



2006 SRG ACTIVITY REPORT

STATION RESOURCE GROUP | 6935 Laurel Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912

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**STATION
RESOURCE
GROUP**

2006

**STRATEGIC
VISION**

Our aim is that stations, national leaders, and funders throughout public radio associate the Station Resource Group with strategic vision, increasing the civic and cultural significance of public radio's local institutions, knowledge and insight about our collective work, constructive influence with leading entities in our field, and innovative initiatives that move our national endeavor forward.

**INCREASING
LOCAL
SIGNIFICANCE**

In a time when public radio is realigning its services and business models in an evolving media environment, SRG is been a strong, results-oriented advocate for both the continuing opportunities in our core broadcast work and the expanding possibilities of new services and channels.

**KNOWLEDGE
AND INSIGHT**

**CONSTRUCTIVE
INFLUENCE**

This overview of Station Resource Group activities reflects the range of tasks SRG pursues on behalf of its members and some of our most important recent work.

**INNOVATIVE
INITIATIVES**

SRG Board of Directors

Wayne Roth
Chairman
KUOW, Seattle

Kathleen Pavelko
Vice-Chairman
WITF, Harrisburg

Roger LaMay
WXPB, Philadelphia
(As of March 2006)

Torey Malatia
Chicago Public Radio

Joan Siefert Rose
North Carolina Public Radio:
WUNC

Stewart Vanderwilt
KUT, Austin
(Through February 2006)

JoAnne Wallace
KQED, San Francisco

SRG Staff

Theresa R. Clifford
co-CEO

Thomas J. Thomas
co-CEO

Kerri Hoffman
Business Manager

PRX: PUBLIC RADIO EXCHANGE
Jake Shapiro
Executive Director

John Barth
Managing Director

Matt MacDonald
Technical Director

Andrew Kukliewicz
Senior Web Application Developer

Nathan Woodhull
Web Application Developer

Adrienne Mathiowetz
Member Support Associate

Nick van der Kolk
Editorial Associate

Johanna (Jones) Franzel
Generation PRX Coordinator

PUBLIC MEDIA STRATEGIES FOR LOCAL STATIONS

Develop analyses, strategies, and plans that help stations increase the value of their content and services, extend their share of the public's use of electronic media, advance their sustainability and effectiveness, and enhance their roles as robust and compelling locally-controlled institutions.

In 2006 SRG ramped up our focus on the programming, technology, and organizational issues surrounding mainstream emergence of new audio delivery channels and the growing use of on-demand and interactive media. We sought to frame key issues, manage discussions among station leaders, and work with stations to shape plans for local action and recommendations for national policy.

- SRG brought together staff from stations, networks, and national organizations for facilitated discussions of technical and public service issues that are shaping digital distribution of public radio content.
- PRX Executive Director Jake Shapiro assumed a major role in the NPR-coordinated Digital Distribution Consortium Working Group, a five-month effort in which leading new media thinkers in public radio developed technical and financial models for a collaborative digital distribution infrastructure.
- As the year came to a close we began organizing a meeting of leading national and station-based content creators to ascertain who wants to work with whom, and on what terms, in building a shared “back end” for direct-to-consumer digital distribution of public radio programming at both the local and national level
- Along the way we made numerous presentations on challenges and strategic opportunities in the changing landscape, including detailed briefings at the SRG Planning Retreat and for the boards and staff of several SRG members.

Even as new media beckon, SRG continued its signature analyses that help stations and others strengthen and enlarge public radio's current formats and services through better understanding of the dynamics of audience use, financial support, and public value.

- *The Public Radio Format Study: Financial Patterns* examined audience and financial data for 228 stations over six years to track patterns of performance and productivity associated with different formats and programming strategies.

PUBLIC MEDIA STRATEGIES FOR LOCAL STATIONS

- A featured address by SRG co-CEO Tom Thomas at the Association of Music Personnel in Public Radio's national conference offered a sweeping overview of quantitative and qualitative research findings regarding classical music and public radio. Audio and slides of the presentation have been widely circulated within public radio's classical music community.

