

**The Maine Public Broadcasting Network Strategic Plan**  
**2013 through 2018**

**Charting the Path to 2018 and Beyond**  
**Driving Membership, Growth, and Sustainability in a Changing Media Landscape**

## **SITUATION ANALYSIS**

MPBN is standing at the intersection of a digital crossroads. The public radio and television services that we enjoy today are dramatically different than those of 15 or 20 years ago. This organization has adapted successfully to the threats and opportunities here in Maine and nationally over the years, through its historic connection to the University of Maine and Colby, Bates and Bowdoin Colleges. However, the fiscal challenges that have confronted MPBN in the past several years through the recession have left us unable to take advantage of the growth opportunities that the changing media landscape presents.

The wide availability of unfettered access to the very content we broadcast is both an impediment and a unique attribute in maintaining our current audience. While MPBN needs to fully embrace the digital world and deliver public radio and television content when and how our audience wants it, the institution also must create content that is unique to Maine – in fact, content our audience demands from MPBN. Once we also consider the potential declining tax-based financial support, in the coming years, a pragmatic solution is required.

The MPBN executive team believes the path that leads to growth and a sustainable future is clear: a deliberate step in the direction of offering more and better news content (journalism) while concurrently investing in digital media. These two actions will offer our users the information that they demand, and the tools to access that information. Both strategies require a company-wide commitment to change the paradigm at MPBN, while also pursuing new models for revenue, identifying efficiencies in how and where we do our work, and developing a mutually beneficial relationship with the State of Maine. This new direction is very much in line with the fundamental mission of MPBN and, in fact, will serve all of Maine and the region in new and improved ways.

(December 2012)

## **MISSION**

Every day, the Maine Public Broadcasting Network connects the people of Maine to each other and to the world through the open exchange of information, ideas and cultural content. As Maine's premier, independent public media resource, we create exceptional opportunities for the communities we serve to engage with critical issues, compelling stories and quality entertainment.

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## **VISION**

Over the next 3-5 years, MPBN will make major investments in those areas that, in our best professional understanding of the environment, the media, and our current and future audiences, will assure that MPBN remains a vibrant local institution – both relevant and financially strong for the next generation.

We will be making strategic investments in the content we produce and the platforms through which we engage audiences. In summary:

- We will make an investment in journalism – building MPBN's brand as the source of "all things Maine."
  - Our radio and digital platforms will emphasize news and public affairs, while we seek alternate channels for music and other legacy programs that meet our mission as a public broadcaster.
  - In television, we will make an investment in and direct our production resources toward distinctive, original content that is specifically focused on news and public affairs, while continuing to be a provider of the core program service of PBS and other national channels distributed within our coverage area. We also will seek to offer content that is produced by community partners within Maine, Northern New England and Atlantic Canada.
  - We will make an investment in digital media because it is essential to our future. We all understand that the legacy reach and scale of broadcast TV & radio is immense, but our world is rapidly changing, shrinking, and becoming customized. Each new generation of MPBN user has expectations that we will meet them in new ways and on new platforms.
  - Finally, in order to transform ourselves we will aggressively pursue opportunities for achieving efficiencies in our operations, while becoming a more nimble, flexible and people-centered organization. In addition, we will develop a mutually beneficial relationship with the State of Maine both as a funder and a provider of valued emergency and community services.
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## **KEY PRIORITIES**

1. Build MPBN's position as the premier, independent public media source of news and public affairs in the region.
2. Embrace and fully integrate digital content and interactivity with current broadcast platforms and services.
3. Achieve sustainability through strategic growth and increased efficiency in operations.

