

Successful Media Interviews

A guide for online, digital, print-based interviews.



Welcome!

If you are reading this, you likely have a media interview set up and are looking for some starting guidelines. If so, welcome! Media interviews are one of the best ways to highlight your expertise to the world and, more importantly, your target audience.

This guide should be used more as a reference to supplement your personality and interview style. While you do not have to follow all of these tips verbatim, we have found that the most successful interviews follow the model outlined within this guide.

However, success can be a fluid term, depending on the focus of your interview. At BizTech Weekly, we define interview success in the following way:

"A successful interview captures the true expertise of the subject [the interviewee] in a way that makes them appear both trustworthy and knowledgeable to prospective consumers of their product or service."

Defining interview success in such a way may sound counterintuitive, especially if your personal goal is to increase sales or generate more leads. This is an understandable predicament, but there is a reason we define success this way, which you will understand by the end of this guide.

First steps: Is the interview the right tool for you?

We want to ensure that you maximize your success with our interview, and to do that, you must determine if the interview is the right tool for you to utilize at this time.

Make no mistake, an interview is primarily a marketing tool, despite what conventional wisdom may have you believe. We offer interview services at BizTech Weekly as a way to help entrepreneurs and creatives maximize their brand's potential.

Generally speaking, there are two primary types of media interviews:

1. Interviews that focus on maximizing the readership of a publication.
2. Interviews that focus on maximizing the perception of the subject or interviewee.

These two interview types are seen all over the web on news media sites and online magazines. Both styles drive impact but have vastly different goals.

The first type focuses on maximizing readership towards the publishing outlet. These are common with celebrity interviews or interviews with well-known personalities. These interviews primarily support the publication as they can reach a larger audience and drive more advertising revenue. The subjects in these interviews also get a temporary boost. They are likely attending the interview to promote a new movie, book, business deal, or any recent notable event.

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The second interview type focuses on lesser-known individuals deemed experts or well-versed in their fields. These are common with startup founders, entrepreneurs, artists, creatives, and other individuals who drive positive impact but may not have the name recognition they deserve. Publications do not generally receive increased readership from these interviews, so they are often supplemented with publishing fees to recoup the costs of conducting, editing, researching, and publishing the interview.

Similar to the first case, subjects attend the second interview to promote their brand. However, unlike the first case, these subjects are also focused on enhancing name recognition and establishing themselves as experts within their respective industries.

At BizTech Weekly, our interview methods primarily focus on the second style mentioned. We feel our techniques target trust and name recognition. Our goal is to highlight up-and-coming experts, the proverbial "underdogs" that are often blindsided and hidden underneath a plethora of clickbait ads and celebrity gossip.

Now, to answer the question: is this interview right for you? Well, it depends on your current web presence and social recognition. If you Google your name or brand right now and can easily see hundreds of web links referencing you or your brand specifically, then perhaps this interview is not best suited for you. That's not necessarily a bad thing. In fact, you should congratulate yourself if such is the case. You have an established web presence and a level of trust that supports the work you do.

However, if you are struggling to capture leads or retain clients, perhaps a lack of public trust plays a role. Assuming you have a good product or service for which a real market need exists, this interview will do much more for you than wasting excess funds on advertising when the time isn't right.

What this interview is not

Continuing from the last section, it is essential to understand what this interview is and is not when it comes to promoting your brand. We want to be as transparent as possible with expectations, as that ensures a better overall experience for us as a publication and for you as an interviewee.

The interview is not a *direct* advertising tool. It is not designed to flood your site with traffic or rapidly increase your sales. We see countless promises from marketing firms giving customers unrealistic expectations with their inflated ad packages.

We have interviewed many individuals across our various publications, and a revolving theme we regularly see is ad spending before trust building. In essence, people want fast results, and pay-per-click ads can often deliver just that. The problem, however, is that consumers are much more skeptical about where and when they spend their money. In a world flooded with online financial scams and fly-by-night operations, a good and engaging ad is not enough to drive customers; you need to build trust first.

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You are wasting your money when you spend it on ads without building a good layer of trust and authority. Building a base layer of trust enables a solid foundation for more effective use of your advertising dollars in the future. This way, when prospective customers see your ads and do a quick Google search, they will see multi-pronged layers of social proof, authority, and expertise, making them significantly more likely to purchase your product or service.

