

Practical Strategic Planning for public media organizations



DECEMBER 7, 2023

A Public Media Company webinar | www.publicmedia.co

WEBINAR LOGISTICS

1. All microphones are muted and cameras off
2. We welcome conversation – please use chat function to share questions and thoughts
3. Webinar being recorded and posted on PMC website:
www.publicmedia.co/webinars

Strategic Planning for Public Media Organizations

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MEDIA
CO.**

PURPOSE OF TODAY

1. Determine the right time for strategic planning
2. Review the key steps in the process
3. Understand how you can go about it
4. Hear from someone who's been through it
(John LaBonia, CEO at WLRN Public Media)
5. Answer your questions



WEBINAR PRESENTERS



John LaBonia

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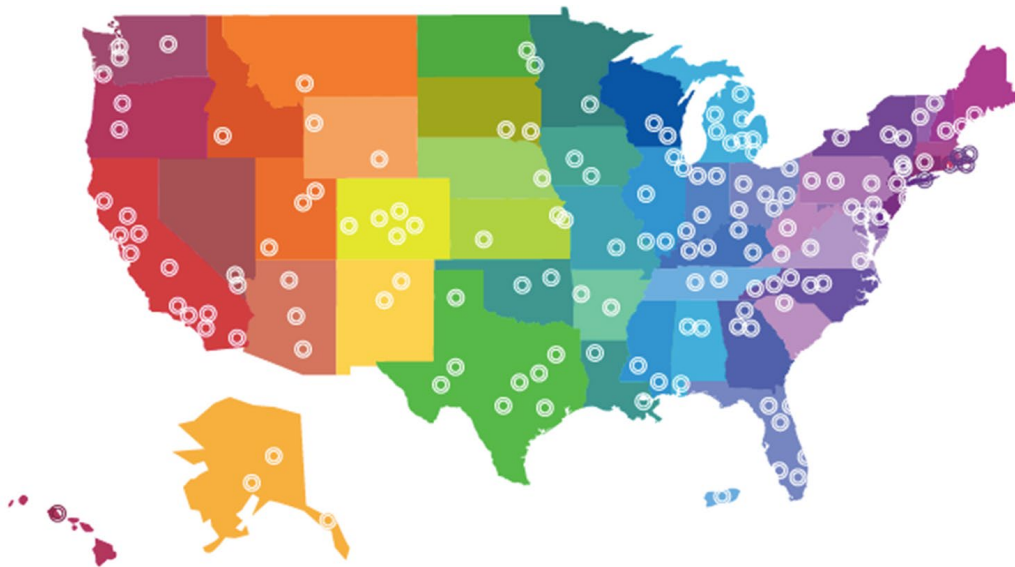
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ABOUT PUBLIC MEDIA COMPANY

Public Media Company is a nonprofit consulting firm dedicated to serving public media. We leverage our business expertise to increase public media's impact across the country.



Public Media Company works in partnership with stations in urban and rural communities to find innovative solutions and grow local impact. We have worked with **over 375 public media organizations in all 50 states**

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WHAT IS STRATEGIC PLANNING?

- Strategy bridges the gap between “where we are now” and “where we want to be”
- Strategy is a plan of actions that, together, help you reach a clear destination. It’s **not a list of big ambitions**. Agreed actions **needs to be relevant, executable, and take you somewhere**
- **Strategic planning** is the process you go through to clarify your strategy and get critical resource decisions right, helping ensure your resources (money, time, talent) are where your strategy is



STRATEGIC PLANNING KEY STEPS



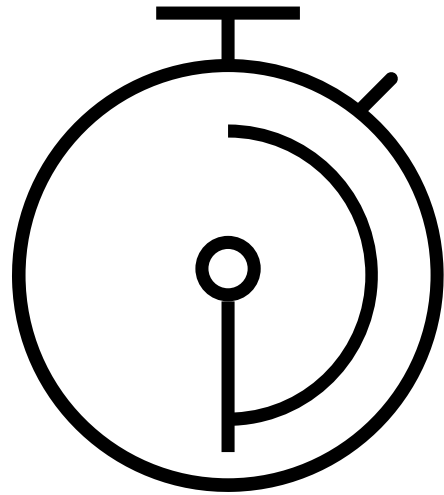
01

PREPARE: What the process will look like and who will be involved

- **Determine if now is the right time**
- **Decide scope**
 - How ambitious? Revise vision, mission, values?
 - How much time/money? Manage internally or get outside help (consultant (local, national), board member, etc.)?
 - What period will the plan cover? 3 years?
- **Identify stakeholders and process**
 - Who to engage during process? Staff (how deep in org), board, governing entity, community? How do we ensure diversity?
 - What process will we follow? How will we engage stakeholders (group meetings (in-person, remote, hybrid), 1:1 conversations, surveys)? How frequently?
 - Who gets to agree final version?



