SEATTLE CHANNEL

Strategic Recommendations

2018 – 2019

seattle
CHANNEL

Table of Contents
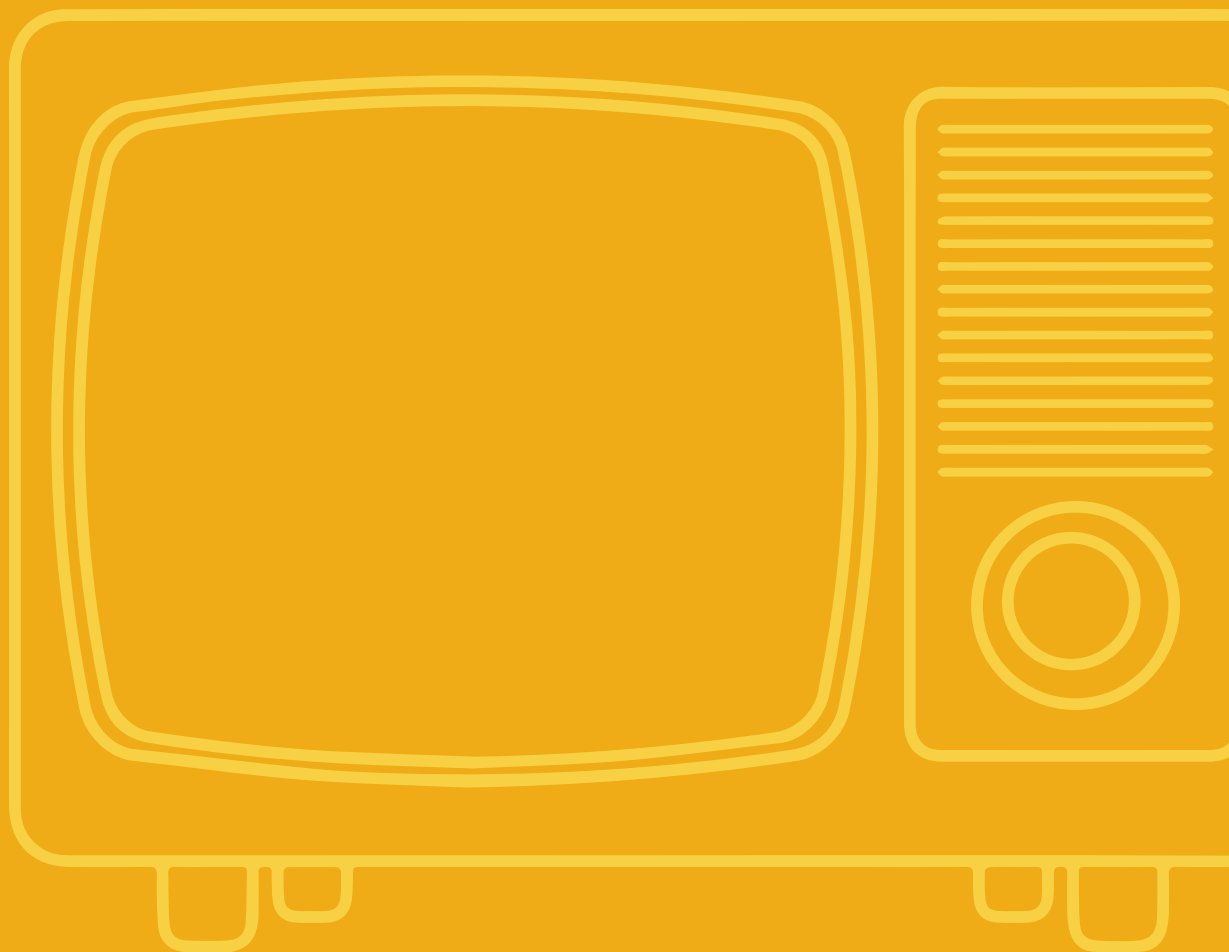
INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

PROGRAMMING FOR THE PEOPLE:
A Brief History of Government Access Television

In 1997, network television was king. It was the main source of news, entertainment and sports for most Americans, supplemented by daily newspapers and glossy magazines. As Hap Freund, station manager for Channel 28 (pre-cursor to Seattle Channel) stated, "Channel surfing is an important reality; it's how most people watch television." A new development called "the Internet" served as a supplement to television. For the savvy and fortunate few, the world wide web was a platform to connect with others around the globe in just a few keystrokes and clicks of the mouse.

Despite these new choices and an array of channels to choose from, the airwaves were dominated by commercial, for-profit content. In the early 1970s, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) laid the groundwork for public-access television by requiring cable companies to provide free access for government, educational, and public purposes.[1] Major municipalities across the United States began using this new platform to broadcast the proceedings of city and county government, enabling civic leaders to communicate directly with constituents via government-access TV, in addition to establishing educational and public-access channels. At the heart of this effort to democratize the airwaves were the key American values of transparency, equality and access.

[1] W.D. Sherman Olson, "The History of Public Access Television." billolsonvideo.com/history-public-access-TV.html (last visited May 17, 2018)

Many stakeholders strongly opposed the FCC's decision. Cable companies asserted that the creation of public-access channels were intrusive and unlawful. Because of the challenge brought forth by television industry leaders, the Supreme Court struck down key portions of the FCC regulations, citing agency overreach that violated the first amendment rights of the plaintiff, Midwest Video Corp, in 1979.[2]

After this ruling, and with their future uncertain, municipal television stations turned to Congress for help.

Organized under the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM) and the National League of Cities (NLC), the proponents of public television sought a new and unexpected ally: The National Cable Television Association (NCTA). As the principal trade association for the cable industry, the NCTA's decision to partner with the USCM and NLC enabled all parties to pursue legislation that would offer the maximum shared benefit. This joint effort between cable companies and proponents of public access helped ensure that Congress would not choose a winner in the fight but would instead pass a law agreeable to both sides.

The effort to craft legislation that would satisfy all parties and become law took several years and involved careful deliberation. Senator Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.) took a special interest in the negotiations and worked to steward it through multiple sessions of Congress in the 1980s, culminating with the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984, signed into law by President Ronald Reagan.

With public, educational, and government (PEG) access now required by federal law, a few municipalities began experimenting with video production and the power of broadcasting. Parallel with the rise of technology companies like Apple and Microsoft, cities across the United States began using these new tools and advancements to better serve their residents. This confluence – a rise in the accessibility of "high technology" and federal support for PEG access to the airwaves – helped bring about a watershed moment for public media, and directly led to the creation of Seattle's government access station TVSea.

THE EARLY DAYS: TVSEA

With tech on the rise, especially in the Pacific Northwest, Seattle's leaders quickly realized the growing uses and benefits of TVSea. In July 1996, Councilmember Tina Podlodowski, a former Microsoft executive and chair of the Technology and Telecommunications Committee, sponsored and stewarded Ordinance 111301, which directed revenues from cable franchise fees to properly staff and fund Channel 28. Mayor Norman Rice signed the ordinance into law.

On the heels of this new legislation, the City created a unit within the Executive Services Division – Channel 28/Video Services – which consolidated a collection of video equipment and staff with expertise in its operation and allowed gavel-to-gavel coverage of City Council meetings. Supplemented by cable franchise fee revenues, the new team helped establish the City's first government-access television channel. Station manager Hap Freund put it best

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[2] "FCC v. Midwest Video Corp., 440 U.S. 689 (1979)." Justia Law, supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/440/689/case.html.

in his first annual report, saying "Channel 28 is really the only way for most citizens to get an unbiased and complete grasp of what's happening in their city government." [3]

TVSea quickly received nationwide recognition for its innovative work, winning multiple honors at the 1999 National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA) awards ceremony. In 2001, TVSea took home First Place for Overall Excellence in Government Programming, demonstrating that government-access television was a resource with tremendous value to the public and that Seattle was leading the charge.

City leaders were taking notice, too, and in 2001, appointed a blue-ribbon commission to develop a short and long-term vision and direction for the City's television station and website. The Seattle Commission on Electronic Communications was also charged with exploring TVSea's structure, finances, programming, marketing, teledemocracy and emerging technologies.

