

# Montgomery Community Television, Inc.

Strategic Plan 2011-2014

April 2010

## Introduction

In July 2009, the MCT Board of Directors charged the Strategic Planning Committee to complete an updated strategic plan before the end of fiscal year 2010. The previous plan was implemented in 2005 and was to serve as the organization's guiding document through fiscal year 2010.

The primary purpose of this new strategic plan is to strengthen MCT (known more generally as Access Montgomery TV) through a planning effort that builds on the strengths of the organization while it explores new approaches that address the tremendous changes that have occurred since MCT's founding a quarter of a century ago. This effort will unify the Board, staff and contributors around common goals and strategies. Through this plan, our aim is to enable the organization to serve the residents of Montgomery County in a more vital and sustainable way.

## Context

In arriving at its recommendations, the committee gave the heaviest weight to financial and content-related components. Changes in these two areas (which include technology and how audiences access programming) will have substantial impact on AMTV over the life of this plan and beyond.

The financial realities facing AMTV are sobering. AMTV currently receives 96% of its revenues from the Montgomery County government by way of master and production services contracts. The master contract is funded through the local franchise agreement between the county and cable distributors, including Comcast, Verizon and RCN. These agreements are set to expire beginning in 2013, and the results of renegotiations could significantly and negatively impact AMTV's primary funding mechanism. In addition, Montgomery County has seen budget cuts over recent fiscal years totaling more than \$1.1 billion. Future budgets are entirely dependent on the strength of state and county economies, and the Montgomery County Council may choose to reappropriate some portion of the cable franchise fees away from services such as AMTV.

The extremely rapid advances in video and computer related technologies are keys drivers that significantly affect AMTV's operations. In addition to our traditional cable distribution method, live Internet streaming and video archiving provides MCT broadcast programs to a worldwide audience. These technological advances have lowered the cost of video cameras, equipment and editing software so that they are now affordable to many citizens of our community.

With the preceding in mind, the Strategic Planning Committee recommends the following 2011-2014 priorities based on five Key Focus Areas:



Financial



Content



Staff



Community



Governance

**Our 2011-2014 Goals will be:**

1. Strengthen and diversify our revenue streams to create greater financial security, flexibility and sustainability.
2. Provide an environment for the community to develop, produce and distribute content that meets the diverse needs of Montgomery County residents.
3. Attract and retain a diverse workforce with modern educational and media background that focuses on idea creation, collaboration, measurable superior customer service and continual individual and organizational improvement.
4. Provide the community with organizational support, mentoring, training and facilities as a means to provide quality sustainable content output.
5. Develop a Governance structure through the Board and committees that provides appropriate guidance and support to management.

## 2011-2014 Goals & Strategies

### 1. Strengthen and diversify our revenue streams to create greater financial security, flexibility and sustainability.

#### *Strategies:*

#### **1.1 Maintain our Master and Production Services contracts with Montgomery County.**

- 1.1.1 Develop a communications plan that provides ongoing interaction with County government decision-makers, highlighting the value AMTV provides the residents of Montgomery County and its worthiness for continued support and funding. (FY '11)
- 1.1.2 Provide superior customer service to support County's production needs while maintaining integrity of MCT's production priorities. (FY '11)

#### **1.2 Strengthen our relationships with cable providers, the County Cable Administrator and local and national organizations.**

- 1.2.1 Develop direct relationships with cable providers. (FY '12)
- 1.2.2 Partner with County Cable Administrator during cable franchise negotiations to better-position public access television as a valued resource to cable subscribers. (FY'12-13)
- 1.2.3 Strengthen our relationships with local and national PEG organizations. (FY '11)

#### **1.3 Create a Development activity at AMTV which generates community-based support.**

- 1.3.1 Form a Development Advisory Committee composed of community fundraising experts who can provide guidance to AMTV on establishing a Development/Fundraising plan. (FY '11)
- 1.3.2 Establish a Development/Fundraising Plan that explores a variety of revenue-generating approaches. (FY '11)
- 1.3.3 Establish individual Board member development goals. (FY '11-12)
- 1.3.4 Develop & utilize a customizable funding toolkit. (FY '11)

