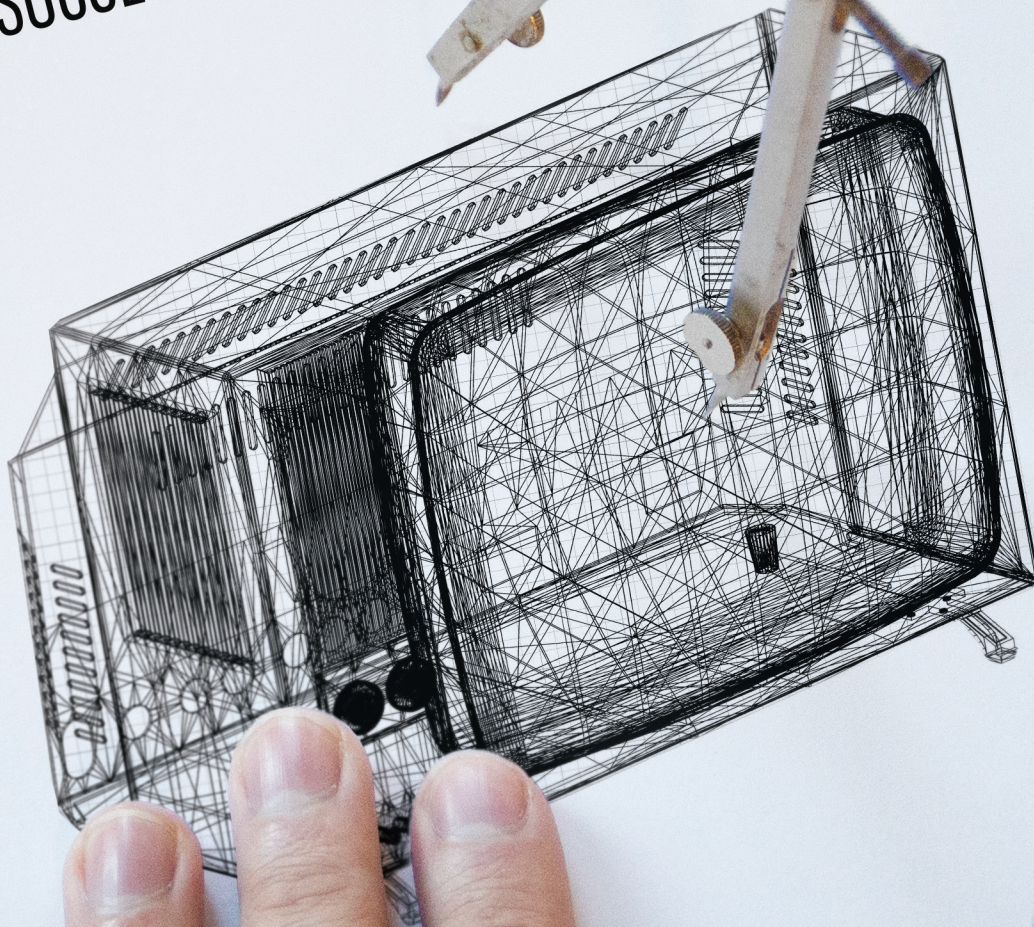


# HOW TO GENERATE EARNED MEDIA FOR SUCCESSFUL ADVOCACY



# GOOD EARNED MEDIA IS HARD WORK. THAT'S WHY IT'S CALLED EARNED MEDIA.



**PRO-TIP:** Earned media requires its own strategy and plan to be successful. Done properly, it can make a big difference in your effort.

## WHAT IS EARNED MEDIA?

The definition is very wide in today's world.

### Traditional

#### **MSM: Newspaper, TV and radio news stories**

- Opinion editorials (op-eds)
- Letters to the Editor

### New Wave

- Online media sites
- Blog writers
- Just about anything that is "published"

## HOW DO YOU GET IT?

- Make sure you have a current media list and you are sending valuable content to the list.
- Don't overlook an old-fashioned news release with a good hook. As newsroom resources decline, some ready-made content may get picked up.
- Get a reporter to write about your issue.
- Hold a newsworthy event.
- Find someone in the new wave "media" to write about it — they are always looking for content.

## CAN IT BACKFIRE?

- Yes, but usually not as long as you are dealing in facts and representing your issue truthfully.
- If you have active opponents, be prepared for their counter-punch.
- And then punch back. The back and forth itself may make your issue newsworthy.

## HOW DO YOU MAKE YOUR ISSUE NEWSWORTHY?

- Ask a newsmaker to write an op-ed about your issue.
- Run some creative paid media that creates a buzz on your issue.
- Get an elected official to talk about your issue.
- Find a good, local hook that makes your issue relevant.



## HOW DO YOU HANDLE NEGATIVE NEWS ABOUT YOUR ISSUE?

- Be prepared. If you have opponents, it is probably coming.
- Respond rapidly; don't run from it.
- Punch back.

## DO I NEED PROFESSIONAL HELP?

- That depends. Can you put together and execute a strategy without professional help?
- Do you have an internal spokesperson or communications team?
- Bottom line: someone needs to be in charge of the strategy and someone needs to be the spokesperson, whether that is an outside consultant or an internal designer.

**REMEMBER:** There is no such thing as a silver bullet. Earned media is a complement to your efforts, not a substitute. Numerous good stories could help you, but one bad story could sink your entire effort. You need an earned media strategy ... don't wing it.

