

## Legal Media Editor's Panel Review

Held at LawNet Annual Conference, Phoenix, August 23, 2004



During this year's annual LawNet conference, LawNet and Envision Agency hosted the first inaugural legal media editors panel discussion. The goal of the event was to give legal vendors a better understanding of the legal media landscape and the "how-tos" of working with the legal editors. The initial vendor response was overwhelming with over 60 vendors, firms and agencies having attended this event.

The distinguished panel of legal publication editors included:

- Randi Mayes, Editor-in-Chief of *Peer to Peer* newsletter and Executive Director of LawNet, Inc.
- Monica Bay, Editor-in-Chief, *Law Technology News*, Managing Director, *Law Firm Inc.*, and *Small Firm Business*
- Jay Strother, Editor-in-Chief, *Legal Management* and *ALA News*
- Jamie Tyo, Managing Editor, *Law Office Computing*, *Legal Assistant Today*

Here are highlights of the topics covered during the lively 60 minute panel discussion:

**Press release submission process:** Panelist spent a portion of the discussion detailing how to submit press releases and to whom to send them. In the case of *Law Office Computing*, the appropriate contact person is determined by the content of the press release. Currently, Lill Bose is in charge of product reviews, Kathryn Feather cover new product releases in the "Just Released" section, and Jamie Tyo, LOC's Managing Editor is focused on firm profiles and success stories in the "Tech Setters" and "My Solution" columns, and beginning in December/January a large firm focus. While Jay Strother, Editor, *Legal Management* and *ALA News*, receives all news releases but is primarily focused on trends and solutions for his legal administrator readership. Randi Mayes and Andy Spiegel with LawNet's *Peer to Peer* newsletter include excerpts of most newsworthy press releases in *Peer to Peer*'s quarterly Product Announcements section. According to Monica Bay, Editor-in-Chief for *Law Technology News*, and Editorial Director for *Law Firm Inc.* and *Small Firm Business*, over 3000 press releases are sent to a general press release account on a monthly basis, and based on relevance and subject matter are then redirected to the appropriate publication. The key to getting into these publications boils down to knowing the magazine, the different departments and features, and writing a press release in a succinct and easy-to-understand style.

**Article Pitching & Placements:** This topic focused on the process by which an article or by-line makes its way to a legal publication. In the case of membership publications such as *Peer to Peer* and *Legal Management*, editorial content and article preferences are a direct reflection of what trends, technologies and legal developments organization members are most interested in. *Peer to Peer* article submissions should be purely educational in nature and are focused on firm processes, implementations and case studies and success stories. ALA's *Legal Management* takes its editorial highlights from a periodic Knowledge Skills & Abilities Assessment for Law Firm Managers, a survey that identifies 57 proficiency areas for firm management. As a result, most editorial is determined accordingly with a technology feature focus in the March/April issue. In addition, recurring features in *Legal Management* include "Competitive Edge" and "Practice Management", both of which have a technology slant. As for ALM's legal technology publications, as well as *Law Office Computing* magazine, the key to successfully pitching an article is to fully understand what topics are being covered in a given month, and to position a legal client and their successes and failures versus simply contributing a vendor by-line. Also, all panelists agreed, that article pitches and ideas succinctly delivered via e-mail have the

best chance of getting reviewed and potentially archived for future consideration.



**PR Etiquette:** The consensus among the legal editors is that vendors who follow preset editorial guidelines, understand and read the publications their targeting, know the audience, and respect media deadlines will have the most success in meeting press release and article goals. Among the biggest “pet peeves” of what not to do when working with this media audience includes telephone follow-up on news releases, not empowering employees to give out basic firm information as part of standard media requests, and excessive use of technology jargon in press releases and article submissions.

If you have any questions or comments about our first inaugural legal media panel discussion, please feel free to email Envision Agency ([jf@envisionagency.com](mailto:jf@envisionagency.com)).

## PUBLICATION SNAPSHOTS

This table will serve as your “cheat sheet” when contacting these legal editors and targeting their audiences with news releases and features.

Publication/ Publisher	Editor	Audience	Circulation	Focus
Peer to Peer newsletter/ LawNet, Inc.	Randi Mayes, Editor <a href="mailto:rmayes@peertopeer.org">rmayes@peertopeer.org</a> / Andy Spiegel, Publications/Media Specialist <a href="mailto:aspiegel@peertopeer.org">aspiegel@peertopeer.org</a>	LawNet members include primary technology decision makers in over 850 law firms and legal departments	5,000	Covers trends and educational vies on leading legal technologies written in an objective, non-sales manner
Legal Management (ALA)	Jay Strother	Administrators, executive directors, managing partner and solos	20,000 including 9,000+ legal administrator	Covers issues impacting law office managers including technology, trends in HR, software and general business practice
ALA News/ Association of Legal Administrators (ALA)	Jay Strother <a href="mailto:editorial@alanel.org">editorial@alanel.org</a>	Administrators, executive directors, managing partner and solos	ALA membership, 20,000+	Trends and legal developments affecting ALA members
Law Technology News/ ALM	Monica Bay <a href="mailto:lawtech@amlaw.com">lawtech@amlaw.com</a>	IT Directors, Corporate Counsel, IT staff and attorneys/partners among small, mid-sized and global law firms	43,000	De-mystifying technology in order to assist in the evaluation and understanding of technology
Law Firm Inc./ ALM	Monica Bay, Editorial Director/ Trevor Delaney, Managing Editor <a href="mailto:lfi@amlaw.com">lfi@amlaw.com</a>	C-level among top 250 largest law firms including EDs, CTOs, COOs, CFOs and CIOs	20,000	Advancing the business of law by providing information that readers need to run their firms as businesses
Small Firm Business/ ALM	Monica Bay, Editorial Director/ Trevor Delaney, Managing Editor <a href="mailto:sfb@amlaw.com">sfb@amlaw.com</a>	Attorneys at small law firms nationwide	70,000	Devoted to the unique management and business issues small law firms face
Law Office Computing	Jamie Tyo <a href="mailto:jtyo@jamespubsishing.com">jtyo@jamespubsishing.com</a>	Small and large law firm managers, MIS staff and attorneys	7,000 paid circulation	Targeted legal technology coverage offers unbiased, independent reviews, news and features