Coordinating Committee

September 6, 2013

Time: 10am PT/ 1pm ET

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

Present: Jo Ellen, Sharon, Maya, Eric, Rory, Shay, Lisa,

Absent: Steve, Alan, Maureen

NEXT MEETING WILL BE FRIDAY October 4, 2013 at 10 PT/ 1 ET

1. **General Check-in**

2. **Annual Meeting**

There was vigorous discussion about the schedule which was not completely resolved.

Thurs Feb 27: pre-meeting workshops, or does conference begin on Thursday?

Thursday Feb 27: Opening Reception 7-9

Friday Feb 28: Conference 9-4 and Party! 7:30-10:00

Sat March 1: Conference ends at 1pm (after lunch)

Sat March 1: Strategic Planning starts 3-6pm

Sun March 2: Strategic Planning 9-4

Several members voiced objections to using the word “pre-meeting.” Members also voiced objections to having members pay for “pre-meeting workshops.” Members did like the idea of creating more open space and “working group” opportunities. Finally, Cc members suggested we now call our event a conference.

We need to have more discussion about the pre-meeting workshop idea. Jo Ellen asked if discussion could take place online, so we could get to strategic planning.

3. **Strategic Planning**

The CC authorized me to begin a strategic planning process, modeled generally on the Berrett-Koehler planning process.

The problem to be solved: We need to find a way to sustainability, and that requires deciding what we are: a trade association that represents independent, mostly progressive outlets or a mission-driven organization that advocates for the progressive independent news sector.

The process:

* A steering committee of 15 people will be formed to guide the planning process. This committee will consist of key TMC stakeholders as well as members.
* Sept-October. Steering committee will first seek to frame the question by conducting focus groups with stakeholders to determine how TMC is seen by those within and outside the organization. This will help define the problem of definition and sustainability
* October (last week). Steering committee will then frame the question, and send a survey to TMC members for initial responses
* November-December. Steering committee will begin researching answers to the framing question. This may require breaking into workgroups.
* January-February. Steering committee will turn research into a draft strategic plan, a plan that answers the fundamental question asked in October.
* March 1-2. At an in-person meeting, stakeholders will dig into the draft plan, looking for flaws and making positive recommendations.
* March-April. Steering committee will draft a final plan.
* May 2. CC will be asked to vote on final plan.

Throughout this process, the steering committee will send monthly newsletter to TMC members, keeping members informed about the committee’s progress.

Committee is in formation and currently includes:

Jo Ellen Green Kaiser, TMC E.D.

Steve Katz, FNP representative/ TMC member (print, large budget)

Alan Searle, CC co-chair (radio, mid-size budget)

Maya Schenwar, CC co-chair (digital, mid-size budget)

Johanna Vondeling, BK (book, large budget, led their strategic planning process)

Josh Stearns, Free Press (staff) and Freedom of the Press Foundation (board) (policy ally)

Tiffany Shackleford, E.D., Association Alternative Newsweeklies (sister association)

Gregg Zachary, Walter Conkrite Professor, U. Arizona (academic, journalist)

**Stakeholders we need to bring onto the committee:**

Funder—policy areas

Funder—journalism

TMC member (small budget)

TMC member (video and/or film)

TMC member or potential member (international)

Second Academic or observer of “future of journalism”

Second progressive policy person

**Plus, as we bring on committee members, we need people of color and people whose outlets /organizations reach audiences of color**

**Table of Contents w/Highlights**

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**I. Financial Report**

**Financial Report thru July 31 attached. 2014 Proposed Budget attached.**

External Revenue--Expected

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Amount** | **Notes** |
| Membership Dues | $25,000 |  |
| 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 | Performing marketing analysis |
| Trivia Contest | 0 | Dormant idea |
| **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 2014** | **Amount** | **Restricted?** | **Notes** |
| Metrics, various | $69,000 | Yes | 0 to salary/expenses |
| Wallace Global | 50,000 | No | 46,500 to salary/expenses |
| **Total Expected** | **$119,000** |  | **$46,500 to TMC salary/overhead** |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Grants in Process** | **Amount** | **Restricted?** | **Notes** |
| WDN | 250,000 | Yes | $75K to salary/expenses; hire second person; Rollout following RJP Pilot, if successful |
| MDF | 30,000 | Yes | 10K to salary/expenses |
| **Total Possible** | **$280,000** |  | **$85 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 | $2500 |  |
| Lab Fees | 1,000 |  |
| CJTI | 10,000 | Break-even year but aim to cover project management cosgts |
| **Total** | **$46,000** |  |

**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.

Tyson Miller’s grant request to Garfield failed. We will look for another way to fund environmental initiatives.

**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 dormant right now

**Development Committee members are:**

Lisa Rudman, Making Contact, CHAIR

Miles Kampf-Lassin, ITT

Kim-Jenna Juriaans, IPS

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

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Aug 2013 | Dec 2012 | Δ Dec 2012-present |
| Starting # | 66 | 60 | 6 |
| New Members | 2 | 4 |  |
| Dropped Members | 1 | 0 |  |
| Total Members | 68 | 64 | 4 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **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.

New Members: Kosmos, Toward Freedom

Raw Story and Center for Media and Democracy have begun application process

**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**

**Business Planning**

I invested $2250 in Catchafire. We have our first consultant, Justin Hendrix, a market analyst. With him, I am creating a more sophisticated analysis of our potential market, which will include doing 20 client interviews.

We have interviewed 5 potential clients already. There is clearly some need, but we are still trying to get a handle on what, precisely, clients will pay to get. Justin tells me we must bring in $1 million in revenue for CJTI to support TMC.

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

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

**V. Miscellaneous Initiatives**

**Interns/ Communications Associate:** Rosanna Chiu just finished her internship. She really improved traffic on our facebook page. I’ve decided we can’t go without a communications associate, so I am in the process of hiring a 10 hour a week person to keep our facebook updated, send out a regular newsletter, and update our website.

**Office Space**: I have let the lease on 44 Page lapse. I wasn’t using the space, and would rather spend the money on a communications associate.

**Network of Networks**: This group continues monthly meetings.

**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.

**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**

**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.

**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

July , Sanjay Jolly, Prometheus Radio: LPFM opportunities

Sept 10, Rashad Robinson, amalia deloney, Jennifer Yeh, Bartees Cox: Net Neutrality Case

Oct : Josh Stearns: TV Broadcast Consolication (the Sinclair buy)

Oct: : Tracy Rosenberg, Andrea Quijada: Media Literacy Education

**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.

**Pilot Project:** Ms., Bitch, Making Contact, In These Times and PNS, along with 5 AAN outlets, are participating in a pilot project. The launch date is October 7.

**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.