Midway through the Commission's work, the September 11 attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C. challenged — and changed — American life. The post-9/11 world reinforced both the importance and fragility of a vibrant participatory democracy, with active and engaged citizens committed to transparency, truth and access to their elected leaders. Through this lens, and with terrorism on the minds of the public, the 14-member commission identified opportunities to improve TVSea's offerings and value to viewers. The Commission delivered its plan to the Mayor and City Council at the end of 2001, which included a recommendation to rebrand TVSea as "Seattle Channel."

CURRENT CHARTER

More than 17 years after its founding, Seattle Channel continues to set a national standard for excellence in original programming and creative civic engagement. Myriad advances in technology and dramatic changes in how audiences consume content present both a challenge and an opportunity: with fewer cable subscribers and less funding coming from franchise agreements, how can Seattle Channel continue to redefine excellence and demonstrate its core value in a manner that is sustainable, accessible and interesting to its audiences?

Until very recently, television was the best way to share news and information with large audiences. Indeed, when TVSea was reimagined as Seattle Channel in 2002, most cell phones didn't have cameras, social networking happened on Friendster, and "buffering" was a more familiar experience than "streaming." The proliferation of broadband internet enabled many consumers to opt out of their cable subscriptions, transforming the content delivery model for providers of news and entertainment. As traditional TV viewership declines and consumers grow more comfortable using Smart TVs, gaming consoles, tablets and phones to stream content, cable revenues are also projected to plummet.

Seattle Channel has been a leader in public-service programming since its inception and has the recognition and awards to match. For the station to continue to thrive for the next 15 years, adapting to a dynamic media environment is just one piece of the puzzle.

[3] Channel 28/Video Services, Year One Review/Year Two Preview, Seattle Channel Annual Report, (December 17, 1997), seattlechannel.org/Documents/SeattleChannel/reports/97-98_annual_report.pdf

Seattle Channel must also consider the content needs for, and ramifications of, Seattle's shifting identify while standing by its commitment to engage audiences inclusively and equitably. The region has seen unprecedented growth in recent years, and newer members of the community bring fresh perspectives, backgrounds and interests that are important contributions to Seattle's civic discourse.

Recent elections and political crises have helped to shine a light on civic processes and continue to reinforce the need for an informed electorate, while also infusing new energy and interest. Voters are demanding more from their governments and public institutions, and Seattle Channel is a critical conduit for civic engagement and elevated political discourse. Seattle Channel also remains an important platform for local artists – from musicians to actors to visual artists – and a space to showcase, explore and share community and culture.

In 2001, America's democratic principles, institutions and norms faced new and terrifying threats – threats that changed how Americans viewed the world. In 2018, we face similar but new challenges: foreign attacks on elections, "alternative facts," "fake news," and media consolidation. The confluence of these challenges presents a crucial opportunity for Seattle Channel to evaluate content hits-and-misses, consider opportunities for strategic realignment and develop a sustainable strategy to accomplish its mission.

METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY

The City of Seattle Information Technology Department engaged Nyhus Communications (Nyhus) to help facilitate the development of Seattle Channel's Strategic Recommendations. Nyhus is a Seattle-based, award-winning strategic communications and advocacy firm with nearly 25 years of experience developing communications and public affairs programs.

Nyhus was tasked to develop strategic recommendations that identified the following:

- **Priority areas for programming and content**
- **Opportunities for meaningful partnership, collaboration, and community engagement**
- **Marketing and engagement recommendations to expand reach and attract a broader, more diverse audience**
- **Methods to measure and evaluate Seattle Channel's impact and project outcomes**

APPROACH

Unlike a commercial broadcast company or for-profit media organization, Seattle Channel is a resource supported by, and in service of, the entire population of the City of Seattle. To ensure these recommendations have the most representative information possible, Nyhus relied on six distinct methods and sources to collect information:

1 Formed a seven-member Seattle Channel Advisory Committee

2 Conducted a confidential audit by phone interview with twelve community influencers

3 Conducted an audit of Seattle Channel's social media and competitive landscape

4 Conducted a poll of 500 Seattle residents

5 Hosted two discussion sessions with Seattle Channel employees

6 Conducted a poll of Seattle Channel employees to provide additional feedback and comments

The information gathered from these sources was then combined with additional research and discovery to form the foundation for the findings in this report.

1 The Seattle Channel Advisory Committee

To guide the planning efforts, Nyhus enlisted the support of media and communications experts to provide counsel and recommendations based on their professional experience and familiarity with the media landscape in Seattle. Senior staff at the City of Seattle's Department of Information Technology, including the chief technology officer, provided recommendations and helped recruit committee members. These subject matter experts participated in several brainstorming sessions and provided key insights into Seattle Channel's strengths and weaknesses, reviewed the research findings and brainstormed tactics for inclusion in the strategic recommendations. *See Appendix A for a complete listing of Advisory Committee members.*

2 Influencer Audit

To better understand how Seattle Channel is perceived among leaders in the civic and government sectors, Nyhus conducted a series of interviews with key leaders to help identify patterns in sentiment that should impact the strategic recommendations. The influencer audit comprised 12 30-minute interviews with Seattle civic leaders, media experts and communications professionals who represented a broad cross-section of Seattle's demographics and diversity.

Nyhus worked with the Seattle Channel team and senior Department of Information Technology staff to identify the interview candidates. Most candidates were selected based on their knowledge of and familiarity with Seattle Channel and, as such, were able to provide an intimate, third-party perspective on its operations and impact. Others were less familiar with Seattle Channel but were chosen based on their strategic value to the audit results. All participants had prior knowledge of Seattle Channel.

In coordination with the Seattle Channel team, Nyhus developed the questionnaire that served as the interview script. The questionnaire included prompts specifically related to Seattle Channel's mission, programming and ability to reach diverse audiences. It also incorporated questions about the function of government-access television, Seattle's changing demographics, and media consumption trends and habits. The questions were largely qualitative but offered a few quantitative prompts to accurately assess perceptions of Seattle Channel. This script was closely followed in each interview to ensure consistency across the audit.

Interviews were conducted via telephone between October 17 and November 17, 2017. Interviewees were informed that the conversation would be kept confidential and would not be recorded, and that any direct quotes included in the report would be presented without attribution. Interview responses were condensed into key findings and presented to the Seattle Channel Advisory Committee. *See Appendix B for findings.*

3 Social Media and Competitive Landscape Audit

To help understand the challenges and opportunities facing Seattle Channel from a marketing and audience engagement perspective, Nyhus conducted a social media and competitive landscape audit of public media stations in similar markets: Boston, Austin, San Francisco, San Diego, Montgomery County in Maryland, and the state of Oregon.

4 Consumer Poll

Nyhus subcontracted EMC Research (EMC) to conduct an online poll of Seattle-area residents to assess their perceptions of Seattle Channel and the existing mission statement and learn about their media-consumption habits. A total of 500 surveys were completed. The survey was weighted to accurately capture Seattle's diversity using key demographics, and all participants were at least 18 years of age at the time of the survey. *See Appendix C for findings.*

EMC is a leading full-service opinion research and strategic consulting firm serving a broad range of public, private, non-profit and government agency clients. EMC has more than two decades of experience providing public opinion research and strategic analysis to the City of Seattle, including projects for the Mayor's office and multiple City departments.

5 Seattle Channel Employee Listening Sessions

Through recorded listening sessions, Nyhus gained valuable insights from the Seattle Channel team about its processes and procedures, best practices and recommendations for improvement. Over two 90-minute sessions, members of the team provided a wealth of institutional knowledge and first-hand understanding of the challenges and opportunities they see in their work.

6 Seattle Channel Employee and Contractor Survey

Following the in-person sessions, Nyhus conducted an online survey to provide employees the opportunity to share anonymous feedback regarding their experiences, insights and recommendations for improvement. The survey was distributed to employees and contractors via email from Shannon Gee, interim general manager, Seattle Channel. Thirty-seven people, including contractors, full- and part-time employees, and Seattle Channel interns participated in the survey. *See Appendix D for findings.*

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

Upon completion of the research and discovery process, key findings were shared with members of the Seattle Channel Advisory Committee and Seattle Channel employees.

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KEY FINDINGS

KEY
FINDINGS

The research and discovery phase of this process sought to gain insights related to the main components of the strategic recommendations:

- **Priority areas for programming and content**

- **Opportunities for partnership, collaboration and community engagement**

- **Marketing and engagement recommendations to expand reach and attract a broad, diverse audience**

- **Methods to measure and evaluate Seattle Channel's impact and project outcomes**

Below are the key findings that the research and discovery phase yielded. They are organized in five categories, though many findings fit into multiple categories, and each finding is intended to be a component of a broader strategic framework. The key findings are meant to be considered comprehensively to obtain a more nuanced understanding of Seattle Channel's opportunities and challenges, and to inform the recommendations that follow.