We also continued our work on the evolving public service and economic context for investments in local content creation, seeking to advance thinking about individual station programming, the creation of new content, and aggregated investments in local, regional and national services.

- We commissioned Donovan Reynolds, former Director of Michigan Public Media, to survey public radio managers regarding the service, positioning, and financial issues surrounding locally-produced news and public affairs programming.
- Drawing from the survey and other data, we organized and led *Revenue Strategies for Local News*, a management-track seminar at the Public Radio Development and Marketing Conference that brought together managers and development professionals to explore marketing and fundraising strategies for the development and continuing support of their local news efforts.
- We then presented an analysis of the news survey and follow-up discussions at the 2006 SRG Planning Retreat.

Over the years SRG has emphasized various aspects of revenue development. In 2006 we concentrated on major gifts and philanthropic support for public radio stations.

- Along with others, we successfully advocated the creation of a Radio Major Giving Initiative at CPB, which will launch in the current fiscal year.
- We opened discussions with NPR staff on a broad major gifts strategy for public radio – and NPR's particular role in such a strategy.

PUBLIC MEDIA STRATEGIES FOR LOCAL STATIONS

- We interviewed senior development officers at public radio stations with strong major giving programs to identify activities that would move the leading edge of the field forward, ideas that might contribute to the success of CPB's new initiative, and their sense of the value NPR brings to local major giving efforts.

Some of our most effective work involves collaborating with others who are addressing public radio content, service, and sustainability in a changing media framework.

- SRG actively supported NPR's "New Realities" planning process, encouraging participation by SRG members in regional retreats, meeting with project facilitators, reviewing document drafts, and joining in a culminating national meeting.
- We worked with the Development Exchange and CPB to explore options for convening public radio's civic leaders, which led to plans, now being finalized, for small gatherings of key civic leaders in mid-2007.
- SRG staff provided an extensive staff briefing and follow-up data and analysis to the National Endowment for the Arts in connection with its study of classical music on the radio.
- We created and contributed a multi-year financial database to the Radio Research Consortium's *Audience 2010* project, consulted with the project's researchers, and critiqued drafts of project reports.
- Our staff participated on plenary and workshop panels at the national conferences of all of public radio's national organizations – AMPPR, DEI, iMA, NFCB, PRNDI, and PRPD – always emphasizing a strategic perspective, continuing discipline in core broadcast services, and embrace of new opportunities in content and connections with audiences.
- Our staff was also increasingly tapped to address public media issues outside public radio – with foundations, media activists, and academics.
- PRX partnered with several other groups to create *Beyond Broadcast*, a national conference to explore public broadcasting, cable access television, and other traditional public media's opportunity to incorporate new social media models made possible by the internet and new devices.

NATIONAL POLICIES AND STRUCTURE OF PUBLIC RADIO

Work for funding and regulatory policies and arrangements within the structures of public broadcasting that help stations thrive in the rapidly changing media environment and that strengthen services that speak to distinctive geographic and interest-based communities.

In 2006 SRG launched an effort to shape arrangements between stations and content providers that will more effectively support and reinforce stations' role as the primary source through which listeners connect with public radio's most highly valued programming.

- We created a Committee on Rights and Uses of National Programming to identify and sharpen stations' concerns and interests in their dealings with national program suppliers, especially NPR, and to develop a strategy for addressing these issues.
- We successfully launched a unique series of facilitated discussions between board members and senior executives from NPR and SRG to explore issues and develop recommendations regarding NPR and its members, with a strong focus on the area of stations' opportunities for digital distribution of NPR programming.
- We developed a plan with NPR through which stations can offer on-demand, time-shifted streaming of their local versions of NPR news magazines beginning in 2007.

For two decades SRG has played a leading role in the development of funding policies at the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

- SRG's co-CEOs Terry Clifford and Tom Thomas presented an overview of public radio's performance in audience service, fundraising, and building public trust, and highlighted emerging themes and strategies employed by public radio to extend its services across multiple platforms to the CPB Board of Directors' at their opening meeting of 2006.
- SRG staff work on an ongoing basis with the executive leadership of CPB and its Radio office, providing suggestions and feedback on funding priorities, new initiatives, stations' concerns, and opportunities in the field.
- Our staff served on advisory panels for all of CPB's major radio grant programs, including the Community Service Grant program, the Public Radio Program Fund, and system support investments.

