Coordinating Committee

July 5, 2013

Time: 10am PT/ 1pm ET

Call in Info: 424-203-8075, Access Code: 519956#

Present: Jo Ellen, Eric, Lisa, Alan, Sharon, Maureen, Steve

Absent: Shay, Maya, Rory,

NEXT MEETING WILL BE FRIDAY August 2 at 10 PT/ 1 ET

AGENDA for this meeting:

1. General Check-in; Questions on Report (below)?

2. Build a Vision statement. See next page.

Bracket for next meeting?

Issuing Statements on Policy

Should we create a policy on issue statements so that we can take faster action? As we work more closely with advocates, it becomes increasingly important to be able to support their media-related policy positions. This may raise a larger discussion around whether it is finally time to become an independent organization, and whether that should be a 501c3 or 501c6.

**Mission Statement**

The Media Consortium’s mission is to support and grown the impact of independent news organizations.

**Vision Statement**:

**Reliable source** of information that takes a stand on issues that are in the public interest. As a result of the reporting, there is change—it’s the type of reporting that **compels change**. Not just highlighting the problem but working towards solutions. Solutions are a stimulant to hope, and hope is a propellant to take action.

What’s unique about working together? The vision will look similar to the outlets, but there is something more—the **collective, coordinated synergy** that creates more impact together. We are transparent with each other—we serve the public interest—goal is to get the information out to the public.

We are succeeding if the **range of opinions and voices that are heard in public discourse** is far broader than it currently is. Strengthen sector and give us a much greater capacity to be heard in the halls of power and where people live, because what gets heard now is so narrowly construed. We are not just interested in getting the attention of the rich and powerful.

Intervention in a broken public discourse. Functioning democratic society—given the context in which we all operate.

Critical alternatives to what is, and critical of what is proposed as well. Be as inquisitive of solutions—to chew the solutions through. That is what is different about journalism from PR on the left.

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The Media Consortium is an association of journalism-based outlets, committed to producing content that is fact-based, accurate, and transparent. Our members are non-partisan and work for the public interest. Unlike 20th century journalists, however, neither the Media Consortium itself nor our members pretend to objectivity.

Our theory of change lies in drawing a line between information and action. We define our mission both as informing audiences and inspiring audiences to act upon that information, whether that means providing story-based solutions or connecting audiences to activists. Our largest vision is to foster democracy by giving members of the community the tools they need to foster and promote long-lasting social change.

As you think about the vision statement, you might want to take a look at a few articles:

David Carr, NYTimes, June 30, 2013: Journalism, even when it’s tilted

[**http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/01/business/media/journalism-is-still-at-work-even-when-its-practitioner-has-a-slant.html?pagewanted=all&\_r=0**](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/01/business/media/journalism-is-still-at-work-even-when-its-practitioner-has-a-slant.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0)

The notion of journalist as political and ideological eunuch seems silly, even to some who call themselves journalists.

Jeff Cohen, Common Dreams, June 26, 2013 Snowden Coverage

[**http://www.commondreams.org/view/2013/06/26-0**](http://www.commondreams.org/view/2013/06/26-0)

The truth is that many of the greatest journalists in our country’s history—from [Ida B. Wells to I.F. Stone](https://www.commondreams.org/view/2008/11/14-0" \t "_blank) —were accurate reporters of fact, but hardly dispassionate.

