

PUTTING THE PUBLIC BACK IN PUBLIC MEDIA

A Strategy to Rebuild Communities, Fund Journalism and Invigorate Democracy

The decline of news

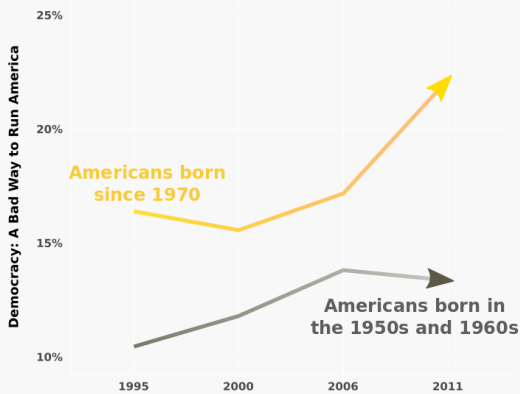
There are now less than half of the the number of working journalists at daily newspapers. In 1990 there were 56,900 newsroom employees. There are now less than 32,000.

The end of PBS?

The current proposed spending cuts threaten to eliminate the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, delivering a significant loss of vital funding to keep national programming available and local stations financially sound.

Youth Lose Faith in Democracy

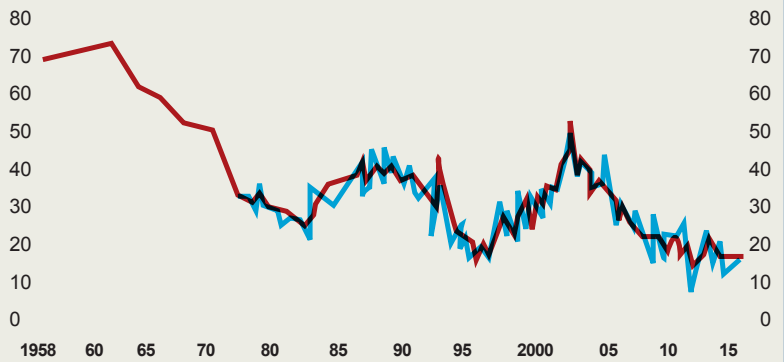
Young Americans: Losing Faith in Democracy



Source: World Values Survey, 1995-2011, and Foa and Mounk (2015) "The Democratic Disconnect". Respondents asked to assess "having a democratic political system" as a way to run the United States; Percentage "bad" or "very bad".



Americans' trust in government 1958-2015 (% of total)



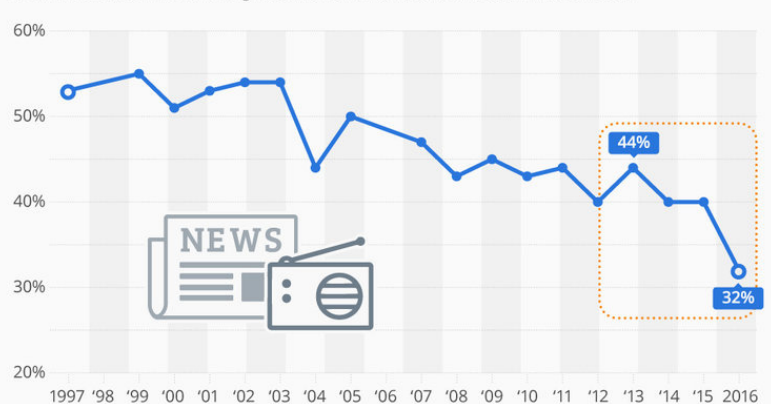
Footnote: Percentage of Americans who say they trust the government "Just about always" or most of the time". Source: Pew Research Center compilation of polling data from various sources.

A crisis of trust in America

Our communities depend on institutions, common beliefs in democracy, trusted facts and the ability to have meaningful dialogue. All of these are under siege. Many Americans are feeling a decline in the civic health of the community and even in civil discourse with their families.

Trust in Mass Media Erodes

% of Americans who have a great deal/a fair amount of trust in mass media



2016 figure based on telephone interviews conducted in Sep. 2016, with a random sample of 1,020 adults living in the U.S.



@StatistaCharts Source: Gallup



THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Our growing news “deserts”

There are now 12 newspapers owned by private investors who view them as cash machines and historically have not put new resources into their operations, slashing staff to maintain good margins. This trend, combined with consolidation of media in our state, creates regions where little to no coverage is happening.

Home values falling

The national trend of people moving towards large urban centers has impacted housing prices in towns and suburbs. The state as a whole shows median home values are down 18 percent from their 2004 peak.

Young people leaving

We are just one of a few states whose median age is over 40 which also means fewer children. Our high school population is projected to shrink faster than 47 other states. This is also creating a crisis in public school funding and the solvency of our state pensions and retirement funds.

CPBN brands still trusted

Despite national media trends, CPTV and WNPR remain vital to our consumers who rely on our news and entertainment.

