

Holdsworth Consultancy Ltd

Litigation Support and Reputation Management

What is litigation support and reputation management

- It is important to ensure that any litigation that may lead to media or other stakeholder interest has a properly thought through communications strategy.
- The strategy should work out key stakeholders and the messages that you need to give that group either prior to, during, or after any litigation.
- Media can report on ongoing cases where restrictions have not been put in place, it is crucial that appropriate messaging is developed so an understanding of your version of the case is understood, the other side may be doing the same.
- Any communications strategy must work hand in hand with the legal team.
- It may be essential that communications are prepared for both a positive and negative outcome of a case. What you will say post litigation, could be as important as what you have said throughout and will position you for the future.
- There is the longer term reputation of the individual or organisation to consider, communications plans should be developed to ensure any damage is repaired and recovered.

Our Approach

- Building Credibility – Firstly we can look at the credibility of the claimant / respondent as it currently stands, considering whether any reputational work would be beneficial before a claim is submitted or a defence begins. Additionally we research the media landscape, identifying which journalists would possibly take an interest in the case, whether it is beneficial to pre-empt interest with prior engagement or not.
- Communications Strategy – We will work with the legal team to identify what communications strategy could be employed, reactive or proactive as well as understanding what materials may be needed during the case. This could be a reactive Q&A or statements.
- Planning – It is essential to be prepared. We can explore various scenarios, ensuring we have processes in place to deal with issues as they occur swiftly.

Our Approach

- During the trial – We can, if required attend court, handling media who are present or keeping a watching brief to ensure we are prepared should something come up during hearings that may be reported.
- Judgment – It is essential that we are prepared for judgment, ensuring scenarios are considered and statements drafted. Following judgment it may be essential to set the narrative before the other side can, ensuring our points are aired.
- It is essential throughout proceedings that any Public Relations team work closely with legal teams. It is crucial that any communication activity compliments the legal strategy and is prepared to respond to protect the reputation of the client, and the legal firm.

Why Holdsworth Consultancy Ltd

In one word, 'experience'.

- The experience of working discreetly to achieve positive outcomes in many situations.
- Having worked with multiple law firms across multiple jurisdictions.
- Understand the sensitivities that come with protecting the reputation of individuals, families, businesses and organisations.
- Having dealt with issues that include, but are not limited to, wrongful allegations, tax issues, litigation, crisis situations, and family disputes - we have a wealth of previous experience that we can use.
- Can work independently or with your team to prepare media strategies that do not conflict with any ongoing or future litigation

Experience

- Worked across multiple jurisdictions with several law and intelligence firms, who were pursuing a fraud of over US\$3bn across the globe, involving multiple respondents. Providing reputational support for our client, responding to malicious claims made by the other side and preparing and releasing communications concerning individual successes against various litigants in different courts, tailoring releases for the for different markets.
- Worked with multiple law firms for a high-profile client to protect their reputation in the wake of serious and subsequently false, allegations. The individual would have faced disproportionate media coverage due to family connections and membership of certain societies within their University. We ensured messaging was prepared as needed as well as performing an analysis of their online profile, making recommendations to minimise possible impact should their name become public.
- Supported a distinguished British businessman and politician, as he faced highly damaging – and untrue – personal allegations, fuelled by speculation and high profile individuals repeating these. We worked swiftly to refute the allegations and present the actual facts of the matter, demonstrating that the allegations were wholly false.
- Acted for one of Africa's wealthiest businessman, building his profile in the Western media prior to a high profile litigation in the UK. Supported the client throughout the trial with daily attendance in court, working closely with lawyers to prepare media statements as they were needed.

Experience

- Worked with a high-profile retail entrepreneur and investor in response to allegations by a mainstream newspaper who believed there was a viable story concerning his former partner. After understanding the allegation and what actually took place, had conversations with the journalist and convinced them that there was no story.
- Supported a global drinks company through a tax dispute with HMRC, building their messaging to ensure that, regardless of the result, the reaction of their customers was planned and managed. The company were also prepared for media questioning, with Q&A's produced as well as media training for key people.
- Supported high-profile individuals who have been accused of wrong-doing, enabling the legal process to take course by preparing media handling strategies should the case come to the attention of the media.
- Assisted a prominent family with the management of the media following the unexpected death of a family member. This included preventing the media from directly approaching family members both in the UK and overseas, and included on-the-ground presence and support. Working closely with lawyers ensured accurate reporting and provided the family with regular updates and analysis into the media coverage and direction.

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