Also think about how we differ from INN, which just hired a data reporter to help members coordinate around data-driven stories. I think the difference is precisely around solutions, activism, point of view…

[**http://www.niemanlab.org/2013/07/monday-qa-denise-malan-on-the-new-data-driven-collaboration-between-inn-and-ire/**](http://www.niemanlab.org/2013/07/monday-qa-denise-malan-on-the-new-data-driven-collaboration-between-inn-and-ire/)

**Table of Contents w/Highlights**

**I. Financial Report (see attached P/L)**-Lost first CJTI client; on budget

**II. Development Report-**new potential 2014 grant with SEE Innovation

**III. Membership Report-**Report on Netroots

**IV. CJTI-**Working on Market Analysis via Catchafire

**V. Misc Initiatives-**Intern onboard

**VI. Projects-Labs**

**VII. Projects-Editorial Collaborations**

**I. Financial Report**

**Financial Report thru May 29 attached. 2013 Budget updated and attached.**

External Revenue--Expected

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Amount** | **Notes** |
| Membership Dues | $25,000 | Dues letters have gone out (14K in 2013; 10K in winter 2012) |
| Non-Member Reg | $785 | Non-member registration for annual meeting @$250/ |
| Sponsorships | $0 | We did get a sponsorship from the Better Paper Project |
| Lab Fees | 1,000 | Mobile II Lab planned |
| CJTI | 0 | “Sure bet” client fell through when CEO died suddenly ; not sure if we will get revenue in 2013; working hard at developing clients—4-5 prospects |
| Trivia Contest | 0 | Working on starting a sponsored trivia contest for 2014; soft launch via FB in July; launch on contest website aimed for late fall, after we work out kinks, get sponsors |
| **Total** | **$26,785** |  |

**Bottom Line:** We are running tight for 2013 at our reduced expense level. We definitely have $$ through November. December may be tricky. I’m starting to work on 2014.

**II. Development Report 2013**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grants in Hand 2013** | **Amount** | **Restricted?** | **Notes** |
| Wallace Global | $30,000 | No | $28,900 to salary/expenses |
| Metrics, various | $75,000 | Yes | $22.500 to salary/expenses |
| MDF-MPREP | $30,000 | Yes | $15,000 to salary/expenses |
| MDF-NCMR | $10,000 | Yes | 0 to salary/expenses |
| Quixote-RJP | $30,000 | Yes | $4500 to salary/expenses |
| **Total In Hand** | **$145,000** |  | **$70,900 to TMC salary/overhead** |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Grants Expected 2013** | **Amount** | **Restricted?** | **Notes** |
| Metrics, various | $69,000 | Yes | 0 to salary/expenses |
| **Total Expected** | **$69,000** |  | **0 to TMC salary/overhead** |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Grants in Progress 2014** | **ASK** | **Restricted?** | **Notes** |
| WDN | 250,000 | Yes | $75K to salary/expenses; hire second person; Rollout following RJP Pilot, if successful |
| Garfield Foundation | 50,000 | Yes | $10K to salary/expenses; Via SEE Innovation—Environmental Journalism internship program + regranting |
| Wallace Global | 30,000 | No | 28,900 to salary/expenses |
| MDF | 30,000 | Yes | 10K to salary/expenses |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Total Possible** | **$360,000** |  | **$124 to TMC salary/overhead** |

External Revenue Expected 2014

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Amount** | **Notes** |
| Membership Dues | $30,000 |  |
| Non-Member Reg | $2500 | Non-member registration for annual meeting @$250/ |
| Sponsorships | $2000 | We did get a sponsorship from the Better Paper Project |
| Lab Fees | 1,000 |  |
| CJTI | 10,000 | Break-even year but aim to cover project management cosgts |
| Trivia Contest | 3000 | Weekly contest, $50 sponsorship fee to start, gradually rising to $100 or more with audience growth |
| **Total** | **$48,500** |  |

**Development Report Narrative:**

**Foundations:** The number of large foundations in the progressive news media space continues to decrease, so we are turning our strategy towards issue-focused foundations. This meshes well with our emphasis on impact via issue-based collaborations. If the Reproductive Justice pilot is successful, it will provide a model for other collaborations. I am going to make a special effort to reach out to labor, environment groups in the next few months.

A two-year conversation with Tyson Miller of SEE Innovation may be paying off; he’s including us in a very large grant request to the Garfield Foundation around environmental reporting, specifically paid internships and perhaps some regrants. Fingers crossed.