1 Mission Statement
2 Metrics and Evaluation
3 Programming and Content
4 Marketing and Engagement
5 Partnerships and Independence

1 Mission Statement

An organization's mission statement serves as the guiding principal for all operations, initiatives, and priorities, by summarizing its aims and values. Seattle Channel's mission statement was last updated in 2001. The current mission statement is:

"To inform and engage citizens in the governmental, civic and cultural affairs of Seattle through compelling use of television, Internet and other media."

A significant portion of the discovery and research phase centered on evaluating Seattle Channel's mission statement. Nyhus requested input from all key audiences, brainstormed alternatives internally and surveyed the public and influencers for feedback. When asked to offer their "best guess" as to the current Seattle Channel mission, participants used many of the words that already exist in the current statement, as seen in this word cloud:

What words or phrases first come to mind when you think about Seattle Channel?	% of heard
Local/community news	**41%**
General positive (Interesting, good, great, etc.)	20%
Government news	**14%**
Boring/uninteresting	6%
Specific program (PBS, Art Zone, Seattle Outdoors)	5%
General negative	3%
Other	11%
None/nothing	5%

When the current statement was presented to the online survey participants, favorability ratings increased from 71 percent to 76 percent. When told of the current mission statement, influencer audit participants expressed strong positive sentiment, and Seattle Channel employees rated their success at fulfilling the mission with high scores—an 8 out of 10.

In general, participants in the research and discovery phase expressed that the current mission statement, while adequate, could benefit from a "refresh" – one that more strongly conveys the value proposition of Seattle Channel and clearly articulates its goals for the future.

The above graph demonstrates that public perception of Seattle Channel's mission aligns very closely with reality.

"WE NEED TO TAKE A HARD LOOK AT OUR CONTENT AND DECIDE WHAT TO DEFEND AND WHAT TO DISRUPT."

According to respondents, the mission of Seattle Channel is to inform and bring awareness to its residents about the activities of their local government, with recurring sentiments including:

- **Inform residents about happenings within the city**

- **Foster a relationship between residents and their government**

- **Bring city meetings and decisions into their devices and homes**

- **Provide access to government information and government activities**

- **Enrich Seattle by giving the community a voice**

Conversations with the Advisory Commitee, Influencer Audit participants and Seattle Channel employees about the current mission quickly focused on the use of the word "citizen." There was consensus among all groups that the mission cannot and should not be limited to documented citizens and must reflect the stories and news relevant to all segments of the community. Therefore, the mission must be expanded to include a focus on connecting people to local government and, as one participant in the Influencer Audit noted, "actively provide engagement opportunities for underrepresented communities and voices."

Further, the specificity around "television, Internet and other media" was considered limiting and does not enable Seattle Channel to grow and adapt with changing technology and media-consumption habits.

As the cord-cutting trend gains in momentum, the mission should reduce the emphasis on television and be augmented to incorporate digital and broadcast media.

2 Metrics and Evaluation

Though Seattle Channel is broadcast to cable subscribers via the cable franchise agreement, the station does not have access to important viewership data. This has been an ongoing challenge – without viewership information for the television station, how does the Seattle Channel team make informed decisions? How is success tracked and measured, and how is impact evaluated?

Many organizations struggle with these same questions. In the era of big data, the importance of using quantitative information to guide programming, marketing and other strategic decisions is critical. Content producers must make operational decisions based on what audiences are reacting to, what they want to see, and how they want to watch or engage. For non-commercial media companies, there are two primary measurements that inform impact: growing audience segments to reach more people; and enriching the viewing experience for those already consuming content.

"We need to access, track and leverage data to better adapt our content to online and mobile platforms," noted a Seattle Channel employee in feedback on the employee survey. "We need to take a hard look at our content and decide what to defend and what to disrupt."

For online content, where it is much easier to track views, there is also an emphasis on "engagement" metrics. How many viewers were inspired to act because of Seattle Channel content? Did they use a Seattle Channel tool to contact the City Council, or click the "more information" button after a short video explaining a policy proposal? These methods can provide tangible evidence of reach and engagement.

While Seattle Channel has had tremendous success throughout the years winning multiple awards for the quality of its content, there is not a direct connection between awards won and impact on people's lives. Using data to demonstrate that Seattle Channel's content is reaching target audiences and inspiring them to act is one of the top priorities for the near term. Thankfully, there are several methods and techniques used to answer the key question: how does Seattle Channel's work make a difference? The recommendations section that follows will explore options available.

3 Programming and Content

Throughout each step of the research and discovery process, interviewees and advisors consistently cited the extremely high quality of Seattle Channel's programming and content as its core public benefit, informing audiences on civic affairs and cultural happenings. Beyond just providing important information, Seattle Channel makes an extra effort to connect the information to the day-to-day lives of viewers. In many ways, Seattle Channel continues to effectively service the mission identified for the organization in 2001.

In the public-facing consumer poll, respondents rated all community programming examples as valuable for the community. "Programming covering local issues and politics" rated the highest in value overall, followed by "live coverage of local government meetings and press conferences," and "community stories/documentaries about Seattle's people, programs, cultural traditions, and history."

Seattle Channel Programming Ratings

	Mean	Extremely Valuable '"7- Intensity"
public affairs shows covering local issues and politics	5.41	27%
community stories/documentaries about Seattle's people, programs, cultural traditions, and history	5.29	23%
live coverage of local government meetings and press conferences	5.26	25%
civic conversations and town halls featuring an audience	5.25	23%
programs about local arts and culture	5.22	21%
panel discussions and interviews with local leaders, national figures, and authors	5.18	21%
feature magazine show with a focus on local people, events, organizations, and places	4.91	15%
programming covering local bands and music	4.61	12%

Q12-19. And how valuable do you think each of the following types of Seattle Channel programming are for the community: 18-6601 Nyhus Seattle Channel | 12

Seattle Channel original programming is smart, well-produced and sets a high standard nationwide. It provides historical context to current issues and events. This is a critically important function for a progressive, future-facing population experiencing explosive growth. But as more people "cut the cord" and primarily use their mobile devices, Seattle Channel needs to meet viewers where they watch – not where they were a decade ago. The ability to share content on social media and through other online platforms is a critical factor Seattle Channel must consider as it develops new programming and expands its delivery methods. Of the 37 percent of external survey respondents who indicated they did not plan to watch Seattle Channel:

27 percent cited Seattle Channel's "boring or uninteresting" content as a detractor

21 percent expressed that they rarely or seldom watch TV

12 percent indicated they no longer have a television or cable subscription

As noted by one Seattle Channel employee, "The content needs to be refreshed and, in some cases, a complete overhaul. Many of the programs have been running with little content changes for 10-plus years. We need to sit down and really look at what the audience wants. Television and media in general are changing greatly and Seattle Channel needs to evolve or be left behind. Even though it is one of the top government stations in the country, that doesn't matter in Seattle. Our audience is very sophisticated and politically tuned in and we need to give them more of what they want."

In the online survey, when asked to prioritize what content Seattle Channel should produce, respondents ranked Seattle Channel's current offerings very closely, not indicating a specific preference for one type of program over another. At the end of the poll, once respondents were more familiar with Seattle Channel and its offerings, 56 percent said they would be interested in watching – but only 17 percent said they were "very likely" to do so. Though positive, the lack of intensity on the part of respondents is concerning.

Still, this data demonstrates that viewers appreciate, equally, each of Seattle Channel's primary offerings. When asked what Seattle Channel was missing, more than half of respondents (57 percent) could not name a specific type of other programming that would be beneficial. In short, viewers like what Seattle Channel is focused on and did not favor one type of programming more than any other.

In sum, those familiar with Seattle Channel find value in the programming but to those who are unaware of Seattle Channel, the perception is that the content is stale. The need to change this perception is a main driver of the tactics explored in the recommendations section for both programming and content and marketing and engagement.

"EVEN IF YOU GO TO THE WEBSITE, IT TAKES A WHILE TO FIND OUT WHAT STATION THEY ARE ON OR HOW TO WATCH IT ONLINE."

