Josh Stearns

TMC as a coordinating body has been an engine for ideas that often develop from the members—it’s the ability to facilitate and build relationships between members, so that we can take the members’ ideas and make them happen. Even the failures have been valuable.

* Content curation and amplification network (wire service)
* Ad Network
* Support Your Media Day

That feels unique, but is also ridiculously hard to fund, because it is not top-down. It’s very grassroots and about making a place for experimentation and facilitation.

There are really natural connections between the members but they don’t happen naturally. They don’t occur without hard work. I don’t know of another group that does that for the sector that we serve.

Communications—having a safe place where people can seed discussion via listserv, briefings, conferences—it’s hard to quantify that, but it’s critical. I watched the Media Reform Consortium disappear, and I feel the absence.

Use Columbia University study language—post-industrial ecosystem, when the future of journalism is much more networked, those ligaments that hold everything together are so much more important than they’ve ever been before.

Especially for smaller organizations—they lack what holds and protects journalism.

AAN

While Altweeklies have been seen as liberal or progressive, they are not. Alternative really defines them. For the Media Consortium, independent is the best descriptor. A merger of alternative and independent could make sense.

Future?

If members can’t articulate what is missing, that is a problem

When Consortium is strongest, it’s when you have editorial collaborations that have their own brand, like Occupy May Day/ Media for the 99%. Those efforts make the whole bigger than the parts. There is an opportunity like one I saw at Campus Compact—we’d get a $2 million grant and give 70% back to the network, and paint the big picture, and show how our facilitation would put the pieces together and show that it would have more impact as a sum of the parts. There’s an opportunity to look at corporate underwriting for that.

Or, the opposite of that. Members are doing a vast amount of work, and pull it together into ebooks, for example, gun violence in America.

Best practices around storytelling and impact—standards

Tapping into the democratic dialogue space, especially around complex issues. How can TMC help facilitate dialogues by bringing together TMC journalists into town halls to move meaningful, deep dialogue with the issues, rooted in journalism but not the journalism itself. How do we build community around the news—how do we make space for public discourse? Model like Radio Lab—national program that brings in revenue by doing events around the country. Tour on poverty