Progressive Media Wire Project

Impact, Evaluation, Next Steps
February 10, 2009
Going to review the agenda quickly, then we’ll be off and running.

II. What are the Media Wires/Project overview
- Review goals and strategy of project
- Give overview of newsladder platform

III. Current Activity and Initiatives-Blogs, Social Media, Ads and more

IV. Success to Date.
We’ll also look at a traffic snapshot for January and go over projections through June.

V. What’s Next? Goals for next 6 months, what you can do.

VI. Questions/Feedback

Make sure people know they can jump in and ask questions
## Agenda

**Overview of Project**
- Goals
- Platform
- How it works
- Benefits

**Current Activity / Initiatives**

**Success to Date**

**What’s Next?**

**Questions / Feedback**
The driving inspiration for the media wires project was find a way to support YOUR WORK and distribute it to new and untapped audiences.

Two strategies:
1.) aggregate your content via newsladder.net
2.) provide round ups promoting that content using new media distribution tools such as blogs and social networking platforms to push it out

This project’s ultimate goal is to provide a platform that:
(again, increases awareness and influence of YOUR content and the progressive media sector, drive traffic to your sites, move your content to new audiences and archive your content around key issues.) We’re working to frame this project as a sort of progressive digg—where content is organized by issue.

To tell you a little more about NewsLadder:
It’s a distribution that exists to distribute content outward (as it's all consolidated around an issue)
Here, content resides on the hub but functions as a mechanism to distribute more efficiently outward (as it's all consolidated around an issue). Not about competing – but about a platform for distribution...

Users can post stories

Users can post stories, vote and comment on what they think is important

You can post content

Submit through the site… Or…

Use Ladder Up! Toolbar tool

NewsLadder team aggregates and posts TMC member content EVERY DAY.

Aggregated across TMC sites (RSS feeds, Yahoo! Pipes, daily site review) Content team reviews against 501c3 guidelines (If needed: the 501c3 guidelines stipulate that since this project is sponsored by a non-profit entity, it cannot provide specific endorsements of political parties or members, nor can it advocate or lobby causes. These wires are journalistic in intent for legal reasons.

Content team posts to appropriate / relevant NewsLadder Site— including non-TMC NewsLadders like OurTroops, Iraq, Justice, etc.
Here’s a little animation that sums up how the project works
Key Benefits

- **The collection of sites builds a strong distribution platform that:**
  - Builds TMC member influence by extending content new and targeted audiences
  - Facilitates content and audience sharing among TMC members
  - Increases traffic and incremental readership via:
    - Focused content: Wires function as ‘the’ journalistic hub on key issues
    - Natural search friendly
    - Efficient distribution of content (new media tools, outreach, social networks)
  - Requires almost no TMC member effort for maximum benefit
    - We Leverage & Extend Existing TMC Member Content
Agenda

Overview of Project

Current Activity / Initiatives
- Blog Outreach
- Partnerships
- Tools of the trade
- Social Networking
- Enewsletter

Success to Date

What's Next?

Questions / Feedback
Intro Zach and Lindsay

These purpose of these blogs is to curate and contextualize your content—while also cultivating new audiences, We’re providing snappy, easy to read directories of topics that people want to know more about. Our bloggers are all very knowledgeable of their fields and are doing a great job contextualizing your work as part of a powerful progressive media movement.

We’ve developed relationships with leading progressive websites (like Huffington Post) and are publishing these roundups across the blogosphere. You can pick up the blog posts from the MC listserv Tues-Thurs, where we publish them in HTML—so you can just copy and paste from your email. You can also get these posts from the new MC website at www.themediaconsortium.org/consortium-report (share address) We’ll talk more about that and the one-on-one partnerships we’re building with non-profit organizations and thinktanks later on.

You can also blog about top-ranking newsladder content on your own site—which would help increase a cross-pollination of audiences and expand the reach of this project.
While we’re still working on making tracking more efficient, here’s what we do know:

Huffington Post: Content is regularly featured on Business and Media Sites. John McCain content was featured on election page.