**2. Provide an environment for the community to develop, produce and distribute content that meets the diverse needs of Montgomery County residents.**

*Strategies:*

**2.1 Review the changing environment for public access in general and Montgomery County residents in particular, including demographic shifts, cable providers and technology platforms.**

- 2.1.1 Monitor and update environmental data of Montgomery County that provides demographics, technology and other pertinent data points to help guide AMTV. (FY '11)
- 2.1.2 Consider, evaluate and update information as it relates to Public Access best-practices and benchmarking. (FY '11)
- 2.1.3 Utilize focus groups to provide input on what content best serves audiences' needs. (FY '11)

**2.2 Provide Volunteer producers with resources to improve the quality of their productions.**

- 2.2.1 Use MCT staff and Peer Review groups to provide training, coaching and feedback on their productions to improve the level of quality. (FY '11)
- 2.2.2 Involve volunteers in the 'Idea Sharing' activity with MCT Content Team. (FY '11)
- 2.2.3 Continually review and adjust the Training program, equipment and facilities to ensure it is addressing the evolving needs of production technology. (FY '12)

**2.3 Improve the quality of MCT-produced productions that meets the highest industry standards.**

- 2.3.1 Provide production team with training, coaching and feedback on their productions to improve level of quality. (FY '11)
- 2.3.2 Ensure that AMTV has the necessary technology to produce high-quality productions. (FY '12)
- 2.3.3 Develop a Greenlighting activity that ensures a diversity of ideas and inputs as well as long-lead production planning. (FY '11)
- 2.3.4 Establish an outside producer pool AMTV could call upon for additional production capabilities and increased diversity of skills. (FY '12)

**2.4 Develop capabilities for Montgomery County residents to access AMTV's content on platforms convenient to them.**

- 2.4.1 Generate an Enhanced Distribution Plan for leveraging AMTV's content on new media platforms. (FY '11)

- 2.4.2 Provide training to staff and volunteers on new media platforms and how best to distribute content. (FY '11)
- 2.4.3 Research best practices on New Media capabilities around industry. (FY '11)

**2.5 Raise interest in and awareness of AMTV as a source of engaging, empowering and informative content.**

- 2.5.1 Develop Programming and Promotional strategies for the re-purposed channels 19 & 21 that ensure all stakeholders know of our efforts. (FY '11)
- 2.5.2 Develop a Marketing Plan that utilizes an array of local media to promote AMTV's programming to the community. (FY '12)
- 2.5.3 Leverage community organizations as focus groups to enhance the content we deliver. (FY '12)
- 2.5.4 Create an outreach program to encourage content producers to consider AMTV as a distributor of their productions. (FY '12)
- 2.5.5 Work to ensure that program data updated and current on AMTV's website and work with others to make program information available to Montgomery County cable subscribers. (FY '11)

**3. Attracts and retain a diverse workforce with modern educational and media background that focuses on idea creation, collaboration, measurable superior customer service and continual individual and organizational improvement.**

*Strategies:*

**3.1 Implement a Performance Planning process for each AMTV employee.**

- 3.1.1 Each individual employee has an annual written performance plan and review. (FY '11)
- 3.1.2 Each individual performance plan is communicated on a regular, ongoing basis between the employee and their manager. (FY '11)
- 3.1.3 Each employee's performance plan includes goals that are tied directly to the Strategic & Operational plans and associated strategies, ensuring that the daily efforts of each employee contribute directly to departmental and organizational goals. (FY '11)
- 3.1.4 Coach managers on performance planning and appraisals. (FY '11)
- 3.1.5 Provide for funding of individual employee training programs. (FY '12)
- 3.1.6 Develop a performance-based incentive program for employees. (FY '11)
- 3.1.7 Develop a process for coaching lesser-performing employees that establishes a clear pathway for improvement, with a termination policy that is respectful of the individual while addressing the high-performance expectations of the company. (FY '11)

**3.2 Ensure that each employee understands and takes ownership of the Operational and Strategic plans and how they contribute to them.**

- 3.2.1 Present the Operational and Strategic plans to staff and give copy of documents to each employee, providing regular all-staff updates on how the overall organization is executing on the plans. (FY '11)
- 3.2.2 Provide formal and informal opportunities for employees to generate and contribute ideas on Content, Development and other areas, and recognize those contributions. (FY '11)
- 3.2.3 Ensure that each employee understands that collaboration and cooperation are key performance metrics. (FY '11)