4 Marketing and Engagement

For all content producers, connecting the fruits of their creativity with target audiences is a major challenge – perhaps, the dominant challenge. Among interviewees and survey participants who are familiar with Seattle Channel, there is a high degree of support for Seattle Channel's content. However, the external research shows this group is in the minority. There is an overwhelming lack of familiarity with Seattle Channel and its offerings among general media consumers.

Of the people familiar with Seattle Channel, 71 percent viewed it favorably, while 21 percent had no opinion and eight percent viewed it unfavorably. This demonstrates that once a viewer becomes familiar with the offerings, they are likely to view them positively. However, of those familiar with Seattle Channel, one-third said that they had never watched. Similarly, only one-third of viewers aware of Seattle Channel had visited **seattlechannel.org**.

Those unfamiliar with Seattle Channel, roughly 57 percent of the entire survey, are predominately women (64 percent), ages 18 to 34 (66 percent) who have lived in Seattle for fewer than five years (80 percent). This population mirrors the cord cutting trend experienced by the cable companies and provides Seattle Channel with the challenge of reaching and engaging this audience outside of the traditional television format.

Survey respondents understood and agreed with the importance of government-access television and recognized its intrinsic value. There is a clear need, however, to demonstrate this value to new audiences and increase engagement with current viewers.

This challenge is significant. As a service provided to all residents of Seattle, Seattle Channel does not have a target market that is easy to understand psychologically or reach without great effort. Instead, it attempts to provide "something for everyone."

The most recent awareness campaign launched in 2015, "Seattle Channel: It's Not What You Think", was an intriguing approach to challenging viewer misconceptions. But this work is ripe for renewed investment and a fresh approach. A common recommendation offered by several interviewees and survey respondents was to deploy a new marketing and engagement campaign, which will be addressed in more detail in the next section.

Interviewees also underscored the importance of driving viewers to the website. Appointment TV, once the bedrock of content managers efforts to attract viewers, is now an antiquated approach. Disrupted by more convenient "On Demand" services and streaming options, Seattle Channel's website should better connect visitors to Seattle Channel's award-winning content. However, the current Seattle Channel site map is not user friendly and content can be challenging to find. "Even if you go to the website, it takes a while to find out what station they are on or how to watch it online," stated one audit participant.

The four most referenced recommendations to generate awareness, increase viewership and engagement, and sustain audience retention were:

1 A robust, interactive presence on social media platforms

2 Cultivating meaningful and beneficial partnerships

3 Expanding presence at existing community activities and events

4 Increasing advertising efforts

As part of the audit for Seattle Channel's social media presence, Nyhus examined Montgomery Media, the government-access resource in Montgomery County, Maryland, and Oregon Public Broadcasting (OPB). Both are superb examples of public-media organizations with active and shareable online presences. Below are two mini case studies of what they are doing well:

Montgomery Media: Blog Savvy

Regular blogs by different contributors and guest bloggers contribute rich and varied content, which showcases Montgomery's connection to the community.

Montgomery places high importance on frequent blog posting to ensure its website has a steady stream of new material.

Oregon Public Broadcasting: Categorization, Consistency and Cross-Promotion

Like Montgomery's site, OPB does a good job of categorizing its content into neat and digestible areas of focus (TV, radio, news, art/life, music, etc.).

OPB posts on Twitter frequently – sometimes more than 10 times per day.

OPB excels at cross-posting and cross-promoting content across all channels. OPB pinned a Tweet informing users about their Instagram account, encouraging visitors to follow them there.

These case studies demonstrate the value of showcasing outside voices and experts, and the importance of cross-posting content across all formats.

KEY DATA

43 percent of those surveyed were familiar with Seattle Channel. **51 percent** of men, but just **36 percent** of women – a significant gender gap.

For those new to Seattle – i.e., having moved within the past 1-5 years – only **20 percent** were familiar with Seattle Channel. For those more established (residents for 6-10 years), that number jumped to **43 percent**.

48 percent of respondents from North Seattle were familiar with Seattle Channel, compared to just **40 percent** of South Seattleites.

5 Partnerships and Independence

In all facets of the research and discovery phase, there was considerable interest in connecting Seattle Channel with civic and cultural institutions, local media organizations, and non-profit social welfare organizations. Many stakeholders attributed to Seattle Channel a unique ability to provide a neutral forum for conversations about the many controversial, complicated challenges facing the region. This ability is in direct service to Seattle Channel's mission to educate and inspire civic action.

Seattle Channel's unique status as a divison of the City of Seattle raises questions for several stakeholders about the structure of the relationship with the City and whether the City has oversight over Seattle Channel's content and editorial decisions. Members of the Advisory Committee and participants in the Influencer Audit saw great value in codifying the parameters of the reporting structure and clarifying the City's role in Seattle Channel's operations.

Similarly, Seattle Channel should clarify the terms by which it can enter into engagements with external partners and organizations. By connecting creatively with local organizations to build programs and develop mutually beneficial partnerships, Seattle Channel can serve as a "courageous convener" and help strengthen the connections between "old" and "new" Seattle.

Seattle Channel employees are keen not only to facilitate new partnerships but also to play a role in cultivating those relationships. Two-thirds of employees stated they wanted to play a role in partner development. However, employees are at a loss on how to act on behalf of Seattle Channel.

There is a clear opportunity for Seattle Channel to develop the framework and tools to empower employees to build partnerships on the organization's behalf.

There was also significant concern about Seattle Channel's ability to inform and educate the public on civic activities with an independent voice. Many interviewees both inside and outside the organization shared anecdotes of editorial decisions made to avoid "ruffling feathers" – avoiding a specific topic due to its controversial nature, or not asking a difficult question of the Mayor or a Councilmember, the people responsible for determining Seattle Channel's budget.

As one influencer audit participant noted, "Some of their programs (news programs like *City Inside/Out* and *Ask the Mayor*) should be bolder. This is a problem, since they're part of City government, they hold back. I don't think they should do that. They should have the City pass legislation giving them some guidelines around independence, especially today, given the constant attacks on the free, fact-based press. Over time, this would give them a better brand and reputation of strength."

Others, however, were careful to not encourage Seattle Channel to step up its journalistic efforts, feeling that is a service better left to the local news organizations. This group believed that Seattle Channel has a fundamental "eat-your-vegetables" role to play for its audience, like C-SPAN, but also agreed there needs to be clear parameters about what is covered and why. There is a balance to be struck, these interviewees concede, but at the moment, too many grey areas exist for Seattle Channel to do anything but use abundant caution.

SWOT ANALYSIS

To synthesize the results of the research, Nyhus Communications worked with the Seattle Channel Advisory Committee to develop the following SWOT analysis.
A SWOT analysis examines four elements:

Strengths – Internal attributes and resources that support a successful outcome

Weaknesses – Internal attributes and resources (or a lack thereof) that work against a successful outcome

Opportunities – External factors that Seattle Channel can capitalize on or use to its advantage

Threats – External factors that could jeopardize Seattle Channel's success

To assess Seattle Channel's current position, the following questions were explored in each of these areas:

Strengths
What advantages does Seattle Channel have?
What does Seattle Channel do better than anyone else?
What makes Seattle Channel unique?

Weaknesses
What could be improved?
What should Seattle Channel avoid?
What are the hard truths it needs to address?

Opportunities
What opportunities exist?
What should Seattle Channel pursue?

Threats
What obstacles exist?
How are media outlets overcoming those obstacles?
What factors are most pressing?

