

The Media Consortium Membership Questionnaire

Tell us about your organization's mission and vision.

Western Citizen combines watchdog journalism with online tools to encourage public deliberation and direct citizen action on community issues across the Rocky Mountain states. Our vision compels us to seek the intersection of truth-telling and persuasive technologies to produce "news you can act on."

Why do you want to join The Media Consortium?

I highly valued my previous experience with the Consortium when I worked at the Center for Independent Media. The camaraderie, innovative-thinking and willingness to collaborate by the members is critical for developing new and more efficient editorial and business models while our industry is in such tumult.

How do you see your organization as a fit for The Media Consortium? Would you like to be an associate or full member?

As an associate member, Western Citizen integrates well into the Consortium's aims to foster collaboration, diversify media leadership and explore reader engagement strategies. We are currently partnering with Consortium member Public News Service on a content-sharing agreement to promote the radio network's podcasts. We can also offer The Media Consortium and its members the opportunity to test new audience development technologies developed through an associated Knight-Stanford fellowship project.

How would you describe your primary audience in terms of size, diversity/demographics, lifestyle and geography?

Our readers are primarily based in the Rocky Mountain West (Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming) though we also attract a national audience among people concerned about regional issues on the environment, energy policy, elections, culture, immigration and broad subject investigative reporting. A demographic survey is under development to gain a greater understanding of our growing audience.

What is your operating budget?

While in a two-year startup mode the budget is less than \$1,000 per year. Western Citizen exemplifies the ultra-lean bootstrap while exploring new methods of presenting local/regional political news.

How many staff do you have?

One, currently unpaid.

What are your primary platforms? (e.g., print, radio, online, video, tv, books, social networks, etc.)

Currently online and will be moving into a planned innovative mobile platform over the course of the next year.

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News you can act on

WESTERN CITIZEN

How do you reach your audience? Please list subscriptions, online presence, listservs, or any other platforms (e.g., YouTube, MySpace, Facebook) that your organization uses to engage your audience. While we are still in beta mode, our outreach strategy has focused exclusively on social media.

What infrastructure is your organization looking to build? (e.g., advertising, web strategies, technological innovations, editorial planning, etc.)

As a 2010-11 Knight Stanford Fellow, I am working on an associated project for Western Citizen that explores web and mobile applications featuring civic engagement principles, game design theory and persuasive technologies. I will be seeking media beta testers for this project.

Does your organization have any areas of expertise that could be helpful to The Media Consortium and its members?

I'd be delighted to share my experience in online news startups, journalism technology and reader engagement strategies. Western Citizen was launched as part of my 2009 USC-Annenberg Knight Digital Media Center news entrepreneur fellowship.

How does your organization fit into the progressive media network? (e.g., media producer, distributor, monitor, reform/justice, etc.)

News content producer and aggregator.

Is your senior management willing and able to contribute to Consortium discussions, meetings and projects?

Yes, wholeheartedly.

Who will be the primary MC contacts for your organization?

Western Citizen editor and publisher Wendy Norris.

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