July 6, 2015

Lisa, Maya, Sharon, Rory, Jo Ellen, Maureen, Steve

James on vacation; Antoinette traveling;

AAN meeting:

Attended by: Maya Schenwar, Steve Katz, Jay Harris, Susan Gleason and Kim Elliott

Sally Freeman, Mark Zusman, Chuck Strouse

Maya: It went well. AAN folks didn’t know much about the Media Consortium or our member outlets. The more we discussed a merger we realized it would take a lot of whole group decision making on their part, and most of their membership didn’t know about the possibility of a merger. So then we looked at what we can do. They were excited about collaborating and moving towards a merger, by working closely on small projects. We felt we had a mutual understanding. But then when Jo Ellen forwarded an email from Sally suggesting they aren’t ready to message to their members I found it confusing.

Steve: Top line: It seems very unlikely that a full merger is a live item. However, there may be advantages and learnings that we can get from collaborations that may help make the case for broader work together with AAN and other associations.

Jo Ellen:

What are our strategic goals with AAN and how far are we willing to go to meet those goals?

Maya:

Tiffany was not at the meeting. Do we know that she wants to work with us? Has that changed?

Jo Ellen:

They may lose money at the SLC meeting; Tiffany is preoccupied with that.

Maya:

Are they offering you the chance to present?

Jo Ellen:

I don’t know.

Maya:

It makes a difference whether they are asking me to introduce the collaboration or just say hi.

Rory:

Continue to put time into moving AAN forward. But put more time into looking at other organizations as well. I would ask for a timline from AAN. This is the second straight convention in which there is no mention of a possible collaboration at their annual meeting. Maybe the problem is Tiffany. On the convention, I would say, let’s have our own convention this year.

Maureen:

I agree with Rory. We can explore some projects with AAN, but not put so much energy into the AAN partnership.

Lisa:

On the surface it looks like AAN as an organization is not prioritizing this. AT first I thought this was a cultural difference, but this is a cone of silence. For the conference, we need to do what is best for us. If we do it together, we would do it on our terms, and for different reasons—for efficiency but not partnership. We had collaborations with them even before we started talking about a merger. We have to be realistic.

Steve:

There may be specific things we can do with AAN that would be good for the Media Consortium. I don’t see AAN and the Media Consortium having a really tight deep long term relationship. If the real issue is that there are 7-8 professional associations operating in different chunks of the universe and the object is to get everyone to work more closely together, then picking and choosing projects to do with AAN as a test case would make sense as part of a larger, strategic goal of building a new infrastructure for the independent media.

Jo Ellen

What about 2016 conference?

Maya:

Depends on Salt Lake. If they want me to talk about deep collaboration, then another joint conference makes more sense. If that doesn’t happen, then we should definitely do our own thing.I also think the East Coast conference is important.

Jo Ellen:

Check in. Where is my time best spent?

Maureen:

AAN should not be the primary focus, and you spent a lot of your energy with that. So I think you should focus on projects with them, and projects with others.

Steve:

How do you imagine your role and Manolia’s role?

JO Ellen:

Lisa:

I think when you find the right person to help then you can expand all the work you do. Building leaders and adding depth to collaboration/membership would be a good fit.

Jo Ellen:

How can I do a better job on recruiting for committees?

Maya: People who have time and effort to be involved are part of member outlets who don’t have leadership responsibilities. Those people may not hear about the opportunity. So do outreach beyond leadership by asking leadership to put out the message.

Lisa: Pitch to leaders as a way to keep people involved.

Rory: Get more of the staff onto the listserv.