STRENGTHS

- Informative, quality content
- In-depth reporting on local topics
- Platform for local artists and voices
- Tells untold stories, informs and illuminates
- Chronicles Seattle's history
- Strong reputation among peers
- Proximity to City Hall and access to the local political process and leaders
- Live webcasts/Facebook streaming of events
- Employee passion and retention

WEAKNESSES

- Minimal awareness and understanding of Seattle Channel
- Confusion regarding government-access vs. public-access TV
- A perceived lack of independence
- Insufficient marketing and advertising budget, staff resources
- Stale formats - long-form content and programming, half-hour interview shows
- Lack of data on viewership and engagement
- Poorly defined partnerships, uncertainty around how to address
- Static, unpredictable programming schedule
- UI/UX concerns with seattlechannel.org; content disconnected from online schedule
- Team members firmly in "comfort zone"
- Lack of team diversity, permanent leadership

OPPORTUNITIES

- Promotion of programs and shows could be better targeted to relevant audiences
- More robust social media presence and interactivity
- Clearly defined framework for establishing partnerships
- Content-sharing agreements with other media organizations
- Adapt and promote content created by other City Departments
- Break down department silos
- Re-use/re-cut what already exists
- Promote the great work the City is doing
- Better delineate relationship with other departments regarding what Seattle Channel team does/doesn't do
- Create shorter and more digestible content, easier to share
- Pursue partnerships with over-the-top services like Apple TV, Roku, Netflix, Amazon Prime
- Vet the idea of a Seattle Channel Foundation
- Increase engagement with Seattle residents/viewers
- Incorporate different media formats (i.e., podcasts of popular programs)
- Use data to inform schedule and prioritize content

THREATS

- Cord cutting
- Appointment TV: a thing of the past
- Not adapting to consumption trends
- Revenue model
- Innovation
- Content overload
- Dependent on relationships with elected officials
- Lack of data

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Through careful synthesis and consideration of the research and discovery findings, Nyhus has developed the following strategic recommendations to support Seattle Channel during the next five years. These recommendations incorporate themes from the City of Seattle Information Technology strategic agenda, including an emphasis on using data to drive innovation, advancing the cause of digital equity, and enhancing and making more efficient the public experience. Based on these key data and insights, and in partnership with the Seattle Channel team, the following recommended strategies and tactics are organized into the five focus areas: mission, content, marketing, partnerships, and metrics.

MISSION

Mission Background

The mission of an organization should serve as a compass for success and growth because it defines the most important aspects of an organization: what its purpose is and why it matters. It is critical that all strategic recommendations stem from and support Seattle Channel's mission. All stakeholders involved in the research and discovery phase of this project spent considerable time examining and evaluating the mission.

To properly evaluate the mission, it is important to understand how it was evolved. In 2001, the Seattle Commission on Electronic Communications – a 14-member panel with representatives appointed by both the Mayor and City Council – was tasked with creating a "short- and long-term vision and direction for the City's television station and its website in order to increase public awareness, understanding, and participation in government, community and cultural affairs." [4]

The Commission's efforts and its final report were instrumental in shaping Seattle Channel into what it is today. It sought to establish Seattle Channel as "a national leader in the use of technology to expand civic engagement and public discourse," and this goal has largely been achieved. Still, despite the many accomplishments of Seattle Channel, there is opportunity for improvement.

To provide historical context, prior to 2001, Seattle Channel's mission statement read:

"To inform citizens about their government and to offer them a timely opportunity to be involved in government decisions. Our mission is to:

1 Impartially produce for television the unedited legislative activities and informational meetings of the City Council and press conferences and policy statements by the Mayor;

2 Produce video communications that support organizations and agencies funded with City moneys; and

3 Offer the public additional programming related to civic affairs and cultural events relevant or unique to the citizens of Seattle."

The essence of that statement was condensed into a more concise mission by the Commission in 2001, which is the version still in use today:

"To inform and engage citizens in the governmental, civic and cultural affairs of Seattle through compelling use of television, Internet and other media."

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[4] Seattle Commission on Electronic Communication. (2001). New Elements of Democracy. Retrieved from the City of Seattle website: seattle.gov/scec/documents/SCEC_Complete_Final_Report.pdf

Seattle Channel Advisory Committee member quotes, regarding the mission statement:

"There are many people who live here who are not citizens. It's kind of a common shared issue. A question about how should the mission statement, if at all, reflect the equity and inclusion issues of the City and for all of us? That's a piece that's missing for me. It may not be in the mission statement, but it definitely should be in the plan."

"With regard to the mission statement, I would say that it should be aspirational rather than descriptive."

"What about that opportunity for storytelling? Everybody's making YouTube videos now. We're in that age of people journalists. If you look at that, what's the station's role and what could it be in empowerment when it comes to the community being journalists, and communicators, and story makers and tellers?"

Refreshing the Mission Statement

A well-developed mission statement is a touchstone for an organization's identity, strategy and vision. It helps guide decision making, prioritize efforts and more effectively connect with core audiences. After discussing Seattle Channel's current statement with the Advisory Committee, audit participants, and survey respondents, the consensus emerged that the current statement would benefit from a refresh to more accurately capture the state of Seattle Channel and the environment in which it operates.

A strong mission statement highlights the organization's key differentiators. It should succinctly convey the long-lasting impacts of the organization and capture, at a high level, the methods and tools used to achieve that impact. When coupled with a clear, focused and aspirational vision statement and supported by these strategic recommendations within this document, Seattle Channel can take advantage of its many strengths and lay the groundwork for its future.

We also considered the mission statements of other notable public media organizations in the community:

KUOW
"To create and serve an informed public, one challenged and invigorated by an understanding and appreciation of events, ideas and cultures"

KEXP
"To enrich your life by championing music and discovery"

KCTS 9
"To inspire a smarter world"

Recommendation

Seattle is many things to many people. It is a young city, changing quickly, and at the forefront of innovation and change – which creates opportunity and prosperity, as well as tension and disparity. It is a vibrant, verdant, self-aware place, where everything seems possible when people are mobilized and passionate. To capture this excitement, and to help Seattle Channel better "channel Seattle," a proposed revision to the mission follows:

"To inform, engage, and inspire to act; to chronicle Seattle's many stories; to forge a connection between Seattle's people and their government; and to enrich the civic spirit."

An updated mission statement could help Seattle Channel make decisions about its priorities through discussion and reflection on whether a course of action will help Seattle Channel accomplish its mission. In this way, the mission can serve as a barometer for the Seattle Channel team, rather than as a statement of fact with a weaker connection to measurable value and utility.

This refreshed statement aligns with what people describe as Seattle Channel's highest value, while relieving it of ties to a specific medium or method and capturing a more aspirational sentiment than the previous mission.

CONTENT AND PROGRAMMING

A key opportunity in this strategic recommendation process is a review of the current slate of content produced by Seattle Channel and an evaluation of the process by which it is created. The focus groups and influencers engaged in the discovery phase of this process awarded Seattle Channel high marks for its content, and Seattle Channel regularly receives awards for its programming. But it is important to constantly reevaluate programming, test playback with key audiences, and optimize both development and delivery to maximize impact.

Another consistent theme that emerged throughout the research and discovery phase was the desire to see more hyper-localized stories with a special focus on underrepresented communities within the City. Stakeholders also want to see more stories focused on the issues that are important throughout those various communities.

As Seattle Channel continues to evaluate its content and development processes, questions for reflection include:

Does the content further Seattle Channel's mission in measurable ways?

Are all the relevant members of the team empowered to weigh in on content strategy?

What practices and procedures are in place to approve and evaluate content?

What audiences are served by each piece of content developed by Seattle Channel?

Are there audience segments that are not as well served as others?

How can Seattle Channel ensure its content reaches its target audiences as effectively as possible?

Content and programming recommendations

Chunk out the Content

Seattle Channel should explore creating shorter, more digestible content that is easier to share on social media and consume on mobile devices. News summaries, Council highlights, Mayoral quips and quotes, and segments of long-form interviews are better suited to current digital consumption habits and more easily distributed through social media platforms.

Reduce, Re-run and Repurpose

"Ask the Mayor" provides a critical public service by helping to directly connect viewers with their Mayor, and Seattle Channel should continue this valuable partnership. The format, however, needs an update for today's audiences and engagement style. This means moving the program from the confines of the studio and exploring alternatives: a town hall format with a live audience, online Q&A via one of the popular video streaming services or attaching "Ask the Mayor" to existing community forums.

Seattle Channel should also play a role in connecting the City of today with its past by re-playing compelling and informative programs from its archives. This helps provide viewers with historical context and perspective – something often missing from public discourse.

Podcast

Like the podcast version of "Book Lust with Nancy Pearl," many of Seattle Channel's public-affairs programs can be easily adapted to an audio-only format. By creating a Seattle Channel podcast network, content can be repurposed in an accessible way that makes it easier for audience segments to enjoy past and future programming.

Metrics such as downloads, ratings and mentions on other social media channels can be used to gauge success. Additionally, Apple podcasts also offers metrics to its content creators that can serve as an indicator of reach and interest. Downloadable, commute-friendly content is key.