TPM Café
One of their top 20 cafe blogs. The Media Consortium’s articles got almost 1800 unique pageviews in January

DailyKos:
Commenters are active and definitely paying attention to our work.

We’ve updated our tracking abilities as of last week, so we will be able to provide more thorough and accurate reporting by the end of this month.
As I said earlier, we’re also working on one-on-one partnerships with immigration, healthcare, economic-focused blogs, orgs, and think tanks to pick up and distribute blog posts. These listed organizations are interested in implementing this project, or already have.

All of these contacts were generated by MC members. It’s an organizing process—lots of phone calls and follow up. Over all feeling is that people are very interested and excited by this project. It’s a tremendous way for our sector to engage likeminded partners.

Here are some of the commitments we’ve gotten so far:
The Student-Farmworker Alliance is hosting the widgets and blogs.
Center for Health and Gender Equity is interested in helping build a reproductive health subladder—but we’ll talk more about that later.
The National Council for Research on Women is currently hosting the widgets, and we’re working on a strategy to roll these tools out to their network of more than 100 U.S. research, advocacy, and policy centers.
Young People For is interested in hosting the blogs and widgets.
OneAmerica plans to begin hosting the blogs and Immigration widgets.
WhiteHouse2 is featuring RSS feeds from the NewsLadders on its discussion pages. You’ll see a screenshot in a moment.

Organizing efforts really ramped up following the holidays, so expect more good news to come.
Tools of the trade

How else are we increasing your content’s reach?
Tools of the trade

How else are we increasing your content’s reach?

Twitter

Follow the Media Wires on Twitter
Twitter feeds are available for every Media Wire
Re-Tweet when a blog post goes up.
Twitter followers are growing—we’re at approximately 250 followers now for our sponsored ladders.
WIDGETS!
Here’s an example of the Widgets at work on LinkTV’s current event’s site. We’ve just launched an improved tracking system for widgets and should have a good snapshot on this content next month. Widgets are easy to implement and available in flash and java, in multiple sizes. They are very popular among our non-profit partners, who see them as the perfect way to help inform their audiences.
RSS!
We also have RSS feeds that can be fed into your site to fit your design specs. Tracking on these links is also up and running.
Our FaceBook page and applications are helping connect your content to new audiences. WAITING FOR APPLICATION STATS FROM MAX

You can work with these tools to self promote:

**Facebook**

- Become a fan
- Become an Admin
- Post your content
  - Events
  - YouTube clips
- Send a message

Add the Facebook application to your profile for your friends to see and use. The applications are by far the easiest way to participate in this project: adding them to a page or profile is just a matter of clicks.
Here are the Facebook apps in action on your pages.
These other efforts make up a smaller percentage of our overall strategy, but are helping cultivate an audience and reputation for this content.

Paid Search,
We’re investing smartly in paid search to help boost the awareness and audience of this product for people that are already looking for this information.
We’re also in the process of applying for a google grant for 10,000 of advertising a month, which could exponentially boost our traffic and the project’s reach. We should know about this by March.

Enewsletter Promotions
While small, these lists are growing, and are encouraging repeat visits to the ladders—and TMC content by extension. And even though this is a small list, the CTRs are strong.
Agenda

Overview of Project

Current Activity / Initiatives

Success to Date
  - What is success?
  - Traffic

What’s Next?

Questions / Feedback
And the 4th factor? Member participation. We need your help to make sure that this project has an impact. The success of this project hinges on collaboration amongst MC members and the resulting cross-pollination of audiences. We'll talk more about how you can opt in later on.
We’ve been struggling to map the impact and traffic for this project and implemented new measurement tools that will track blog pageviews and clicks, rss, facebook and widget clicks as well. January also marked a recovery from the holidays and the downswing of McCain related traffic. This is part of a process and we are confident that numbers will perk up beginning this month.

