

How PR Can Make You \$170 Million

October 4, 2009

From HBC's Sound Bites Blog (www.hellermanbaretz.com/soundbites)

"Look Ma, no ads."

That's what the founders of Mint.com might have said after they sold their company for \$170 million a few weeks ago. You might think that building a \$170 million business -- especially for consumer services like Mint.com's online personal finance tools -- would require a lot of advertising. Not so, as [Slate's](#) Daniel Gross tells it:

"Yesterday, at a [panel I moderated in San Francisco](#), Donna Wells, Mint.com's chief marketing officer, stunned a room full of digital marketing pros by noting that she really didn't have much of a marketing budget. Mint.com has gone from zero to 1.5 million users in two years with no ad campaign, save a mid-five-figures sum spent on search engine terms. Rather than purchase traffic, it has pursued the same type of strategy that food trucks and online magazines do: Using free social media and piggybacking on popular new communications technology. Mint.com has more than 36,000 Facebook fans and 19,000 Twitter followers, a well-trafficked [blog](#), and a popular iPhone application."

Law firms should pay attention to this case study, which shows how well-planned PR campaigns can take you where you want to go, without spending on advertising.