This approach builds on an initiative from another City entity: The Seattle Public Library. The Library is partnering with community-based organizations and providing training to aspiring podcasters. This use of this pre-existing public infrastructure can help expand the reach of community activities and happenings to a much wider audience.

Schedule and Theme

Consider grouping content thematically to support "binge-watching." The current Seattle Channel schedule is unpredictable, which can be a barrier for entry to viewers.

As one influencer audit participant put it, "There is an increasing complexity to life. My perspective, or maybe getting older, life was a bit simpler and life was a little easier to manage. The overhead of life has gotten bigger and heavier – with that comes ambiguity, uncertainty, lack of trust. If Seattle Channel can position itself, apply authenticity to helping people understand issues, to helping people to create a better life for themselves, that would be very important."

One small but effective way to reduce the overhead of life is to connect content broadly across themes and reflect those themes in blocks of programming. This will help viewers know what's happening on Seattle Channel quickly and easily.

For example:
- **Mayoral Mondays**
  (Ask the Mayor, Mayoral event videos, history of Seattle Mayors)
- **Town Hall Tuesdays**
  (Council Conversations, City Inside/Out, Civic Cocktail)
- **What's Happening Wednesdays**
  (City Stream, Clickdown 21)
- **Arts & Culture Thursdays**
  (Book Lust, Art Zone, Community Stories)
- **Fun Fridays**
  (Eccentric Seattle, Front Row, An Evening With...)

Power Programs with People

Facilitate, through partnerships, the creation of culturally relevant programming, ideally developed by diverse communities for diverse communities. This effort would increase engagement with the public by encouraging viewers to share their content ideas and programming recommendations.

For example, Seattle Channel could host a contest for new programming ideas with social media audiences rating their favorites. Or, Seattle Channel could post surveys and polls on its social media channels, asking viewers to weigh in on pressing topics discussed in a recent program.

Produce Content Live and In The Community

Seattle enjoys a wealth of cultural events, community-organized panel discussions featuring policy experts and civic-minded organizations like Seattle CityClub and the Urban League. These organizations already do the heavy lifting to host and organize events. Seattle Channel should work with these organizations to produce programs like "Council Conversations" and "Ask the Mayor." Traditionally these programs are filmed inside the studio, but we recommend moving them out into the community.

There is an element of unpredictability with live-audience events, but this also lends authenticity and excitement in a way that could elevate both the public's awareness and perception of Seattle Channel.

Not only can Seattle Channel cover these live events, but it should leverage them as an opportunity to engage with the people in attendance. Using and promoting hashtags specific to each event, Seattle Channel can crowd source photos and videos from the event's participants. Seattle Channel can then edit the content into a short one- to two-minute video montage event summary that can be shared on social media, at City Council meetings and with neighborhood blogs.

Increase Access

With support from the Mayor and Council in the 2018 budget, Seattle Channel secured funding to provide live captioning for full City Council and committee meetings. Along with embarking on this service, Seattle Channel is exploring additional ways to expand on captioning as new technologies for artificial intelligence transcription and searchable transcripts become available. Seattle Channel has been working with the City's Americans with Disabilities advisory group on service approaches, as well as exploring partnerships within other City departments to create multi-lingual public service announcements.

Seattle Channel should continue to build on these partnerships and successes, but recognizing, like in the case of funding live captioning, significant resources are required to support these efforts.

Evaluate Content Through Psychographic Profiles

In today's digital landscape, a one-size-fits-all approach to content will not be effective. Consumers have too many options and sources for information to sift through all the available choices. When appraising content and determining whether to add or cut a program, Seattle Channel should evaluate through the lens of psychographic customer profiles. If demographics explain who the audience is, psychographics explain why they watch. Seattle Channel can only effectively build an audience when it understands both the demographics and psychographics of its viewers. The combination of both sets of data will form Seattle Channel's audience persona – a detailed picture of the people currently watching, and those Seattle Channel wants to attract. Once the personas are developed, Seattle Channel can effectively determine which content resonates with each persona and ensure that the delivery platform is tailored to each.

With respect to content and programming, there is no shortage of ideas, but there are significant constraints on resources and time. To that end, the Seattle Channel team would greatly benefit from informative tools that can help guide decision-making – tools that can identify where to invest time and energy for maximum impact.

METRICS AND EVALUATION

As part of the City of Seattle's Cable Television Franchise Agreement[5] with Comcast, the cable company provides access for Public, Education, and Government (PEG) programming in the basic channel lineup offered to consumers, in addition to a $50,000 advertising credit and 0.4 percent of Gross Monthly Revenues. But as "cord-cutting" continues, an unintended impact is a reduction of funding available for PEG programming.

Figure 7: Traditional video subscribers
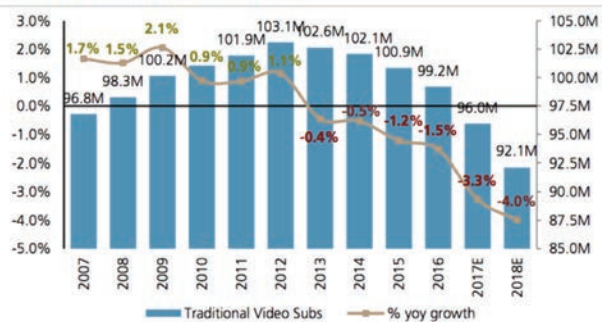
Source: Company data, UBS estimates

Source: Business Insider http://www.businessinsider.com/ cable-tv-subscriber-losses-q2-chart-2017-6

While cord-cutting is a challenge for traditional cable companies, consumers enjoy greater choice both in what they watch and how they watch it. The rapid adoption of smart phones and tablets, in tandem with higher speed cellular and wireless connections, is transforming and disrupting TV viewing habits — habits that formed throughout several decades as TV became the focal point for living rooms across the United States.

An abundance of data on these trends enables traditional media organizations to cope with the new reality. But what if the cable companies didn't have access to their subscriber data, or know their audience reach? How would trends be identified and evaluated? How could offerings be adapted to meet the changing landscape? Digital platforms are important for reaching audiences where they are, but which ones matter most, and how can they be leveraged most effectively?

Currently, Seattle Channel tracks the number of programs produced, hours of City Council meetings recorded, Seattle Channel followers on social media, NATOA and Emmy awards won, etc. Though important, these metrics do not provide a rich understanding of Seattle Channel's efficacy in connecting with target audiences. Nor do the metrics provide insight into how programs are perceived and how well Seattle Channel services the interests of its audience. An important first step in developing this data set is counting viewers to establish a baseline of current viewership and audience engagement.

Key Performance Indicators

In April 2017, the Station Resource Group and the Wyncote Foundation in cooperation with National Public Radio (NPR) formed a working group of 15 public media organizations to answer a key question: Which measurements should be used to drive progress in digital service, where the platforms keep changing and proliferating? This is one of the key challenges facing public media organizations across the United States, and Seattle Channel is no different.

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[5] City of Seattle Cable Television Franchise Agreement, seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/SeattleIT/cable/ComcastFranchiseAgreement_Jan2016-Jan2026.pdf (last visited May 17, 2018).

Through a year-long collaboration, the working group sought to create consensus and share best practices on "what we measure, how we measure and how we use data to inform decision-making in our organizations."[6] The working group recognized the need to create a common framework for measuring success, as each institution was evaluating and tracking success differently, using more than 100 different Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Ultimately, the group concluded that, to be useful in this context, a KPI must be:

- Tied directly to specific, organization-wide goals
- Top down, cascading throughout the organization and useful for all teams
- Familiar and understandable by all
- Easy to remember and limited in number

This group also identified four metrics that KPIs should help to drive: growing audience, knowing the audience, engaging the audience and monetization. The findings of this working group informed the development of the following recommendations.

To establish a "data baseline," Seattle Channel should consider:

Establishing a relationship with Nielsen to collect Seattle Channel TV viewership data

Nielsen Local TV View (NLTV) is an online tool that enables users to analyze viewing within Nielsen Designated Market Areas (DMAs).

Users of NLTV can create custom trade areas to analyze a target audiencece as well as sub-sample their audience by a variety of characteristics.

Integrating Google Analytics into all Seattle Channel online properties

Equip existing team members with the expertise to use Google Analytics (or other free measurement service) to its fullest potential.

Collect existing data from Google Analytics for the Seattle Channel website as far back as possible.

