

How to Star in a TV Special on Retirement Challenges

By Dan Richards
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Last fall, I wrote a column titled [Tapping into today's #1 client concern](#).

The article discussed the skills and knowledge necessary to become a “go-to expert” on retirement planning – and how advisors could get the story out.

Shortly after the column appeared, I received an email with some questions from Andy Fass, a veteran advisor in Sacramento with RW Baird, a leading U.S. independent brokerage firm.



In March of this year, he sent me another email – pointing me to a five-part series titled “*Plugging the Retirement Gap*,” that had appeared on the local NBC television affiliate in Sacramento, in which he’d been prominently featured.

[Here's](#) the first of those segments.

The benefits of being front-and-center

Not every compliance department allows advisors to appear on television or to be quoted in the paper.

But if you’re in a firm that permits this, there are some big advantages to this kind of profile:

- When you email the links to articles or news segments, it reinforces your credibility with existing clients and referral sources;
- It differentiates you when talking to prospective clients;
- It makes your website more substantive and professional; and
- It can lead to an ongoing opportunity to provide commentary on market events.

Just don’t expect it to lead to calls from prospective clients.



Here's what Andy Fass says:

"While this was a great experience and I've received good feedback from many folks, it really didn't translate into any short-term business.

I do think that long term, it will be worth it, as I am able to use the tag line "As seen on KCRA Channel 3" in my marketing and correspondence and this adds a degree of credibility.

I have also done a couple of other spots for them, and they call me every so often for a comment or a brief interview.

The other good thing is that I have an open invitation to provide them with any ideas I have on timely issues and if they like them, they'll put them on the air. I'm working with one of their main reporters now on a couple of things."

Candidates for media profile

Over the years, I've talked to advisors who've used different approaches to build awareness and credibility through the media:

- Doing regular commentary on radio or television, often related to commentary on market events – sometimes weekly, sometimes daily, in a few cases two or three times a day
- Writing articles for a local newspaper or magazine
- Approaching local media with story ideas in which they would be featured
- Positioning themselves as experts who the media could approach for comment and quotes

Almost without exception, their experience was similar to that of Andy Fass – the phone seldom rang with calls from prospective clients.

Rather, the benefit stemmed from the ability to use articles or radio or TV clips to send to existing and prospective clients and post on your website.

And when a prospect did call, it was often after repeated exposure to an advisor's message. I spoke recently to an advisor who since 2005 has appeared monthly on an investment TV show, talking about stocks and sectors he likes.



He recently got a call from a multi-million dollar prospect who said, “I’ve been watching you for years and finally decided I should give you a call.”

Approaching local media outlets

Here’s the approach that Andy Fass used to make the new series in which he appeared happen:

- Prepare a written outline of what you propose to cover – Andy Fass developed his based on some retirement planning workshops he runs.
- Approach the news director of the local station – in Andy’s case, he happened to have a nephew working at the station who was able to give the proposal to the news director.
- Follow up – for Andy, it took two phone conversations and two face-to-face meetings.
- Set aside the time – it took about 45 minutes to shoot each segment. In addition, Fass got some of his clients to appear in the segment.

This doesn’t have to be limited to television – it could also work with local radio stations or newspapers.

To learn more

If you’re interested in seeing more, [here’s](#) the link to the website on which these news segments appear; many thanks to Andy Fass for generously sharing his experience.

** Dan Richards conducts programs to help advisors gain and retain clients and is an award winning faculty member in the MBA program at the University of Toronto. To see more of his written and video commentaries and to reach him, go to www.strategicimperatives.ca.*

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