IS NOW THE RIGHT TIME?



Signs it may be time for strategic planning discussions (whether that's a quick refresh or a full process):

Environment has changed – significant change is happening (or has happened) in the world you operate in and you're not sure how your organization should operate in such an environment (changes could be political, economic, social, technological, environmental)

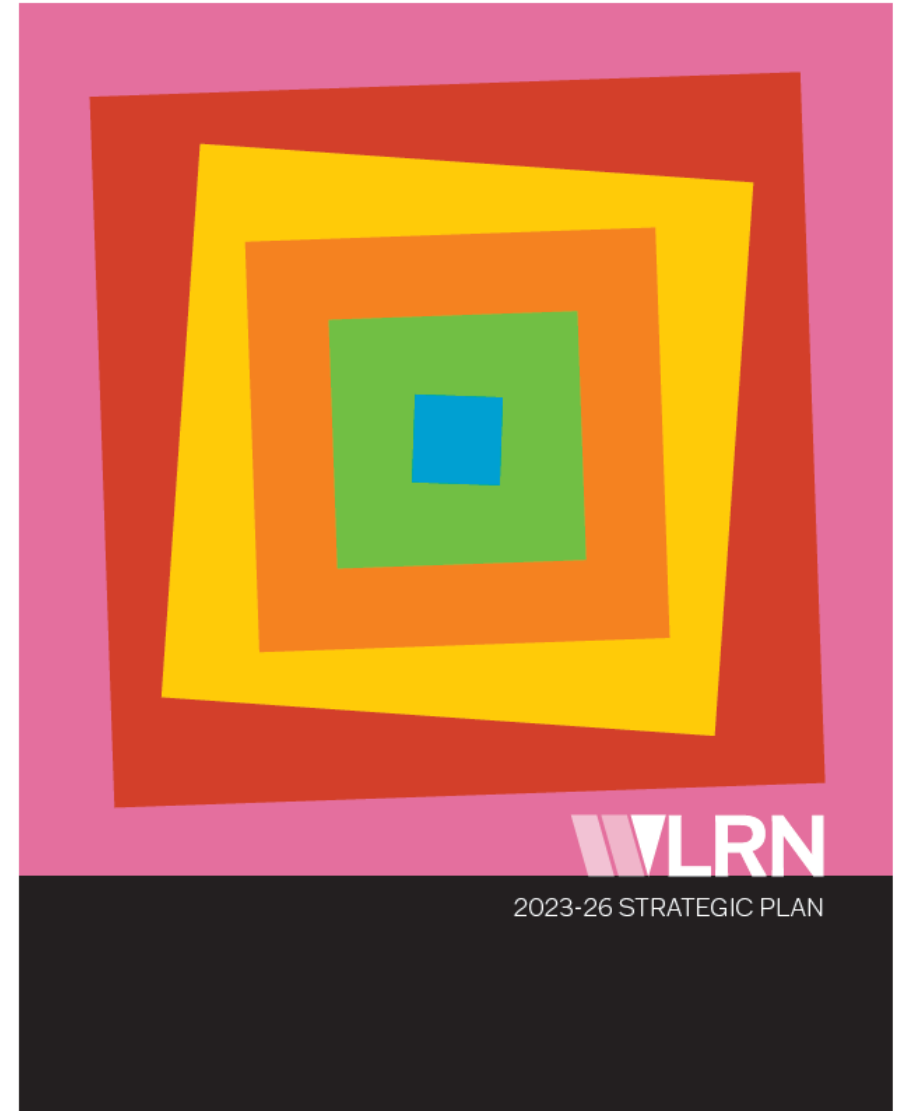
Organization has changed – you have had a big change in staff (e.g., a new leader or lots of turnover), partnered with another entity, grown/declined considerably, etc. may indicate its time to get clearer about future goals

Indecision – you're involved in lots of things and have opportunities to do more but, to advance the organization, do you say yes or no?

