

WOI Radio: FY14 Annual Local Content and Services Report

1. Describe your overall goals and approach to address identified community issues, needs, and interests through your station’s vital local services, such as multiplatform long and short-form content, digital and in-person engagement, education services, community information, partnership support, and other activities, and audiences you reached or new audiences you engaged.

WOI AM/FM, a member station of the statewide network of Iowa Public Radio, has identified four community issues and needs, which are directly related to the core part of its mission statement, “informing, enriching, and engaging Iowans through high quality news and cultural programming.” These four topics reflect the needs of both WOI AM/FM’s immediate community, which is Central Iowa, and its expanded community, which is the state of Iowa. These topics, which guide WOI AM/FM’s reporting coverage, are: politics and government, health and education, arts and culture, and public policy.

WOI AM/FM’s News staff meets daily to review breaking, ongoing, and upcoming news and cultural stories. During this meeting, news reporting assignments and decisions are made, including how an issue/story should be communicated to listeners. The staff works to provide both an on-air audio package as well as a web story, which provides at a minimum the information shared on-air. Video footage is provided on the website occasionally as well.

WOI AM/FM’s Music staff meets regularly to discuss and determine coverage for upcoming performances and cultural activities. Some of this coverage is provided on-air while some is provided exclusively online, encouraging development of a diverse audience both through radio and online-only interaction.

These efforts result in greater exposure to a more diverse audience. Diversity of this audience includes ethnicity (particularly through the ‘Being in Iowa’ series, which is referenced in more detail later), age, political affiliation, gender, religious beliefs, and sexual orientation. Though this cannot always be measured quantitatively, it can be measured qualitatively, with detailed examples provided.

2. Describe key initiatives and the variety of partners with whom you collaborated, including other public media outlets, community nonprofits, government agencies, educational institutions, the business community, teachers and parents, etc. This will illustrate the many ways you’re connected across the community and engaged with other important organizations in the area.

WOI AM/FM and its member stations of Iowa Public Radio are the only public radio stations in many parts of the state providing service to both urban and rural audiences. The educational and entertainment services provided by WOI AM/FM are essential and valued by those who listen. In order to ensure it upholds its mission and properly serves the public, WOI AM/FM has established several key initiatives with several different community partners. These initiatives and partnerships include:

- Enhancing coverage of issues related to food, fuel and field in Iowa and across the Midwest through continuing our partnership with Harvest Public Media (HPM), sharing our reporter’s stories and those of our HPM partner stations;
- Broadcasting a local series titled “Iowa Arts Showcase,” which highlights the arts in our state, featuring interviews with experts and performers. These interviews showcase what is occurring across Iowa and expose our listeners to opportunities and events that they might otherwise not be exposed to;
- Broadcasting “Symphonies of Iowa” and “Arias in April,” which extend the reach of Iowa’s premier cultural institutions;
- Broadcasting a local series titled “Being in Iowa,” which gives voice to diverse populations and helps our listeners understand who we are as Iowans. The reports investigate the issues, history, cultural traditions, challenges, and future of diverse groups of people that are part of Iowa, and educate the broader population about the people that call this state home;
- Providing perspective and well-researched information during news reports, talk shows, roundtable discussions, and other community conversations by expanding relationships with the broader educational community, including K-12 teachers and university professors;
- Showcasing student performances in our Music programs, including “University Concert,” through continued relationship development and collaboration among the public universities and private colleges; and
- Collaborations with community non-profits, offering opportunities for these organizations to share their stories and initiatives either through event sponsorships or through news stories and other programs.

In addition to these primary partnerships that directly support the fulfillment of its key initiatives, WOI AM/FM has other related partnerships that assist in communicating its mission and value. These include participation in career fairs, serving on student and community panels, guest lecturing, moderating presentations, and attending other festivals and events.

3. What impact did your key initiatives and partnerships have in your community? Describe any known measurable impact, such as increased awareness, learning or understanding about particular issues. Describe indicators of success, such as connecting people to needed resources or strengthening conversational ties across diverse neighborhoods. Did a partner see an increase in requests for related resources? Please include direct feedback from a partner(s) or from a person(s) served.

