



Earned Media: How to Spotlight Your Program and Reach More Help Seekers

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What Is Earned Media?

- Media that you did not pay to be published
- Social media posts and engagement
- Trade publication or newsletter
- Online reviews
- Newspaper article
- Letter to the Editor
- Stories on local network television
- PSAs





What is NOT Earned Media?

- Any ad you PAY for:
 - Social Media
 - Google
 - Television
 - Billboard
 - Targeted Digital
 - Newspaper

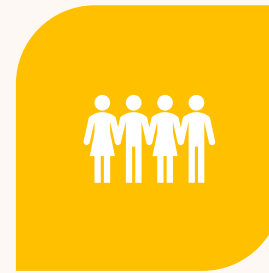
Why Earned Media Matters



MANY PEOPLE TRUST EARNED
MEDIA MORE THAN PAID ADS



TRUST IS NECESSARY TO
CONVINCE PEOPLE TO SEEK
HELP



YOUR SEO WILL BE GREATLY
AMPLIFIED BY STORIES FROM
REPUTABLE NEWS OUTLETS



IT CAN BE SIGNIFICANTLY LESS
COSTLY THAN PAID MEDIA

Earned Media Free Media



Although you don't PAY for it, it may cost a lot of time and effort



Writing press releases, contacting media, conducting interviews can be time consuming



To be effective, you've got to be available at the convenience of the media, which are often non-traditional hours

How Much Coverage Can You Get?

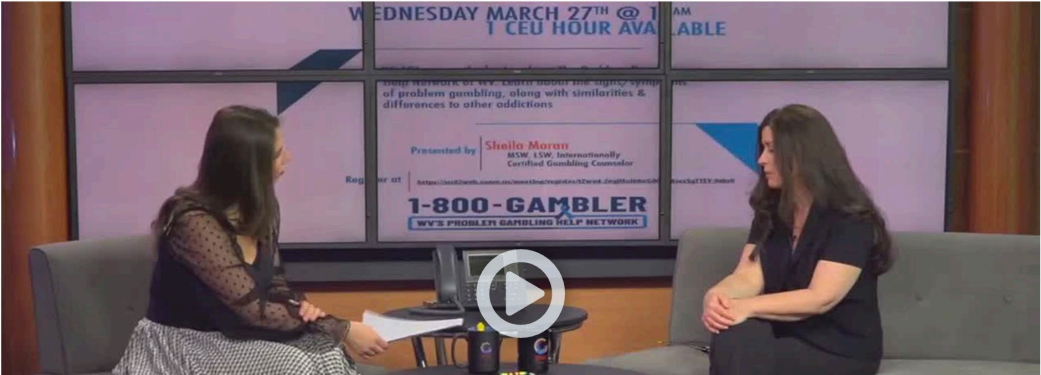
- Our company generated over 1000 articles/news stories last year about our programs.
- The amount of coverage you get may depend on the market where you operate
- Direct correlation with the time you spend on the endeavor

West Virginia bill could force gambling operators to share data with academics for research purposes

by: [Annalise Murphy](#)
Posted: Feb 27, 2024 / 05:24 PM EST
Updated: Feb 27, 2024 / 05:24 PM EST

Gambling is a growing problem as it becomes more accessible

Problem Gambling Month highlights the issue, brings awareness, and allow for more conversations



WEST VIRGINIA

Events being held to help West Virginians struggling with problem gambling

1♥800♦GAMBLER



News Election Results Weather Latest Video LIVE Sports Best of the Class 2024

Calls to 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline have doubled in West Virginia over last year



FIRST LOOK AT FOUR
CALLS TO 988 HAVE DOUBLED IN
WEST VIRGINIA OVER LAST YEAR



The Intelligencer. Wheeling News-Register

July 08, 2024 | Today's Paper | Submit News | Subscribe Today | Login

Peer Liaison To Work With Wheeling Police in Getting Help for Those Struggling With Substance Abuse

TOP HEADLINES

MAR 29, 2024

EMMA DELK
Staff Writer



Public Service Announcements

- Broadcast stations (not cable!) must air some time for “the public interest”
- However, there are many ways they can do this other than airing PSAs, including community calendars, interviews on local initiatives, food drives, etc....
- There is a lot of competition for PSAs
- Make sure spot is professionally produced
- You can email locally, or submit to;
<https://psa.nab.org/default.asp>



When to Initiate Press Contact

- Any recognized awareness time period (PGAM, RGEW, etc....)
- Changes in law/policy
- Employee promotion/hiring
- New trends in data
- Adding new services to your program
- Hosting an event
- Reaction to breaking news events
- Send as frequently as possible!

