



Media Interviews? **Why Me?**

We watch it, listen to it, read it and go online to view it. The media play an important part in our everyday lives, and it's an excellent vehicle to create awareness of your firm and the services you offer. Becoming a media resource in your community is an excellent way to showcase your tax expertise and reinforce the value of the CPA profession. It also is a smart business strategy in today's competitive environment.

Why would a reporter want to talk to me?

As a CPA tax practitioner, you have a wealth of factual information that can be useful to a reporter who is writing about tax issues. For example, you can confirm basic facts or provide an explanation about complex rules that apply to taxpayers who have overseas assets or business property.

Why should I do a media interview?

You are the expert in the eyes of the audience! It raises your profile in the community and helps cement your reputation as a knowledgeable tax professional. Being quoted in articles also helps promote CPAs as the premier tax professionals.

Are media interviews hard to do?

Not usually. You know the tax rules already. Reporters are looking for your expertise to share with their readers/viewers.

What does the reporter need from me?

First, the reporter needs a timely response. Tell the reporter as quickly as possible whether you can do the interview. They are on deadline and will have to seek help elsewhere if you can't do it. Second, give answers the readers/viewers can understand. Tax rules are complex, yet most reporters will not be able to cover the nuances in their stories. You can qualify your answer with terms such as "generally" or "most taxpayers."

When I do an interview, what should I remember?

- Keep it simple. Avoid technical jargon and spell out acronyms to ensure they understand. Approach it like a conversation with your neighbors who want to know what's happening with tax changes and how it affects them.
- Know what two to three key points you want to make.
- Be clear and concise.
- Personalize and humanize your points with examples and analogies, if appropriate.
- Use your company's name when possible. For example, instead of "we expect," say "The Davis CPA firm expects."

It's okay to say you don't know the answer. If you can, look up the answer and send it to the reporter. They'll appreciate you even more.

Can I see the article before it is published?

The reporter may appreciate your offer to review the article for technical accuracy. Journalists are not obligated to provide you the article they have written and some may not be comfortable doing so, but you shouldn't hesitate to ask.

What if I'm not an expert on what the reporter is asking?

Refer the reporter to another CPA who is an expert. Remind the reporter what you can speak knowledgeably about.

How do I get started?

It's easy. Just let the business or personal finance reporters in your community know that you're available to answer questions when they're working on tax stories. You could use the sample media advisory and customize it, send email messages to reporters or editors or make a few phone calls.

"I used to be a bit intimidated by talking with reporters. But once I did a few interviews, I actually enjoyed it. It is an excellent way to connect with the community, share helpful tax tips and promote my expertise."

– Jeffrey Porter, CPA