The interview is a social proof, web authority, and trust-building tool; nothing more, nothing less. We interview subjects who fit the culture of our magazine and aim to highlight their relevant expertise to our readers and anyone curious enough to do a Google search on you.

When you build trust, your advertising dollars go a lot further.

How it works: a quick background

Now that we have established expectations and what the interview offers, it is time to dive into the core of this guide. Because this is a text-based digital interview, you will have all the questions beforehand and be able to select which questions you want to answer. Additionally, if you have a specific question you want to answer, you will also have the opportunity to include your own set of Q&A.

The interview questionnaire can be found at biztechweekly.com/interview-form or by [clicking here](#) if you are reading this electronically. On this form, you will provide some background information, like your role, website, social media links, and goal for the interview, along with answering the interview-specific questions.

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Remember that you do not have to answer all the questions. They are broad by design, allowing you to tailor your answers specifically for your brand or company. Additionally, you may have *specific* questions you want to answer, so we've included a section where you can write out your own questions, followed by your answers.

We will go over more specifics below, but the main thing to remember is that this should be a stress-free experience. You can answer the questions in quick and simple terms. Our team will do the heavy lifting and transform your answers into Fortune-500-worthy responses. Just because you may not be an exceptional writer doesn't mean you can't sound like one! So don't sweat the small stuff. After all, we want you to sound like the expert that you are.

Rehearsal

So you have an interview booked, now what? For many individuals, this can be a nerve-racking experience, particularly if they have never been interviewed by the media. The good news is that it is a lot less formal and a lot less stressful than something like a job interview.

Even better, a digital or text-based interview gives you ample time to frame your story mentally, and unlike live interviews, it allows you to correct mistakes ahead of time and put your best self forward. Remember, you are participating in this interview to establish your expertise and build trust with your audience.

Before answering the questions, try to rehearse your story in your head. How do you want to be perceived? Witty? Stoic? Passionate? There is no right or wrong answer, but your personality should align with the brand you want to represent. For example, humor may not be the best choice if you are running a traditional business consultancy, but it might be if you are targeting new tech startups.

Try to visualize your prospective audience finding and reading your interview, and try to portray yourself in a way that builds trust and confidence within that audience group. Again, try not to overthink it; our editors are also there to help you out, so even if your answers don't perfectly mirror what you were going for, we can certainly restructure your answers, so they drive the most impact.

Understand your personal goal

This may sound obvious to some, but it is not always clear when diving into the questions. We often get so lost in the question itself that we forget the global purpose of the interview as a whole.

If your goal is to establish yourself or your brand as an expert in software development, try not to go too off tangent toward a subject that does not add value to your interview. Very often, an interviewee will start with an answer that is more or less direct, then veer off into the deep end by talking about something slightly related to the question but trivial in the grand scheme of things.

Visualizing yourself as the reader, I.E., your prospective customer, is a good practice. Try to imagine whether they would be interested in the side-bar commentary or if it would just be a waste of their time reading it. Your goal is to establish trust and expertise within your field to capture target customers, so try not to get lost in the limelight by straying too off-topic.

Use conversational language

You may be an expert in your field, but many of your potential customers may not be. In fact, it is highly likely that your customers are not as knowledgeable and well versed in your field, hence why they would need your products or services.

Many interviewees treat the interview as a press release or technical document; it is not. An interview is a conversational piece. It is used to highlight the human behind the brand while also highlighting the benefits they offer customers clearly and succinctly.

The level of technical detail and jargon will differ depending on the product or service you are offering, but a good strategy to keep in mind is: "how would I explain this to a high-schooler"?

While such a thought process may sound insulting to your prospective customers, keep in mind that the reality of the situation is that they are unlikely to understand all of the elements and concepts that you have to offer.

The interview is formatted as a conversation between you and our staff interviewer. Any overtly technical details and jargon should be watered down so your audience can understand and want to become your customer.

People do not buy what they do not understand. Your goal here should be to engage readers, not publish scientific research.

The goldfish and the elephant: focusing on attention span

Our interview form has a preset number of broad, open-ended questions for you to answer. While you can certainly answer all of them, you must remember that attention is not infinite. Readers will not spend more than 30 minutes reading your interview. In fact, you would be lucky if they read through the entire thing; and that is ok.

The goal of the interview is not to gain a deep and insightful understanding of you as a person and what your brand has to offer (shocking, we know); it is to establish a baseline of trust.