ICYMI: A two-year-old child was left alone in a vehicle parked outside gambling establishment, court records say.



WCHSTV.COM

Charleston man accused of leaving infant in car while gamb

'It's a big concern': Charleston man accused of leaving child in car to gamble

by PAIGE TAYLOR | Mon, May 27th 2024 at 8:49 PM

Updated Tue, May 28th 2024 at 7:46 AM



Charleston man accused of leaving child in car to gamble. (WCHS)

Take every opportunity for media



Writing a Press Release

- The better you write it, the more likely it is to get published verbatim
- Include
 - data from your program
 - sources
 - local angle
 - human angle
 - quotes
- Remember to POOFREAD! If you do not do this, you may be IMBEARASSED!

Adding a 2nd Voice

Most reporters want to have a 2nd source

If you are not the person who provides direct services, consider having someone who does add to the story

Reach out to other local or national experts

The very best person to tell the story is someone who has lived it

- If you have trusted and reliable local people in long-term recovery who are willing to tell their story, that will have the most impact



Timing is Everything!

- Best time of day to send press releases is 10AM-2PM.
- If you are trying to get local TV news coverage **THAT DAY**, send earlier!
- Avoid sending on holidays/weekends.
- Send more than once!



Sending a press release

- Consider a professional press release platform
- You may be able to use a state press association at a discount
- You can create your own list, but beware of high turnover
- You can individually call or email reporters (this is the best, but time consuming)
- You can often send to news@ or news director at TV stations
- Follow up is often necessary
- Include your cell phone number and say OK TO TEXT
- Have a professional headshot handy
- Don't rely only on major daily newspapers



Interacting with Print Media

- Many newspapers, especially non-daily papers will print your press release verbatim
- Newspaper reporters are more likely than television reporters to ask in-depth questions
- They may ask to record your conversation
- You can ask that questions be sent in advance
- You will not be able to proofread the final article
- Make sure they include a call to action

Letter to the Editor/Op-Ed

- This is a great way to get your words in the newspaper without doing an interview
- LTE are done in response to a particular article in the newspaper. For instance, “In the December 12 issue of the Times, xx stated that we have adequately funded problem gambling programs in the state. We think this conclusion is wrong Here’s why.....”
- Op-Eds do not have to respond to a specific article, and typically make an argument.
- Typically, LTE are under 250 words, but Op-Eds can be up to 700 words. They may be edited for space.



On the Record

- Unless you explicitly state otherwise, and the reporter consents, assume everything you say is **ON THE RECORD**.
 - Unfortunately, that includes grammar missteps and filler words
- If you state something is **OFF THE RECORD**, it means they cannot use what you tell them in their article, unless they verify it through another source. Off the record interviews may be giving to build credibility with a reporter or to provide them with expertise.
- If you request an interview as **BACKGROUND** it means the information can be used, but your identity will be obscured.



