



NMA Media Tool Kit

This tool kit will start you on the path to organizing media coverage for a local event or ongoing campaign.

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NMA MEDIA TOOL KIT

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NMA MEDIA TOOL KIT

Engaging the media is another important lobbying step. The NMA Media Tool Kit will give you some concrete ideas on how to encourage media reporting on local issues that are important to you and to the National Motorists Association.

Role of the Media and Social Media in the Political Process

The mass media “may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about”.

This quote has stood the test of time since Harvard Professor Bernard Cohen first stated this in 1963.

As motorists’ rights advocates, ultimately what we want to accomplish is to make sure that our local bridges, highways, roads and streets are properly maintained and available to all users of the road and that our constitutional rights are protected by law enforcement and the courts. Whether you are one person or a group with an issue, working with local media is essential in building awareness and pushing reform of local issues and problems.

Media can influence the way the public thinks about the issues surrounding driving which in turn might encourage an elected or non-elected official to make changes or push for reform. Reporters do care about these kinds of stories and are generally willing to at least consider whether or not to do a story.

As citizen motorists’ rights organizers, you will essentially deal with three different types of media engagement: issue based, event based or background. Each have different approaches but can easily be coordinated and managed using the same principles.

Issue Media Engagement

You have identified a problem that affects you personally, and you have made efforts to have the problem fixed, but to no avail. You notice others have the same or similar problem, but you still don’t get anyone in officialdom to respond. Contacting the media might bring awareness to the problem and hopefully then you will receive a response from officials. In order for the media outlet to get hooked however, you need to do your homework first.

Here is an example of a problem: you have encountered an intersection with what you believe is a shortened yellow light and you have the red-light camera ticket to prove it. Of course, you want to fight that ticket in court, but more importantly you want to make sure that if the yellow light is indeed mistimed, you would like the city department responsible for the intersection lights to make that change.

Before you contact any reporters, you need to do a bit of homework first. Backing up your claim with information gives the media outlet more to go on, gives you more credibility as an interviewee and helps the reporter feel more positive about the story since he or she is not starting from scratch.

Here are a couple of things that you should uncover with regards to the red-light camera intersection example before you approach any media outlet.

- 1) Go back to the intersection with a stopwatch and time the light yourself more than once to see if the light is consistent, and determine the estimated timing to either confirm or deny your suspension.
- 2) If you think the timing is wrong, then ask your city or county traffic engineer for two pieces of information:
 - a. First determine whether the road/street/intersection in question is controlled by the state, the county or the city/town/locality and then contact the responsible engineer with that level of government. The state DOT engineer does not have authority over local roads and vice versa.
 - b. Find out from the engineer when the last time the road/street/intersection had a traffic study and,
 - c. Did that study conform to city/state law before a red-light camera could be placed?
- 3) If you are getting nowhere with your questions, contact a reporter (TV and newspaper generally) whose beat is either transportation, citizen complaints, consumer issues or special investigations. Contact your local station's tip line or the newspaper consumer reporter to complain. Keep calling and keep contacting—persistence will eventually win out.
- 4) In the meantime, you may want to file a freedom of information request. ([Click Here on how](#)).
- 5) If the reporter is willing to do the story, it will be a huge help to have already done some of the footwork so that the reporter does not have to start from scratch. You have already gathered some of the nuggets that will allow him or her to build a great story including printing off the [Red-Light Camera FAQ from the NMA website](#).
- 6) Even if the reporter does this story and there is a great deal of online feedback, this will not mean that ordinances or state laws will be changed. A story like this, though, will give other viewers and the media more

understanding on why shortening yellow lights makes an intersection less safe and introduce them to the National Motorists Association.

A story like this could also inspire other motorists to step forward and ask why potholes are not fixed in the most important thoroughfare in town or encourage a neighborhood group to petition its city council to make its neighborhood safer by adding more street lights. Perhaps it will even inspire you to form a group to rid your area of red-light cameras altogether.

Event Media Engagement

If you are interested in forming a local single issue reform group or a local chapter of the National Motorists Association, check out the NMA Organizing Tool Kit for Local Engagement.

Event media planning has similar planning elements as those of issue media planning with one distinct difference—you have a date that you plan to hold a rally, protest or organizing meeting.

Your group has decided to fight city hall for an outright ban on red-light cameras. Your group has made the determination that the easiest way to do this is to bring about a ballot measure that would be proposed during the next scheduled election. Coordinating a ballot petition campaign might likely be the only way to make this happen. This is like a David vs. Goliath sort of story and if you spin it right, you can indeed encourage reporters to cover this story. You will need to have a strategic plan, with potential for great visuals and be organized to maximize your efforts.

