

Words Plus  
Design

BUILD YOUR  
LIST  
**WITH FREE  
PUBLICITY**

Use the media to get  
new subscribers

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# Introduction

## Why media exposure is a powerful tool for growing your email list

Traditional media can be an efficient way to drive high-intent traffic to your website, but many entrepreneurs are skeptical for a few reasons:

- It's hard to prove ROI
- They see curiosity but not enough sales
- Many news outlets will not give you a link even after an enthusiastic interview

In this guide we are going to tackle all three of these challenges. How? By turning your media opportunity into a subscriber bonanza.

**The challenge:** Most media outlets don't provide links to your website

The reason why media outlets are reluctant to give sources (that's you) a link is because they don't want to be seen to be advertising any single business. After all, people are paying big bucks

for display ads and if they see someone else getting promoted for free they might get upset –maybe even upset enough to withdraw their ads.

Another reason is that there is a very hard dividing line between advertising and editorial (the articles) in the traditional media which is supported by ethical standards.

**The solution:** A strategic freebie that is easy for people to find online.

In this guide we are going to talk about how to drive traffic from your media opportunity to a link that will grow your email list.

If you are still working on how to pitch the media to get the interview in the first place, check out [the Perfect Pitch: 5 Steps to a Press Release Journalists Want to Read](#).

## Step 1: Determine your messaging

### Why the right resource matters

When we approach the media as entrepreneurs, one of our key motivations is usually to establish ourselves as experts and authorities in our industry. As a result, our freebie should be something that solves a real problem for our audience. This problem should be one that they can immediately recognize while we are discussing it during the interview.

When it comes to building freebies, most coaches will encourage you to focus on your ideal target

market, but when we speak to the media, we also have to consider the market of the broadcast or publication we are pitching.

Determine where your market intersects with theirs. If you aren't sure exactly who their market is, check out the information they make available to advertisers. This can often be found in a link in their footer that says something like "Advertise with us".

## Exercise 1: Find the Overlap Between Your Market and the Media's Audience

**Objective:** Identify where your target market intersects with the media outlet's audience.

### Steps:

1. Define your ideal customer. Write down their demographics, biggest pain points, and what they want to achieve.

2. Pick 2-3 media outlets you'd like to be featured in. Look for their audience demographics in their "Advertise with us" section or by reviewing their content.

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3. **Compare:** Where does your audience overlap with theirs?

Write a short statement that summarizes why your expertise is relevant to their readers/viewers.

### Example:

"My audience consists of parents who want to save for college. The local news station's audience includes many middle-class families who care about financial planning. My expertise in budgeting directly relates to their viewers' financial concerns."

## News values

Another important consideration is whether or not you can tie your freebie into an interview that is newsworthy. A newsworthy story can have at least three or more of the following elements:

- **Timeliness:** A new announcement or a topic that aligns with a current trend or event (holidays, back to school, inflation, etc.)
- **Impact:** A topic that impacts a broad enough audience for the media outlet to care (health, finances, relationships, etc.)
- **Proximity:** Pitching your local media is generally the fastest path to success in media relations. You can also localize national or international news if it is relevant to your brand.
- **Prominence:** The importance of the people or organizations being discussed. Highlight your bio or your company's accomplishments or comment on the actions of prominent people such as politicians or well-recognized companies. Partnering with a prominent person, such as a celebrity, is another common tactic.
- **Relevance:** This relates to how much the audience cares or how relevant it is to their lives even if it doesn't impact them directly.
- **Conflict:** Some brands aren't afraid to wade into controversy or comment on political issues. Make sure this aligns with your brand and audience before taking this route.
- **Oddity:** Things that are so novel and unusual as to be attention-grabbing.

For example, let's say you are a financial expert who wants to help parents save for their children's college, but you know raising kids is expensive and this is a major pain point for parents. Your freebie might be a budget tracker that helps parents find savings and understand how much they need to put away.

- **Timeliness:** This story might play well around back to school time when parents are thinking about education.
- **Impact:** There are a lot of parents who need this kind of assistance.
- **Proximity:** Pitch your local paper, TV and radio because they prefer to interview locals.
- **Prominence:** Highlight your qualifications.
- **Relevance:** Almost everyone cares about the cost of education as it has an impact on society at large.
- **Conflict:** Are you the type of person to speak your mind? You might criticize the forces that make education unaffordable for families. This can make you seem like an advocate which can attract parents with similar feelings.
- **Oddity:** Maybe you have a story about something unique a student did to pay for their college. For example, taking a dare and crowd-sourcing to make it happen.

