**Current Mission**

The Media Consortium’s mission is to support and grow the impact of the independent media sector.

**Current Vision (too long, not focused enough)**

We believe that independent media—media that are not owned by either multinational corporations or the government--play a vital role in democracy. Independent media are driven by a mission to tell the truth to power. We tell the stories corporate media do not dare to tell.

Media Consortium members seek to inform, educate, and engage citizens in creating the world to which we all aspire. Committed to fact-based journalism, Media Consortium members believe words matter and can spur action.

By supporting member outlets, amplifying their many voices, and leveraging their collective audiences, the Media Consortium aims to grow the influence and visibility of the sector. Our goal is to take back the media from a handful of corporate oligopolies, and restore healthy and vibrant debate to this country.

Minutes, May 3, 2013

Present: Alan, Shay, Sharon, Rory, Steve, Eric, Maya, Lisa,, Maureen

How could we leverage it and grow it into $1 million for the whole field?

--Maybe it’s a cruise? Maybe we invite funders to a cruise and raise money around projects they are really excited about.

Foundations love **matching grants**. Let’s match $500K dollar for dollar, and then create an endowment so we wouldn’t have to be in a begathon.

Would the goal of the **endowment** be to create a fund to regrant to members? Or for the Media Consortium itself? I would want to create a fund for **capacity building** and use the rest for programs that were tangible, to point to impact,, like organizing around **issue-based coverage**.

**Make the Consortium much larger**, where we could incorporate some of these other groups, like community radio, tv, etc. What is the value-add for pre-existing organizations? One answer would be if we have money to give away.

Collaborative efforts give value to the rest of the membership. This money can leverage **matching grants for focused reporting collaborations**; we could hire someone to work with each collaborative group to do more multiplatform work; we could become **packagers of contents** and distribute it to other outlets (like what we did with May Day site). Take packaging off resources of individual outlets.

Help members raise profile, raise klout; Consortium to get percentage of increased revenue?

**Marketing/promotion/communications capacity for the sector** as a whole; plus Research capacity into changing audiences, changing technology, so that we could do better marketing. [Is this research being done by others elsewhere?]

**Revolving line of credit for members**;

**Matching grants with the members;** Consortium puts up $ for every $ raised by partner groups. That would be a way of leveraging member money.

Lens is what will build members. Bringing money and attention to the sector writ large. We need lobbying, pressure group representing independent media. All $$ should funnel up to expanding strength and capacity. Deepen what we are doing already.

What about the training institute? If that provides longer term income, then let’s shore up capacity there.

Collaborations—that is our uniqueness. Joint funding, joint reporting, crossplatform, that is what differentiates us.

We need strategic planning to clarify mission and vision.

**Core Mission?:** Build capacity of individual members; grow the impact/ power of the independent sector

**Big Picture**: Can we position ourselves as a leader and coordinator of all independent outlets? Return American Journalism to its Independent Roots.

Many of the concrete practical things we talked about: health insurance pool, liability insurance, etc. These are things we all need to build capacity. They help us feel more comfortable about continuing to exist.

**Jo Ellen: Network of Networks**

**What really differentiates the Media Consortium from these other associations?**

* Our focus on the independence of our members?
* Bedrock orientation around politics/theory of change/ that is not necessarily shared by other associations, which are more traditional trade associations. We have the advantage of being able to talk in straight language about what we think about. Other associations can’t do that. It’s a huge difference and advantage to the Consortium;

When I use the term independence and collaboration it is not just about a process, but to make impact, to further progressive values. If we are doing the journalistic work of informing audiences, and if we are inspiring them, then the idea is that there is a social change/progressive result.

Independence—why?-- so that we are unfettered to do the muckraking and principled partnerships with advocacy groups and to think about movement building.

This is our vision statement. Our mission is building capacity, but our vision is around this theory of change—how we see the work that we are doing, and the purpose of the work that we are doing.

Muckraking/ activism

We need to do both. We can do both, and we should present it that way. Different Consortium members have different ways of resolving that tension between the two. WE are coming around to an environment where the idea of objectivity is not the holy grail of journalism (see Jay Rosen). If you look at journalism 100 years ago, most of it was engaged in creating social change.

Formulate an argument: you can do journalism that is fact-based, accurate, transparent, and you can also connect to activism. We are not a political organization. But if there is that component, we won’t shy away from it.

There is a virtue in presenting ourselves as not objective in the way mainstream media too often presents itself. Not he said she said journalism. **We are objecting, not objective**.

People mistake a political agenda for being partisan. But we are often as hard on left as right. **We can do progressive and non-partisan**. Our goal is to be non-partisan, and we can do that while being agenda driven and working for social change and working for the **public interest**. We need to work hard to not speak to our own choir.