'd like to do some publicity.

Me: Great. What, specifically, do you want to talk about?

*continued on page 3*

Washington, DC; Special Counsel to President Bill Clinton (1996-1998), Helio Fred Garcia, Founder and President, Logos Consulting Group, Chappaqua, NY, Professor of Management, Stern School of Business, New York University; Mark Tatge Midwest Bureau Chief, *Forbes*, Chicago, IL; and Joshua Peck, Senior Manager, Media Relations, Duane Morris LLP, Philadelphia, PA. This program will focus on the critical business decisions an organization can make to prevent, mitigate damage from, or recover from an event that threatens its operations or reputation. In ideal circumstances, a plan can be in place before a crisis occurs, and scenarios for managing the impact of the event once it breaks can be implemented. Topics to be covered include:

- Identifying the issues and threats;
- Understanding the predictable intended and unintended consequences;
- Timelines for action; and
- Mitigating reputational harm.

To register go to [www.ljnonline.com/alm?conference](http://www.ljnonline.com/alm?conference) or call 1-800-999-1916.

Enjoy this issue of *Marketing The Law Firm* and I look forward to your continued support and commentary.

— Elizabeth Anne "Betiayn" Tursi,  
Editor-in-Chief

# Marketing

The Law Firm®

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Editorial e-mail: [steves@palawnet.com](mailto:steves@palawnet.com)  
Circulation e-mail: [subs@palawnet.com](mailto:subs@palawnet.com)

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Marketing the Law Firm P0000-242  
Periodicals Postage Pending at Philadelphia, PA  
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:  
ALM  
1617 JFK Blvd., Suite 1750, Philadelphia, PA 19103  
Annual Subscription: \$329

Published Monthly by:  
Law Journal Newsletters  
1617 JFK Boulevard, Suite 1750, Philadelphia, Pa 19103  
[www.ljnonline.com](http://www.ljnonline.com)

## 'Reporter Speak'

*continued from page 2*

Attorney: Tax. (or employment or intellectual property or government contracts ...)

Me: OK. Specifically, what do you want to talk about?

Attorney: Well, we do it well. We provide good value to our clients. We get good results.

Me: (What I'm thinking): Ah yes, well, that will give us an edge over all those other firms getting quoted saying how inefficient, expensive, and inept their tax practices are.

Me: (What I say): Ah. OK. Well, what, specifically, could you talk about regarding your practice? Are there any issues you're working on right now with clients that you see as a possible avenue for new business? Any trends you're seeing?

Attorney: No. I just want to talk about our tax practice. Look, I have to go, I'm due on another call. Just find me opportunities about tax and I'll do them.

Me: Sure. Will do.

Funny enough, the media opportunities for this attorney don't come pouring in. There's something missing. Oh yes, specifics!

Reporters are busy people. They are not going to interview an attorney just because they have memorized the tax code and keep their clients happy. No, they want stories, and stories are all about specifics.

Here's a conversation with an attorney who knows how the game is played.

Attorney: I'd like to do some publicity

Me: Great. What, specifically, do you want to talk about?

Attorney: Well, I'd like to increase the visibility of our tax practice.

Me: OK. Do you have any specific ideas?

Attorney: Yes. There's been a change in the law that will allow small businesses to save significant amounts of money if they just do

their tax planning a certain way. We've helped a couple of clients do this, and I think it would be a great new avenue for business for us. And, our target market is small business, so I think this would be a great way to showcase what we do for this sector.

Me: (What I'm thinking): Yes! Someone who gets it!

Me: (What I say): This sounds good. OK, let's talk about this change, what it is, how it's going to affect small businesses, and what they need to know.

**Reporters are busy  
people. They are not going  
to interview an attorney  
just because they have  
memorized the tax code and  
keep their clients happy. No,  
they want stories, and stories  
are all about specifics.**

We finish our conversation. I have about a half-page of notes that I turn into a pitch that runs about a paragraph or so. I make sure there's a good, pithy quote from the attorney in the pitch. We go back and forth a bit on the language — tax attorneys! — and I get to work. Soon enough the attorney is doing so many interviews that I'm starting to get e-mails back that read "I've created a separate date book just for media."