**Major Donors**: Thanks to CC members and others for helping to train me in working with major donors. While I have begun to be approached by major donors, I don’t think they will be at the heart of our fundraising.

**Fundraising**: The Development Committee is focused on two efforts:

* **implementing the collaborative fundraiser in 2014**

It has become apparent that we don’t currently have enough volunteer energy for the collaborative fundraiser, even though there is a strong desire to continue it. Jo Ellen is thus seeking an intern or on-spec freelancer willing to develop sponsors for the collaborative fundraiser—we need to raise $10-15K to make the fundraiser work.

* **Identifying a source of general support revenue for TMC: trivia contest**

The committee has looked into an auction, sweepstakes, raffle and other instruments. All are problematic. However, Jo Ellen now believes we may have some success with a weekly trivia contest underwritten by a sponsor. The trivia contest would direct the public to gather info from TMC members around a particular topic (e.g. drones, fracking, etc). Contest winner might get a free subscription or a book. Jo Ellen will use an intern to implement this idea over the summer.

**Development Committee members are:**

Lisa Rudman, Making Contact, CHAIR

Miles Kampf-Lassin, ITT

Jessica Diamond, Yes!

Kim-Jenna Juriaans, IPS

Zach Carter, Gregpalast.com**III. TMC Membership Report**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | June 2013 | Dec 2012 | Δ Dec 2012-present |
| Starting # | 67 | 60 | 7 |
| New Members | 0 | 4 |  |
| Dropped Members | 0\* | 0 |  |
| Total Members | 67 | 64 | 3 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **New Members** | 0 |  |
| **Dropped Members** | 0 |  |

Good news. WIN is back with us and planning to actually pay dues! They came to our Netroots event.

The Netroots event cost $800 for 20 people, which equals $40/person, yet I think it had a good ROI. We had representatives from Alternet/ Raw Story (roxanne), American Prospect, Brave New Films, Care2, LA Progressive, The Nation, News Taco, Truthout, WIN, and Yes! show up—especially nice to see BNF, The Nation and WIN there—it brought them closer to the fold. Also Peter Leyden showed up, which is good for us.

Applied for membership: Kosmos, Raw Story,

Inquired re: Membership: Bioneers, media mobilizing project

**Membership Committee Members are:**

Christa Hillstrom, Yes! **CHAIR**

Andrew Stelzer, Making Contact

Brian Stewart, Campus Progress

Shay Totten, Communications Director, Chelsea Green

On Family Leave:

Liz DiNovella, The Progressive

IV. **The Community Journalism Training Institute**

**Clients**

Literally days before we signed a contract with Common Cause, Bob Edgar died, and we were back to square one. It would have been a $30K contract. The contract isn’t lost, but probably will be in stasis until 2014.

I am developing a number of other leads. Will be more specific when they move from being leads to prospects.

**Business Planning**

I invested $2250 in Catchafire. We have our first consultant, a market analyst. With him, I am creating a more sophisticated analysis of our potential market, which will include doing 20 client interviews. Will keep you up to date—most of this work will happen in July/August.

Website: [www.cjti.org](http://www.cjti.org)

Catchafire membership: market analysis, pitch deck intensive, financial modeling

**V. Miscellaneous Initiatives**

**Interns:** I have recruited an intern, Rosanna Chiu. She will focus on researching and creating the proposal for a tv show (see below); creating a weekly trivia content (see development) and helping me come up with a better strategy for managing TMC’s social media. If I get another intern, I will also set them to working on a monthly newsletter.

**Office Space**: I have signed an agreement to rent a desk at the offices of SF Public Press for 3 months, at a cost of $300/mo. If TMC is to have interns, we must have office space. This space is centrally located at Van Ness and Market, disabled accessible, and staffed 8-9 hours a day by SF Public Press. They also are very generous about sharing resources, and will provide a great working environment even if I can’t be “in the house” myself.

