

Featured Articles

Retaining the Right Expert Witness with DRI's Expert Witness Resources

By Trey Oliver



A new matter comes in. You analyze the facts alleged in the complaint, create a proof chart, and determine the discovery needed to prove or defend against the elements of the claims. That's the easy part.

Invariably, the case becomes more complicated, and many times, we, as attorneys, quickly find that we need help on a particular subject matter to prove or defend our case. That's where an expert witness comes in. And, as we know, a good expert witness can make a case just as easily as a bad expert witness can break a case.

Whether you are fortunate enough to identify early on that you need an expert witness, or whether it becomes evident that an expert witness is needed as discovery unfolds, expert witnesses with the right qualifications can be hard to find. Some cases require the retention of an expert witness within a particular niche; other times, even in a subject area where you have significant experience, your first choice may be conflicted out or request a higher rate than your client is willing to pay.

When this occurs, we are often left seeking a qualified expert witness. The tried and true methods of finding an expert witness in a time of need (*i.e.*, firm-wide e-mails, calls to long-lost law school comrades, and Google searches) are never a sure thing. Luckily, all hope is not lost—DRI has the resources to provide the help you need.

DRI maintains a database called "[Expert Witness Resources](#)" that provides options, profiles, and reports for potential expert witnesses. The database includes expert witnesses from all over the country and with specificity in numerous different fields. These expert witnesses have not only been identified by fellow DRI attorneys, but are recommended by your legal peers who have had significant case or trial experience with these expert witnesses.

The Expert Witness Resources database is divided into three subcategories: the Expert Resource Database, Expert Witness Reports, and Expert Witness Placement. When attempting to make an initial assessment, the Expert Resource Database and Expert Witness Reports resources

are pertinent to retaining the right expert witness for your case.

The Expert Resource Database is one of the leading repositories of expert witness information on the market. With over 65,000 registered expert witnesses, it provides access to a vast network of expert witness contact information and the initial information you need to identify a list of potential expert witnesses in your geographic footprint and/or topic areas. A simple search through DRI's Expert Resource Database can cut out significant research or nonbillable time vetting potential expert witnesses.

If you aren't sure that you've found or identified the perfect expert witness through your initial search in the Expert Witness Database, DRI provides access to several types of expert witness reports with more detailed information on expert witnesses, ranging from brief screenings to in-depth reports. These reports include the DRI Expert Witness Profiler, the DRI Witness Screening Report, and the DRI Witness Challenge Report.

The DRI Expert Witness Profiler provides a comprehensive personal and professional background of an opposing expert witness or even your own expert witness. Expert witness profiling provides immediate strategic advantages and protects you from negligent retention claims. The Expert Witness Profiler includes information on an expert witness' general background, retention history by plaintiff and defense attorneys, expert rates, and case history (including direct and indirect challenges regarding the expert witness).

DRI also offers Expert Witness Screening Reports. These reports include a snapshot of the expert witness' testimonial history and an assessment of the number of times an expert witness has testified in the past. Within the Expert Witness Screening Report, you can also see the number of affidavits and reports a potential expert witness has published, the transcripts and depositions an expert witness is on record for, and the number of Daubert challenges (and exclusions) for that particular expert witness.

Lastly, the Expert Challenge Study provides an in-depth assessment of the expert witness' prior history of being

challenged, excluded, and critiqued as a result of his or her qualifications. These reports contain case summaries and supporting documents for each of the cases in which the expert witness has testified. Knowing whether your expert witness' testimony is going to be allowed is necessary on the front end to save you wasted time, effort, and expense that can dramatically affect your case.

In summary, DRI is a network that can help create client relationships, promote relationships with other professionals in your subject area, and keep you apprised on legal developments. But it also offers other benefits—including

tools to help you identify and hire the right expert to advance your client's case. Next time you're in need of an expert recommendation, give DRI's [Expert Witness Resources](#) a try before sending off another firm-wide email.

Thomas "Trey" L. Oliver III is an attorney at Bradley Arant Boult Cummings LLP, handling matters in complex commercial, product liability, construction, real estate, and toxic tort litigation. He also serves as co-chair of the Expert Witness Committee for the DRI Young Lawyers group. Trey can be reached at toliver@bradley.com.

Hey Y'all! Howdy! How to Make the Most of Networking at the DRI Young Lawyers Seminar

By Shelley Napolitano



Registration for the [2019 DRI Young Lawyers Seminar](#) is open! We want you to join us in Music City from June 26–28, 2019, at the Hilton Nashville Downtown. One of the greatest benefits of a DRI membership is access to the vast network of other attorneys and in-house counsel from the U.S. and Canada. Here's the inside scoop on the best ways to make connections and take advantage of every networking opportunity! We can't wait to meet you!

Service Project at Thistle Farms: Wednesday, June 26 at 10:00 AM

Join other service-oriented young lawyers on a trip to Thistle Farms, an organization that brings hope and opportunity to survivors of trafficking, prostitution, and addiction. The service project is my personal favorite way to network at the Young Lawyers Seminar while giving back to a great cause. This is the first event in the seminar line up and your first opportunity to make friends. Be sure to arrange your travel plans for an early arrival. We will head to Thistle Farms early on Wednesday. See you there!

Practice-Specific CLE: Wednesday, June 26 at 3:00 PM

The Practice-Specific Session is a brand new event this year. Not only will you get to attend a CLE presentation in your practice area, but you will have an opportunity to network

with others who have a similar practice! Use this opportunity to find out what's going on in your area in other states and maybe make a new business connection.

Networking Receptions: Wednesday, June 26 at 6:00 PM & Thursday, June 27 at 5:30 PM

Before everyone heads out to dinner, we will get together for a welcome cocktail hour at the hotel. This is the perfect place to introduce yourself to new people. The Young Lawyers Committee is such a warm, welcoming group. You will have no trouble finding a new friend over drinks! Bring your business cards, and make a lasting connection.

Dine Arouds: Wednesday, June 26 at 7:30 PM & Thursday, June 27 at 7:00 PM

The Nashville foodie scene has some great offerings. Join other attendees on Wednesday and Thursday for dinner at the hottest spots around. Don't know anyone? No problem! Dine Around sign-ups will be circulated to seminar registrants as the seminar gets closer. These dinners are a blast! Great memories are made over a nice meal. Register for the Seminar today so you don't miss the announcement.