Our audience trusts us and depends on us:



92% agree CPBN is high quality

89% agree CPBN is trustworthy

87% love CPBN and would miss it if it went away

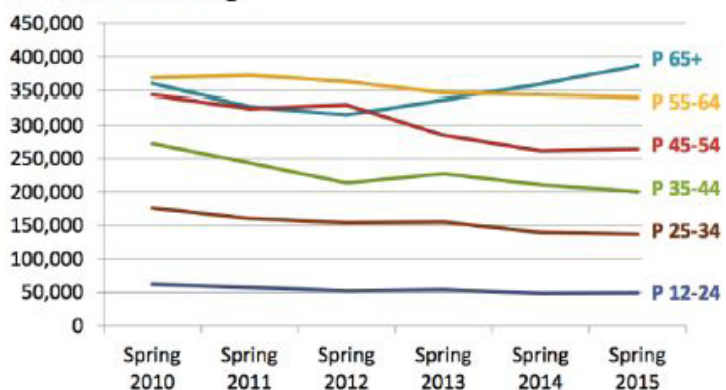
79% agree CPBN brings people together around ideas they care about

But our audiences are getting older

Unless we diversify our consumers and leverage new digital media, our reach will continue to erode making fundraising more difficult, exactly at the wrong time. We must grow audience and create brand new revenue streams to continue to improve and grow our local programming.

Declines in listening to Morning Edition among all ages under 65

Since 2010, all age groups under 55 have lost 20% of AQH listening



OUR COMMUNITIES STRATEGY

Leveraging Digital Media, Broadcasting and Gatherings to Connect People



How people engage today

The internet has fundamentally disrupted how people behave and interact with one another. It has created platforms that decentralize activities and shift trust to peer-to-peer networks. This also means a shift from a *geographic* strategy (people connected by where they live) to a *psychographic* approach (people connected by attitudes and affinities).

How we will leverage this shift

Instead of fighting against the current, we will use it to power our efforts. Our approach is to find, understand and grow communities of interest - people who are united in a common passion. By focusing on their needs and desire to get together, we will create content, programs, services and gatherings that provide a platform for connecting.

As we build these groups out, we will be looking for new revenue approaches based on the successful strategies of growing digital media operations: memberships, events, sponsorships, advertising and micro-payments. Eventually, this revenue will not only power the communities work but, will subsidize new programming and grow our journalism efforts across the state.

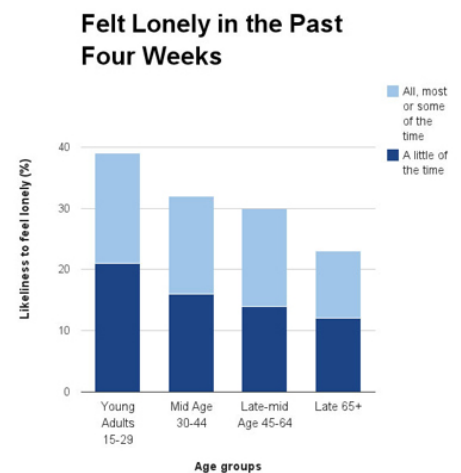
Successful digital media “narrowcast”

The brands that are growing in the new economy focus on specific niche topics that allow them to tap into deep needs of consumers who reward their focus with money.

The consumer is the new producer

With widely available digital tools, the audience is now creating content on par with professionals. We will leverage this competency to curate and amplify the best of it. This “pro-am” approach will eventually generate more, less expensive and better programming.

People are hungry for connection



A WELL-DESIGNED EFFORT

Fail fast, learn quickly, repeat

We are using lean start-up techniques to create inexpensive prototypes that test our potential solutions, get them in front of consumers, make shifts and test again. This ensures that we are maximizing efficiency and discovering as we go rather than making expensive out-of-the-box solutions.

Research, make, test, scale

Once we have a product or service that our audience responds to, we will add dollars to improve the user experience and start to scale the solution for a wider audience. We are building with the consumer in mind at every stage.

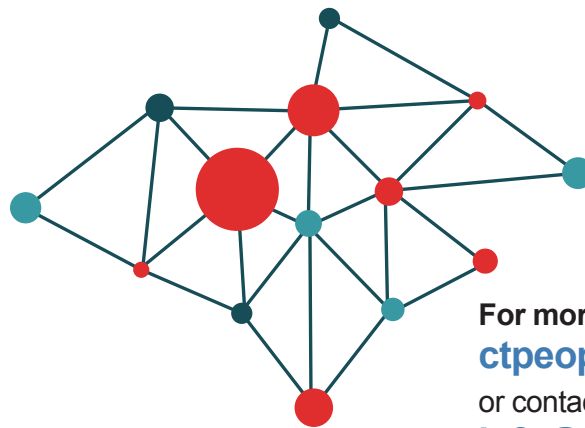
A new team for a new time

We've devoted resources to a key team that will lead this effort. However, we are involving everyone at CPBN in this project as it will redefine who we are and deepen our connections to community.

We need your support to invigorate democracy

We believe our community strategy will grow audience, generate new revenue, connect the community, fund journalism and most importantly find new ways to strengthen our democracy. We know this is a big push and we need your help to support it over the next few years. Eventually, this will replace our current operating models, future-proofing our organization and allowing us to self-fund our work. This will be especially important to the future of journalism as the for-profit models continue to erode and lose their impact. In addition, our work will become a model for public media organizations across the country. Help us make Connecticut an even better place to live and help us begin to put the public back in public media.

“Over the next five years, we will create a powerful communal infrastructure for Connecticut, becoming an essential source of quality journalism, culture and civic engagement for the citizens of the state.”



For more information visit ctpeopleproject.org or contact The People Project Team at info@ctpeopleproject.org

TO BRING THE PUBLIC BACK