Using historical data from Google Analytics and Nielsen, convene a working group to identify the Key Performance Indicators that will best help Seattle Channel accomplish its mission.

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[6] Barba, Holm, and Scholly, "Five reasons to build on public media's journalism collaborations," Current. https://current.org/2018/04/five-reasons-to-build-on-public-medias-journalism-collaborations (April 11, 2018)

To augment the current metrics, Seattle Channel should consider monitoring the following KPIs:

Email Address Acquisition

An individual email address is one of the most vital pieces of information for digital marketing and audience engagement. Seattle Channel already has a subscriber function on its website, so adding this metric can happen immediately.

Website Visits

Once the analytics are in place, Seattle Channel can measure the number and quality of website visitors. By evaluating new versus returning visitors, the average length of session spent on the website, bounce rates and video views on the site, Seattle Channel will begin to understand the effectiveness of its efforts and identify what content is helping to drive the mission.

Subscriber Survey

Issue an annual Customer Survey to the entire Seattle Channel list with a core set of questions. Supplement this annual survey with more frequent, targeted, and less expansive surveys to specific audience segments.

Social Media

Use tools to track likes, retweets, shares, polls, and calls-to-actions clicked, in addition to inbound links (Outside websites linking to seattlechannel.org content).

Evaluation

Once key performance indicators are identified, tracked, and evaluated on an ongoing basis, Seattle Channel leadership will be equipped with more meaningful, actionable information to drive content, partnership and programming decisions. The data will also help the station determine which marketing and content strategies are making an impact. With greater visibility and trackable metrics, the team will be better equipped to allocate its limited marketing budget and resources in a more strategic way.

However, raw data doesn't always tell the whole story. Like the methodology used to develop these recommendations, Seattle Channel will benefit if decisions are made based on the combination of insights gained through data and ongoing, qualitative assessments of accomplishments and opportunities.

Create a Seattle Channel "Kitchen Cabinet" within CTAB

The insights offered by members of the Seattle Channel Advisory Committee for this report were substantial, well-informed, and provided context for the strategic recommendations in this document. These sessions should serve as a starting point to continue gaining feedback and insight from outside of Seattle Channel.

As such, Seattle Channel should form and convene a permanent Seattle Channel Subcommittee within the Community Technology Advisory Board (CTAB).

Currently, CTAB partially fills this advisory role for Seattle Channel, but the station would be well-served to have more robust and focused attention on its activities from experts in the public media space in addition to representatives from the communities Seattle Channel serves. This group could also reinforce, from a policy lens, advisory position, Seattle Channel's commitment to the City's Race and

Social Justice Initiative, and continue the efforts to support equitable access and inclusive programming.

A dedicated subcommittee, led by a member of CTAB, would also provide consistent support to Seattle Channel and could advise on the implementation of the recommendations from this document.

Viewer Surveys

While the Advisory Committee can offer input and high-level feedback, a wide-reaching survey of Seattle Channel viewers can be a helpful tool for long-term planning, benchmarking and charting progress. This annual survey should be sent to all email addresses collected through the website.

Currently, Seattle Channel uses MailChimp to communicate with its subscribers. MailChimp offers integration with SurveyMonkey to easily embed surveys into existing MailChimp templates.

By including qualitative and quantitative questions in the annual survey, Seattle Channel can track improvement with its core subscriber base. Separately, the City of Seattle IT Department can continue to include questions relating to Seattle Channel in its annual citywide survey.

In addition to an annual survey, Seattle Channel should leverage its email list to conduct short, one-off surveys of individual shows or segments throughout the year to gain real-time insight that can help measure the impact of programs and segments. These surveys would be separate from the social media surveys recommended in the following Marketing and Engagement section which are intended to drive interaction with Seattle Channel content.

MARKETING AND ENGAGEMENT

Commercial television stations have large budgets to buy TV and radio ads, signage on transit and billboards around town, in addition to vast marketing teams to tease enterprise stories. Though Seattle Channel does not have an extensive marketing budget, it can accomplish much of its goal by using funds creatively and selectively.

Refresh and Amplify the Website

The Seattle Channel website excels in many ways; it does not need a complete overhaul. It is credible, useful, valuable, and findable. However, its usability and accessibility could be improved. With a targeted redesign and minor adjustments made, it will be more desirable to its visitors.

Redesign Site Map

The Seattle Channel website hosts an enormous amount of content. With considerable amounts of content, it becomes critical to have a detailed map to enable visitors to easily find and navigate through the content library. An industry standard in web design is to make any content on a site accessible in no more than four clicks. By reorganizing the Seattle Channel website to enhance efficiency, visitors will stay on the website longer and they will engage more deeply with the content. As a model,

consider the Montgomery Community Media in Maryland. Their site includes categories for content organized by interests: business, education, events, life, public safety, etc., enabling visitors to find content on the topic of most interest to them. By organizing programs by topic or issue, visitors can find what they need quickly.

Click to Watch

Add in "Click to Watch" functionality for visitors browsing the schedule of programs to allow immediate access to content of interest.

Enable Pause

Enable viewers to "pause" the website's live stream and pick up where they left off. This will encourage viewers to keep the Seattle Channel website open longer and explore more content.

Integrate a Discovery Platform

Installing a discovery platform on the website will help site visitors discover more Seattle Channel content based on their behavior on the website. A platform like OutBrain, which is used by The Seattle Times, helps to connect viewers to other content that might be on a similar topic or slightly older and therefore harder to find. Once installed, the program uses data of all site visitors to make "Watch this next" recommendations and encourage visitors to spend more time on the website.

Issue Calls to Action

The website should serve as the online hub for Seattle Channel. The website is the ideal location for engaged citizens to participate in follow-on conversations, find additional information and resources, and explore program archives. As such, effort must be made to funnel audiences to the website. For example, social media content should encourage followers to "continue the conversation" on the website.

Recalibrate the Take 21 Blog

The Take 21 blog currently acts as a newsroom for Seattle Channel. Consider expanding this platform to demonstrate Seattle Channel's leadership in the industry and provide insight into the behind-the-scenes happenings in the studio, host profiles and extended content. Seattle Channel needs to invest the time to ensure that the blog is working to engage audiences rather than simply push content.

Expand Reach on Social Media

The social media landscape is changing daily, and it is difficult to predict what platforms will be most relevant during the scope of these recommendations. The following recommendations are not platform-specific but are intended to be useful in a variety of contexts to help guide and expand Seattle Channel's social media strategy and capabilities.

Cross Promote

Seattle Channel needs to highlight its other social profiles whenever possible. By calling attention to Seattle Channel's Twitter presence on its Facebook page, and vice-versa, the audience for each will grow. Seattle Channel should "pin" a post on Twitter highlighting the Facebook page.

Leverage Quizzes and Polls

Quizzes and polls are a fun and easy way to drive engagement with Seattle Channel content. Further, they provide real-time, quantifiable feedback on programs and topics.

Share Partner Content

Seattle Channel should scour its partners' and other City social media profiles and share appropriate content. Not only will it strengthen these important relationships, but the partners will be more likely to share Seattle Channel's content.

Grow Seattle Channel's Online Audience

Seattle Channel has a very limited advertising budget, and it should be directed to drive the greatest results. Advertising efforts should focus on growing the online audience rather than driving traffic to the television channel. Seattle Channel should develop campaigns designed to:

- **Drive email sign-ups, as this will enable Seattle Channel more opportunities to engage with the audience.**

- **Grow social media audiences to enhance the efforts listed above.**

- **Drive online traffic to the landing pages of the website, such as Seattle News NOW, to expose visitors to multiple pieces of content at once.**

- **Work with Seattle IT to expand options for Seattle Channel website customization.**

Explore Partnerships with Critical Delivery Mechanisms

The cord cutting trend is, in large part, fueled by the variety of programming options available to consumers. Seattle Channel needs to explore partnerships with the over-the-top delivery providers such as Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime and Roku. These partnerships will help raise awareness of Seattle Channel with new audiences and provide viewers with a new on-demand option for tuning in. Further, the ability to select shows or segments will ensure that audiences are able to watch the content that is most interesting and of value to them. As part of the partnership agreements with these providers Seattle Channel will have access to viewership metrics which can help inform programming decisions.

PARTNERSHIPS AND INDEPENDENCE

Seattle Channel, on its own, produces a vast amount of local content. This service alone is an incredible public asset that deserves a much broader audience. But with a limited budget to market itself, Seattle Channel could significantly increase its reach and impact by creatively pursuing strategic partnerships with other public entities, like-minded organizations and content developers.

