



Media Minefield

Earned Media

What it is & why it matters

According to Nielsen, 92% of consumers say they trust earned media, while only half trust paid ads.

As a business owner or leader, you are probably saying, “Great! But what is earned media?”

Earned media refers to free publicity gained through promotional efforts. It cannot be bought or owned. It is the local newspaper interviewing a financial expert about the most recent stock market crash. It is the business owner sharing his battle with addiction on his road to success. It is the stylist at the salon down the street showing off the hottest back-to-school hairstyles at your favorite TV station.

It also happens to be our specialty. In 2010, Media Minefield was started because, as a reporter, our CEO saw firsthand how badly businesses were handling earned media opportunities.

Most business owners understand the importance of paid media, or advertising, to reach their target audience. But many have a hard time understanding how to secure earned media and how it can benefit their company and brand.

Here’s why it matters:

+ Earned media builds trust. A Nielsen study found that earned media is the most trusted source of information, and it is the channel most likely to stimulate the consumer to action.

- + Earned media helps you gain credibility. Appearing in real news interviews as an expert in your industry builds your credibility with current and future customers. In fact, we have had several clients tell us that an earned media interview sealed the deal with a potential client.
- + Earned media establishes your authority. One interview is great, but it is with consistent media appearances that you build awareness in your community. You become top of mind and the first person in your industry someone would contact.

Some of the most well-known businesses are earned media pros—companies like Berkshire Hathaway run by Warren Buffet and Virgin Group led by Richard Branson. We have yet to come across a business that doesn’t have earned media opportunities that could help them reach their goals. Even if you aren’t a billion-dollar brand yet, ensure you are making earned media work for you; it will help reach your goals even faster.