

BEST PRACTICES RESEARCH: SUMMARIES

GOVERNANCE BEST PRACTICES: Joe Estivill

A board handbook is essential. Board development is essential – targeted recruiting based on organizational needs. Many stations have boards that seem to be more “hands off” than the WFHB board; most stations are clear in stating that the board is not to interfere in day-to-day operations. Many boards have an official requirement that board members volunteer their time and/or raise money or donate money themselves. A Community Advisory Board is required for CPB-qualified stations, charged with reviewing station programming and policy decisions rendered by the station, but at WFHB it is unclear what the CAB does or how they do it or how their role fits into the existing committee structure. Some stations deal with CPB “restricted use” funds by separating certain expense lines into a clearly delineated section in the station budget.

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE BEST PRACTICES: Chad Carrothers

It is evident that the biggest “hump” for little stations to get past in order to become big stations, or just to become more financial viable, is the creation of a Development Director position. The stations with the biggest budgets may have an entire cadre of development officers working on underwriting, special events, grant writing, capital campaigns, pledge drives, and overall fundraising strategies. One or more committees are generally utilized. If there is more than one Development Director, that second person is often an Underwriting Manager. Virtually every station has a General Manager. Many stations have at least one full-time news staff. Some stations have an Office Manager / Business Manager; WFHB does not have this position, all its duties fall on the General Manager. Some stations have an Operations Director; WFHB used to have this position, it was dissolved and its duties reassigned among the General Manager, Music Director, and News Director. Many stations have a Program Director; WFHB does not have this position; music director and news director act as co-program directors and General Manager acts as executive program director. Salary ranges for each position are determined by the Board of Directors and evaluated every two years. Employees are given performance evaluations by the Manager at least once per year, often tied to merit raises. Many stations provide 100% health insurance to their employees. Salaried employees are expected to work a forty-hour week; some stations require records of time worked. A grievance policy is essential, and generally says that employees are expected to consult first with the General Manager. A chain of communication is established that includes a mediator and/or Personnel Committee and ends with the board of directors but only when absolutely necessary.

PROGRAMMING BEST PRACTICES - Emily Jackson

Training handbooks are essential, especially for news reporting and digital editing/production. An overall programmer handbook is also helpful, with an extensive table of contents and index. An online version would be easily searchable. Training guidelines in the handbook are integrated with evaluation criteria - training outline matches the self-evaluation, and peer/listener/staff evaluation forms. Music directors/program directors train programmers on how to be a good announcer and conform to FCC and station regulations. Many stations have a requirement for each programmer to do volunteer work outside of producing their program, especially attending station meetings and participating in pledge drives. Some stations mandate that each program must generate income by bringing in an amount of pledges that is appropriate for the time of day that the program airs, and the programmer must actively solicit pledges according to station instructions and policies.

FUNDRAISING BEST PRACTICES: Brian Kearney, Shaun McDermott, Chad Carrothers
Our research into on-air fundraising information affirms that WFHB is already engaged in best practices. Much like other community stations, fund drives can be a grind for both listeners and on-air pitchers. WFHB does a good job of making cogent cases that are sincere and compelling whilst giving out the phone # and web address often. Other community stations talk of establishing endowments. WFHB already has one, and this is a strength. WFHB needs to incorporate planned giving into its growth strategy for the endowment. Collaborations and partnerships are an integral part of other station's growth plans. It should be with WFHB as well by including quantifiable, measurable outcomes in its plan. Programming-wise, there are some interesting measures discussed such as conducting listener-surveys, market research, scientific surveys of active listeners, focus groups, and surveys of lapsed members. WFHB would be wise to learn about these techniques and adopt the most effective ones to focus on its programming and grow its audience thus positioning itself for more successful fund drives and underwriting opportunities.

