



News

Bloomberg Reviews LMRM: Off-the-Cuff Legal Advice Can Put Attorneys in Hot Water

March 12, 2019

Reporter Melissa Heelan Stanzione of *Bloomberg* recently wrote about a panel at Hinshaw's [Legal Malpractice and Risk Management Conference](#) last week. Titled "Informal Opinions: Quick Questions, Enduring Troubles," the panel looked at the emerging risk of lawyers providing "off-the-cuff" legal advice without the benefit of complete facts, research, or the caveats and conditions associated with formal legal opinions. Hinshaw's Matt Henderson moderated the panel, which included John Villa of Williams & Connolly LLP and Michele Coffey of Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP.

The panel described how a short phone call or quick e-mail can lead to millions of dollars of legal trouble. That's a particular challenge now that many lawyers are reachable 24/7 thanks to smartphones. Attorneys have to balance their ethical obligation to keep their clients reasonably informed with solid risk management. Lawyers must be specifically trained to respond to informal inquiries in a manner that identifies the time constraints, limited knowledge of facts, and lack of research. It is also helpful to offer to furnish a more detailed memo.

Henderson, Villa and Coffey also discussed emerging issues in the area of informal client advice, such as the use of artificial intelligence, suggesting that AI will continue to take a greater role in lawyer-client relationships including through its ability to analyze the chances of possible case outcomes.

[Read the full article](#)

"Off-the-cuff Legal Advice Can Put Attorneys in Hot Water" was published by *Bloomberg Big Law Business*, March 7, 2019.

Off-the-Cuff Legal Advice Can Put Attorneys in Hot Water <https://t.co/0OtHh3xqjd>— Big Law Business (@BigLawBiz) March 7, 2019

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