Why am I able to get this attorney opportunities and not the other one? I have something to give to reporters. I've got a specific story that I know will appeal to a specific group of reporters who write for a specific audience. I've got proof that this attorney is knowledgeable and experienced and has something quotable to say. In fact, the quote I've included proves the attorney can talk in sound bites.

## HELP WITH STORY IDEAS

This is just one example of how to approach putting a pitch together that provides specific information to reporters. Here are some things to keep in mind when you're working with attorneys on story ideas.

- Don't think in broad, general terms. News is about what happened at a specific time on a specific day in a specific location involving specific people, with a specific result. Think about any article you read or news broadcast you watch. When was the last time you saw an article that aimed to cover one practice area in its entirety? When was the last time you watched a story on the nightly news where nothing happened, where nothing changed as the result of some event?
- Remember that you need to demonstrate the value of an attorney as a source to a reporter. This means communicating exactly what the source can talk about, the kind of impact it will have, etc.
- Include quotes in your pitches. It's a great way to humanize your source, and also reassure reporters that an attorney knows how to speak in sound bites.
- Keep in mind that some attorneys just "get it" and others need to be brought along slowly. Invest some time, though. Once an attorney learns what you need, look out. You'll be deluged in good, usable story ideas for pitches.
- Make sure your pitches have a "so what". By this, I don't mean answering back attorneys when they give you story ideas with an accusatory "so what?" What I mean is, there has to be a central point, a central aim for your pitch. There has to be a reason for the story. If small businesses don't act on the advice of the attorney above, what will happen? That's your story.



*To comment on this month's articles  
or suggest a story idea, contact  
Editor-in-Chief **Elizabeth Anne**  
"Betiyyn" Tursi at  
Elizabethtursi@aol.com.*

## P.R. Value

*continued from page 1*

- People
- Process
- Products

### People

Dinwoodie talked of the importance of determining what work stays inside and what, if any work you might wish to outsource to PR agencies. He recommended that you consider whether the effort is public relations or communications, which Dinwoodie defined as follows:

- PR, *ie*, short term goals of becoming well known through the press which calls for limited internal resources.
- Communication, *ie*, provide timely access to truthful information out in the marketplace to color the things that you're hoping others will say about you, which approach will call for more resources and a greater mandate from the leaders of the firm and represents a more strategic approach to for example grow a practice group.
- You will want some combination of people who have a deep understanding of the firm as well as deep connections in the market.
- You will have to determine whether your goal is to make news by pitching or if you are already a firm that is constantly in the news to perform the more mercurial function of managing the news, manage crises and staying out of as opposed to in stories.

There are various responsibilities that must be addressed. Dinwoodie spoke of the following model where all of the functions are performed internally:

- CCO/Director Of Communications who makes interesting the mundane, and who develops strategy to get the firm to where it wants to be. The Director will have developed senior contacts within the media.
- Media Relations Managers, who are proactive and who, broken up by practice group, have the narrower focus of being a contact for and proactive component to the PR efforts.

- Coordinators Community Responsibility Managers and Corporate Communications Managers whose efforts implement the strategies of affecting what people say about you (including getting lawyers ranked).

The firm must thereafter determine whether to supplement these efforts in whole or in part with an outside agency. And if so, what will the outside agency be mandated to do, to whom will they report and how much freedom will they be given to work with partners directly, which Dinwoodie suggests should always be with the inside PR person playing an active role.

### Process

Inside the firm you must:

- Determine the issue of how to streamline access from and to the media so it is time sensitive and not bureaucratic;
  - Ensure that the inside PR people are perceived as adding value; and
  - Establish whether you will have only one or two partners from a practice group as spokespeople or, as Dinwoodie prefers, to allow and encourage them all to speak with the media.
- Once you have decided that certain functions should be performed by an outside agency:

- Establish the expectations at the beginning of the relationship;
- Have them work on things that are strategic not opportunistic;
- Define for them the practice group initiatives that you consider important;
- Advise them to target those publications that will translate into new business; and
- Have the agency spend its resources on achieving for example, the two or three big goals rather than the daily placements.

### Products

Dinwoodie went on to recommend the use of the following information tools in the public relations process:

- ProfNet — a division of PR News wire for awareness building;
- Vocus — CRM system for media management;
- Bacon's — Directory of Journalists (integrated with Vocus) or stand alone;

- Biz360 — media measurement tool; and
- Westlaw, Lexis and Bloomberg Law — allow you to create the news.