An excellent resource for WFHB fundraising is the Development Exchange, Inc., a non-profit dedicated to helping public media raise money. The DEI Resource Library boasts a wealth of information categorized into six disciplines: Individual Giving, Corporate Support, Foundation Support, Marketing, Capital Campaigns, and General Management. Best practices for fundraising include using customer service practices to solidify and build membership, using both email and direct mail for effective fundraising appeals, integrating campaigns across on-air, email and direct mail, creating, maintaining and using a donor database, and using the station website to encourage action. Effective Fundraising Appeals are timely, clear, and make a compelling case for support. Know your audience and build and maintain large, clean, strong lists; store important information about your donors including the type of gift that a donor has made. Online pledges are on the rise, so make sure your website has a pledge button and a secure, easy to use pledge form with consistent layout, navigation, and organization of the site. Improve your fundraising results by providing segmentation options for mailings and telemarketing (frequency of giving, levels of giving, membership history, etc.) and by storing relevant information on your donors that enables you to personalize your solicitations. Utilize eNewsletters, audio and video streaming, podcasts, and specialty content. Train all staff on effective fundraising regardless of their specific job duties.

When seeking grants, do your homework! Research the foundations you are targeting, call them for a chat before submitting a formal proposal, arrange a site visit, tell a story and make your case for funding clear, concise, compelling, and illustrate community service.

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES: Joy Laughter
Comprehensive volunteer orientation, training, and feedback/evaluation is essential. A volunteer handbook including training manuals is essential. It is unclear how stations track volunteer hours and ensure volunteer engagement/fulfillment of volunteer hours. Some years ago Steve Volan tried to implement a paper "sign in-sign out" system he had designed. This was not embraced by volunteers and was not enforced by staff. Volunteer applications should ask about individual's special skills or community involvement (affiliations). A personal sense of radio's place in a community is an important part of volunteering. One of WFHB's difficulties has been to get broadcasting volunteers to commit to other kinds of service: Administrative tasks like library re-filing, CD reviewing, the miscellaneous little things that the General Manager

should NOT be doing, and Desk Jockeying – and Occasional tasks like Pledge-Catching and Tabling at live events. It may help volunteers find a starting point more quickly, if volunteer signup information included clarification of these three activity areas: Broadcasting, Administration, and Occasional. Virtually all stations have a Volunteer Coordinator who is almost always a non-paid volunteer. Some stations actually interview prospective volunteers instead of a completely open-door policy. Volunteer recruitment is essential through on-air messaging, internships, and networking with other agencies (examples: staffing the front desk with folks from the Retired Senior Volunteer Program and an active presence in the Bloomington Volunteer Network).

MEDIA MODELS AND JOURNALISM – January Jones

1. Media Models

- 1.1. Community Media Models- These are organizations that have adapted the community radio ethic using innovative technology and management solutions.
 - 1.1.1. Grand Rapids Community Media Center- Multiple, independent community based media and arts organizations that share a structural umbrella and administrative resources while maintaining separate facilities and audiences in Grand Rapids Michigan.
 - 1.1.2. Ideastream – Merge of the major public radio and public television stations in Cleveland, Ohio into a single physical structure that also includes cutting edge media teaching labs for educators and students, shared facility and studio use with arts performance group.
 - 1.1.3. Denver Open Media- Adaptation of community access television model that provides extensive training, equipment use and automated, online, viewer-controlled programming outputs.
 - 1.1.4. Twin Cities Media Alliance – Formed to provide training on media skills and citizen journalism. Primary output is online, citizen -based news site- the Twin City's World.
- 1.2. Public Private Partnership Models- Both of these models use licensing agreements as the vehicle for building the brand of the radio show.
 - 1.2.1. WXPB and World Café Live- In Philadelphia, the popular WXPB radio show World Café expanded it's scope and brand by partnering with a private business to create a live music venue- World Café Live- where the radio show is now broadcast from. WXPB and World Café Live co-located in a new adjoining but separate space.
 - 1.2.2. House of Blues Radio Hour- Although, I didn't include research on this show I provided it because it's similar to how World Café works. In their case they have leveraged the House of Blues brand to create a radio show with one of the blues brothers, Dan Aykroyd.
 - 1.2.3. Internet Only Models- These organization focus strictly on providing online content for news and music.
 - 1.2.3.1. News: Twin Cities Media Alliance's TC World; Open Media Boston- These news organizations use the citizen journalism model for their content.