You don't need to hit all of the news values but try to find at least three that are relevant.

## Exercise 2: Identify Your Freebie's Newsworthy Angle

**Objective:** Make sure your freebie aligns with media-worthy topics.

### Steps:

1. List your freebie idea (e.g., budgeting spreadsheet, social media strategy guide, email template).
2. Check it against the seven news values (Timeliness, Impact, Proximity, Prominence, Relevance, Conflict, Oddity). Identify at least three news values that apply and relate to a topic you can discuss on an interview.

### Example:

**Freebie:** "Budget Tracker for Parents Saving for College"

**Timeliness:** Back-to-school season, rising tuition costs in the news

**Impact:** Affects millions of parents

**Relevance:** Families struggle with finances, making it an important topic

If your freebie doesn't align with at least three, tweak it to fit a more newsworthy angle.

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# Messaging

Break down your story into three main messages. This is a common PR strategy to keep you focused during the interview.

For example:

1. Raising kids is expensive.
2. Families struggle to save for college.
3. Budgeting is the solution.

## Exercise 3: Craft Your Three Key Interview Messages

**Objective:** Clarify your message so you stay focused during the interview.

**Steps:**

1. Write down the main problem your audience faces.

**Example:** Raising kids is expensive.

2. Identify the biggest struggle or misconception about this problem.

**Example:** Families feel they can't save for college because they have too many expenses.

3. Define your solution in one sentence.

**Example:** Budgeting is the key to making college savings possible.

4. Create your three main messages.

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In this case, we can offer a budgeting spreadsheet to help families.

## Step 2: Create a media-friendly freebie

Choose a freebie that is:

- Relates to at least one of your three main messages.
- Addresses a small part of the problem but leaves room for your paid solution.
- Is simple enough that people will use it: a checklist, framework, mini-guide, or template often works best.

Also, if you are going to incorporate this freebie into your interview, you need to make it “reporter-friendly.”

- The freebie should be something that’s difficult to explain fully in a short segment. Then you can say something like, “Naturally, I can’t address everyone’s situation in this short interview, but I do have a no-cost budget planner and tracker parents can use.”
- Make sure that the reporter understands that this is free. Otherwise, they might cut you off to avoid advertising your products or services.
- Explain exactly how this resource will help with the problem you are discussing in your interview. “Parents will understand their current expenses, find hidden cash and make a savings plan.” The interviewer should naturally want to ask you more about it. during the interview.

## Step 3: Develop an easy-to-find URL

A squeeze page (also called a landing page) is the place people will go to give you their email address in order to be taken to the download. It’s a good idea to use landing page software or make a page with a form on your website that has no distractions like headers, extended footers and menus.

If you use WordPress, Elementor is a popular plugin that allows you to build a landing page from templates or from scratch.

Ensure that your URL is easy to say out loud and easy to remember. For example, it should be something like “MoneyCoach.com/College”. You are going to try to repeat this URL at least three times during the interview. Don’t bother to say “https” or “www”.

Here is why this strategy works:

- If you are doing a print or web-based article interview (an interview where the reporter takes notes and then writes their story later), they are more likely to use your URL in the story if it isn’t complicated.
- If you are doing a radio or TV interview, the listener or viewer can remember the URL and type it into their browser later or as the interview is airing.
- A broadcast reporter is more likely to add the URL to the show description or summary if it is short and snappy.

You may need to buy a domain name for this purpose and connect it to your landing page software. If you already have a website with a simple domain name, and you are at least a little tech savvy, you can add a landing page.

## Best practices for an easy-to-remember URL

- Keep it short and simple (e.g., YourName.com/guide)
- Avoid hyphens, complex words, or long strings of numbers
- Try not to use words with multiple spellings, homonyms, etc.
- Avoid unusual brand spellings (ie. Lyft), hard-to-spell names or made up words
- Consider a custom redirect if your main site has a complicated domain

## Exercise 4: Create an Easy-to-Say URL for Your Squeeze Page

**Objective:** Make it easy for listeners/viewers to find your freebie.

### Steps:

- Keep it short and simple (e.g., YourName.com/guide).
- Avoid hyphens, numbers, or anything hard to spell.
- Say it out loud—if it's hard to pronounce, simplify it.
- Test it with a friend. Ask them to recall the URL after 5 minutes—if they struggle, shorten it.
- Consider hosting platforms you already subscribe to such as your own website provider, a landing page builder, an email service provider, etc. If they can't give you the URL you want, consider setting up a redirect.