He concluded with examples of good (where the agency offers additional skills and resources) and bad use of outside PR Agencies where the agency is used in a way that creates work but little measurable results.

### SHEILA TURNER

Sheila Turner gave a wonderfully complete analysis of the factors to consider before deciding to hire an outside PR firm and the cautions and guidelines in dealing with the outside PR agency to get the best bang for your buck. She smartly concludes that each law firm must look internally to determine its PR focus and strategic goals.

Turner asserts that you must have a clear expectation of your chosen agency. And accordingly, you must give them an adequate differentiating message with which to work.

Turner prescribed a list of internal practices that must precede the decision to hire an outside PR agency. She recommends that internal PR people:

- Regularly meet with practice group lawyers and key partner;
- See and treat lawyers as clients;
- Attend firm meetings and events;
- Know the firm's clients, prospects and competition;
- Know where the firm wants to be — what placements would have a meaningful affect on business development efforts; and
- Know which of the firm's goals the PR firm will focus on achieving and ensure that the desired PR efforts will result in meeting business objectives.

The advantages and disadvantages of retaining an outside PR agency were summarized.

### Advantages:

- Managing the work load without increasing the head count.
- Receiving an objective independent view of the firm in relation to other law firms with which the agencies might also work.

*continued on page 5*

## ***P.R. Value***

*continued from page 4*

- Receiving an external objective reinforcement of the views of inside PR people by which firm partners may be reassured.
- Having the benefit of an outsider's view of the competition.
- Exposing strengths and weaknesses that the internal team may have overlooked.

### ***Disadvantages:***

- There is an increase of time and access required with and to an outside firm that are necessary.
- Outside PR firms are costly.
- There are trust issues, confidentiality, the risk of unethical leaks and other risks inherent to service providers who also serve the competition and indirectly the media.
- Agencies may use your lawyers to leverage media exposure for other clients.

To take the benefit of the advantages and minimize the disadvantages, Turner provided a general scheme for the role of internal and external PR resources; however, while certain projects and groups can be handled by external agencies, the internal group should work on these types of projects as well.

### ***Internal***

- Press releases.
- Partner announcements.
- Deal announcements.
- Award/Leading Lawyer submissions.

### ***External***

- Hand off the publicity function with respect to the practice of either.
- An individual partner or a practice group.
- Matters like large deals or a major court victory.
- Projects.

**Stephen J. Ruben** is President of Valuelaw Consulting Inc., which helps law firms with their marketing efforts by providing services focusing on planning and administering client surveys; individual performance coaching for attorneys and staff; and conducting assessments of firm marketing strategy and tactics and develop and implement needed changes. Stephen can be reached at [stephen.ruben@valuelaw.com](mailto:stephen.ruben@valuelaw.com) or 212-255-2989.

**So which PR firm to hire?** And what are the evaluation criteria? Turner cautioned that you should check references from current and former clients, head hunters and media contacts to determine if the PR firm candidate:

- Meets deadlines and promises;
- Has a reputation for ethics;
- Provides the account person what was promised;
- Brings good ideas to the table;
- Has honest and accurate billing — get a billing sample;
- Is available when needed (even if after business hours);
- Has stability of staff;
- Delivers strategic counsel; and
- Understands the legal industry.

To avoid surprises or disappointments in the relationship, Turner proposes that you explore these issues:

- Determine a clear and precise mechanism for billing;
- Ask tough questions. Ask for specifics;
- Effect a mutual agreement on what success means for YOUR firm;
- Recognize that PR firms are good at touting. Listen for 'spin!'; and
- Consider the pros and cons of a firm that specialized in your area and has other clients with similar PR needs.
- Once hired, Turner urges that you observe how they work. Are their pitches targeted? Do they deliver on their promises? Were their promises realistic in the first place?!

Once hired and a level of confidence and trust are established, you have an investment in the PR firm's success, so:

- Set Realistic Goals;
- Communicate regularly;
- Enable access;
- Include them in firm mailings;
- Empower a knowledgeable, decisive and responsive internal marketer as the main contact person for the outside PR firm; and
- Offer praise/criticism.