Background Media Engagement

Providing background to reporters is another way to build local credibility and bring another voice and perspective to the table with regards to motorists' rights. This "off the record" discussion cannot be quoted or attributed to you. If you give background information, make sure you have an agreement up front with the reporter before you discuss anything. Not every media outlet will be receptive to this kind of interview since attribution gives authority to the story.

Remember the media can sometimes be your friend, but can also sometimes be your enemy. Even though many of us grew up believing that journalists are neutral in their reporting that is not always the case. Choose your words carefully regardless of your impression of their demeanor or tone. Avoid casual, idle and unplanned comments (outside of greetings of course) that could be misunderstood by the reporter or used to change the intent of the interview.

Anti-car proponents are good at labeling motorists as the bad guys. This is especially true in the online press that loves to pit two groups against each other. And if the media

outlet is not objective, all the more reason to remember this media outlet might not necessarily be your friend.

Providing background information about an issue could be in the way of writing letters-to-the-editor or contacting the reporter of a similar story.

HOW TO BUILD A LOCAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

One of the first things to do when thinking about generating media coverage for an issue or a motorists' rights advocacy event is to decide on the goal:

- Do you want to raise awareness about a particular problem?
- Do you want to find new group members and/or volunteers?
- Do you want to meet with media influencers to give background on a particular issue?
- Do you want the publicity to bring about some sort of change?

Media and publicity planning are essential whether you are one person or part of a group. In creating a plan, keep the following points in mind:

- Find a singular message that will bring more awareness to your issue. That message needs to be clear, simple, direct, emotional and easy to understand by everyone in your target audience.
- Tell them what you want them to do after they heard the information.
- Create talking points that can be used by you or a group spokesperson. Learn these and use them in all your written and spoken information (especially interviews).
- Have accurate facts that are at your fingertips and easy to understand for your intended audience.
- Think about ways to create news so that the media will report on your issue or group event.
- Think about what kind of visual message you can bring to your issue or event. Visual elements can include photographic and/or video opportunities and graphical elements that might be important in the telling of your story.

- If you are involved in a local motorists' rights group, designate a spokesperson for consistency in the message. This person will also serve as the contact for reporters, producers and editors.
- Create a spreadsheet of who will do what and when so that all the information is in one place and you or your group can check off when milestones have been reached.
- Plan for media coverage and publicity before the event, during the event and after the event.

Personal Contact

Many media outlets have tip lines and this may be a great way to entice some media involvement. For example, if you think that yellow lights are shortened at intersections with red-light cameras, write up the information on the tip line portal or email and suggest that you or your media spokesperson would be willing to be interviewed about why you think this is so.

If there is no tip line, look on the media outlet's website and call up your local TV or radio station and ask for a reporter who handles citizen complaints. If you know a reporter or editor, contact him or her and ask who would be a good person to talk with about your idea for a story.

Writing a letter-to-the-editor can sometimes prompt a story as well. Don't be shy about your issues and don't hesitate to call or contact a reporter or editor more than once. Remember, always be professional.

Identify and Build a List of Media Contacts

The media outlets in your community can run the gamut: daily and weekly newspapers, local TV news, statewide or city public radio or television, commercial talk radio, local radio news, online local news websites, and neighbor/community blogs.

Newspapers

- Identify local newspapers that might be interested in reporting your issue or cause.
- Find contact information for the news editor or managing editor and even a reporter or two by looking into the information area of the newspaper or finding the information online.
- Identify any local reporters that write about local transportation issues or local political news.

- For weekly papers, write your own story and submit for publication. Please remember to check the newspaper's submission guidelines to be considered for publication before you write anything.

Television

- Even if you live in a community without a TV station, contact the closest station(s) to find out if they have interest in covering a regional story. The more sensational the issue or story, the better of course.
- Identify and find contact information on the news director and/or the assignment editor at the station.
- Watch the local news to see if there is any reporter that appears to have a traffic, public safety, and/or consumer affairs beat. Find out their contact information and write to them about your issue.
- If the station uses an online tip line, follow the instructions and write a news tip the news department cannot refuse.
- Frequently, on public television there are local roundtable discussions or even magazine type of shows that highlight local, regional or state news. Watch these shows and find out if your issue might be of interest to the producer. Pitch him or her the idea and see where it goes.

