

PR Tactics: Breaking News

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



[Photo: [Sister 72](#)]

The announcement of Justice Sotomayor's nomination back in May -- one of the biggest breaking legal stories this year -- gave McClatchy reporter Michael Doyle an opportunity to [blog about](#) best practices for PR shops when it comes to breaking news stories.

Why are we revisiting this now? That's easy -- like we said, Michael had some useful nuggets about how to best approach reporters on breaking stories, and we'd like to share them with you. And, ummm, okay, he may have cited Hellerman Baretz Communications as being one of the quickest on the draw after the Sotomayor nomination, noting that "Hellerman Baretz sent a useful release at 9:28 [a.m., on the day of the nomination], offering a Mayer Brown attorney who has argued before Sotomayor." The HBC release was the second into Michael's in-box on the big story.

But we write not to shower ourselves in glory. Well, not entirely anyway.

The other part of the post we found interesting was this tip for effective releases on breaking stories:

"Note to p.r. practitioners: the best approach is to include a quick canned quote from the expert(s), as well as a direct phone line to the expert. This allows the reporter to cut and paste . . . err, take advantage of . . . the prepared comment or follow up with live questions."

Thanks for the guidance, Michael. Next time someone gets nominated for a seat on the Supreme Court, we'll hope to be first in your in-box, with a quote already in the can for you.