### **ELIZABETH LAMPERT**

Elizabeth Lampert brought her ability to secure and deliver a clear message. She added her insights from the outside PR agency perspective about how to begin the relationship effectively:

- Hire the right partner in the PR agency that has good chemistry with the law firm and its people;
- Define your costs, goals and expectations clearly;
- Interview attorneys together with outside consultants and create strategic messages and define trends in the industry;
- Delineate roles clearly to minimize overlap;
- Define reporting structure. Outside PR agents should have relationships with attorneys, but report directly to in-house marketing department;
- Develop a plan for communicating amongst and between yourselves; and
- Be very clear on billing matters. There should be no surprises.

Lampert asserted a number of reasons why the relationship between a law firm and its outside PR agency works successfully. In her mind an outside PR agency can:

- Maximize opportunities by dealing with a firm whose only effort is PR;
- Bring more resources to the PR effort without adding to the head count;
- Provide industry intelligence and broad contacts within the legal media community;
- Assert an impartial perspective that allows the agency to be brutally honest and objective with the law firm;
- Offer higher level talent which can supplement the PR help in-house; and
- Focus on specific projects without be distracted by the day to day internal happenings.

Lampert also asserted the pitfalls of which both the agency and the firm must be aware:

- The outside agency lacks the day to day scoop within the firm and can therefore miss important messages;
- Attorneys may depend on outside Agency which can undermine the value of the internal marketers;
- If there is no chemistry, forward action will be inhibited;
- The agency might put junior people on the account, not the promised PR star;

*continued on page 6*

## P.R. Value

continued from page 5

- Unresolved and unclear billing issues can bring the relationship to a sudden halt;
- Over-promising and under-delivering will be perceived as poor results; and
- When inside PR and the outside agency are out of sync, the inside marketing department and the outside agency will not be stating one clearly defined message

Lampert discussed the value of various ways in which the relationship between the law firm and the PR agency can be structured:

- Practice area focused — where PR specialists are assigned to practices groups;
- Project focused — where for a limited time during a particular project the PR Agency carries a project reducing the workload of the internal team. The budget and goals are easy to define and the results, easy to measure; and
- The PR firm exercises its influence in a geographical location, focusing on specific offices. This structure needs constant interaction with attorneys and is not recommended by Lampert because this focus limits your ability to gain national attention.

In order for the relationship between a law firm and a PR agency to work effectively, there are a number of functions, the performance of which must be addressed and agreed upon by the parties with little overlap:

- Who and how regularly do the Agency reps consult with attorneys?
- Who sends opportunities and works out logistics?
- Who defines strategy and scope? and
- Is the outside PR person to be proactive or reactive?

Finally, the measure of the PR agency's success is often a function of its access to the law firm's management. So to get the best results, it is important that there be real open access to and from management and the agency.

## JAY JAFFE

Jay Jaffe was the final speaker, and with his over 30 years experience provided a strong overview of just what a PR firm has to offer individual law firms. He summarized the primary attributes that outside PR counsel offer to law firm PR efforts.

**A broader view of the big picture and rising trends from working with multiple firms and with their clients.** Jaffe asserted the outside PR firms, particularly those that work within in and beyond the legal industry, have a broader view of the world and future trends than those PR people who toil only in the legal industry or in individual firms. So outside PR firms gain perspectives that can enhance the public relations efforts of individual client firms

**More regular contacts with a broader scope of journalists.** Jaffe indicated that there are approximately 250 full time journalists working specifically in the legal field. In addition, outside PR firms working with law firms and other industries have exposure to and relationships with more of those approximately 2000 members of the different vertical, legal and business media.

**One stop shopping for reporters.** Because of relationships formed over the years, it is not unusual for members of the media to contact Jaffe to gain access to a number of attorneys from various law firms that Jaffe Associates serves. Accordingly, the PR firm becomes a connecting point for the media.

**In multidisciplinary marketing firms, a broader view of options.** Firms like Jaffe Associates can also offer more interrelated client services. For example, he was able through his firm's Web services group to have a Web site up and running in 2 hours to provide a publicity vehicle for a Plaintiff's lawyers who were Jaffe's client .

Jaffe concluded his talk by addressing the more general strengths and limitations of an outside PR Agency.

What do P.R. firms really have to offer more than anything else?