Radio

- Talk radio show producers/hosts are always looking for topical news. Frequently, they find stories in local newspapers and go from there. No harm in pitching them your issue for a show. An email press release might be the ticket to inspire the show's producer to contact you.
- Local radio news has a similar structure as television except the station generally has a news director and not an assignment editor. Identify and contact the news director via press release email or station email portal.

Online News Websites

- Most online news websites are a part of an already established media such as a newspaper or broadcast station. Many of these websites, however, have their own editor or producer, so it does not hurt to contact him or her separately.
- Sometimes local outlets feed into statewide online news websites. The statewide media website might also have their own editor/producer and sometimes reporters who work directly through the website. Figure out the relationships to your local media, and don't be afraid to pitch an idea.

Neighborhood and Community Blogs

- Remember, most motorists' rights and traffic issues are local. Some local bloggers might be interested in your issue, and this is also a great way to publicize your issue or event.
- If you are not aware of any local bloggers, do an online search and find those who are blogging consistently.
- Read a couple of blog posts to determine if the blogger might be an appropriate outlet. If so, contact the blogger in the manner mentioned on their blog.

Contacting media at first might be a bit intimidating, but the worse that can happen is they say no and you move on. You will become a pro in no time, especially if you have a plan and a contact list. The most important thing is to just do it!

How to Find Free Publicity for an Event Such as an Issue Rally or Protest

First of all, go through the planning process as outlined above. After you have determined your message and appointed a spokesperson, create a document regarding why the media should come and visit your event or work on your issue. Also, think about free publicity ideas you could do before the event to encourage others to participate.

- Write a short blurb (300 words or less) about the event and send to your weekly community newspapers, advertisers and other online outlets that you uncover.
- Write a calendar blurb and email to all the community calendars in the area.
- Identify any talk radio shows that might have interest in your topic. Contact the host or producer to see if they would like to do an interview. Make sure you have information to send via email as soon as you are done with the call. Even if they don't do an interview, they might mention the event on air.
- Send a press release by email to the assignment editor (TV news), news director (radio news), or editor (newspaper) and then follow up by phone a few days before the event to see if he or she could send a reporter or at least a photographer/videographer to the event.

Using Social Media for Your Local Issue or Cause

Whether you are involved in an issue group or you are just one person with an issue, having a Facebook Page or even a simple website page dedicated to your local issue or protest group can be another opportunity gateway. Interested people can more easily find you online and might want to get involved. Make sure your contact information can

easily be found and if someone does contact you, have the courtesy to email back or talk with him or her about the issue or the event.

If you are so inclined, Twitter might also be a great way to contact local reporters and other potential supporters. If the issue or event is visual, an Instagram account might also be effective. If you plan to video tape any part of the event, putting the edited version up on YouTube could garner additional publicity to the cause.

Promoting the Visual Aspects of an Event

TV, newspaper and online outlets need visuals so make sure that you have the potential for great visual moments during the event. Assess what kind of photo opportunities might be available for your event. Even if a reporter cannot come to cover the event, the media outlet might send a photographer or videographer which still gives you event coverage.

For example, if your group will be protesting at a particular intersection that has red-light cameras, have your group make colorful and easy to read signs. Decide as a group if you will walk in a certain way or chant civil protests.

How to Write a Press Release

A press release is a document that outlines the issue and/or the event and whom to contact for more information or to interview. For press release samples, find Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. The following are the most important elements of a press release:

- 1) Place information at the top of the release for when the information can be used.

Examples: “For Immediate Release” or “To be used between June 1-June 30”.

- 2) You may place your name and contact information at either the top or bottom of the release. Most important thing is make sure to include your name, email address, and telephone number.
- 3) A title of the Press Release is essential and will be the only thing to pique the interest of the reader.

Examples: Grant Street Intersection Yellow Lights are too short! Or

Red-light Camera Protesters will be out in force on June 2 at the Grant and Elm Street Intersection

- 4) For the main text, start the first paragraph off with the city and state then a colon with the first sentence after that.
- 5) Keep the press release to one page. If you have online resources or even want to link to information on the NMA website, place this information after the main

text. If this is an event, make sure you answer the who, what, where, when in the first paragraph.

- 6) At the end, have a short paragraph on your group or yourself. This gives the press release credibility. Examples:

The Los Atomos Red-Light Camera Protesters started organizing in January. Our goal is to rid the city of all red-light cameras by popular vote in November.

Or

Henry Gibbs is a member of the National Motorists Association and, as a motorists' rights advocate, works on local traffic issues that matter to all who use the roads.