More often than not, prospective customers will quickly skim your interview, reading the relevant parts. In other words, readers are looking for one thing when looking at your interview: is this person "legit"? Yes, it really does drive down to that one question.

So while you can answer all of the questions, you are making the interview unnecessarily long and drawn out, and considering readers will not likely read the entire thing, you want the interview to be long enough so it flows nicely but is not too long where you are wasting your time.

Try to answer the questions you feel will drive the most impact on your brand. Before answering each question, consider whether your answer will drive engagement from the reader and establish trust in your field of expertise. It is better to answer five questions with solid and engaging components than to answer 20 questions rambling on about irrelevant details.

Don't sell too hard. What?

We know it sounds highly counterintuitive. After all, the end goal of your interview is to drive sales for your brand or business eventually, so what gives?

Remember earlier when we talked about the modern consumer's behavior? They are inherently skeptical, and there is no easy way around this. This is a good thing, whether we realize it or not.

Your prospective customers do not want to be "sold" to; they want to believe they make their purchasing decisions independently. The interview is a marketing tool that guides them to make their own informed decisions. When you sound less like a pushy salesman and more like an expert offering their opinion, this puts consumers' minds at ease.

It would be best if you used sales plugs sparingly within the interview. Ideally, the best spot for them is at the end. Our research shows that most readers skim through informational web pages down until the end, looking for keywords that answer the questions they are looking for, often ignoring the bulk of the text.

However, this isn't to say that you should avoid discussing the benefits of your product or service altogether; in fact, it is far from it! We just mean that you should try *not* to answer questions with a sales goal in mind.

If you answer each question with a "last minute offer never to be seen again," consumers will be put off by your rhetoric, and even worse, your credibility will tank in their eyes, as they will feel you are overtly focused on selling your product rather than participating in the interview in good faith.

Maintain an air of professionalism

BizTech Weekly is a professional publication, and we want to represent that in all of our interviews. When you participate in the interview, try to maintain a level of professionalism you want your prospective customers to see. After all, you are here because you want to establish your trust and expertise in your field.

While we have already gone over, in detail, the mindset you should have when answering the questions, however, most interviewees forget the one central focal point for the entire interview: the thumbnail photo.

The photo you select is critical because that is the photo that will be shown when your interview is shared across the web on social media, blogs, your website, etc. We often hear that you should never judge a book by its cover, but the reality is that people do. It does not matter if it is right, but it does matter, and you should keep that in mind.

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Ideally, your photo should be a professional headshot or your brand's logo. While that vertical orientation bathroom selfie may capture the beauty in your eyes, it will not capture prospective customers. Consumers want to see an image that establishes an inherent affirmation of trust. You do not need to hire a professional photographer, but it certainly wouldn't hurt.

Your thumbnail photo will be the focal point of your entire interview, whether you want it to be or not, so pick one that speaks volumes to your credibility, trustworthiness, and professionalism.

Wrapping it all up

We wrote this guide to be as short and succinct as possible to quickly give you the necessary insights for a successful media interview. This section serves as a recap and quick reference section.



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- A successful interview captures your expertise and builds trust.
- This interview is helpful for those looking to maximize public perception and trust.
- This interview is a marketing tool, not a direct advertisement.
- Rehearse your story, and frame it for your target audience.
- Understand your personal goal for the interview, and visualize yourself as a reader.

Did you meet that goal?

- Use conversational language and avoid overtly technical jargon.
- Keep it succinct and focused. Only answer the questions that would drive the most impact.
- Don't sell too hard, advise.
- Be professional, both with your words and your photo.

And that does it! We hope this guide answered your questions and eased some of the anxiety that comes with an interview. As always, if you have any questions, you can always reach out to us at biztechweekly.com/contact.

BizTech Weekly

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In a rapidly developing world, it's important to stay ahead of the curve when it comes to business and technology. BizTech Weekly is an online magazine that covers the latest advancements in business, technology, and culture. We provide readers with insightful articles and interviews that explore the implications of these developments for both businesses and individuals. Whether you're looking to stay ahead of the competition or simply stay informed, BizTech Weekly is your go-to source for all things business and technology.

With BizTech Weekly, you'll find perfectly summarized articles on the latest business and technology trends, interviews with industry experts, tips and advice on how to use technology to your advantage, and more.

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