

How To Get Free Publicity In Local Media Like This...

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MOVEMBER: solicitors suffer 'unbelievable abuse'

Top (lip) team on cash leaderboard

DAVID MILLWARD
AND ALAN BUNCE

A MIX of the internet and old fashioned face-to-face meetings helped a team of learned legal gents raise a remarkable £8,500 for charity by growing moustaches.

But they had to spend the whole of November looking slightly ridiculous to make it happen.

Solicitors from Field Seymour Parkes battled through mockery from colleagues, friends and clients as they all grew their 'taches as part of the Movember fundraising campaign for The Prostate Cancer Charity.

But they had the last laugh when their fundraising total proved to be one of the highest amounts made by any team in the country.

When the moustachioed dozen met anyone they suffered a mix of abuse and laughter but would then pass on a special web address for donations. That proved key in raising such a high total.

Ian Wood-Smith, senior partner of the London Street firm, said none of the team grew attached to their moustaches.

He said: "They are shocking – the itching and the abuse you get around



the place is unbelievable. No-one has been tempted to retain it. It was fantastic to shave them off and people are walking around the office with a great sense of relief now."

Meetings in London, he said, were the worst occasions.

He said: "They think we are all country bumpkins anyway. You turn up with one of these on your face and you should see the looks you get. It's been very good for us though."

"Lawyers take themselves too seriously."

Mr Wood-Smith, also a director at Reading FC, suffered more humiliation when meeting officials from

other clubs, some from abroad, who had little understanding. He said: "When the Malaysians from Cardiff came in I couldn't explain to them why I looked like this."

And on top of that he is a governor at Bradfield College where his moustache has also been noticed.

He said: "I go into meetings and when the chairman of the governors saw me he did not know what was going on."

The team said goodbye to their hairy top lips with a party for some of their generous sponsors at the Slug and Lettuce, at The Oracle, on Tuesday.

FUZZY: The Field Seymour Parkes team
Picture: PETER BLOODWORTH
(Ref 102412)



Publicity is FREE, powerful and will turn you into a local expert. And your kids will love it too...

One of the best ways to get media coverage is to start sending out regular press releases to your local media.

It's cheaper than advertising. It's probably going to be read by more people. And it's powerful. But where do you start?

The key is to think of all the things that are newsworthy. You'd be surprised at what local media will pick up. Here's a list of things that can get you coverage.

Don't forget to photocopy all your results and use them in mail-outs and other marketing that you do.

- Personnel changes = promotions, additions, qualifications, experience, new partner.
- Expansion = physical office, new countries, new markets.
- Business win = have you won a new client, particularly if they are famous locally.
- Seminars = are you planning any? Did you hold one? (Take pictures and get testimonials/record them).
- Awards = have you won any industry awards?
- New Responsibilities = have any staff been given roles with other companies or volunteer bodies?
- Charity = are you organising an event, reporting about an event (pictures) or sponsoring an event?
- New = are you a leader in your field in technology, opening hours, new book published?
- Mentoring/Training = are you mentoring any students or training business owners?
- Employee benefits = do you do something special for your staff?
- Marketing = have you got a unique proposition e.g. 100% guarantee?
- Anniversary = 12 month, 5 year, 10 years in business?
- Results = have you had great results especially if you are bucking industry trend.
- News = can you comment from a local angle on a national news story or can you inform local market on new legal implications.

Who do you send press releases to?

Naturally you should build a list of local media organisations. This includes radio, newspapers, magazines, TV and websites. Your best bet is to call each of the main media organisations and ask the question of who you should send press releases to.

You can simply say, "I'm a local law firm and I'd like to send you a story about our new award/charity event/staff member etc. Who is the best person to speak to?" They'll probably put you through and then you can start the relationship from there.

Don't miss out on Chambers of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, MP's etc.

There's always something going on within your business or the world that can get you publicity. Make a habit to get a story a month about your firm into the local media.

Pretty soon the local media will be asking you for comments about legal issues. Then just make sure you have something to say!

Betting on a Beckham boost

A CHIPPING Sodbury solicitor is banking on a Rooney hat trick next summer in the hope of boosting the local housing market.

Paul Hajek, who runs Clutton Cox solicitors on High Street, has put his money where his mouth is by offering free conveyancing fees if England win the World Cup.

Football fan Mr Hajek says he believes England can bring the trophy home for the first time since 1966.

He said: "Next year could be the year."

Mr Hajek added: "People are going to be gripped by World Cup fever next year. So we thought 'let's get part of the feel good factor going in conveyancing'.

"I decided to refund anyone who uses our conveyancing services online from now until Thursday, June 10, on the condition that England win the World Cup."

"And if England do win, then we're happy to donate the money



Paul Hajek of Clutton Cox solicitors in Chipping Sodbury 6SR2070V09

to charity instead of giving the refund. "So if you are moving house and work or support a charity then get in touch. "You have nothing to lose."

Getting free publicity = more Conveyancing clients. So says Paul Hajek of Clutton Cox.

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Boyd Butler