

**WQLN**

***FIVE-YEAR  
STRATEGIC PLAN***

## ***Executive Summary***

During the next several years as the political landscape changes and technology advancements accelerate, WQLN and the Public Broadcasting industry will face challenges and exciting opportunities. The potential for digital delivery of television and radio, combined with the ever-increasing personalization of the media experience through new devices like cellular phones, mp3 players, and personal video equipment presents our industry with exciting opportunities.

In recent years, Federal funding for Public Broadcasting was threatened by the increasing demands on Federal resources and shifting priorities in Washington. In fact, Public Broadcasting was de-funded in the last two Presidential budget proposals. Annual planning for WQLN operations and services is more difficult because a significant portion of WQLN's funding comes from the Federal government through the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). In response to this uncertainty, the WQLN strategic plan includes a significant focus on developing financial stability through growing the WQLN endowment with planned gifts, establishing an education endowment to ensure the continuity of WQLN's educational initiatives, and increasing the annual excess revenue over expenses from operations with the long-term goal of funding depreciation to provide for the replacement of equipment and maintenance of our physical facility.

Advancements in technology are changing the way people work, communicate, and use media for entertainment and education. The full implementation of digital television and digital radio will open the opportunity to offer more programs and services. WQLN recognizes that technology also provides many opportunities to develop efficiencies in its operations. WQLN is committed to developing and using technology to improve its service to the community while being good stewards of the resources entrusted to it by the community. In keeping with this commitment, WQLN will focus its technological efforts only in areas that represent real potential.

Although WQLN is customarily known as a television and radio station, the leadership team of WQLN is committed to extending the value of programming through community outreach programs and educational initiatives that change people's lives. WQLN will continue to expand and develop educational outreach programs in areas that fit with the mission of WQLN, provide opportunities for life-long learning, and produce lasting changes in the lives of its constituents.

Finally, WQLN recognizes that in order to accomplish the exciting opportunities in these changing times, it must recruit and retain a staff of talented and team-oriented employees. WQLN is committed to developing an internal culture that supports and encourages creative ideas, teamwork, and personal growth.

## I. Economic/Financial Stability and Growth

### □ **\$1 million General Endowment with \$300,000 in commitments via Estate Intention forms**

A healthy endowment is essential to the long-term financial health and independence of WQLN. The goal to increase the endowment will be met through a Planned Giving program.

A Planned Giving program is a systematic effort to identify prospects, make personal phone calls on those persons having the ability to make major gifts, encourage such gifts by providing individual tax and financial planning information to the prospect, soliciting the gift, and building a relationship with the donor. An active solicitation of outright gifts, deferred gifts, and bequests are part of a goal-oriented effort to increase endowment support. To accomplish the goals of the program, the Endowment Committee has established the need for a full-time Planned Giving Coordinator.

At this time, WQLN does not have the funds available for this position. Therefore, the committee has determined that, until the station can afford this position, the current Vice President will handle these duties. A conversation will take place each year between the President and the Vice President as to the availability of funds for a Planned Giving Coordinator.

- Increase the General Endowment from \$800,000 to \$1,300,000 in new planned gift income and confirmed expectancies within 5 years.

### □ **Establish a \$150,000 Education Endowment**

Recognizing the need for WQLN Education to self-sustain its efforts annually, WQLN Education will create an education-specific endowment to help nurture that self-sufficiency.

- Implement PPTN Funding Phase-Out Plan for FY 08-FY10.
- Net an average of \$30,000 annually over the next five years to reach \$150,000 in the Education Endowment by 2012.

### □ **\$300,000 Net--Annually Funding Depreciation**

WQLN's net revenue for FY05 was \$110,620. In FY06, the net was \$146,729. This represents a 32.6% increase in FY06. The budget for FY07 is \$100,268 and through twelve months, the station is projecting an excess of \$151,768 before the annual audit. This represents an increase of 3.4% over FY06. The station needs to achieve an annual increase of 26.5 % in the first year and 22.6% each successive year in order to achieve the desired \$300,000 over the next 5 years. The goals for the next five years will be as follows:

- Achieve the following net revenue over expenses from operations:
  - FY08 - \$192,000
  - FY09 - \$219,000
  - FY10 - \$246,000
  - FY11 - \$273,000
  - FY12 - \$300,000

## II. Innovation

WQLN realizes that Broadcast and Business technology advance at a rapid pace. Organizations will not survive if they are unwilling to adapt to new technology. WQLN will find or drive innovation in balance with financial constraints and an understanding of market trends to maximize the use of technology throughout its business.