- 1.2.3.2. Music: Spotify, LastFM, Grooveshark, Pandora- The on-demand, web-based music providers are a big competitor for radio so they are noted here but aren't included in the research.
- 1.3. Original News Content Creators- These news organizations create content to syndicate to other news organizations.
 - 1.3.1. The Uptake - Provides local video coverage and utilizes existing public, broadcast streams to create original content.
 - 1.3.2. ProPublica - Award, winning investigative journalist organization funded by a private foundation that provides content to other news organizations.

2. Selected practices of the model organizations

- 2.1. Media Integration (words, sounds and sights on multiple platforms)
 - Multiple options for content consumption; Find existing content through partnerships to support cross-platform generation; Crowd-sourcing video, information and data and then adding context for our community and media partners
- 2.2. Funding
 - Diversifying revenue streams through public/private partnerships; fee for services; foundation support; business and individual memberships; fundraisers
- 2.3. Staffing
 - Successful projects rely on paid staff to maintain credibility and content production.
 - "Citizen journalism math is working out this way: Fewer than one in 10 of those you train will stick around to be regular contributors. Even then, they may be "regular" for only a short period of time."
- 2.4. Education programs
 - Media organizations in the not-for-profit community must have an effective education program and mission to reach users and new audiences.
- 2.5. Services to non-profits
 - Affordable and accessible media and public relations services to other non-profit organizations.
- 2.6. Use of Physical Space
 - Integration of space with arts uses and private leasing space for businesses with "affinities"; Dispersed model with multiple physical locations for media center members
- 2.7. Information Providers
 - Repurposing available feeds into value added information for news organizations and consumers; providing news and content to other news organizations;

2.8. Public Safety and Service

-Up to date weather and disaster information; community information services like public service announcements; community partnerships

3. Journalism Thought Leaders

3.1.1. The Knight Foundation

3.1.1.1. “Community radio needs help: While showing promise as community news outlets, community radio as well as cable access television stations need additional support and stable project leadership to deliver daily newscasts. “

3.1.1.2. “Citizen journalism is a high-churn, high-touch enterprise”

3.1.2. The Pew Center for Excellence in Journalism-

3.1.2.1. **“Define target audiences.** Clearly define target markets, regularly conduct research about the needs of those audiences, and have ways to consistently measure their impact. “

3.1.2.2. **“Diversify expense and revenue models.** Most organizations focus their spending on developing content, leaving limited resources for business development, marketing and IT. “

3.1.2.3. **How People Get News.** “Roughly one in ten adults (9%) cite the radio as a key source for breaking news and weather. “

3.1.3. Soros Foundation.

3.1.3.1. Media Business Models- “Media businesses need to be sustainable, but their traditional sources of income are, in many cases, drying up.”

3.1.3.2. Citizen Journalism- “Whereas professional journalists often enjoy specific privileges, such as protection against libel charges and protection of journalistic material, citizen journalists generally do not qualify for these rights.”

3.1.3.3. Investigative Journalism- “...objectivity will be increasingly displaced by transparency as an ethical base for journalism:

STRATEGIC PLANNING BEST PRACTICES: Joy Laughter

My pet question that I hope to get into Plan discussions is, “What does community media MEAN to a community?” The ability of a small organization like WFHB to link and deliver media formats like radio, television, video, and online text, along with the speed of social media (Twitter et al), should be part of the WFHB “story” that we tell, when we communicate the value of the station to every segment of our social sphere in S.C. IN – government, business, education, services, and the individual. WFHB isn’t just a music tree-house with young, idealistic news reporters, it’s a community media resource that connects listening residents with their local government, their school systems, businesses and services, and segments of the population they may never really meet face-to-differently-colored face. And there must be reasons why these different community powers (government, business, etc) value WFHB as a community media resource. This kind of value can and should be impressed on new volunteers – this is real community involvement, even if it just looks like a course credit project or free-time fun thing. I guess the more familiar way to express this is “community-building,” but that’s gotten to be an easy phrase, easily forgotten.

