

# Litigation PR in High Profile Commercial Cases

Byfield Consultancy is a specialist legal communications agency which offers unrivalled expertise in the complementary disciplines of legal PR, litigation PR and reputation management.

We have advised clients in some of the highest-profile civil cases in recent years and across many jurisdictions. Our extensive experience in managing the media in times of dispute, working closely with the client's legal team, means that we are able to seamlessly dovetail public relations activity into the legal strategy.



**Richard Elsen**  
Chairman

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Byfield is often approached by clients where cases require expert and sensitive media handling skills, together with an intimate understanding of the legal parameters in which the media operates.

Our experience means we are acutely aware of issues such as contempt of court (including across jurisdictions), understand the legal process and, importantly, the legal status of information and documentation.

Our success in litigation PR mandates is based on the solid working relationships we build with our clients' lawyers by working in close conjunction with their senior management, in-house PR teams and with Counsel.

Our approach is very much research and preparation led and we offer clients the following suite of services:

- **Narrative building** – we tell the client's story, building a strong narrative in support of their position, which resonates with the legal arguments being put forward.
- **Scenario media planning and strategy** – we plan for likely situations that may present either problems or opportunities, enabling us to form strategies designed for constructive media engagement.
- **Preparation of detailed Q&A** – we build a detailed Q&A document that

enables us to prepare in advance for likely questions from journalists and other stakeholders.

- **Drafting of statements and press releases** – these are essential communication tools to keep stakeholders informed throughout the case.

- **Rebuttal services** – we understand the importance of timely, effective rebuttal in ensuring that mis-information is not allowed to become perceived truth. We work to ensure accurate reporting and the correction of mis-reporting after the event.

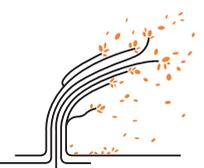
- **Preparation of media packs and briefing documents** – this is a vital part of educating journalists about cases. We provide a media briefing document informing journalists about the facts of the case, the key players, likely legal schedule and other key pieces of information. This builds goodwill with journalists and helps avoid incorrect reporting.

- **Spokesperson services** – where required we are able to provide spokesperson services on behalf of the client.

The services described demonstrate how we adopt a thorough, methodical approach to disputes and litigation – one designed to predict and pre-empt possible reputational damage.

*"I have never been less than impressed by Richard Elsen. Highly sensitive to the client's needs, he always knows which buttons to push and when to push them. The Byfield team is responsive and really understands how to manage the media in highly polarised situations."*

- James Laddie QC, Matrix Chambers



# Case Studies

## Acting for Peter Cruddas in his landmark victory against Times Newspapers

We were instructed by Peter Cruddas, Founder and Chief Executive of CMC Markets and former Conservative Party co-treasurer, in his long-running libel litigation against Times Newspapers following the publication of highly damaging allegations in The Sunday Times.

We built a narrative that highlighted how the articles had damaged Mr Cruddas' business and private life and the lack of support he had received from the Conservative Party. The case involved a number of related legal actions and we worked very closely with the legal team to prepare a media strategy for each which supported Mr Cruddas' main claim against Times Newspapers.

Our strategy for Mr Cruddas winning his case was aggressive and focussed on restoring Mr Cruddas' good name. We arranged interviews with all the main broadcasters, built coalitions with influential stakeholders on social media and applied significant pressure on David Cameron to publicly apologise to Mr Cruddas, which is the first thing the Prime Minister did on returning from his summer holiday.

*"I knew my case was likely to attract publicity and wanted a trusted communications adviser on hand to tell my side of the story accurately. Byfield Consultancy was recommended to me by my legal team and I was highly impressed by their past experience, focus on the legal sector and media contacts. I was also impressed by how seamlessly Byfield worked with my lawyers and they became an important part of my team. I would highly recommend Byfield Consultancy for their expertise in litigation PR and reputation management."*

- Peter Cruddas, Founder and Chief Executive of CMC Markets

## Intellectual Property Litigation

A leading British designer of high quality leather accessories approached us when a former manufacturing partner set up a competing business and did not respond to initial action from the solicitors. We were brought in to create an effective media campaign that would exert pressure on the company to respond to the case being brought against it.

Using our established connections at the national level we built a narrative around our client's plight and secured an in-depth article on the key issues in the Financial Times. We then approached the fashion press, including leading blogs, which covered our client's case in a sympathetic way and which painted the defendant in an unfavourable light. The result of the ongoing media interest placed significant pressure on the defendant whose business practices were called into question and whose reputation suffered as a result of the media coverage.

In the event, the defendant settled the case very quickly.

## Byfield's Founders:

### **Richard Elsen, Chairman**

Richard Elsen was one of the first exponents of litigation PR in the UK. Richard is well known amongst leading journalists for his handling of highly sensitive national and international news stories. His work includes litigation and disputes, crisis and reputation management mandates.

In the last decade Richard has handled the media aspects of some of the most challenging and high profile civil actions brought before the High Court. In addition he regularly trains clients on litigation and crisis PR and lectures on the topics.

### **Gus Sellitto, Managing Director**

Gus has worked with the legal profession since 1998, and works at the intersection of legal PR, litigation PR and reputation management in high risk situations.

Gus has significant experience of advising clients on highly sensitive crisis management issues and litigation communications. Most recently he acted for Peter Cruddas, Founder and Chief Executive of CMC Markets and former Conservative Party co-treasurer, in his libel case against The Sunday Times. Additionally, Gus has helped to raise the profile of a number of global, national and regional law firms, barristers' sets and legal associations.

## About Byfield

Byfield Consultancy offers market leading expertise in legal PR, litigation PR and reputation management.

To find out more, visit [www.byfieldconsultancy.com](http://www.byfieldconsultancy.com)

