

FY08 Technology Committee Budget Report to PNB, July 2007.
Approved at Tech Committee meeting July 18, 2007.

1. We've been asked to comment on the inability of workers to get a hearing and a process for compensation regarding fair salaries.
2. Technology is badly under-funded. Serious finance commitments are needed. Also, a serious strategy is needed for meeting technology needs, requiring a commitment of staff time.
3. Pacifica needs an operations budget breakout for FY08, like other breakout parts of the National budget. (We need a budget line, and some detailing of expenditures.)
4. The foundation should send the technology staff to each station to do digital distribution training, digital hardware assessment, and the management initiatives needed to parallel digital capacities across the network.
5. Support the technology staff's initiative to do needs assessment.
6. The promotion of digital productions within digital productions and elsewhere, and the solicitation of financial support for Pacifica's digital media via our digital distribution.
7. The per-song royalty fees need to be anticipated as much as possible. We need to start on a data-base which will calculate past and future costs.

Henry Norr moved that the committee support this outline as the budget report at the PNB in-person board report in L.A. in July 2007. Passed without objection.

Four Motions from the Technology Committee, Passed on June 20, 2007

I. Motion (Passed without objection): The Chair of the PNB Technology Committee will give a statement on technology budget concerns at the in-person meeting in July.

II. The PNB Technology Committee passed without objection the following motion at the July in-person meeting. Please add it for a consent item:

Whereas Pacificafoundation.org now has the capacity to accommodate the National Board calendar needs, and that Pete Korakis has requested a change be made in the calendar process, and that the Technology Committee has passed the following,

the PNB Technology committee requests that the web location for officially noticing all Pacifica National Board meetings as required by the bylaws, is now Pacificafoundation.org, replacing KPFTx.org

III. Request from the PNB Technology Committee to be considered as an activity for the July in-person PNB meeting, passed without objection:

The PNB Technology Committee requests that the PNB allow for time to train members for the posting of board and committee minutes on the Pacifica website. We would ask each committee to send forward a member or two to be trained in posting minutes, or if this does not get done at the L.A. meeting, that a telephone conference training session be arranged in August (by Rip Robbins and Pete Korakis).

IV. Motion to support PNB Plan for Digital Distribution (Passed 7-Y, 1-A)

Whereas

1. Listening habits in the U.S. are changing, with broadcast radio beginning to decline and Internet-based digital distribution rapidly taking off.

a. The number of listeners to broadcast radio and the amount of time per week they tune in are declining, according to Arbitron. By contrast, more and more people, especially but not only young people, are spending more and more of their time listening to streaming "Internet radio," podcasts, and other forms of digitally distributed audio on computers, iPods and competing devices, and now cell phones. Apple has already sold 100 million iPods. U.S. sales of all portable digital audio players are expected to

reach 40-50 million units this year - and grow sharply in future years. According to one study, 44 percent of consumers under 24 years of age and 39 percent of those over 24 already consider the Internet to be the primary way to listen to music. Even radio's most valuable asset, its grip on drive-time, is vulnerable to the challenge of digital distribution - more than 70 percent of 2007-model U.S. automobiles offer iPod integration.

b. There's no reason to think this is just a passing fad. From the listeners' perspective digital audio offers compelling advantages over radio: they can choose, from an enormous range of options, not only what they want to listen to, but also when and where. The cost of portable players is coming down, while their capacity and capabilities increase. The only real downside with today's portable players is that users have to connect them to a computer to load content, but even this hassle will disappear within a few years as wireless Internet access capabilities become standard equipment (through the merger of cell phones and music players, a la iPhone, or by the addition of WiFi or WiMax radios to dedicated players).

2. This trend presents both serious threats and tremendous opportunities for Pacifica. It's a threat because:

a. If we don't make our content easily available in popular digital formats, and we don't make listeners aware of its availability (by effective promotion, putting it where people are looking, etc.), people who have adopted the digital audio model won't listen to it.

b. If we do make our content available in digital form, but we don't find ways to make money from it, we will face increasing difficulty in funding our work.

c. If we don't pay close attention to some tricky legal issues - in particular, reaching agreements with volunteer producers that clarify ownership and distribution rights to the programming they produce, and ensuring that we have rights to distribute any music included in programming we distribute online - Pacifica and our stations could face countless lawsuits and enormous royalty claims.

3. On the other hand, the emergence of the digital distribution model offers unprecedented opportunities:

a. It gives us the potential to reach vast new audiences outside the listening areas of the five stations (and the limited additional distribution we currently have

via affiliates). We have already had a taste of what this could mean, with listeners from all over the country and the world tuning into our streams and downloading our archived programming, but the possibilities of growth in this area are virtually unlimited.

b. It gives current and new listeners access to mission-driven programming produced by Pacifica's sister stations and the Pacifica Radio Archives as well as programming produced by Pacifica's growing number of affiliates.

c. If we can muster the resources, digital distribution gives us the potential to produce far more content than our stations can squeeze into 168 hours a week of air time. In addition to providing an outlet for a great deal of well developed programming that cannot be accommodated in the 168-hour schedule, this would provide excellent opportunities for training and learning, in effect giving us, in baseball terminology, a "farm system": programs and programmers that prove their merit and appeal through digital distribution could be promoted to the broadcast schedule.

d. Pacifica missed out on television. With digital distribution, however, there's no reason we have to be limited to audio - potentially, the same model could work for video.

Therefore be it resolved:

The Technology Committee supports the PNB's January resolution to develop a digital distribution strategic plan as a complement to terrestrial broadcasting. That commitment should include:

1. Exploring how the Technology committee can reach out to local station technology program producers -- including KPFK ("Digital Village"), WBAI ("Off the Hook" and "The Personal Computer Show" and KPFT ("Technology Bytes") -- about producing programming that presents how digital technologies, the internet and intellectual property issues are changing the broadcasting landscape and what the impact of these changes means to Pacifica;
2. Ensuring that such programs promote discussions of technological and strategic options for pursuing digital distribution, particularly insofar as they permit the broadest range of Pacifica program content to be shared as

freely as possible with the widest universe of listeners, in accordance with the desires of the copyright holders.

3. Recognizing the importance of digital distribution to Pacifica's future in budgeting and hiring decisions;

4. Ensuring that each station gets the training and equipment needed for digital distribution;

5. Supporting urgent efforts to resolve potential legal problems, including efforts to craft new licenses and to establish clear delineation of producers' rights, and to experiment with ways to generate income from digitally distributed programming.