

# Campaigning for your Readers Choice Award

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*Strategies for promoting your business to voters.*



# 2017 Readers Choice Awards

For the 22nd year, the Readers Choice Awards continues the tradition of asking readers throughout Eastern Massachusetts to vote for their favorite local businesses. Each year, hundreds of thousands of votes are cast as a way of saying, “thank you,” to the local businesses that serve them throughout the year.

This year, voting began on January 16th and will run until February 15th. Readers will be able to vote by using the ballot found in their local community newspaper or by visiting [ballot.wickedlocalfavorites.com](http://ballot.wickedlocalfavorites.com).



This eBook offers strategies for your business to use so you can reach your community and promote your business to win a Readers Choice award.

From in-store promotions to tweeting out a hashtag, we want your business to have all of the tools necessary to be voted the best in town!



## Social Media Networks

### Facebook

The biggest social media network gives you the best opportunity to reach a large amount of customers with each message.

### Twitter

Twitter offers your business a chance to connect with customers in real-time and promote yourself with short messages.

### Instagram

Instagram gives you the opportunity to share your message, visually, with consumers.

### Periscope

Live streaming videos have become one of the most popular types of digital content. With Periscope, you can showcase live demonstrations or announcements with your customers via video.

## Start With Social!

Social media offers a wide variety of tools to spread your message to customers, and encourage them to vote for your business to win a Readers Choice award.

While all social media networks have different types of audiences, your approach for outreach can be similar. Simply include a **call-to-action** in your voting posts that takes voters directly to the online ballot at [ballot.wickedlocafavorites.com](http://ballot.wickedlocafavorites.com).

You can also create a **hashtag** to build excitement with followers. Make sure to include the official Readers Choice hashtag, **#wickedfavorites**, along with your hashtag. This will let them know that their votes can help your business win.

## Digital Promotion

There are some key digital strategies business owners can turn to when promoting their business as a potential Readers Choice award winner. Here are a few:

### Update Your Website

Update your homepage to include the logo for the Readers Choice Awards with a link to the digital ballot. Incorporate messaging with it to remind visitors to vote for your business.

### Search Engine Marketing (SEM)

Investing in SEM helps put your business at the top of search engine results for keywords related to products and services like yours. This prominent placement makes it easier for users to find your website, and thus see your message reminding them to vote for you.

### Email Marketing

Connect with consumers through email messages. Let them know that the Readers Choice Awards have begun and direct them to the online Readers Choice ballot. Don't forget to encourage them to vote for you.





## Print Promotion

While digital marketing can help bolster votes among online consumers, advertising your business in your local print publication is also a great way to draw attention to your Readers Choice Awards campaign.

### Ballot Boards

Placing advertisements for your business in print, near the Readers Choice ballot, gives you an opportunity to be top-of-mind to voters while they cast their votes. You can remind them of why your business is different from competitors, and promote special events you help organize throughout the year. You can also tout any Readers Choice awards you have won in previous years.

### Reach All Voters

Make sure your print audience is just as well informed about the Readers Choice Awards as your digital audience. Create a marketing strategy that will engage and encourage customers to vote for your business in the Readers Choice Awards across all forms of media.



## In-Store Promotion

While digital and print strategies are key elements to a successful Readers Choice campaign, creating an in-store marketing campaign is another great way to spread your message to customers.

If you've won the Readers Choice Awards in the past, make sure your certificate is prominently on display in your store. Remind your customers, as they checkout, that they can vote for your business by filling out a print or digital ballot.

Spreading your message to in-store shoppers provides a direct way to remind customers to vote for your business, while touting previous awards.



## Take Home The Prize

Throughout this eBook we discussed a variety of strategies to promote your business with Readers Choice voters. The keys to success involve a well rounded campaign across multiple channels:

- Social Media
- Digital Promotion
- Print Promotion
- In-Store Promotion

Spread the word for your business, and make sure your customers know that you need their support to win. When you do win, don't forget to thank your loyal voters.



Visit [www.wickedlocalmediasolutions.com](http://www.wickedlocalmediasolutions.com) for more ideas on how to promote your business or to request a previous Readers Choice certificate.