**Priority #1: Strengthen MPBN’s position as the premier, independent public media source of news and public affairs in the region.**

Key Objectives <i>The ‘journalism’ strategy</i>	Phase I Implementation <i>Yrs 1-2</i>	Phase II Implementation <i>Yrs 3-5</i>
<b>1A. Increase our capacity for reporting and original journalism.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete initial round of priority hires to expand reporting presence in Augusta, Northern Maine, and Eastern Maine, and fill current gaps in production capacity (2 employees).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the second phase of hiring priorities (projected at 3 additional employees).</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Realign internal resources to maximize our flexibility and responsiveness to the rapidly changing media environment, while maximizing the talents of existing employees (ongoing).</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a journalism fund to allow for rapid mobilization to cover special news and public affairs events.</li> </ul>	
<b>1B. Expand our programming of news and public affairs across all platforms.</b>	<b>Radio</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin the transition to a news and public affairs format on MPBN Radio.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete the transition in programming format.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide more choice in offering music channels where possible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue implementation.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a separate radio channel dedicated to music</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete the growth of Maine Calling into a full-hour, 5-days-per-week program.</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully leverage the strong positions and resources of our national partners such as NPR (ongoing).</li> </ul>	
	<b>Television</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch a separate channel covering the Legislature in Augusta as a pilot project</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve Maine Watch as a signature MPBN-TV offering.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further improve and expand upon local news and public affairs offerings on TV.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capitalize on opportunities to offer distinctive, original content developed by local/regional partners in Maine.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand outward to capitalize on opportunities to offer distinctive, original content developed in Maine and Northern New England as well as Atlantic Canada.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully utilize and package/brand the core program video offerings from PBS and public television community partners in the diverse</li> </ul>	

areas of news, performing arts, culture, science, drama, children’s programming, etc.

**Priority #2: Embrace and fully integrate digital content and interactivity with current broadcast platforms and services.**

Key Objectives <i>The ‘digital’ strategy</i>	Phase I Implementation Yrs 1-2	Phase II Implementation Yrs 3-5
<b>2A. Invest in expertise to guide MPBN’s digital strategy development and execution.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hire an experienced <b>Director for Digital</b> with a successful background in digital technologies and new media (Early FY14).</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete a flexible, yet aggressive and comprehensive digital ‘immersion and integration’ plan for MPBN.</li> </ul>	
<b>2B. Build internal capacity to move MPBN to a ‘digital first’ culture across platforms and departments.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete first round of priority hires (1 employee).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete second round of priority hires (projected at 2 additional employees).</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Realign internal resources to assure all content across platforms on a daily basis is automatically considered for digital sharing, enhancement and/or treatment (ongoing).</li> </ul>	
<b>2C. Upgrade MPBN’s digital platform (websites, social media, mobile-friendly interface, etc.).</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete Phase I upgrades to the digital platform with priority focus on user-friendliness of the website and mobile interface.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete Phase II upgrades to the digital platform.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fully leverage the systems tools and support of our national partners (NPR and PBS) to achieve economies of scale and seamless compatibility.</li> </ul>	
<b>2D. Establish MPBN-Digital as a reliable and valued source of breaking news, as the essential aggregator of ‘all things Maine,’ and as a ‘go to’ interactive player/destination/social platform.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an editorial policy for digital that upholds MPBN’s brand – and that of NPR and PBS – for online MPBN material and sourced content.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to expand MPBN’s presence across multiple social platforms (e.g., Face Book, Twitter, You Tube, Flickr, Vimeo, Blogs), existing and emergent.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fully leverage the strong positions and content resources of our national partners (NPR and PBS).</li> </ul>	