The last thing I want to get in is the point I came across in some reading for my day job, a non-profit advisor saying his job was to make sure non-profits are gathering (and using) the right information for their goals. I hope that one of the outcomes of our Planning is to identify what the right information is for WFHB, how we’re going to gather it, and what we’re going to do with it, to what end. Will we do marketing, or listener, or volunteer, or collaborator surveys? And what would we do with what they tell us?

EXAMPLE STRATEGIC PLAN: Joy Laughter

The KVMR Competitive Positioning Statement is an executive summary of KVMR's marketing research, competitive strategy, marketing strategy, and communications strategy. KVMR has a thoughtfully researched marketing program that attracts new listeners and financial supporters by telling its story and communicating its core values. Market analysis is used to establish fair and competitive underwriting rates. KVMR will develop an integrated marketing program to tell its story, build and enhance its reputation, attract listeners, cultivate relationships, express itself as a community resource, and secure financial support.

...

D. Develop promotional strategies that communicate KVMR's story and image, and

...

2. Be guided in its planning and decision making by market research.
3. Develop and implement an evaluation process for the marketing plan.
[taking this tack would mature WFHB from the “treehouse” identity]

For each of the four groups (i.e., board, staff, broadcasters and volunteers) KVMR will:

1. Create a Performance Growth Cycle.
2. Develop a description for each group detailing its role, how it is distinct from and interdependent on the other three groups. [[huh? Broadcasters and Board aren't volunteers?]]
3. Develop and/or revise individual job descriptions and performance standards.
4. Set annual goals for each group and individual.
5. Assess performance against goals and provide feedback.
6. Develop a training program for groups and individuals.
7. Create an ongoing problem-solving forum.

"Competition, Regulation and Marketing," KVMR's position within the local radio market and our

need to be more visible;

"Programming," our product, the means by which we serve our listeners, and the responsibility that comes with it;

"Broadcasters," our volunteer air staff, the ways in which they do (or do not) get along, their understanding of their roles and responsibilities, and access to the airwaves;

"Staffing and Volunteering," both of which have grown tremendously presenting the station with the challenge to retain the simple charm of a small operation yet manage the group professionally;

"Organizational Effectiveness," the need for consistent policies, definition of roles, and business structure - again, balanced with the innocence that got us here;

"Performance Review & In-Service Training," simply, regular systems of feedback, encouraging things that work, coaching things that could work better, and providing necessary training;

"Funding," how do we attract and insure the funding we need to reach our goals?; and

"Infrastructure," the space we have, the space we need, and whether or not we own it.

BEST PRACTICES – SUMMARY OF SISTERS STATION INTERVIEWS – Chad Carrothers

How do you view yourselves as a content provider - multimedia vs. "just radio"? What is your approach to building yourself as a multimedia content producer – audio/video, social media, the web, etc?

All of the stations aspire to do more than “just radio” but cite limitations resulting from lack of dedicated staffing. In terms of multimedia the stations tend to focus their efforts on their website. Most cite their radio programming as top priority and use social media and the web to draw people to that programming. However, some also use social media not just for promotion but to deliver product as well. All of the stations use Facebook. WYCE, one of the more progressive stations, issued the following warning: “Any station that views itself as “just radio” will soon find itself “just out of business”. Stations need to build themselves as a brand, to which listeners/donors feel a strong sense of loyalty.”

What donor database software do you use? Is it proprietary or custom-designed? If proprietary, what vendor and how effective? HOW do you use the information in that database? Direct mail, email, website, etc?

