

## **Social Media as PR in Legal Marketing is Underused and Under Funded**

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Public Relations, in general is underused and underfunded, so in the midst of the legal world's struggle to reinvent itself, social media as a PR tool is under used and under-funded.

According to Veronis Suhler, the US. Spending on PR rose 71% in 2008. WPP noted that PR was the fastest-growing discipline in 2008.

Based on what I'm seeing, there are a lot of legal marketers out there who don't seem to understand the principles or ethics of the discipline. So, based on Johan Bloom's comprehensive column in May 11th's Advertising Age, here are some rudimentary rules to keep in mind:

### **Earned media is not paid media**

Honestly, any place that will take cash for editorial credit, really isn't worth your time and isn't credible. What's worse is your "Pay-per-Play strategy may end up hitting the headlines for trying to deceive the public

### **Earned media requires being interesting and open**

You have to have a real, meaningful story that matters and is worth telling: A journalist, blogger or tech-savvy consumer, will only tell it if they think it's worth listening to and sharing.

### **Listen to the people you paid to help you**

Don't hire a PR or social media person or agency and then ignore them when they tell you that the story you're presenting is too boring, a lie or even worse, a lie that's going to get found out. Believe it or not, there are times clients go against my advise, and don't get the results they want...

### **You can't control the message**

In spite of the popular tabloid moniker, you PR person or social media specialist isn't a doctor and should be spinning up cures. PR enables you to communicate something demonstrably true. If you need to know how the message will look when it is shared with the public, stick to advertising.

When it doesn't come out quite like you'd imagined, don't scream at your PR person or the journalist or blogger in question. You'll just end up making influential enemies. If your message comes out exactly as you'd hoped, make a note that the journalist in question has no integrity and soon won't have any readers – Or, thank your luck stars that you got lucky.

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