- 7) Also, at the end of the press release, to indicate the end, place three number symbols in a row (###), centered on the page.

As you can see, several components play important roles in a press release. Contact information and release date, plus a title with a city and state designation, are essential. A short message and any online resources that you can point the reporter to are also helpful to any who might want to cover the event. At the end, a short informational paragraph about you or your group is important to build your credibility.

Remember, a press release is a calling card, and you need to find a way to get a media outlet to be interested. Be honest, compelling and succinct in your approach.

GIVING A MEDIA INTERVIEW

Interviews can be fun and with a little preparation and practice you can become a pro in no time. Here are some general tips for giving media interviews. Generally, there are a number of different types of interviews that you could be asked to do:

- A sit down interview that has been scheduled and can be for any media.
- TV package interview—sometimes a sit-down but generally you are standing near the action or perhaps even walking and talking. This is also generally a scheduled interview.
- Day-of-event Interview—an interview that is generally not scheduled ahead of time but is asked for by a producer or reporter at the moment of arrival at the event.
- Ambush interview—reporter, sometimes with a camera person, confronts you suddenly to surprise you with questions. This is generally reserved for officials

and celebrities who don't want to be interviewed, usually about a controversial subject.

- Phone Interview—generally for print, online and radio.
- Skype interview—if you live far away, Skype can be used for both TV and radio interviews. If it is for TV, don't expect that the video will make you look your best. Make sure you have a good front lighting source so you can be seen. Using your smart phone for a Skype radio interview works well but using your smart phone for a Skype TV interview does not so try to avoid it. Instead, use your desktop or laptop computer camera with a real microphone (not the one in the computer). Remember to clean up the space behind you before any Skype television interview.
- Written interview—for print or online. A reporter sends you questions and you write answers and send back –this is more for profile pieces and background information.
- Background interview—can sometimes be instigated by you. A background interview gives you a quick chance to explain the issue and why a reporter or editor should cover the story. Remember though that this is a clear “off the record” interview and you must receive acknowledgement by the reporter that is the case. Of course, a background interview can turn into an “on the record” interview with your consent.

Check out Appendix 3: On-air Interview Checklist for your use.

Check out Appendix 4: Printer/Online Interview Checklist for your use.

Check out Appendix 5: Media Contact Sheet

Before the Interview

Research

First determine which kind of interview this will be and find out who will be interviewing you. If there is time, try to listen to, read or watch some of the reporter's past interviews. Check the interviewer out on social media so you can get a sense of the sort of person he or she might be—are they subtle, do they like to interrupt, do they like to ambush or are they pretty low key. If this is a round table discussion, watch a show or two to understand the style. Also, find out who else will be on the show. When you set up the interview, make sure to ask how long the interview will last, especially if it is live.

Preparation

If this is a sit down radio or TV interview, think about some questions the reporter might ask and come up with some short answers. The more you do this the better the

interview will be. If you might have media show up at your event, prepare by learning your talking points and practice answers to any questions that could be asked.

Professional Appearance

Especially if you will appear on camera, dress professionally in clothing that you feel gives the best you for the time of day and place of the interview. For example, if you are doing an outside interview in winter, wear a coat so that you are not shivering. Do not wear shiny clothing or jewelry or ill-fitting clothes (too small or too loose). Even in a print interview, you want to look your best.

Also, don't smoke, vape, or chew tobacco or gum during the interview. If you will be doing a long interview, bottled water is appropriate to bring and drink if needed before or after the interview.

During the Interview

Turn off distractions

If you are being interviewed at home or the office, turn off your computer, radio, phone, pager and other electronic distractions. Let others know you cannot be disturbed. The same goes for phone or Skype interviews.

Position the Phone or Microphone Correctly

If you are doing a radio phone interview, make sure the microphone part of the phone is at your jawline and not directly in front of your mouth. This will prevent extraneous hisses. Never use a speaker phone for a phone interview because no one will be able to hear you clearly on the other end.

If it is a TV interview, the microphone will generally be provided, placed on you by an audio person and then tested.

Be Yourself and Smile

Even if you are doing a phone interview or a print/online interview and especially a TV interview, smile and be yourself. Don't worry about anything else except conveying your message as clearly and succinctly as possible.

On Camera Interviews

Be sure to ask where to look when answering. Generally, you will look at the reporter but always ask to make sure.

After the Interview

Send a Thank You

Sending a thank you leaves an impression and helps with your credibility. Also, give feedback on the final piece and encourage the reporter to contact you again.

