Publicizing Your Event

Even the most content rich, flawlessly executed Law Day program is of little value if no one attends or if no one hears about it until after it has taken place. Following the steps below can help you expand your outreach.

Use Social Media

People obtain much of their information from social networks. Don’t be shy about using social media to spread the word about your event. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Pinterest all provide excellent opportunities to promote an event or activity at little to no cost. Consider these social media promotional tools to enhance your campaign reach:

- Conduct and post a Facebook Live interview with key event speakers
- Start an Instagram Stories timeline to stream Instagram Live videos related to your program
- Add your event to Facebook where people can register to attend
- Create a Pinterest board of images related to your program
- Tweet teasers leading up to your event, including program speaker bio snippets and topic samples
- Tag your posts with #LawDay to join the national Law Day conversation

Using the hashtag #LawDay in your posts can give your messages even more visibility among those looking for Law Day related communications. Social media messages are typically very short (280 characters for Twitter), but you can always link to a webpage with more detailed information. If the event page URL is lengthy, you may use a free URL shortener service such as tinyURL or Goo.gl to make links a manageable length for use with social media.


Make Your Event Newsworthy

Inviting a prominent speaker or conducting an interesting and innovative Law Day activity are two common ways of getting the media interested. If you have a Law Day contest (essay competition, etc.), prepare a release announcing the winner and ask local media outlets if they would be interested in publishing the top entries.

Connect with Your Contacts

It is a good idea to send a calendar of your Law Day events to everyone who might be able to help you get the word out. This includes schools, libraries, local law firms, public interest groups, government agencies, law schools, courts, and the like. Word of mouth is an invaluable, cost effective marketing tool.
COLLABORATE WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS
Find out about upcoming community group meetings (e.g. PTA, school boards, etc.), contact the organizers, and ask to be allotted time on the agenda to briefly discuss Law Day. If this is not feasible, ask the organizer if he or she would be willing to make an announcement about your event if you provide him or her with copy.

ENGAGE THE MEDIA
The 2020 voting centric theme could be particularly interesting to media personnel. Consider having journalists on your Law Day planning team, inviting them to your event, and involving the media where possible, as it could pay huge dividends when it comes time to publicize your event. Having a member of the local media engaged in the planning of your event gives them a vested interest in its promotion and success.

SEND OUT MEDIA RELEASES
Prepare a written announcement about your Law Day programs and send it to local media outlets. Many newspapers have community event sections that will list your event for free. Radio and television stations do this as well. Some media outlet websites will allow you to enter the event information directly through an online form. Don’t forget that many online news sites have community calendars as well. Wherever possible, tailor your releases to the editor of the section where you want the announcement to appear (e.g. “attention community events editor”). It is possible that you may be able to get a newspaper or other media outlet to do an actual news story on your event. But you must think of a news hook that makes the event particularly interesting or timely for that media outlet’s audience (e.g. a prominent speaker, a special award, etc.). The Law Day 2020 voting rights theme should help with providing a timely message. Send your release to radio and TV stations or newspapers; don’t forget to include new media, such as blogs and online news sites. An increasing number of people are getting their news from these sources.

WRITE LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
A letter to the editor is an excellent way to reach newspaper readers. Keep in mind that with the high cost of newsprint, most newspapers keep these letters from the public very short. You should use this space to discuss the Law Day theme or the importance of Law Day rather than just to market the event. The community calendar is a more appropriate place to promote the event itself. Consider submitting your letter to smaller community newspapers where it is more likely to be published, rather than to a major metropolitan newspaper that can receive hundreds or even thousands of submissions per day.

SUBMIT ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATION
Many newspapers and community newsletters accept submissions from the public. Publication standards are often posted to their websites. Check with the specific publication before writing such a piece. Keep the audience in mind when crafting your article, making the topic interesting to the reader.

PREPARE PSAS
Public service announcements (PSAs) are a media version of pro bono assistance. When publications have extra print space or when radio and TV stations have extra air time, they might agree to run a brief ad for a community group that provides a specific service or message. Print publications often prefer to receive PSAs in various sizes so that they can be used to fill holes on a page that might otherwise require a different layout.

TAKE PHOTOS
Newspapers in particular, appreciate receiving photographs to accompany written stories. Newspapers often insert photos of community events with a caption describing the event’s significance. While this might seem like a small amount of coverage, surveys show that photos and captions are among the most viewed (and remembered) parts of a newspaper. Having a photograph of your Law Day event substantially increases the likelihood of it receiving coverage.