The six responding stations all use completely different donor database software! Most use proprietary software with SOME customization. The programs used are Blackbaud, GiftWorks, ACT!, Fundraiser Select, Salesforce with Convio Common Ground, and Donor Perfect. The software is used for donor tracking, direct mail correspondence, weekly e-mail blasts, underwriting, volunteers, events, marketing, classes, music industry contacts and overall customer service.

How do you recruit, screen, manage, train, and track volunteers? How do you evaluate the work of volunteers and the quality of their programming? How do you promote fulfillment of off-air hours?

Recruitment does not seem to be a problem, as all the stations say they are not lacking in volunteers approaching them. A Volunteer Handbook is standard. Attending an orientation

session is required, and training sessions are offered on a regular basis ranging from monthly to twice per year. The “buddy system” is used in the training process. Programmer evaluations are done by the music director or Music Committee, and most stations strive to evaluate each programmer at least annually and provide feedback to each programmer. Periodic classes in on-air best practices are offered but not mandatory. Fulfillment of off-air hours is either not required or not enforced; when required, the emphasis is placed on being involved in fundraising efforts.

How do you recruit and orient members of your board of directors?

Board recruitment is a board-level task, and most have a Nominating Committee that looks at skill sets missing from the current seated board. Some have a “board skills grid” that lists categories such as finance, legal, development, fundraising, non-profit experience, engineering, computer/web, etc. A board handbook is essential for orientation. Some include an annual “board retreat” as part of the orientation process.

What are your primary sources of income and how do you manage fundraising and development? Role of staff vs. role of board? Development director?

Direct membership is most often cited as the primary source of income. Three of the six receive no CPB income. Most of the stations have a Development Director (on-staff or contractor) and/or Membership Director to relieve the General Manager of some of the fundraising burden. The board is generally not required to raise money for operating revenue but is often utilized for capital campaigns and special events. Membership in DEI (Development Exchange, Inc.) is highly recommended.

Do you have formal collaborations with other agencies? If so, what types of organizations and what are the nature/objective/outcomes of the partnership?

Collaborations are generally cited as a good idea, but most of the stations limit collaborations to event-specific or campaign-specific partnerships. Ongoing partnerships are mostly internship agreements and concert co-promotions. All of them work with other non-profits and other media organizations. Most say what they are looking for are ways to gain more members and what their partners are looking for is media coverage. The best partnerships are ones that advance the missions of both organizations. The more progressive organizations are proactively pursuing collaborations. At KXCI, the general manager serves of the board of directors for two other related agencies.

SWOT REPORT SUMMARY – Joy Shayne Laughter

This document summarized interviews with Strategic Plan Steering Committee members. Members were asked two questions: What do you see as WFHB Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats? And, what other organizations would you say are good role models for WFHB re: non-profit management, mission, and development?

Interviewed: Sara Laughlin, Pam Davidson, Sue Wanzer, Paul Daily, Christy Gillenwater. NOT AVAILABLE: Melissa Britton.

SUMMARY:

STRENGTHS:

Community engagement, volunteer base, community, diversity, community, number of people in town who have been involved at one time or another, community, central location, community, independence, community, service orientation, CATS partnership, community, experience producing quality programs on a shoestring, uniqueness means no national network will take us over, and there's that whole community thing, too.

WEAKNESSES:

Shaky funding & finances, unclear "reason to listen," changing technologies, limited facility space, competition with WFIU for public attention.

OPPORTUNITIES:

Clearly define what the station means to the community; diversify the Board and funding; expand partnership with CATS; expand into social media, new technologies; more collaborative partnerships; more youth involvement.

THREATS:

Economy, greater competition for fewer resources; changes to Ivy Tech could change landlord relationship; need for strong staff to decrease turnover (!!); keeping all the elements of a volunteer-run organization aligned; technology pits broadcast against digital.

MODELS:

IU Health/Bloomington Hospital; Centerstone; models for community partnership development are Ivy Tech, Bloomington Playwrights Project, MoCo Historical Society, MCPL.