



# Earned Media Strategies to Maximize Reach & Impact

Promoting content is a critical component of successful marketing strategies. Read on for six strategies that help brands integrate their media channels to super-charge results.

The world as we know it is changing. The ever-evolving landscape of social media, journalism, digital marketing, and self-publishing mean that we are entering a dynamic new era where it's easier than ever to leverage media to promote your company.

If you're a marketer in today's digital world, you understand the importance of media across different channels. Though paid, earned, and owned media are nothing new - the concept of integrating them to maximize their impact just might be an idea you're not as familiar with.

These three channels are often treated independently within a marketing department. Paid media (advertising) is rarely integrated with owned (e-commerce, email, owned social) who infrequently work with earned (public relations/communications). However, savvy marketers are realizing they could be leaving opportunities on the table by operating this way. We are seeing progressive marketing minds attempt to integrate paid, owned, and earned media in ways that leverage the strengths of each channel.

# Benefits to integrating earned, owned and paid media



## Earned media works - and it's proven.

Studies state that 90% of consumers rely on editorial reviews and press coverage to make purchase decisions. Earned content increases purchase consideration by 80% more than branded content and 50% more than user reviews! It's no surprise that consumers would trust an independent 3rd party review over an advertisement your company puts out.



## Super-charge PR efforts.

Today's news cycle is incredibly fast-paced, which means that within a very short period of time, your top articles may be buried by new content. Companies need to find a way to expand and extend any PR success they receive. By integrating your media channels, you can not only keep your media hits alive longer, you can leverage sophisticated paid media targeting techniques to expose prospects to positive 3rd party endorsements of your products and services.



## Using paid media to promote earned media is cost effective.

Do more with less: Amplifying earned media is an efficient way to engage consumers with content that's already been created on your behalf.

To give you an even better understanding of how these channels work in the real world, take a look at this article. Ford Motor Company and their agency (GTB) experienced a degree of success that truly surprised them when they began monitoring post-click performance of their editorial coverage promotion efforts.

*We were promoting editorial coverage through paid channels, but didn't have any visibility into post-click performance," says Nick Gentile, GTB Experience Strategist. "This was a black box for us. For example, which articles did people actually read? What was reader sentiment like on those articles? Onclusive's technology actually gave us that level of visibility, and enabled us to optimize our spend toward what was working.*

The ability to collect data and gain insight in real time is helpful, he says. He's not alone in that sentiment. Several Onclusive clients struggled with the same lack of visibility and data - transparency that could help them make better decisions.

# Here are six proven strategies that we've seen work time and again.



## 1. Promote editorial content across multiple marketing channels.

Think of this tactic as buying the kind of attention you want to receive. When you obtain positive coverage about your products and services, extend the reach of those stories with paid advertising, corporate social accounts, email marketing, and employee advocacy programs. Remember that nothing promotes itself. If you have quality coverage worth sharing - make sure you are doing so across as many marketing channels as possible.



## 2. Create different coverage around the same story.

Messages are received differently depending on where the reader sees them and what stage of a customer journey they're in. Try a few different tactics when promoting stories about your brand, and then optimize towards the best performing coverage. For example, you may find that innovative stories about your company featured on general interest/news sites outperform the same stories covered in a vertical topic blog. Pay careful attention to each channel and the way that you've positioned the story, and then shift resources to what's working and redirect from those getting little attention.



## 3. Make the most of multiple media platforms.

Don't just amplify across one platform; use Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and others. Evaluate each platform's performance and optimize resources towards the ones who drive the most qualified audiences. For general interest news, try Facebook. Looking to reach a specific business audience? Leverage LinkedIn.



## 4. A/B test your creative.

Though you might have some guesses, you never really know what will resonate with people. It's important to develop multiple options and then test them so that you can make decisions based on real behaviors. Create multiple variants of titles, images, and descriptions, and optimize towards the best performers. Do specific versions generate views of earned coverage that result in clicks back to your site? Do certain combinations generate a lower CPC? Over time you will see trends that you can apply to your creative process going forward.



## 5. Vary your targeting parameters.

As marketers, the ability to target is one of the most significant levers we can pull when executing campaigns. Today's digital super powers mean that marketers can create more refined targets than ever before. Try creating variations on your campaign that hit different parts of your target audience. If your target is M/F 18–34, try setting up multiple campaign line items: one to target M 18–34, and the other F 18–34. Review the resulting data to find out whether one demographic exhibits a greater response than others to specific stories.



## 6. Retarget qualified audiences.

Someone who clicks on a review of your product or service has indicated a certain amount of interest or intent. Pay special attention to these warm leads, and create a segment of such users for remarketing. You'll find these audiences will be more receptive to your marketing efforts, since you've already pre-qualified them via their engagement with earned media. To further refine the process and maximize these efforts, Onclusive offers customers the ability to fire remarketing pixels based on specific engagement levels (for example, users who viewed an entire article and/or engaged for 30 seconds or more).

Each of the tactics mentioned here can be implemented by your own staff, however results may vary depending on the preparation, planning, execution, and resource bandwidth that goes into each. That's where leveraging a platform like Onclusive can help you succeed.

Typically, promoting earned media relies almost entirely on Click Through Rate (CTR) and Cost Per Click (CPC) metrics to evaluate performance. We know there's a better way.

We help brands who amplify earned media with paid ads. Leveraging post-click engagement analytics, our clients can understand what's really working and make data-driven decisions to achieve better business results.

## **Case Study: Onclusive helps an e-commerce giant garner new attention - and new customers.**

Overstock partnered with Onclusive to measure the effectiveness of specific earned editorial coverage that aligned with its core messaging strategies. Leveraging our media monitoring platform, we uncovered the article “8 Overstock Shopping Secrets You’ll Wish You Knew About Sooner,” which exemplifies the company’s core consumer messaging strategy.

Overstock wanted to know whether this type of coverage engaged the brand’s target of married and college educated 25-45 year-old females, with \$100K+ HHI, and whether these types of stories are effective at converting new customers.

Onclusive measured reader engagement and surveyed readers with three questions to help Overstock understand the effectiveness of the “8 Overstock Shopping Secrets” article.

The results were impressive and provided key data to help Overstock make decisions about how to garner attention with their target audience in the future. Most notably, we discovered that 61% of those who had never shopped at Overstock before were at least interested in shopping at Overstock after learning about their shopping secrets from the article. The article also received high engagement rates, with 38% of readers spending more than 60 seconds reading it, and impressive content depth scores, with 60% of readers completing the article. These are all statistics that Overstock would have been unable to view without Onclusive’s sophisticated solution.

### **Even the best content cannot market itself.**

The case study above is just one real-life example of the game-changing results that can be achieved with proactive content promotion strategies alongside sophisticated and insightful tools like Onclusive. If your company has created or earned some great content - don’t just assume that it will bring viewers. Get in touch with us to learn how Onclusive can help you to measure, report on, and optimize your earned content to enable more effective marketing.



# Onclusive

Onclusive is the data science company for communications. We connect content to business outcomes for the first time, and leverage artificial intelligence to reveal which communications strategies drive actual brand engagement. The result is thousands of high-performance campaigns around the world. Onclusive developed the Power of Voice™ metric as a way to measure the quality of a brand's media coverage in relation to its competitors, and invented PR Attribution™ to measure the real impact that content is having on a company's bottom line. Onclusive was founded in 2011 and is headquartered in the San Francisco Bay Area.

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