
Increasing Impact & Reach of Audits

NSAA Annual Conference, June 3, 2020

Mike Wessler

- Communications Director, Massachusetts State Auditor's Office - 4 ½ years
- 13 years doing communications for government/nonprofits

michael.wessler@sao.state.ma.us



Press Outreach

Means, not an end

- Transparency
- Driving change

Every media market is different

Successful Press Outreach

Good
Story



Right
Reporter



Right
Time



Good Story: Press Releases

- Tells the story of the audit in a way people can understand
 - Which audits get one & which don't?
 - Set a tone that reflects the seriousness of the subject
 - When & how to add context not in an audit
-

Right Reporter: Lists & Relationships

- Press releases are not enough
- Know who key reporters are & what they care about
- Frequent, but meaningful interactions that build trust, establish office as reliable source of information
- Two categories of reporters:
 - **General assignment** - may cover a press release or a topic, but don't have a specialized interest in that topic, often produce a story every day
 - **Investigative or specialized reporter** - has a deep knowledge of a subject matter and generally time to put together a more in-depth piece.



Transparency



Drive Change

Right Time

- Hardest factor to control
- Old audits can get new life



Building an Integrated Online Strategy

Vast majority of views of audits
will be online.

Ensure website, social media,
and other platforms support
each other & work toward same
goal.

Website is not a filing cabinet.

Think Like a Salesman: Conversions

- Information is our product.
- Every action or design choice should lead a user to a desired action or end point. If they reach it, that's a conversion.
- A cluttered, confusing store vs. well designed store



Website as a Communication Tool

COMMUNICATIONS
SHOULD MANAGE
THE CONTENT ON
YOUR WEBSITE.

Website as a Communication Tool

- Communications team should manage content on your website
 - IT should manage technical infrastructure
 - Meet people where they are: mobile, search & ADA friendly
 - HTML audits/reports
 - Present content in unique ways & groupings
-

Using Social to Support Efforts

- A few tips:
 - Pick the right tone
 - Find the platforms that work for you
 - Use images that capture attention (Canva)
 - Don't be afraid to flop
 - Focus on conversions
-

Find the Right Social Platform

Twitter

- Short posts
- Use threaded Tweets to tell stories
- Quickly understood graphics

Facebook

- Long-ish posts
- Photos of people

Others?

- LinkedIn
 - Instagram
 - Email marketing
-