- **A yearly technology audit will be completed.**
  - The technology used in each department will be documented.
  - Technological trends for each department will be outlined.
  - Recommendations for technological improvement will be developed for each department.
  - Rolling five-year outlook will be outlined (best guess).

- **Execution of the Technology Audit**
  - Responsibility for audit production rests with lead technology professional.
  - Team will include one individual from each department (on advisory basis).
  - Audit will be completed annually by March 15 beginning in FY 08.
  - Audit outline will be complete by December 1 beginning in FY 08.

- **15 major Technology Projects**

To keep WQLN positioned as an early adopter or in the early majority, WQLN will plan and execute three major technological projects a year. These may include hardware, software, and process upgrades or redesign. Projects must have business or operational impact and will serve as major organizational initiatives. The projects will be derived from the annual technology audit and will be executed within a fiscal year. Projects may be defined as steps toward a multi-year initiative.

Responsibility for defining and executing the plans will rest with WQLN's lead technology position. The executing team will consist of at least one technology professional and likely will include individuals from other parts of the organization.

- Uniform Project Steps:
  - Projects will be presented to—and approved by—the senior leadership team.
  - Product development will initially utilize internal resources as product testers (this serves to acquaint internal users with external services).
  - When the project is 50% complete and all internal users are trained, marketing may begin.
  - User (constituent) training will be completed as part of a successful project and associated costs will be budgeted as project costs.
  - Planning/Budgeting for ongoing training and support of all projects must be completed (ongoing training and support costs will be billed to project sponsor department).

### **III. Community Outreach**

As a community licensee, WQLN recognizes our responsibility to the Lake Erie Region to expand the benefits of our on-air programming in a terrestrial manner. To that end, WQLN will provide educational outreach to new or underserved communities through a variety of educational programs and initiatives. Over the next five years, WQLN Education will expand its reach as a service provider in two distinct areas: Adult Education and Outreach.

WQLN will also continue to create unique community events in the Lake Erie Region that both enhance and contribute to the awareness and understanding of the eclectic programming that airs on WQLN Radio and WQLN TV-DT. Over the next five years, a WQLN multi-departmental committee, with members from Creative Services, Education, and Development will facilitate one annual collaborative event.

□ **Innovative Educational Services: Adult Education and Outreach**

It is the goal of WQLN Education to provide innovative educational services that meet unmet and underserved needs. These services are provided through two distinct departments within WQLN Education: Adult Education and Outreach.

• **Adult Education: GED for Me!**

- Maintain successful operations of GED for Me! in Pennsylvania.
  - Enroll 400 students annually for a total of 2,000 students in five years.
  - Expect that 1,300 students will complete the program in five years.
  - Expect that 950 students will pass the GED tests within the next five years.
  - Generate a minimum of \$200,000 annually in funding to sustain PA program operations.
- Establish GED for Me! in nine additional states (minimum of one PBS station per state).
  - Assess need for program in nine additional states -- completed by 6/2008.
  - Determine target list of nine states -- completed by 7/2008.
    - Phase I:* Secure seed money (through excess Pennsylvania PIE funds or appropriations) to begin operations in two additional states -- completed by 6/2009.
    - Phase II:* Secure seed money (through excess PIE funds or appropriations) to begin operations in three additional states -- completed by 6/2010.
    - Phase III:* Secure seed money (through excess PIE funds or appropriations) to begin operations in four additional states -- completed by 6/2011.
- Create and launch Project HOPE:

Project HOPE is an initiative designed to extend the GED for Me! students' experiences past the point of passing the GED Tests and onto guidance with further education and employment options. Project HOPE is not only a guidance initiative; it is also a student retention and motivation program.

  - H - Get them Hooked! Get the word out, get them interested, and get them committed to GED for Me!
  - O - Offer online opportunity! - Get them started and keep them actively motivated to complete the GED for Me! Program and obtain their GED. Provide full-scale intervention to increase retention and keep them actively participating in the program.
  - P - Prepare them for life after GED for Me! - Provide them with interview and resume writing training, life coaching, college admission information, and job searching strategies.
  - E - Educate them or employ them! - See them through admission to further education or better employment. Partner with state and national career link offices, employment agencies, two- and four-year colleges and tech schools to offer alternatives to GED for Me! Graduates.
    - Phase I:* Integrate basic guidance operation into GED for Me! - Project HOPE, in an effort to increase student retention and completion as outlined under "H" and "O" above- by 6/2008.
    - Phase II:* Implement Project HOPE in two additional states by 6/2009. Expand guidance services to include services outlined under "P" and "E" above.
    - Phase III:* Implement Project HOPE in three additional states by 6/2010.
    - Phase IV:* Implement Project HOPE in four additional states by 6/2011.