**Network of Networks**: I arranged a dinner on May 28 for the heads of all the independent news organizations, including INN, AAN, ACM, NFCB, AIR, NAM, NAMAC, Youth Radio. My report is attached.

**TV Show:** I have been approached by no fewer than 3 companies about creating a Media Consortium TV show. This 30-60 minute show would be something like 60 minutes—Split into 1-4 segments independently produced by outlets (presumably with help/funding). It would possibly include intersitital segments and would definitely include professional hosts to provide connective tissue. My interest in these conversations has focused on the following:

1. How would content be produced? I am only interested if such a show would increase the capacity of our outlets to create video, which means providing funding and expertise.
2. How would content be branded? It is critical that content from an outlet carries that brand.
3. How would content be distributed? A show would be a great way to reach a new audience and influence decision-makers, but whether it can do those things depends in part on how it is distributed.
4. How would content be promoted? See #3.

**Break-Thru News**: I have been talking to Patrick Kitano, the founder of this social media aggregator, about using it to push TMC content to a wider audience.

**Newsfunders.org**: I have signed on as an official advisor to this crowdsourcing concept. To be honest, I don’t know that it has legs, but I want to get us in at the ground floor if it does.

**Tools for Members**

The relationships I am building with INN and AAN are beginning to bear fruit:

**Liability Insurance.** INN has offered to extend their liability insurance to Media Consortium members in good standing. INN underwriters are presently reviewing TMC materials; we expect to be able to offer insurance by the summer.

**C-Xense**. AAN is working with C-xense to develop a progressive news ad network. Yes, again. But this time it may work. C-xense is driven by context-computing, so it delivers ads based on what users are most likely to want to see. Every publisher in the network can specify what types of ads they want and where. See <http://www.cxense.com/cXad.html>

AAN will run the network for a 10% cut. Three TMC publishers are running now as a test case.

**Content Management System.** AAN has also created a content management system to allow their members to share content. Tiffany at AAN is working with me to configure this system for our editorial collaborations. This will enable us to create large collaborations that work for each individual outlet.

Plus I have been doing my own work, following up on a number of initiatives:

**Video Player**: Media Consortium Playlists

I also have been approached by One Screen, which makes a video player/ platform very much like YouTube. I have brought this concept to the members and Steven Oh of TYT is following up. The benefits over YouTube are the following:

1. Outlet controls ad delivery and can monetize content
2. Outlets can use content from TMC members who also are on OneScreen and have given permission—for example, for a story on fracking, you could pick up pieces on fracking done by the Young Turks, or by Mother Jones (if they were using OneScreen and gave permission).
3. Any TMC outlet or the Media Consortium itself could create a playlist of TMC content on OneScreen (if permission to share was given) and thus have continuous video content and be able to cross promote content.

OneScreen main revenue comes from charging .25-$1 per CPM for use of the video player (cost depending largely on length of video). If OneScreen serves advertising, it takes 20% of the ad revenue—but users don’t have to use OneScreen’s ad service.

**Vocus PR Database**: Thanks to the work of Susan Gleason (Yes!), Vocus offered TMC a subscription to its professional PR database and is allowing TMC to act as an agency and offer use of the database to its members/clients. 10 TMC outlets have signed on this year. We are charging them a fee based on type of use. The fee is set to defray the cost of the database, and not to drive revenue for TMC. If it turns out that TMC staff must spend a considerable amount of time managing the use of this database, then in subsequent years we will build in the cost of TMC staff into the fees.

VI. **Project Report: Incubation and Innovation Labs**

**Long Form Journalism Lab.** The long form journalism lab finished. We were not able to do a case study, but The Progressive used the learning from the lab to launch their first ebook.

**The Metrics Lab** is invisible, I know, but it is actually underway. The researchers are currently getting baseline information. They expect to start the experimental phase in July.