You Can't Control the Edit or What is Written

No matter what you convey during the interview, the person reporting the story and his or her editor have the last word. Don't sweat it! Just do your best. Focus your preparation on your talking points and practice beforehand answering any potential questions. Think of a final thought you would like to impart. Be clear, concise and on message. Use conversational language and stay relaxed.

Round Table Discussion Interviews or Televised Debates

Generally, round table discussion shows are focused on one issue with differing viewpoints. Use some of the same techniques in preparing for an interview. You also need to find out who else has been scheduled for the show and find out a little about him or her.

Be professional, don't forget to smile and convey your message in the best possible light. Don't get rattled and try not to become confrontational.

Televised debates generally involve politicians running for office. Sometimes, you might be involved in an issues debate up against politicians, government bureaucrats or more often than not, advocates from organizations with a different viewpoint.

You could be an audience member for a town hall sort of event and you might potentially be able to ask a question. If you know you will be on the show as an audience member, write the question down before hand on an index card and practice a couple of times.

The National Motorists Association encourages you to go after every opportunity to discuss motorists' rights. The more information that is out there, the more motorists will realize they don't have to accept the status quo.

Evaluation

Even if your group is an ad hoc protest group, keep track of stories, editorials, and any letters that have been written, published, broadcast and shared online.

Keeping track of media clips and placing the links in an online document and/or printing them out for a clip portfolio will also help you tell your story to elected officials and other influencers. Clips can sometimes be an indication of strong support that will make officials take notice.

If your group continues, this ongoing evaluation process will be an important continuity factor for all those who are working with you.

Appendix 1: Issue Press Release Sample



For July 31, 2017 release

National Motorists Association Asks Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao to Curb Federal Funding of State Traffic Ticket Blitzes

Waunakee, WI – July 31, 2017: National Motorists Association (NMA) President Gary Biller, in a letter to Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao, urged the Trump Administration to fill the vacant position of National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) administrator with a leader who will end the decades-long practice of funding state and local ticketing campaigns.

In direct opposition to the National Transportation Safety Board’s July 25, 2017 call for extensive automated, point-to-point vehicle tracking and increased funding of quota-driven ticketing campaigns, Biller said, “Highway safety programs should be evaluated with safety performance metrics, not activity-based goals that can lead to questionable motivations. The effect that ticket-blitz enforcement campaigns have on safety is debatable. What isn’t debatable is that making funding contingent on meeting certain activity levels is a direct incentive for state and local law enforcement to implement a quota system.”

He added, “States jump at the chance to receive tens of millions of dollars that their law enforcement agencies can use to run ticketing campaigns throughout the year while accumulating significant federally funded overtime compensation. When the incentives for highway enforcement programs are revenue-based, traffic safety improvements and the rights of motorists become secondary considerations.”

The National Motorists Association supports stronger driver education programs, realistic traffic regulations that create higher compliance levels, and well-maintained roads as the most effective means of highway safety improvement.

The complete letter to Secretary Chao can be found [here](#).

Contact:

Gary Biller, President, National Motorists Association

Email: nma@motorists.org

Telephone: 608-849-6000

Website: www.motorists.org

About the National Motorists Association:

Founded in 1982, the National Motorists Association is a North American grassroots advocacy organization dedicated to the protection of motorists’ rights and freedoms. The membership-based organization advocates for traffic laws fairly written and reasonably enforced, traffic penalties based on sensible standards, traffic safety built on proven engineering solutions, and a focus on advanced driving-skill development.

###

Appendix 2: Event Press Release



News Release



For Interviews or Additional Information Contact:
Shelia Dunn
NMA Communications Director
communications@motorists.org
608/849-6000

To be used between June 1-30, 2017

For: News & Editorial Directors, Assignment Editors, Radio Talk Show Producers, Transportation and Traffic Reporters

Lane Courtesy Month: A Reminder to Drive Right, Pass Left!

Waunakee, WI: June has been designated Lane Courtesy Month by the National Motorists Association and the NMA Foundation. Lane Courtesy or lane discipline as it is sometimes called is quite simply staying in the right lane on the highway except to pass slower moving vehicles.

When motorists use lane courtesy every time they drive they will find they are generally safer because they drive with the traffic instead of continuously weaving in and out of traffic. Motorists will save gas and arrive quicker at their destination because they are going with the traffic flow which allows for a smoother ride. Most importantly, when motorists use lane courtesy there will be less road rage and less overall stress while driving.

The National Motorists Association urges motorists to serve as a role model by keeping right to yield to faster traffic, practicing Lane Courtesy year round.