WLRN PROCESS

Questions for John:

- Why did you do it? And why then?
- Did you review vision/mission?
- How did you decide on a process?
- How did you decide on stakeholders and how to engage them?
- Why did you work with a consultant?



02

KNOW: Understand the context in which the organization exists (now & future)

- **Within organization**
 - Your current performance and trends
 - Financial, Audience/engagement, etc.
 - Your current plans and strategies
 - Your current org structure, processes, internal dynamics
- **External environment**
 - Demographics (current and projections)
 - Local changes (university, area, state, etc.)
 - Media and technology changes (public media, commercial, non-commercial)
 - Policy changes



03

ENVISION: Clarify the organization's purpose and overall direction

- Fundamental element of strategic planning. Using discussions and exercises with stakeholders, **clarifies what you want to achieve, where, and for whom** over a particular period of time
- Elements that can help clarify direction include:
 - **Mission, vision, values**
 - **Intended impact**
 - **Critical success factors**
 - **Challenges/barriers to overcome**
- Objective is to **articulate high level strategic priorities/direction** for the organization



TESTING VISION, MISSION, VALUES

To keep in mind if you're revising your statements

VISION

Describes where you are going and what it looks like when you get there.

Aspirational, future looking, and reflective of your long-term impact on the world

MISSION

Core purpose of the organization – why you exist

Idealistic, grand and aspirational

Must be true, based on real motivations of leadership

Answers the question, how do we contribute to a better world?

VALUES

Defines an organization's personality

Attracts and aligns employees

Is a covenant with your stakeholders

Answers the question, how do we behave?

04

REALIZE: Making the agreed purpose/ direction a reality

- Translates the high level strategic priorities into goals and objectives for the plan period
- Takes into account how your current work helps you achieve your priorities as well what you may need to do differently going forward
- Defines the specific things you will hold yourself accountable for achieving



05

PLAN: Documenting/sharing approach and making it real in budget

- **Develop and adopt strategic plan document**
 - Document high level strategy and specific objectives being pursued (and provide some context for why)
 - Get feedback, buy-in, approval (if needed), share widely
 - Develop a 1-year operating plan (if helpful)
- **Integrate into budget to align resources with strategy**
 - Identify resources needed (money, time, talent)
 - Incorporate into annual budget. Note: How you spend your time/money reflects what really matters to you
 - PMC webinar on budgeting and forecasting:
<https://publicmedia.co/webinars/>



STRATEGIC PLAN ELEMENTS

Areas to potentially address/include in a strategic plan document include:

- **Narrative** to provide context for the plan
- **Critical success factors** that detail high level ambitions
- **Strategic framework** that may include vision/mission/values, intended impact, and **strategic priorities**
- **High-level goals and the specific initiatives** that support those goals
- **WLRN strategic plan:**
<https://npr.brightspotcdn.com/93/a2/ba9bc48f48d7aac2b3b444a4816e/strategic-plan-2023-26.pdf>

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Our strategic plan is driven by and organized around WLRN's Strategic Framework—detailing our aspirations for the future and the strategies that we will pursue over the next three years to better serve our community.

INTENDED IMPACT

WLRN aspires to be South Florida's essential source for engaging local and regional storytelling of consequence.

At our best, we are:

Connecting people with vital information, cultural insights, lifelong learning, and each other

Telling Stories about what resonates and matters in South Florida

Engaging/Reflecting everyone in the community through platforms that work for them

Collaborating between teams, with the school district, with local organizations and institutions, and with the wider community

Changing/Impacting people's lives, their communities, and the policies that affect them

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

To address our challenges and increase our impact in the South Florida community over the next 3 years, WLRN will:

Grow our awareness and reach by expanding our footprint, investing beyond broadcast, being a leader in news, and increasing audience diversity across platforms.

Increase our ability to succeed by clarifying our long-term future, growing our capacity and insights, and strengthening our connections in the community.

06

MONITOR: Develop metrics to track progress against goals

- Develop goals/metrics/milestones associated with the plan
- Track progress, provide regular updates to stakeholders, and adjust direction as needed
- Continue using strategic plan for decision making and refer back to document/metrics when building future budgets (and operating plans)





INSIGHTS FROM JOHN

Public Media Company Webinars

Public Media Company has begun hosting a series of informational webinars for public media General Managers and station leaders to help them stay on top of our ever-evolving media landscape.

Webinar will be available on PMC website for all to view

www.publicmedia.co/webinars

THANK YOU!



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