

Breaking Into the Media

Three steps to getting your first interview and establishing yourself as a local expert

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will let you in on a secret that could have a big impact on the future success of your business: People want to invest their money with a “financial expert”—someone who is recognized and known through the local grapevine as a go-to money person. So how can you position yourself as more than just the bank financial adviser and become the financial professional people seek to work with? One of the best ways is by appearing in your local media as a recognized financial expert.

Understanding the Media

Every day, the business pages of the newspaper and television and radio newscasts are filled with the latest news about Wall Street and the economy. And every day the media calls on financial professionals who can provide insight for their news stories that is easy-to-understand and makes sense to their audience. If you have what it takes and are willing to do some legwork, you can leverage free media exposure to gain visibility, greater profitability and enhance your credibility.

How did I first get into the media? I contacted the news producers and newspaper editors in my local area and told

them to call me when they needed a financial expert who could speak in a straightforward way on complex financial topics. Then I gave them a few topic ideas that I could talk about, such as saving for retirement, reducing taxes and other financial planning strategies. After consistently following up with the producers and editors, a TV station called me for an interview. I prepared well and made the most of my first appearance, and that opportunity led to regular appearances and tremendous visibility in my local area. You can follow these same steps to become the financial expert in your area.

Landing Your First Interview

Step One: Contact the local media and let them know you are a financial expert they can call on for their news stories. How do you know who to contact? Go to your favorite Internet search engine and type in any of the following key words/phrases:

1. (your city), (your state) media
2. (your city), (your state) newspapers
3. (your city), (your state) TV
4. (your city), (your state) radio
5. (your city), (your state) internet

Then click on the links to bring up detailed information about the personal finance contacts and producers at these media outlets.

Step Two: Send attention-grabbing story ideas to the media. Here are some sample story ideas to send to your local media contacts:

If you focus on retirement planning:

“How much money do I really need to retire? This is the question that’s worrying your audience. I’m available to answer questions in an easy-to-understand way.”

If you focus on investment planning:

“After the Federal Reserve meets today at (insert time), I will be available to discuss what their decisions mean to the average investor.”

If you specialize in college planning:

Release a report to the local media that shows the cost of going to the colleges in your area, with a note: “Your audience is concerned about how they can afford to send their children to college. I am available to discuss strategies your audience can use to save for their children’s education.”

Step 3: Become known as the “financial expert” in your local area where people invest their money and purchase their insurance. As you appear in the media, add to your promotional materials that you have appeared as a “financial expert” in “x” media to further build your credibility. You can also email an article that you were interviewed in to your clients and prospective clients. Keep a book of your press clippings prospective clients can see when they come into your office.

Show Me the Money

Here’s the bottom line: By appearing in the media on a regular basis, you have the potential to significantly boost your credibility and profitability in your local buying area. Because of the media multiplier effect, you’re able to be seen or read by thousands of people at one time. You’ll put yourself in a position to have qualified prospects call your office regularly to set up appointments to meet with you. Remember, while your title may be that of a bank investment professional, a top priority is to be a smart marketer so you always have a steady stream of new clients coming to you from both inside and outside the bank. Now is the time for you to be a recognized financial expert in your home market. **BTW**

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