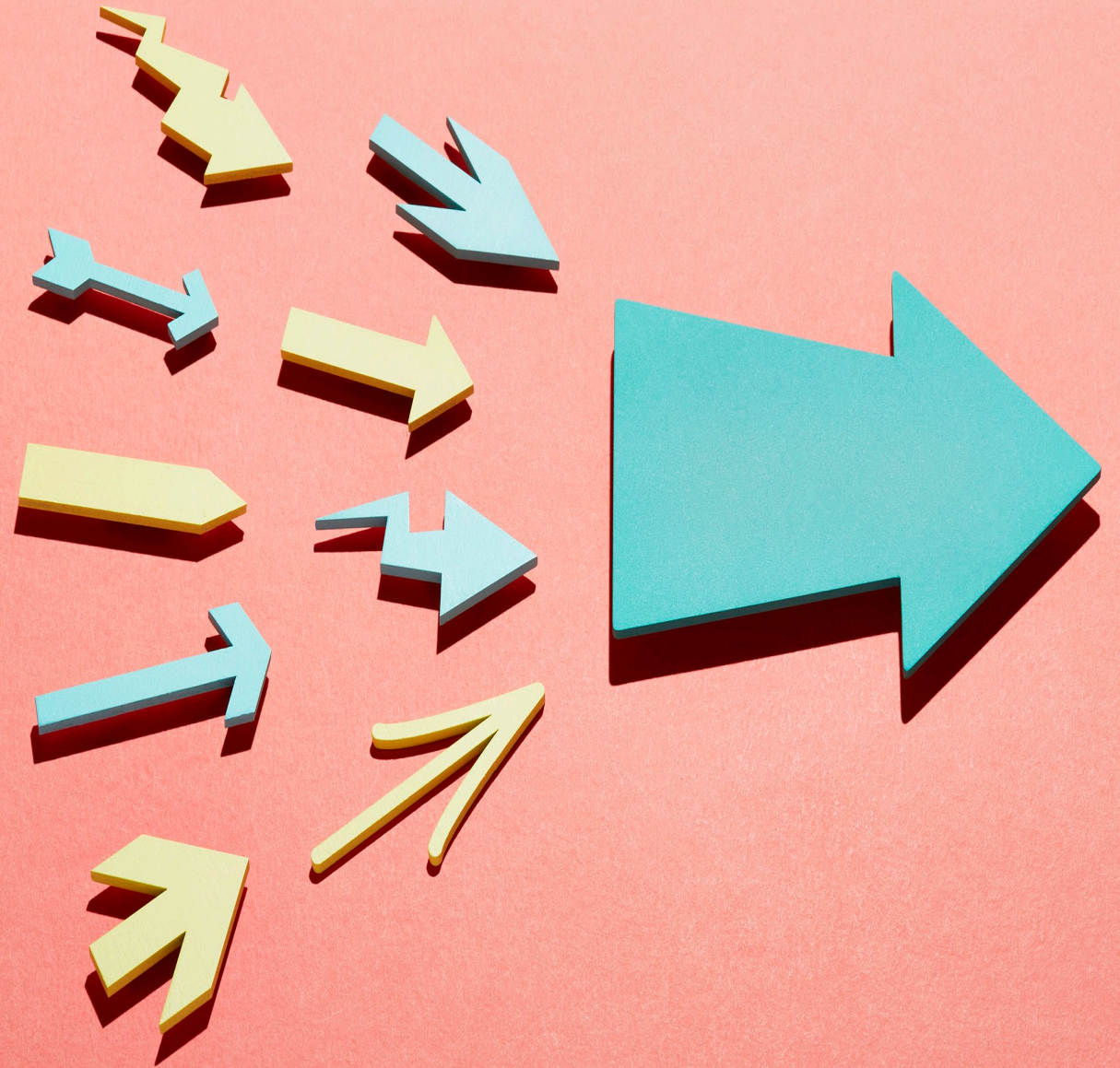
Interacting with Television Media

- Live vs. taped interviews
- In-person vs. Zoom interviews



Talking Points

- In addition to press release, write a few key talking points
- Include phone numbers, websites and stats that are easy to forget, especially if you are live
- Circle back to your talking points, no matter what you are asked-use bridging statements to refocus.
- Sometimes reporters get information on quotes wrong. Usually, it's not a big deal. If it is something BIG, contact them and they may be able to change the digital story.



Think you don't need talking points?



