

Testing a Lawsuit's News Value



Several lawyers have asked me how they should determine the newsworthiness of a particular legal matter. Although each situation is unique, I tell them to consider the following:

Do you or your clients face:

- Publicity-seeking opponents?
- A unique or unusual lawsuit?
- Well-known attorneys or parties?
- A matter with a large sum of money at stake?
- A matter involving a current hot media topic?
- The application of new law, or the new application of old law?
- A matter where the outcome will have broad implications?
- A matter with political or regulatory aspects?
- A matter with a compelling human interest angle?

If the answer to any of these questions is "Yes," I suggest that they consult with their clients to craft a media strategy well in advance of the first media call. Lawyers and clients should work together to develop the basic themes to be communicated and to agree on who will be handling media inquiries over the course of the case.