**Experience.** If a PR firm has several experienced PR professionals

who have worked in the field, they've likely seen it all, know quickly which resources and tactics to use, need little lead time and proceed with diligence and confidence

**Objectivity.** Can provide a more objective perspective that might ruffle feathers if expressed by in-house staff. Outside PR firms are independent and are therefore more able to speak more candidly, telling lawyers what they need to as opposed to what they might want to hear about a strategic or tactical public relations matter

Outside PR firm have limitations. What no outside P.R. firm can do:

- Outside PR professionals, don't know every journalist — nobody does!;
- Outside PR professional can't, and Jaffe Associates won't, "guarantee" a placement or success; and

However well connected a PR firm is, they can't always "kill" a negative story that has its own momentum.

## Q&A

Peck hosted a lively Q&A session touching on the following subjects:

- The PR issues with the big name well known lawyers;
- Success billing;
- Tying business goals to PR strategies in a litigation context;
- Worst PR mistakes;
- The value of dealing with journalists face to face and for PR professionals to visit other offices to deal one on one with their partners; and
- Working with the PR/marketing departments of corporate clients.



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## Strutting Your Stuff: The Advantages Of Seminar Marketing

*What's The Best Way To Attract  
New Clients? Invite Them To  
Listen To You Talk — In Person!*

By Steven A. Meyerowitz

After the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection went public with new “safe fill” regulations a while ago, a number of lawyers in the Pittsburgh office of Babst, Calland, Clements and Zomnir P.C., including Matt Jameson, a shareholder in the firm who concentrates his practice on construction litigation, recognized that the rule could affect almost every large construction project in Pennsylvania. They decided they needed to explain the developments to their clients — and that the situation presented an opportunity to attract new business. Shortly thereafter, Babst, Calland held a seminar on the subject. Jameson says the seminar “generated several calls after the fact” that, indeed, led to additional legal work for the firm.

Jameson is a big believer in seminars as a client development tool. In fact, Melissa L. Jones, the firm’s marketing director, states that “all groups” of lawyers at Babst, Calland put on seminars.

And they are not alone.

### SEMINAR BENEFITS

Seminars, which were “the way to go in the 1990s,” remain hot, according

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to Julie Meyer, the Philadelphia-based marketing director of Dilworth Paxson L.L.P. That makes a great deal of sense. After all, a seminar provides lawyers with the opportunity to strut their stuff for existing clients (reminding them why they hired the lawyers in the first place and subtly suggesting that the initial retention decision was correct) and in front of prospective new clients (to whom the message is, “Look what these people know. I should ask them to help when our company has a problem.”). In short, Meyer adds, “seminars bring clients and contacts into your office.”

Even the invitation to a seminar can serve a benefit. Stacy Clark, an attorney and marketing advisor to small and mid-size law firms in the Philadelphia area, observes that “the invitation is itself notice to clients and prospective clients that you have expertise in a certain area.” So, if an invitation is done correctly — dignified, yet delivering a clear and exciting message — it alone can be a “great marketing tool,” she says.

### AVOIDING THE PITFALLS

To obtain the maximum marketing value from seminars, law firms and their marketing professionals have to steer clear of the all-too-common pitfalls. One big problem to avoid is choosing the wrong subject to cover in the seminar.

In the view of Babst, Calland’s Jameson, broad topics such as a “seminar on commercial law” will not draw a big crowd. By contrast, a seminar “on a discrete area of bankruptcy law, for example, has a better chance of drawing people.” Dilworth’s Julie Meyer agrees, declaring that a seminar should not focus on a firm’s “practice groups” but on particular issues such as Sarbanes-Oxley or privacy. She acknowledges one exception to this rule: Seminars by her firm’s labor and employment lawyers are an effective tool because “people depend on an annual update” and other law firms produce seminars that cover labor and employment issues. In fact, she

concedes, her firm probably “would lose clients” if it stopped giving labor and employment law seminars.

A second issue to consider is the speaker or speakers who will be presenting at the seminar. Clark says that a “seminar really works as a great marketing tool if your speakers are terrific.” The converse is also true: A firm “cannot afford to showcase a bad speaker — no matter how bright he or she is.”

Clark believes that feelings and law firm internal politics aside, firms should put their best speakers — the lawyers who use the least amount of legalese and who have no annoying speaking mannerisms — in front of audiences. However, she says, that does not necessarily mean that a firm should simply refuse to allow lawyers who are not the best public speakers to present at a seminar. Clark points out that “there are lots of great coaches around and attorneys can even have someone in their office or home (such as their spouse) videotape them and give them an honest assessment of their delivery.” She notes that an attorney’s appearance and clothing — Is it too casual or too dressy? Is it too “form fitting”? — can also affect an audience’s impression of the speaker, “which is formed within the first minute of speaking.” What should a firm do if its best lawyer is its worst public speaker? “Get the lawyer some coaching!”