Resources for your use:

[Lane Courtesy Additional Background Information](#)

[Lane Courtesy Fact Sheet](#)

[List of Lane Courtesy Laws in each State](#)

About the National Motorists Association & the NMA Foundation, a 501c3 nonprofit

Founded in 1982, the National Motorists Association is a North American grassroots advocacy organization dedicated to the protection of motorists' rights and freedoms. The membership-based organization advocates for traffic laws fairly written and reasonably enforced, full due process rights in traffic court, traffic penalties based on sensible standards and not revenue collection, reasonable highway user fees, traffic safety based on proven engineering solutions, and a focus on improved and more comprehensive early advanced driving-skill development.

The NMA Foundation, founded in 1999, promotes fresh approaches to highway safety and traffic issues based on reason and sound engineering principles. Through a grant program that encourages a multi-faceted approach of research, education, and legal precedents, the Foundation seeks to protect the interests of the motoring public. The NMA Foundation seeks to protect the interests of the motoring public. The NMA Foundation is the #1 resource for educational materials related to fight unjust traffic tickets, and is a leading national voice on important issues such as lane courtesy.

###

Appendix 3: On-Air Interview Checklist (radio or TV)

NMA's On-Air Interview Checklist

Before the Interview

Watch and tape several shows, keeping the following in mind:

- Watch or listen to at least one show or news broadcast to understand the tone of reporting.
- For TV, check camera angles and color of the background set.
- If the show has a call-in format, has an audience, or allows viewers/listeners to respond by email, alert your friends, family and/or other group members to participate.

Send materials to the Producer and take the following precautions

- Call the day before and make sure the materials arrived.
- Check to see if the materials were read by the person doing the interview. If not, hand-deliver another kit to the station, and try to meet personally with the host or producer.
- If a talk radio program, ask the producer beforehand how many segments and total times for discussion plus if the interview goes well, would they want you or your spokesperson to stay on air for an additional segment or two.

Put in writing the following for you or your spokesperson

- The name and phone number of the station contact.
- The name of the host or reporter doing the interview.
- The call letters, channel, and network affiliation of the station.
- The correct address and location of the interview.
- The time of expected arrival.
- The time the segment will be taped and aired.
- The names of other guests.
- The transportation arrangements.

Take the following precautions if the interview is done in your office or home:

- The location you choose should be quiet and without external noises.
- Make sure the background is appealing to the viewer's eye.
- Have someone in the room at all times to listen to the interview.
- Turn off phones and other potential electronic distractions.

During the Interview

- Be friendly with the host, producer, and technicians.
- Ask if it is better to look directly into the camera or at the host.
- Remember to wear small jewelry that is not shiny and doesn't dangle is best.
- Make sure the microphone is resting in a comfortable position for your height.

After the Program

- Send a note of thanks to the producer and the host
- Have others in your organization do the same
- Add the producer and host to your press list

Appendix 4: NMA's Print/Online Interview Checklist

NMA's Print/Online Interview Checklist

Before In-Depth Print Interviews

- ___ Brief the Reporter on your organization's goals.
- ___ Send the reporter materials, kits and bios.
- ___ Do your homework on the reporter and his or her previous work.

Ask the following Questions of the Interviewer

- ___ Will the interview be by Phone or in Person?
- ___ If in person, location: _____
- ___ Will photos be taken for the interview?
- ___ If not, should a photo be supplied by your group?
- ___ Will others be interviewed for the article?
- ___ Is so, whom? _____
- ___ What is the estimated length of time for the interview?
- ___ When will the article run in print and/or online?
- ___ Which section of the paper or online department will the story run?

During Face-to-Face Interviews

- ___ Double-check that the reporter received background material.
- ___ If you think the reporter might be hostile, make an audiotape of the interview. Ask in advance. Never tape without permission. This will help you have a record of the discussion in case the reporter may try to twist the words or context.
- ___ If photos are being taken, remember that the background is key. Watch for stray items that may be sticking out from behind head shots.

During Phone Interviews

- ___ When reporters call for quotes, make sure they know whether the information is on background. Off the record or on the record and for quotes.
- ___ Spell your name and give the name of your position in the organization (if applicable).

Appendix 5: Media Contact Sheet

National Motorists Association Incoming Press Calls

Date: _____ Time: _____

Caller's Name: _____

News Outlet: _____

Phone Number(s) to call back: _____

Email Address: _____

City/State: _____

Story Deadline: _____

What do I need to do?

Any follow up?