Designed to measure whether collaborative reporting and simultaneously publication have a measurable impact on the social mediasphere, this project will not only track but qualitatively categorize every tweet and facebook post in 2013 (via Crimson Hexagon’s powerful engine). Social media content will be compared to Media Consortium member outlet content to see if our content moves the dial. All Media Consortium members will participate in this project, being run jointly by TMC and Harvard Professor Gary King.

**The Mobile II Lab** got a headstart with an in-depth presentation by PEJ ‘s Acting Director Amy Mitchell on mobile demographics. This lab, conducted jointly with AAN, will look at strategic planning for mobile, focusing on audience surveys and matching content to devices. Plans are for the lab to begin in summer of 2013.

**A Database Integration Lab** emerged from the annual meeting. The aim is to find an API or other solution that would merge subscription, membership, donor, and social media/comment data for each unique contact, with the aim of allowing an outlet to develop a deeper relationship with each contact. I am working on an LOI with Phillip Smith.

**VI. Project Report: Editorial Collaboration**

**The Media Policy Reporting and Education Project** (MPREP) moved into its third year by hosting former FCC commissioner Michael Copps as the plenary speaker at the Consortium’s annual meeting, followed by a panel of experts from Free Press, Public Knowledge and Common Cause. MPREP reporters met at NCMR for a special workshop on connecting media policy to other issues. The Consortium will continue to hold monthly policy briefings as well, with the net effect of training an additional 10 journalists and producing up to 75 new pieces on media policy issues.

**Participants:** Emily Crockett, Campus Progress; Ken Rapoza, In These Times; George Lavender, Andrew Steltzer and Salima Hamirani, Making Contact; Jesse Luna, News Taco; Leticia Miranda, the Nation; Mark Scheerer, Public News Service; Mike Ludwig, Truthout; Nick Coleman, The Uptake plus Sue Capsal, KGNU in coordination with NFCB.

**Briefings:**

March 19, Olivia Wien (NCLC): End of Landlines

April 5-7, NCMR: Special Workshop for Journalists

May 24, Christopher Mitchell, Google Fiber and Community Broadband

June 19, Sarah Morris: Hearings on FCC Nominee

**Reproductive Justice Reporting Project**

**The Reproductive Justice Project** got off the ground at our Baltimore meeting. This project will bring together alternative weeklies and national outlets to share reporting on focused reproductive justice topics. The aim of the collaborative is to push out stories simulutaneously for increased impact. TMC outlets participating include: RHRC Ms. Magazine, Bitch magazine, Feministing.com, the Women’s Media Center, Making Contact, American Independent News Network, Rabble.ca, GritTV, In These Times, and Mother Jones. We received funding and are now launching this pilot project with RHRC, Ms., Bitch, Making Contact, In These Times and PNS.

**The Extreme Energy Project** will use AAN’s content management system to pool reporting and resources, including video and audio resources, share editorial schedules, and plan crosspromotions with each other and advocacy groups, in order to increase the reach and impact of stories. TMC outlets participating include: Earth Island Journal, Specialty Studios, LinkTV, Care2, Chelsea Green Publishers, Making Contact, and Truthout.

**Potential Projects**

**Labor Reporting and Education Project**

Same idea as MPREP but focused on labor issues. Funding from unions.

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**Environmental Reporting Project**

Ditto, but we would collaborate with SEEE.

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**Health Care Reporting Project**

Would love to set up a third Reporting Project as well, possibly on Health Care.

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**Create an Annual Most Significant Impact Award.** This year, the Media Consortium held a contest for most impact in 2012. Seventeen outlets submitted; five were chosen. The results were inspiring—in 2012, Media Consortium outlets had a measurable impact on the 2012 presidential election (Mother Jones’ 47% video), immigration reform (Colorlines), gay rights (American Prospects), student debt (Washington Monthly) and stockholder activism (Berrett-Koehler). The award event is currently be made into a video.