- **Education Outreach:**

- Annual Major Collaborative Project with WQLN TV-DT Production:

WQLN Education will partner with production annually to establish a strong educational component to supplement our television programming. Examples of such initiatives could include, but are not limited to, a student media festival, web curricula with video streaming, a student forum about elections, or educational interstitials.

- Create a true presence for WQLN Education Outreach within the organization and the community by FY12.

The Educational Outreach team will create this presence by working collaboratively with other departments within the organization to create outreach components that correlate with television and radio programs. WQLN Education will serve as a source of information on media usage and lesson plans for local schools while also offering tools and curricula for educators. By also establishing solid, reoccurring events, WQLN Education will build station and community involvement and awareness of our services.

- Remain a self-sustained education initiative.

WQLN Education will build a branch of profitable outreach activities including fee for service and/or fundraising activities such as Angelina, Thomas, Spelling Bee, or Character Days. Two initiatives will take place annually.

- Develop two outreach initiatives annually to reach new or underserved audiences.

WQLN Education will reach out to audiences we have not served extensively in past years including elderly, adults, teens, and upper elementary school age children. WQLN Education will also develop a stronger focus on underprivileged children as we conduct family literacy workshops and other youth projects.

- Collaborate with PPTN stations to develop one statewide initiative beginning in year FY09.

WQLN Education will strengthen our statewide reach by partnering with other Pennsylvania public broadcasting stations to deliver outreach initiatives including contests, professional development trainings, or youth projects.

- **Community Outreach: Expand WQLN's community involvement**

- The *Expand WQLN's Community Involvement Committee* will conduct one Annual Collaborative Community Outreach Event.

- The *Expand WQLN's Community Involvement Committee* will develop a singular, unbudgeted WQLN collaborative community event to raise money to use to better market WQLN to the community. Community Outreach: Yearly comprehensive community audit: A comprehensive community audit will be completed by 6/30/09. A regular ongoing schedule will be determined on the basis of need, time to completion, and usefulness.

- Internal Audit:

- The *Expand WQLN's Community Involvement Committee* will conduct an internal annual audit of WQLN Community Outreach.

- External Audit:

- The *Expand WQLN's Community Involvement Committee* will conduct an external audit of all community events held in the Lake Erie Region.

## IV. Image

When WQLN uses the term ‘image,’ we are referring to an emotional response between a perceiver of the WQLN brand and the values of WQLN. As a regional asset, WQLN’s image is its reputation. To protect the WQLN image/brand/reputation, WQLN will formalize all WQLN communications. Every communication from WQLN, whether it is a formal business letter or a casual email, contributes to the image of WQLN. To that end, the *Create a Positive WQLN Image Committee* will develop a singular style of communication—a *WQLN Style Guide*—and will further reinforce the WQLN method of communication at regularly scheduled staff meetings.

- **Define who we are:**
  - A *WQLN Style Guide* including a crisis communication plan will be completed by January 2008. The guide and plans will be reviewed annually.
- **Educate the team:**
  - Members of the *Create a Positive WQLN Image Committee* will share information bi-weekly from the *WQLN Style Guide* with the staff.

## V. Operational Research

WQLN recognizes that the environment in which WQLN provides its services is changing faster than ever and new changes will occur at an exponential rate. New and emerging technologies will significantly change the way WQLN delivers its programs and services and the way the organization operates. WQLN also recognizes the important role that timely and accurate information plays in business decisions that will impact the future success of WQLN. With this recognition, WQLN will evaluate the need to develop a formal research department and set a timetable for the development of the department. The President & General Manager is the project manager and will complete a needs analysis and proposal by June 30, 2008.

## VI. Organizational Culture

WQLN believes that we can reach our highest potential when team members share a common cultural identity. WQLN is committed to identifying, communicating, and developing an organizational culture that will ensure the success of the station. The following goals are established for the development of the ideal WQLN culture:

- Identify cultural norms and establish a published WQLN Culture Guide by October 2007.
- Develop and implement a WQLN Culture promotion plan by January 2008.
- Conduct an annual survey by June 30<sup>th</sup> to benchmark the progress toward reaching the desired culture.
- Achieve an average rating of 95% (on average, the employees believe we live the culture 95% of the time) by June 30, 2012.