**NATIONAL
POLICIES AND
STRUCTURE OF
PUBLIC RADIO**

- We coordinated with CPB staff administering funds for digital conversion in outreach to stations and the encouragement of conversion projects.
- We helped CPB executives define and develop what has emerged as the Public Awareness Initiative, which will be a centerpiece of CPB activities in the coming year.
- We organized an extended effort to promote an experienced station board member for a seat as radio representative on the CPB board. The effort was unsuccessful.

SRG also works on the policies, procedures, activities, and decisions of many other entities that affect public radio – funders, regulators, networks, producers, national and regional organizations, an array of support, representation, and affinity organizations, and key vendors of research, technology, and other services.

- SRG organized stations and others in the field to develop a unified approach to acquiring public radio audience data as Arbitron moves to its Personal People Meter technology. We convened strategy meetings of station and system leaders and assisted the formation and continuing work of the Public Radio Bargaining Team, a station-based group that, together with the Radio Research Consortium, will negotiate new arrangements.
- We monitored rulemaking proceedings at the FCC for potential impact on public radio and participated in proceedings of interest to SRG members.
- SRG's co-CEOs serve on the New Media Advisory Committee of the Ford Foundation to help guide the Foundation's current and future investments in public media.
- We maintain regular contact with public radio's regional organizations and usually have at least one staff person at regional meetings. This year we also met by conference call with regional board members to review issues and concerns with CPB funding policy and presented the opening address at Public Radio in Mid-America's fall meeting.

**NATIONAL
POLICIES AND
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Another way in which SRG supports members is to help strengthen the capacities of other organizations that include a substantial number of SRG members and that SRG members consider especially important to their work.

- We surfaced issues and options concerning improving the participation of NPR member stations in NPR's organizational decision-making.
- SRG co-CEO Tom Thomas facilitated strategic planning retreats of both the PRPD Board of Directors and the DEI Board of Directors.
- We maintained ongoing liaison with Radio Research Consortium staff and board members as issues emerged with Arbitron.
- SRG provided ongoing data and analysis to support the work of Public Radio Capital and delivered the closing address at PRC's "More Channels, More Service" conference.

PRX — THE PUBLIC RADIO EXCHANGE

An online public radio program marketplace that supports stations' efforts to craft distinctive and engaging services, attracts and nurtures proven and emerging talent, and helps public radio's content creators extend the reach of their work through innovative approaches to program distribution.

www.prx.org

PRX has become a vital service for distributing, curating, and licensing diverse and relevant audio programs and a catalyst for innovation and change within public radio. In three fast-paced years since we launched this service:

- Over 250 public radio stations have downloaded over 11,000 radio pieces from PRX for broadcast to millions of listeners.
- We have distributed over \$400,000 in payments to over 700 content providers.
- Over 11,000 pieces have been uploaded to PRX – creating the largest catalogue of public radio programs available on-demand for broadcast and digital use.
- The PRX Editorial Board and listeners have written over 5,600 reviews of pieces on PRX – the largest collection of critical writing about public radio work in existence.
- Registered members on PRX now number some 22,000 users, including station staff, independent producers, other public broadcasting professionals, and listeners.
- Generation PRX – a special project area for youth media – has become a key resource and distributor for broadcast and digital channels for over 40 youth radio groups across the country.
- PRX has played a pioneering role in podcasting, creating custom tools for stations and offering curated “feeds” of pieces from the PRX catalogue through iTunes and other sites.
- PRX has attracted significant and ongoing funding commitments from such organizations as the MacArthur Foundation, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Ford Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Open Society Institute, and the Surdna Foundation.
- PRX has become a leader in discussions and forums both inside and outside public radio, helping define and advocate for a new public media model that leverages the social and network effects of the Internet and digital media.

We have also developed tools and approaches that apply the innovative technological, curatorial, and social networking approaches used at PRX to a wider range of

PRX — THE PUBLIC RADIO EXCHANGE

public radio opportunities and services, especially station curation and presentation of on-demand content.

