



FCC Policies for Ocean State Media Underwriting Messages

Underwriting Basics

- All underwriting messages on **Ocean State Media** are regulated by the **Federal Communications Commission (FCC)**.
- The primary purpose is to "**fully and fairly disclose the true identity**" of program funders.
- FCC rules apply **equally to for-profit and nonprofit organizations**.
- Ocean State Media reserves the right to **refuse any underwriting message** that:
 - Violates FCC regulations or station guidelines.
 - Is inconsistent with the station's overall tone, or audience expectations.
- If listeners or viewers raise concerns about an underwriting message, it will be **reviewed by station management**. Final decisions are based on FCC policy and station interpretation.

For the full underwriting language policy, download the [\[PDF here\]](#).

Why These Rules Matter

As a public media organization, **Ocean State Media** follow FCC underwriting guidelines to ensure:

- A **non-commercial, listener-friendly** sound.
- **Transparency and trust** with our audience.
- A unique sponsorship environment that **resonates with public media supporters**.

What Makes a Good Underwriting Message?

A strong message should be:

- **Transparent** – Clearly states the name of the underwriter
 - **Non-promotional** – Focused on brand identity or community values
 - **Respectful of the audience** – Calm, authentic tone expected in public media
 - **Succinct** – Clear and brief, typically 10–30 seconds
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What You Can Say (Permitted Content)

Underwriting announcements **may include**:

- A description of your business using its **legal name**
 - Mention of **up to three** facilities, services, or product lines
 - A **corporate slogan**, if not promotional
 - Your **corporate mission** or **community involvement**
 - Information about an **event you sponsor**
 - **Business age**, e.g., “Serving Rhode Island since 1982”
 - **Web address, phone number, and/or street address**
 - Support for a **nonprofit organization**, with appropriate attribution
 - Use of **value-neutral language**
 - Use of **registered taglines**, if well-established or trademarked
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What You Cannot Say (Prohibited Content)

Underwriting announcements **may not include**:

- **Qualitative or comparative language**
(e.g., “best,” “leading,” “award-winning”)
 - **Calls to action**
(e.g., “Visit our website,” “Call now,” “Come see us today”)
 - **Inducements** to buy, sell, rent, or lease
(e.g., “Free trial,” “Limited time offer,” “Discounted tickets”)
 - **Pricing or value statements**
(e.g., “3.7% APR,” “Complimentary consultation”)
 - **Endorsements or testimonials**
(e.g., “Recommended by doctors,” “Rated 5 stars by customers”)
 - **First- or second-person language**
(e.g., You, your, we, our... “You’ll love it,” “We guarantee satisfaction”)
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Examples of Permitted vs. Prohibited Language

Category	Permitted	Not Permitted
Comparative	“Serving 50 cities.”	“More cities than any other provider.”
Qualitative	“With twenty locations throughout Rhode Island.”	“With twenty convenient locations.”
Pricing	“Information available at [website].”	“3.7% interest now available.”
Calls to Action	“Details at [web address].”	“Call now for more information.”
Inducements	“Tickets go on sale Friday.”	“First 100 tickets are discounted.”

Sample Message

ANYTOWN THEATER GROUP... PRESENTING **THE SESSION EUROPA**, STARTING SEPTEMBER FIRST AND INCLUDING SIX PLAYS. DETAILS AT **ANYTOWN THEATER GROUP DOT ORG.**

Additional Underwriting Policies

- We do not accept messages that promote:
 - **Illicit drugs**
 - **Tobacco**
 - **Firearms**
 - **Political advertising is not accepted.**
 - **Digital underwriting messages** allow for **greater flexibility** (separate standards may apply).
 - All messages are reviewed and approved **in-house by management** prior to airing.
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Policy Updates & Station Rights

Ocean State Media reserves the right to:

- Change or amend its underwriting policies at any time.
 - Implement new guidelines to maintain compliance with FCC regulations.
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Contact

For underwriting questions, contact:

Kim Millette

Director of Corporate Support

Phone: (401) 302-4982

Email: kmillette@oceanstatemedia.org

Ocean State Media

50 Park Lane, Providence, RI 02907