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Open Community Radio: KRUU-LP 100.1 FM

Submitted by cyberttoast on April 2, 2007 - 6:29pm

Voting Summary (Elevator Pitch):

KRUU is community radio attempting to go beyond simply airing content. It is a means for a diverse community to collaborate openly and build a better society through the vehicle of community radio.

Supporting organization: KRUU-LP

URL: <http://kruufm.com>

City: Fairfield

State/Region: IA

Country: USA

Project Vision Statement & Potential Social Impact:

The mission of KRUU-LP is to give Fairfield, Iowa, a voice and strengthen the community by encouraging creativity, dialogue and community involvement. KRUU is an inclusive, diverse forum for music, creative expression, information, and entertainment. It is a non-commercial, non-profit, community-supported low-power radio station with a strong emphasis on locally created and produced programming.

The social impact of this project is to channel the creativity of a diverse collection of area farmers, educators, entrepreneurs, teenagers and international college students into a foundation upon which the future of this community can be built. KRUU aims to build bridges of communication and understanding throughout the community.

Partially in response to the shrinking diversity in mainstream media, the KRUU founders created a community-based media alternative with local value and global reach. A world-wide network of such community media outlets would offer a viable alternative to corporate-controlled mass media. Global inter-connectedness and social value is the ultimate vision of KRUU.

As KRUU's station manager, James Moore, likes to say: "To air is human, to broadcast divine".

Sustainability (financial) model:

KRUU utilizes a 4-pronged approach to finances:

1. Underwriting and sponsorship: KRUU provides slots for businesses in the community to sponsor the station. Slots cannot be tied to any specific programming. This ensures that the sponsorship is for the project as a whole, and not for specific shows.
2. Listener-support: KRUU encourages all listeners to support the project with monthly contributions of \$10.
3. Hosted events: KRUU hosts regular social events for which a suggested donation of \$5 is requested. KRUU also provides training on the technology infrastructure (the open-source tools that run our servers, desktops and multimedia editing consoles) to any interested businesses or members in the community, as well as to other community radio stations in the area. All hosted events have a direct relevance to our "open radio" mission.

4. Grants: KRUU supplements ongoing community fund-raising with grants for specific capital expenses including infrastructure improvements, such as building renovation and back-up generators.

Potential obstacles:

The major potential obstacles going forward are:

- Lack of steady funding - this requires that we clearly articulate the value of this project to our community
- Lack of listenership - our value is based on providing compelling, independent, and unique programming to our diverse audience; maintaining a strong listenership requires our responsiveness to community feedback.

In 6 months of operation KRUU has proved that community media draws committed creative individuals. Our challenge is to sustain this enthusiasm over an extended period.

Resource Needs:

KRUU's primary resources for successful operation are skilled, creative volunteers and reliable technology.

Long-term sustainability relies on regular community input to the project. Steady on-going financial support is necessary to maintain and upgrade our broadcast equipment and computing infrastructure.

To this end this project's resource needs are primarily financial. In addition, software tools to make the entire operation simpler for non-technical persons would help greatly.

Key Milestones:

KRUU-LP began with a community meeting in May, 2006, and kicked off broadcasting as a 24/7 operation on Sept 30, 2006 (the targeted launch date) with 30 creative hosts contributing their time & efforts.

A few of the milestones over the last 6 months:

- KRUU received public recognition for having helped Fairfield secure a "[Great Places](#)" designation from the state of Iowa. In turn, the Fairfield Area Chamber of Commerce bestowed the Community Improvement Award for 2006 on KRUU
- We now have nearly 100 show hosts, with 80 regular shows
- Of KRUU's 168 hrs of weekly programming, only 1 show is not produced by the local community, and that's Free Speech Radio News, for international news coverage
- KRUU has an hour every day, 7 days a week, promoting Creative Commons licensed music.
- Roughly 15,000 hours of dedicated community volunteer hours have gone into the project
- We have bridged the age gap: our youngest host is 12 and our oldest is over 70 (and both are active producers of their show)

Our objectives for the next 90 days include:

- Building our news team to take over local and eventually international news programming (spearheaded by students in the community)
- Increasing our regular listenership, and monthly contributors
- Documenting our infrastructure and processes so that our free/open model can be used to help other community radio stations come into being
- Simplifying our operations and tools in order to make the entire process easier for non-technical radio station personnel
- Presenting the "Open Radio" concept, infrastructure, and experiences at the 12th Annual Grassroots Radio Coalition meeting June 21-24, 2007, in Lowell, Mass.

Project Summary:

KRUU-LP is Open Community Radio. The station operates on the philosophies of the Free Culture and Free/Open Source Software movements in the domain of community media. It is an avenue for local artists to

promote their artistic visions, for musicians to share their talents, for educators and activists to debate and have open dialogue about local and global issues. Most importantly it's a means to build tolerance and understanding through entertainment.

KRUU's adoption of the free and open philosophies and software is very pragmatic. In order to provide the most accurate representation of a community's diverse interests it is necessary that we be an open, inclusive, and non-aligned organization. Free/Open Source Software gives us the ability to build strong local technical expertise - not just in the superficial use of software, but with understanding of the underlying engineering and mechanics of these systems.

KRUU is attempting to go beyond simply airing content. It is a means for a diverse community to collaborate openly and build a better society.

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Comments posted by readers:

What is the distribution platform?

Submitted by Rich Reader on April 6, 2007 - 11:32am.

Is this internet radio?

- [Login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

FM and Internet radio

Submitted by cyberttoast on April 7, 2007 - 6:01am.

KRUU is a low-power station, meaning we broadcast at 100 Watts on 100.1 FM (see <http://kruufm.com/node/3> for more details about us). This comes out to about a 10 mile range via our FM broadcast. The Internet stream is currently a 64kb mp3 stream. running on a FreeBSD box running IceCast, and some scripts written by [Tom Clegg](#).

- [Login](#) or [register](#) to post comments

broadcast + webcast + podcast

Submitted by mlinksva on April 6, 2007 - 5:07pm.

KRUU is awesome.

They are really taking **community** radio to the next level -- locally, in terms of almost 100% locally produced content, and globally, in terms of using 100% open source software for production and running the station.

Please check out [my blog post about KRUU](#) for more.