- We continued development and maintenance of PRX's public radio podcast directory
- PRX staff consulted with Public Radio International and Public Interactive on development of the Jukebox project, which enables stations to provide an array of content on-demand, both from national suppliers (including PRX) and station archives.
- PRX Executive Director Jake Shapiro and Managing Director John Barth made presentations to stations' staff and board members about creative uses of PRX tools and opportunities for social media, including visits to SRG members Chicago Public Radio, New Hampshire Public Radio, Radio Bilingüe, WGBH, WITF, WNYC, and WXPN.

PRX has launched several explorations of direct-to-consumer distribution of public radio programming in ways that benefit both stations and producers.

- PRX now offers four podcasts, each of which reflects a different dimension of PRX's work:
 - *NPR Station Showcase with PRX* is a weekly presentation of a station-produced piece, curated by PRX and distributed by NPR Digital Media.
 - *Youthcast* offers a weekly youth-produced piece from Generation PRX, distributed as part of the alt.npr service
 - *PRX Podcast* features pieces from the overall PRX portfolio.
 - *Nature Stories* is a weekly presentation curated by Atlantic Public Media and sponsored by the Nature Conservancy and PRX.
- We continue to offer PRX programs through Audible.com and have developed a new distribution arrangement with IODA.

PRX staff are also taking leadership roles with other key organizations in the field. Executive Director Jake Shapiro serves on the boards of the Integrated Media Association and the Association of Independents in Radio. Managing Director John Barth is on the board of the Public Radio Program Directors Association.

LEADERSHIP FOR STRONGER STATIONS

Support stations' professional staff and civic leaders as they guide their organizations to new levels of excellence, scale, complexity, and effectiveness. Assist them in developing and implementing local plans that advance their public service, capture significant financial support, open doors to partnerships, and foster accountability and public trust.

Each year SRG holds a retreat during which members receive briefings on critical issues and new developments in the field, have a rewarding opportunity to exchange views on key issues, and develop a shared vision of public service toward which they can work individually and collectively.

- The 2006 SRG Annual Planning Retreat in Key Biscayne was well-attended and well-reviewed by participants. It featured briefings by staff (subsequently distributed via the SRG web site), presentations by SRG members, and in-depth, strategy setting discussions on key issues such as developing and financing local news and public affairs, relationships between stations and NPR, and unfolding issues with Arbitron,

SRG also carries out in-depth planning and strategy consultations with member stations throughout the year. This year we led and supported planning projects with:

- New Hampshire Public Radio (strategic planning/capital campaign)
- Iowa Public Radio (integration of operations and strategic plan)
- WKSU (strategic planning)
- WITF (opportunities in new media)
- KWMU (board and staff retreats)
- Radio Bilingüe (strategic planning)

WORKING TO THE HIGHEST STANDARDS

Preserve SRG's position as a highly-regarded leadership organization within public radio, one that exemplifies the highest standards of integrity and professionalism in all its dealings and that is responsive and accountable to its members and elected leadership.

SRG's primary focus is on the strength of its members and the quality of the services they offer to their communities. But we also give close attention to the ways in which we do our own work and how we build and manage SRG itself. Across 2006, SRG:

- Communicated regularly with members on a wide range of topics and SRG activities.
- Sought and received member comments and directions with respect to policy consultations, research issues, SRG undertakings in the areas of digital distribution and the SRG-NPR discussions, and the continued operation of PRX within SRG.
- Helped secure positions for SRG station leaders on numerous industry advisory and consultation panels and committees.
- Maintained an open website at www.srg.org with current and archived publications, reports, and presentations on a wide range of public radio issues
- Provided interviews and background materials for industry publications, trade press, public radio programs, the general media, and academics on issues and events concerning both public media in general and developments at individual stations and organizations in the field.
- Supported the SRG board and its committees and kept members up to date with board activities.
- Supported the PRX Editorial Board, a diverse and distinguished panel of station leaders and producers, and the Generation PRX Advisory Board, which includes both adult and youth leaders of youth radio projects.
- Managed SRG's financial affairs within our budget, earning both another year of positive net revenue and a "clean audit" and high marks from SRG's outside audit firm.