**Priority #3: Achieve sustainability through strategic growth and increased efficiency in operations.**

Key Objectives <i>The 'sustainability' strategy</i>	Phase I Implementation Yrs 1-2	Phase II Implementation Yrs 3-5
<b>3A. Increase financial support through a blended strategy of fundraising and fee-for-service.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase Development staff capacity to build annual revenue (2 employees).</li> <li>• Achieve Phase 1 growth in Membership, Major Donations, Underwriting, and Planned Giving</li> <li>• Launch Phase I of the Capital Campaign.</li> <li>• Evolve our partnership with the State of Maine from a reliance on appropriations to a fee-for-service arrangement.</li> <li>• Aggressively explore and implement new fee-for-service opportunities as they arise (ongoing).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue building capacity to drive revenues (2 employees).</li> <li>• Continue driving revenue growth</li> <li>• Complete Phase II of the Capital Campaign.</li> </ul>
<b>3B. Expand and protect access to MPBN content and broadcast coverage/footprint.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure Eastlink cable access in Atlantic Canada.</li> <li>• Review existing FM coverage for growth opportunities.</li> <li>• Access a journalism fund to allow for timely response to breaking news events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor and take required steps to expand and or protect access to MBPN content in Maine, across Northern New England and in Atlantic Canada.</li> </ul>
<b>3C. Improve the efficiency of internal operations.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct an audit of our internal systems and infrastructure.</li> <li>• Maximize the talents of existing and new employees while realigning systems and resources and working toward a more flexible, diverse, responsive and people-centric organization (ongoing).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement alignment strategies that streamline content and platform priorities.</li> </ul>
<b>3D. Increase MPBN's visibility as the premier, independent public media source of news and public affairs in the region.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a community engagement and collaboration plan to enhance MPBN's brand and marketing effectiveness that is aligned with the priorities of this plan and leverages opportunities provided by MPBN's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the plan accordingly.</li> </ul>
<b>3E. Transition to an independent governance model.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institute an independent nomination process for MPBN Trustees concurrent with the transformation of MPBN's relationship with the State of Maine (ongoing).</li> </ul>	
<b>3F. Measure progress against the strategic plan using a scorecard of key indicators.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See next page (ongoing).</li> </ul>	

## MPBN Strategic Plan Scorecard\*

*What Do We Want to Change and How Do We Measure It?*  
 Measuring Success for the Strategic Plan Efforts

Component	Metric	Subcomponents	Measurement Tool	Timeframe
<b>Audience</b>				
	Ratings/Usage	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Indicator Sum</b>	<b>Quarterly</b>
		TV	Cumulative Audience	Quarterly
		Radio	Cumulative Audience	Quarterly
		Radio Adjustment Tracking	Cumulative Audience per specific hour	Quarterly
		Website	Unique Visitors	Quarterly
		Facebook	Friends	Quarterly
		Twitter	Followings	Quarterly
		Streaming (video and audio)	Users	Quarterly
<b>Fundraising</b>				
	Development Revenue	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>ALL Financial Performance</b>	<b>Quarterly</b>
		Membership	Financial Performance	Quarterly
		Evergreen Membership	Financial Performance	Quarterly
		Major Gifts	Financial Performance	Quarterly
		Underwriting	Financial Performance	Quarterly
		Planned Giving	Financial Performance	Quarterly
<b>Journalism/ Digital</b>				
	Journalism/Digital	Local Stories	# stories generated	Quarterly
		News Story Page Views	# news story page views	Quarterly
		Shared News Stories	# news stories “shared”	Quarterly
		On Site Search	# on site news story searches	Quarterly
		Mobile Searches	# of mobile visits mpbn.net	Quarterly
		Total Visits, New Visits, Page Views, and Dwell Time	# of total visits to mpbn.net	Quarterly
<b>Value</b>				
	Brand Awareness/Impact	3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Survey	Improvements over baseline	Annually
		Membership Count	Rolling 12-month average	Annually
		Audience Conversion	Ratio on Radio Audience/Members	Annually
	Member Satisfaction	In-house Survey	Improvements over baseline	Quarterly
	Employee Satisfaction	3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Survey	Improvements over baseline	Annually
<b>Financials</b>				
	Revenue Sustainability	Budget targets to actual	Monthly financial statement	Quarterly

Debt Ratios/Liquidity	Cash flow	Monthly Balance Sheet	Quarterly
State Funding	Statehouse Project; fee for service	Appropriation allocation	Quarterly
Endowment tracking	Year over Year Increase	Audit Report	Annually

\*Future metrics to monitor include growth of the MPBN endowment, revenue specific to growth in Canada, and scope and impact of community involvement/strategic partnerships.