Another tip about speakers: Because seminars may also provide a cross-selling opportunity for a firm, it should consider broadening the range of its speakers at a seminar. For example, Jameson says that he often has his firm’s labor lawyers speak at his construction litigation seminars. People “get to see” those lawyers in action and thereafter may call on them for counsel.

If a firm chooses the wrong audience for a seminar, it will be a failure no matter how great the topic and no matter how wonderful the speakers. As Babst, Calland’s Jones says: “A focused group of 25 of the right

*continued on page 8*

## Seminar Marketing

continued from page 7

people at a seminar is better than an audience of 500 of the wrong people.”

Jameson divides audiences into two groups: lawyers and business people. Lawyers, including in-house counsel and practicing lawyers who are potential (or actual) referral sources, may come to seminars in part to fulfill continuing legal education needs. This can present a danger. Jameson notes that litigators who speak at seminars have to be careful about telling too much to their adversaries or setting forth a position on a legal issue that later may come back to haunt them.

Still, having lawyers attend a seminar can be worthwhile. Dilworth's Meyer observes that general counsel can be a great audience for a seminar, especially if the seminar focuses on “things they are worried about” and the firm's heavy hitters are speaking, thus tying all of these important issues together.

An audience of business people presents different opportunities to a seminar-producing firm. When the members of this group are decision makers, with the ability to select counsel or influence the company's choice, the benefits are obvious. It can also be valuable to invite consultants or others involved in the industry on a day-to-day basis. They are likely to serve as referral sources if they are impressed with the firm and its lawyers.

### FEEDBACK AND FOLLOW-UP

The work associated with putting on a seminar is not close to over after the seminar is completed. Marketing Director Jones says that “one-third” of the work remains. A firm that fails

to complete the job will not get the maximum bang for its buck.

For example, after her firm conducts a seminar, Jones lets every lawyer at the firm know who attended the seminar, which allows them to contact anyone they may know. She also puts information about the seminar on the firm's Web site and encourages presenters to write articles on the subject of the seminar, which Jones also puts on the site.

Jameson personally follows up after a seminar. He says that he calls every person who attended and speaks with them or leaves them a voice mail message to thank them for attending, to let them know they can follow up with him if they have any questions and to ask them to keep the firm in mind if they have issues in the area of law featured in the seminar that may require that they speak with or retain a lawyer.

Consultant Clark advises that the feedback process should be formalized. For instance, Clark says, firms should have an evaluation form for attendees “that asks questions that will generate more business, such as, ‘Would you like a program on this topic at your company?’ ‘Would you like our newsletter?’ and ‘Would you like to be updated on this subject?’”

## THE FUTURE

Although we live in an age of instant messaging, instant photos and instant Web access, seminars still are quite relevant. Meyer says they may transform from the traditional large seminar to more streamlined events such as “an executive briefing, a 60- or 90-minute breakfast meeting in a firm's conference room or cocktail parties.” They may also move from the seminar-sponsoring firm's office to a client's building. As Stacy Clark says, it can be a tremendous opportunity for a firm to present at a corporation, where it goes in for free and has a coordinator on the inside, and where the firm can be guaranteed an audience of 10, 20 or more corporate executives. Clark says it probably could not be more convenient for a busy businessperson than to have a seminar “20 feet from his or her desk that can answer problems that are on his or her desk.” Whether seminars in person give way to “Webinars” and teleconferencing, one thing is clear: Providing information to clients and prospective clients is something that will never go out of style.



## Reminder! Second Annual Best Of Visual Identity Innovators

Our April issue will feature the **Best of Visual Identity Innovators**. All entries must be submitted by March 1<sup>st</sup>. The categories are:

- Most innovative visual identity to reposition a law firm.
- Most innovative visual identity using a logo.
- Most innovative visual identity involving a name change, branding and launch.

This competition is open only to solo practitioners and law firms. All questions should be referred to me via e-mail at [elizabethtursi@aol.com](mailto:elizabethtursi@aol.com).

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