Each month, we’re analyzing what does and doesn’t work in our promotional approaches to this project.

While we are still solidifying our tracking abilities (we just recently launched a redirect that will make it easier to see what stories are most popular on the blogs and widgets), we do know that traffic is growing and will continue to do so as more and more organizations and individuals use the widgets and rss feeds.

Based on our growth from Dec-Jan (Post John McCain Dropoff), we’re hoping to incrementally increase member clicks across the existing newsladders by 1670/month at bare minimum.
As I said before, our Dec. drop off was due to John McCain and the holidays. Here’s our projected traffic growth for TMC sponsored ladders through June. This is a conservative estimate and is based on our growth of about 5,000 page views from Dec. to Jan.
Agenda

Overview of Project

Current Activity / Initiatives

Success to Date

What’s Next?
  - Goals for Next 6 Months
  - Opting In
  - Exchange Ads
  - Video

Questions / Feedback
Goals for Next 6 Months

- Ramp up traffic using multi-pronged approach
- Continue to build out partnerships with like-minded organizations
- Develop new wires
- FaceBook Connect
- DIGG BUTTON (WAITING FOR SCREENSHOT FROM CAITLIN)

WORK OUT YOUR TALKING POINTS HERE.

-develop new wires. Sustain is ours and one more is budgeted for launch. We’ve had suggestions of a media focused wire—just to brainstorm quickly, what are your thoughts? WHEN ARE WE LOOKING TO LAUNCH?

-FaceBook Connect will add another layer of linking to your content and make joining the news ladder community easier. LOOKING TO LAUNCH WHEN. This tool will publish a notice to your facebook feed anytime you publish an item to the ladders or vote on content. Your FB friends will be able to click on that feed to access TMC member content. It’s another easy way to funnel links to your content to new audiences.
Flash newsladders are short term ladders that capitalize on a specific news item as it goes viral. NewsLadder has tested this platform before with Cabinet.NewsLadder.net and Zimbabwe.NewsLadder.Net.

Our first ladder functioned in this manner. During it’s peak month, John McCain, newsladder.net brought in 18,661 visits, around 77% of which were redirected to you. These numbers do not include blog traffic.

We launched StimulusPlan.newsladder.net on Jan 5. It also functions as a subladder for Economy.newsladder.net. We’re currently ramping up on traffic efforts, and a strong blog outreach is in place as you can see by this screenshot from the economic populist—as the stimulus plan continues to make news, we’ll be generating traffic for your sites.
So, we also wanted to give you all a little taste of where else this project could go. Keep in mind this is just an idea….

PLAY VID

So, quickly, what did you all think? Any immediate comments or suggestions?

We’re looking for partners to help us produce and distribute. Will keep you all apprised of developments.
UPDATE WITH NEW AD COPY!!!!

Part of building out the impact of this project and this sector means that we have to work together. By re-posting using remnant ad space to serve ads for the wires, we are representing ourselves as a powerful network that shares information and expertise on key issues. Your support and participation in this project increases our collective clout and our overall value to new viewers.

The code for all of these items is available on the new MC site—just look in the upper right hand side of the projects page. All of the widgets and ads are available in IAB standard sizes, so they should fit very easily into your site’s architecture.

Mention in enewsletters—we would be more than happy to provide links and text for you to do this. Just ask.
So, just a reminder, these are all of the ways your organization can participate. Please feel free to talk to me during lunch tomorrow about how you can implement!

**Facebook**
- Become a fan
- Become an Admin
- Post your content
  - Events
  - YouTube clips
- Send a message
- Add the Facebook application to your profile for your friends to see and use

**Twitter**
- Follow the Media Wires on Twitter
- Twitter feeds are available for every Media Wire
- Re-Tweet when a blog post goes up.

**RSS**
- Feeds are available for every Media Wire

INSERT COMMENT ABOUT HOW WHITEHOUSE2 IS USING THIS DATA
Any questions or feedback?

For more information, please contact:

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