### Example:

**Good:** MoneyCoach.com/college

**Bad:** Money-Coach123.com/free-budgeting-tool

1. What's your ideal domain name?

## Step 4: Mention your freebie naturally

### Position without being pushy

It's important to remember that reporters dislike advertising. Stay on topic when you mention your freebie during the interview.

Example phrasing:

- "I actually have a checklist that breaks this down step by step."
- "There's a free template I share that makes this super easy—if you want it, just go to [easy-to-say URL]."

Your ultimate goal is to have the reporter mention it online in their article or show description so that anyone, even people reading the archives, can find it. Some broadcast stations also have online reporters who rewrite aired segments as articles to post on the website.

Here are some tips for encouraging the reporter to mention it:

- If they ask, “Where can people learn more?” your freebie is the answer.
- Reference it in a quote that is custom made to get published. A good quote often sums up a situation in a pithy way. “Time-crunched parents need a crash course in college savings and that’s what this budget planner provides. Again it’s at [MoneyCoach.com/College](https://www.moneycoach.com/college).”
- Guide the interviewer through a three-to-five step plan with your resource being one of the steps.
- Provide a statistic or insight from your resource that the reporter can cite. Reporters generally rely on sources and will cite any fact that is not widely known.
- Share an anecdote around your freebie. This could be about what caused you to create it or about how it helped someone. Reporters love stories.

## Exercise 5: Make Your Freebie a Natural Mention in an Interview

**Objective:** Ensure your freebie fits seamlessly into the conversation.

### Steps:

1. Write down three common interview questions you might be asked.
2. Craft answers that naturally lead into mentioning your freebie.
3. Practice saying these out loud so they sound natural.

### Example:

Q: What’s the biggest mistake parents make when saving for college?

A: “Many parents don’t know how much they need or where to find the money. That’s why I created a simple budget tracker to help them get started—it’s free at [easy-to-say URL].”

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A

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A

## Step 5: Capturing & nurturing leads

### Optimizing your squeeze page for conversions

Make sure your page is designed to obtain the visitor's email address before taking them to the download. Ensure that you use the same freebie name that you used during the interview so that people know they are in the right place. For example, don't call it a "College Budget Spreadsheet" in the interview and a "College Savings Guide" on the landing page.

Because a media interview is focused on you as the expert, it's a good idea to feature yourself prominently on the squeeze page. Include your picture and a bio. You can also add "As seen on...[the media outlet where you were featured]". This will help the visitor feel like they know and trust you.

Make your headline relate directly to the problem and solution you addressed in the interview.

Schedule an automation that delivers the freebie and then nurtures them with more information. You can also remind them of where they saw you unless you are using the same automation for many traffic sources.

There are many tips and tricks for designing and optimizing squeeze pages, but it's important to remember that this is relatively cold traffic, so you want to continue to build the authority you created through your media interview and nurture your new leads.

A media interview can create a rush of new traffic and also continue to deliver for many years through search volume and SEO. Set up a conversion system to make the most of your media opportunity.

## Conclusion and next steps

Do you ever download a resource and then fail to take action? I know I do. Here are some steps you can take today to get started on PR list building.

Action plan:

- Decide on your interview messaging
- Choose your freebie
- Create your easy-to-say URL
- Start pitching media opportunities. Grab the Media Pitching Kit for strategies and templates.

Reminder: Every media feature is an opportunity to build long-term authority and list growth!

# Freebie Checklist

Solves a real, recognizable problem

Aligns with the topic of the interview

Connects with three or more news values

Too detailed to explain in a short interview, but not overwhelming

Useful and action-oriented

Formatted with your branding

Leads to the next step in working with you

Includes a call to action

# Squeeze Page Conversion Checklist

Use a consistent freebie name for your interview and squeeze page

Feature yourself prominently

Add “As seen on...” plus the place(s) where you were interviewed

Connect your headline to the problem and solution the freebie addresses

Only request essential information to subscribe (usually first name email address)

Remind them of where they saw you if possible

Create an email automation to deliver the freebie and nurture the new subscriber