**4 Provide the community with organizational support, mentoring, training and facilities as a means to provide quality sustainable content output.**

*Strategies:*

**4.1 Offer comprehensive, project-based training that provides participants a solid grounding in all aspects of production.**

- 4.1.1 Training should be directed toward a completed production in addition to overall instruction. (FY '11)
- 4.1.2 Develop a New Media training offering. (FY '12)
- 4.1.3 Develop training videos such that they are available on DVDs and the web. (FY '11)
- 4.1.4 Develop one-day training courses to enhance production of current volunteers such as Character Generator, Marketing of Programs, etc. (FY '12)

**4.2 Ensure that training curriculum is current.**

- 4.2.1 Update training materials with new concepts and equipment, as necessary and provide to present volunteers, upon request. (FY '11)
- 4.2.2 Ensure that training is timely and meets the needs of today's students. (FY '11)
- 4.2.3 Review other public access training programs and benchmark against AMTV's offerings. (FY '12)

**4.3 Ensure that Trainers are properly prepared and trained on the materials they present.**

- 4.3.1 Incorporate outside training consultants for staff as needed. (FY '12)
- 4.3.2 Ensure that staff is trained on new equipment and capabilities. (FY '12)

**4.4 Ensure that the production facility and equipment is properly maintained.**

- 4.4.1 Staff is accountable for completing equipment, office and facility maintenance in timely manner. (FY '11)

**4.4.2** Ensure that facility is maintained in a professional manner that enhances the staff and visitor experience. (FY '11)

**4.5 Establish and maintain a Youth production training program.**

**4.5.1** Working with Outreach staff and all available resources at AMTV, implement a summer youth production program. (FY '11)

**4.5.2** On an ongoing basis, develop production training program with public, private and home school students. (FY '11)

**4.6 Provide support for volunteers in the use of MCT equipment with an eye toward sustainable output for the newly re-purposed channels 19 & 21.**

**4.6.1** Provide exceptional measurable customer service. (FY '11)

**4.6.2** Develop and provide a list of volunteers who could be available to draw on for productions. (FY '11)

**4.6.3** Establish a written and coherent policy for scheduling all types of program submissions (regular series, one-offs and non-residential productions). (FY '11)

**5 Develop a Governance structure through the Board and committees that provides appropriate guidance and support to management.**

***Strategies:***

**5.1 Review MCT's Bylaws to strengthen the organization's ability to meet mission, goals and strategies.**

**5.1.1** Review best-practices of other public access organizations from around the country. (FY '11)

**5.1.2** Appoint a committee to consider and recommend modification of Board and governance structure of MCT. (FY '12)

**5.2 Recruit Board members who can provide significant contributions in Development and/or Content guidance, and committee members who can contribute their area of expertise to appropriate committees.**

**5.2.1** Appoint a Recruitment Advisory Committee which establishes a clear sense of recruiting priorities as well as expectations for individual board members, particularly in the area of fundraising. (FY '11)

**5.2.2** Diversify committees to enhance expertise from the community. (FY '11)

**5.3 Implement Board Development training on a regular basis to ensure Board members continuously provide effective leadership toward AMTV's mission, goals and strategies.**

- 5.3.1 Create "Larger picture" discussions, forums and materials on a regular basis, to foster a deeper understanding of AMTV's role and challenges in media on a regional and national level. (FY'11)
- 5.3.2 Create board management tools that foster leadership and clarity: an effective board orientation, written descriptions of roles and responsibilities for board service and board contracts. (FY'11)
- 5.3.3 Develop a program to help each Board member construct their own individual action plan with measurable goals to support AMTV's strategic goals followed-up with an annual self-evaluation. (FY '12)
- 5.3.4 Review and amend as needed policies of the Board. (FY '11)

**5.4 Review committees to ensure that each functions with the appropriate amount of authority and guidance toward AMTV management.**

- 5.4.1 Provide written committee descriptions which summarize the purpose of the committee, including committee minutes, in relation to the Strategic and Operational plans. (FY'11)