What to do BEFORE your TV interview

- Format your background, whether it's live or Zoom
- Dress for success
- Remember confidentiality
- Prepare and offer to send a B roll



Minimize distractions





Doublecheck your tech before you are on the air



What NOT to do in a TV interview



Prepare For The Obvious



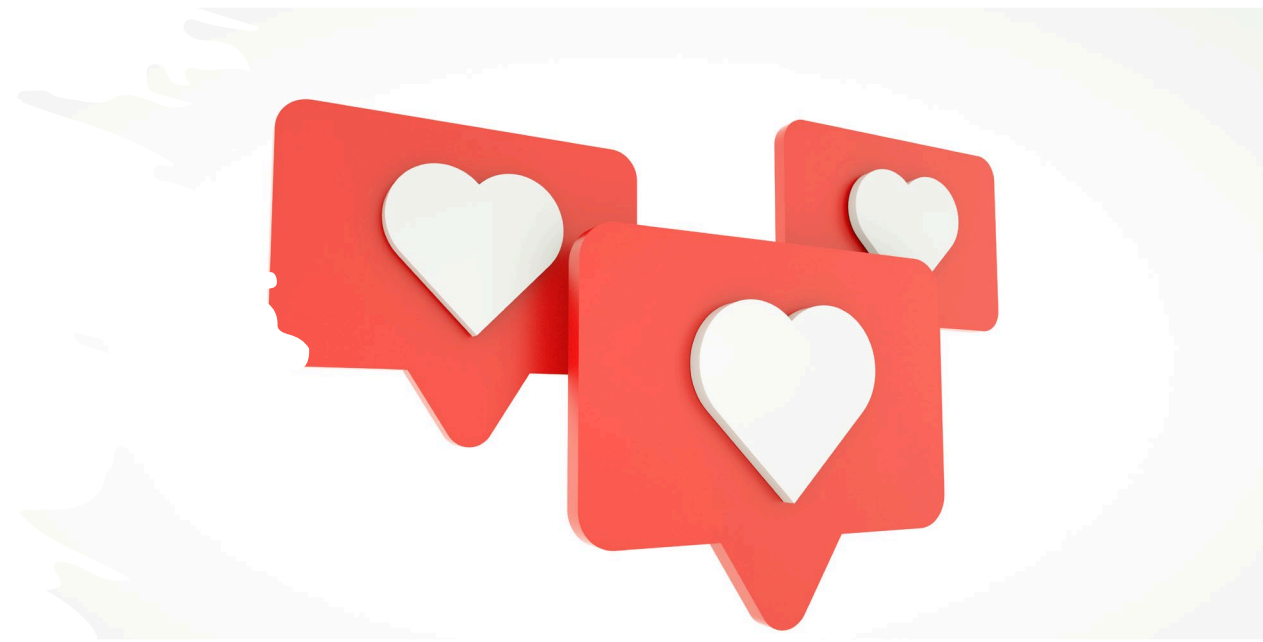
After the Story

- Follow up with the reporter to thank them
- Tag them on social media
- Share the story on your social media
- Keep track of the great media stories you are generating
- Track effectiveness, whether it be fundraising, referrals, etc!



Social Media

- Double check your spelling grammar
- If you tag someone, make sure it's the right person or organization
- Want to add a hashtag? Check it first to see what else it is being used for
- Be careful about humor and sarcasm-they don't always translate well on social media
- This is *NOT* an earned media strategy, but often the only way to get your message out on social media is to pay



Who's #notguilty about eating all the tasty treats they want?!

14 minutes ago via web

Newsletters

- Digital or print
- Great way to highlight the work you are doing in long form
- Make sure you get opt-in – don't spam anyone!



Online reviews

- You may receive online reviews on multiple platforms, such as Yelp, Google, Facebook, or sites specific to your line of work
- Depending on the type of service you provide, it may be appropriate for you to ask for online reviews
- As mental health and addiction treatment becomes less stigmatized and trends towards evidence-based treatment, more companies are seeking online reviews
- Responding to reviews is important



Remember:

- Reporters need stories. You need press. It's a perfect match!
- Establish yourself as an expert in the field, and you'll be called often.
- Do everything possible to make the reporter's job to cover your story easier.
- Don't take rejections personally. If you're having a big event, and a reporter sees a cat stuck in a tree on the way over, the story will probably go to the cat.