WOI AM/FM and its member stations of Iowa Public Radio regularly witness the impact of its key initiatives and partnerships. Through its collaborations with community non-profits and participation in other events, potential listeners are exposed to the programming provided by WOI AM/FM. Additionally, when present at a community event, long-time listeners as well as new listeners share that they value the diversity of programming – both in programming type and broadcast and in story-telling provided by our reporters – or that they first heard about the station through a similar event.

Additionally, the public and private universities frequently communicate how much they appreciate partnering with us – both for news and arts and culture programming. They feel it is a valuable outreach effort on their part, one that pays off by greater exposure to the parents of potential and current students, and appreciate being able to share the wisdom and inspiration of their faculty and staff.

A unique measurable impact comes from metrics provided by the website. One of our reporters frequently guest lectures to a local Journalism class. During that class he plays audio from some of his past stories in a series called “Iowa Archives.” Visits to those stories increase by more than 200% after his guest lecture, as does general interaction of those visitors on the site.

Additionally, the “Being in Iowa” series has received awards for its ability to share and connect the stories of diverse people in Iowa’s communities. Many listeners reach out to share their appreciation for the series, provide tips for other inspiring communities around Iowa to highlight, and often share with us some of the specific information they learned. Additionally, the minority communities and related organizations frequently share their thanks, noting that our efforts help them reach a broader audience, and through that audience, support the fulfillment of their mission.

A tangible result of all these efforts can be found in this listener’s note of thanks:

I was honored to be interviewed by my favorite (and often ONLY) place for news and intelligent discourse. But the way you interviewed and what you’ve written has made a grown man cry this morning.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for hearing the spirit of the message and telling it the way only public radio can – with a heart and soul.

4. Please describe any efforts (e.g. programming, production, engagement activities) you have made to investigate and/or meet the needs of minority and other diverse audiences (including, but not limited to, new immigrants, people for whom English is a second language and illiterate adults) during Fiscal Year 2013, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2014. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

Over the past year, WOI AM/FM and its member stations of Iowa Public Radio have maintained and built upon its initiatives to expand and better serve multiple minority and diverse audiences.

The first of these efforts is the continuation of a weekly broadcast of the bilingual Classical program, *Concierto*, which is broadcast on the weekends. This program targets Spanish speakers, which make up approximately 5% of the state's total population. Listener response to this program continues to be positive, and Iowa Public Radio plans to continue broadcasting the program.

The second of these efforts is the continuation of a news series called “Being in Iowa.” This series focuses on life in Iowa for diverse and minority groups, sharing challenges, triumphs, culture, history, and the impact of these people on and in the State of Iowa. The ‘Being in Iowa’ series will continue in Fiscal Year 2015. Because there are so many diverse groups that live in the state, and because the series is so well received, we believe this has and will continue to further build and connect our audiences with each other, a core component of our mission.

Additionally, this past year we have continued our once-monthly arts program called “Iowa Arts Showcase,” which highlights the efforts and activities of non-profit arts and culture organizations throughout Iowa. This program continues to be received positively, with cultural and arts organizations considering this a beneficial service program for their organizations and the state.

5. Please assess the impact that your CPB funding had on your ability to serve your community. What were you able to do with your grant that you wouldn’t be able to do if you didn’t receive it?

CPB grant funding has been absolutely essential in our efforts to serve our community. The CPB funding we receive is used primarily to pay for national programming, allowing other funding resources to be used by our stations to maintain a large amount of locally produced programming, which is considered essential by our listeners throughout the state.

We also continue to expand our news and talk show programming, working to better serve and reach more audience with this valuable public affairs programming.

Additionally, the CPB funding we have received has enabled us to take some of our news and music shows on the road, expanding our outreach efforts to increase our presence in local communities. Doing this allows us to meet with listeners and constituents in their hometowns, better understanding their communities and building stronger relationships and listener affinity for the organization.

If we did not receive CPB grant funding it would be difficult to maintain the staffing resources required to provide the level of service our listeners and community expects from us - from our cultural outreach efforts to our news reporting and education of Iowans.