The Clayton Archway Executive Committee identified public image as a priority under economic development in 2009. The leaders and stakeholders in Clayton were concerned about the perception of the county and how that could affect industry recruitment. As a first step in addressing this issue, the Clayton Archway Executive Committee approved the establishment of a public image committee. The committee’s primary goal was to strategically address redefining the public image of Clayton County. The public image committee’s action plan included developing projects to accomplish their goal of redefining the county’s image. They established three projects goals to be accomplished this year, the creation of a Clayton brochure, launching of “We Are Clayton” the magazine and promoting positive news in Clayton County.

In an effort to accomplish the goal of promoting positive news about Clayton County, the public image committee brainstormed several ideas. The committee came up with the idea to create a blog and utilize UGA Journalism students to promote positive Clayton initiatives and activities on the blog. The other idea was to develop a better relationship with local media. Jamie Carlington the Clayton County Public Information Officer (PIO) and Chair of the Clayton Archway Public Image Committee offered to partner with Clayton Archway to host a panel discussion inviting local media representatives.

The panel discussion was held on March 24th and the discussion focused on strategies to promote the positive news in Clayton County. It provided media representatives, with the appropriate contact person, that would provide accurate information and facts on news happening in Clayton. There were more than twenty (20) local Public Information Officers and Public Relations professionals who attended the event. The panelists represented local print and digital media and other organizations (Fox News, WSB TV, Clayton Neighbor, Radio One, and Communications Director for ACCG). Attendees rated the meeting excellent because it provided them with an opportunity to voice their concerns and discuss solutions to address the public image of Clayton County.