Codify Structure and Develop Materials to Cultivate Partnerships

The Seattle CityClub partnership is an excellent example of the type of relationship Seattle Channel should continue to pursue. A major hurdle, however, is a lack of clarity about the types and structure of partnerships that would be appropriate and feasible for Seattle Channel, as it is a government-access station. Clarification on these requirements and procedures will enhance Seattle Channel's ability to identify and pursue value-add partnerships. Consider codifying these parameters in a "playbook" so the knowledge is institutionalized.

Audit Existing and Potential Partners

Before attempting to explore new partnerships, Seattle Channel needs to understand the landscape. This audit should capture the nature of all existing partnerships as well as identify potential targets for future partnership. *See Appendix E for a list of potential partners cited during the Research and Discovery phase.*

Develop Partner Playbook

Once the universe of potential partners is identified, Seattle Channel needs to develop the guidelines for determining the criteria for a partnership and the process for developing the relationship. To be successful, the partnership should be mutually beneficial for Seattle Channel and the outside organization. By defining the parameters, the Seattle Channel team can ensure that new partnerships advance the mission. The playbook should also define the process for recruiting a new partner. This will help to promote employee engagement in the process and enable them to successfully act on behalf of Seattle Channel.

Develop Partner Toolkit

Once the criteria and process for defining new partners are in place, it is critical to create the resources necessary to facilitate these relationships. These materials could include presentations, fact sheets, videos, infographics or even microsites that outline Seattle Channel's mission, audience information and opportunities for engagement.

Engage Neighborhood Blogs

Seattle has some 60 hyper-local blogs delivering well-crafted neighborhood news and information to loyal followers. Residents often turn first to these online outlets for news, information and opinion about significant activity in their community. By sharing content and engaging the neighborhood blogs, Seattle Channel's content can reach those that need it the most. Further, the blogs' content and discussions can be good sources of information for programming for the Seattle Channel team.

Develop Seattle Channel "News Bureau"

Seattle Channel's ability to take a deep dive into stories sets it apart from many news organizations. Traditional newsrooms are also grappling with the challenge of changing media consumption habits, and as a result staff sizes are a fraction of what they were a decade ago. Reporters often serve as their own photographers and editors, while also interviewing and writing their stories. Television news stations are also struggling to keep up with the demand for news. The 24-hour news cycle and the need to fill air time and provide content online increases a TV station's need for new stories and sources of information. Seattle Channel can help fill that role by issuing a weekly email blast, targeting assignment editors and appropriate producers highlighting content and schedule for that week. The email blast should encourage the news outlets to reuse Seattle Channel's content, with attribution on-air, online and in print as appropriate. This will help to raise awareness of Seattle Channel's content and introduce new audiences to the station. This weekly email can also be distributed to the neighborhood blogs to support the development of those partnerships.

Seattle Channel "Kitchen Cabinet" within CTAB

As discussed above, the creation of the "Kitchen Cabinet" is a critical step in building new partnerships. Once created, CTAB's Seattle Channel Subcommittee can play a key role in expanding Seattle Channel partnerships with stakeholders and like-minded organizations.

To aid in the efforts to create a more independent public resource, the Subcommittee should:

- **Form a "sustainability working group" to identify possibilities for Seattle Channel's future given the downward trend of cable franchise fees.**

- **Research the feasibility of establishing a Seattle Channel Foundation, modeled after The Seattle Public Library Foundation and the Seattle Parks Foundation.**

- **Actively seek committee members and suggest partnerships that forward Seattle Channel's accessibility and commitment to equity and inclusion, and leverage the committee's expertise and knowledge in the field to strengthen Seattle Channel's editorial independence and advocate for its work.**

Engage with the City

Engage and Educate City Department Public Information Officers (PIOs)

Treating other City departments as partners was a key finding in the Employee Survey and Influencer Audit. Each department creates a massive amount of content each year and has the same customers as Seattle Channel. By cultivating relationships with the PIOs, Seattle Channel will raise awareness of its own programming while also sourcing ready-made content to help populate the City website and social media channels.

To cultivate these relationships, Seattle Channel should:

- **Send weekly emails to the PIOs highlighting the content that will be aired or online that week.**

- **Host regular meetings of the PIOs with the main goal of helping to identify content that can be created or shared.**

Seattle Channel 101

Through discussions with Seattle Channel staff, it became apparent that there is often confusion within other City departments about the role of Seattle Channel. The creation of a "Seattle Channel 101" document that outlines the mission and ground rules for engagement would provide Seattle Channel team members the authority to push back should a request cross the threshold that might jeopardize Seattle Channel's journalistic integrity. This document could be shared with newly elected officials, appointees and staff to ensure appropriate boundaries are established from the start.

Develop a Sustainability Framework to Maintain Independence

Concurrent with establishing parameters for new external and internal partnerships, Seattle Channel must have an honest conversation with City leaders about its unique role within government. Originally established to provide a direct link between people and their leaders, publicly funded government-access television is as important today

as it was 50 years ago. Credible sources of information are getting crowded out by a sea of "fake news." No longer is that credibility guaranteed. It is at risk, just as the trust in civic institutions is at risk when the public's confidence in its government erodes.

Government-sponsored programming must maintain a degree of journalistic independence. Seattle Channel is not a news organization. It does not advance an agenda or attempt to bias its viewers toward a particular point of view. In fact, it is abundantly cautious, opting to ask for permission vs. forgiveness.

Unfortunately, that cautionary stance can have a detrimental impact. Controversial or difficult topics are shied away from, for fear of upsetting the powers that be. This "passive overreach" by City leaders is likely not intentional and most certainly is not malicious. But there are too many anecdotes to ignore. When Seattle's elected leaders share concerns with how Seattle Channel covers an issue, while simultaneously authorizing its annual budget, it is not unreasonable to expect Seattle Channel to alter its approach toward that issue in the future.

Social and ethical norms typically prevent this type of overreaction, but it is a "gray area" that needs to be made clear on paper and in black and white.

> **"SEATTLE CHANNEL IS A JEWEL. INFORMATIVE, RELEVANT. GREAT STORYTELLING. BEAUTIFUL PICTURES AND SOUND. AND DESPITE ITS RELATIVE OBSCURITY, THOSE LUCKY ENOUGH TO KNOW ABOUT US REALLY LIKE WHAT WE PROVIDE."**
>
> – Seattle Channel Producer

The City's branches of government need to hold a frank and productive conversation about what is and is not appropriate.

For example, can a City Council member ask to review and approve a list of questions before an appearance on "Council Conversations?" Does that "sanitize" the discourse, and in turn, weaken credibility?

Or, should Seattle Channel be required to film a City department's event, even though the event does not tie directly in with the Channel's mission and taxes its limited resources?

Finally, if an elected City official resigns, and Seattle Channel does not cover the resignation or the reasons for it, does that do a disservice to the viewing public?

Going forward, Seattle Channel must work with its key stakeholders in City Hall to develop a shared framework that answers these difficult questions. By doing the above, Seattle Channel will have a path forward and will de-mystify the partnership process. This will open a world of possibility for Seattle Channel.

Uncertainty around these types of questions has a debilitating, paralyzing effect on the team responsible for connecting Seattle's people with its power. Seattle, a haven for progressive thinking and passionate defenders of free speech, deserves better – and so does Seattle Channel.

IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENT**ATION**

The Effort/Impact Matrix

When considering how to implement the preceding recommendations, equal consideration should be given to both the investment (of time, money and other resources) required to implement the recommendation, and the potential impact of the effort. The Seattle Channel team can use the following matrix to help prioritize the recommendations and build a plan for phasing their implementation. This tool helps identify the solutions that can be put in place with less effort while still achieving considerable impact.

In this context, "impact" demonstrates how effective the strategy or tactic is in achieving the objective, and "effort" relates to the amount of energy, resources and time necessary to implement.

Effort-Impact Matrix for Goal-Setting

1 Green: Low Effort, High Impact
2 Yellow: High Effort, High Impact
3 Orange: Low Effort, Low Impact
4 Red: High Effort, Low Impact

IMPACT

EFFORT

1 Do all of these	**2** Do these with support
3 Do some of these	**4** Do less of or none of these
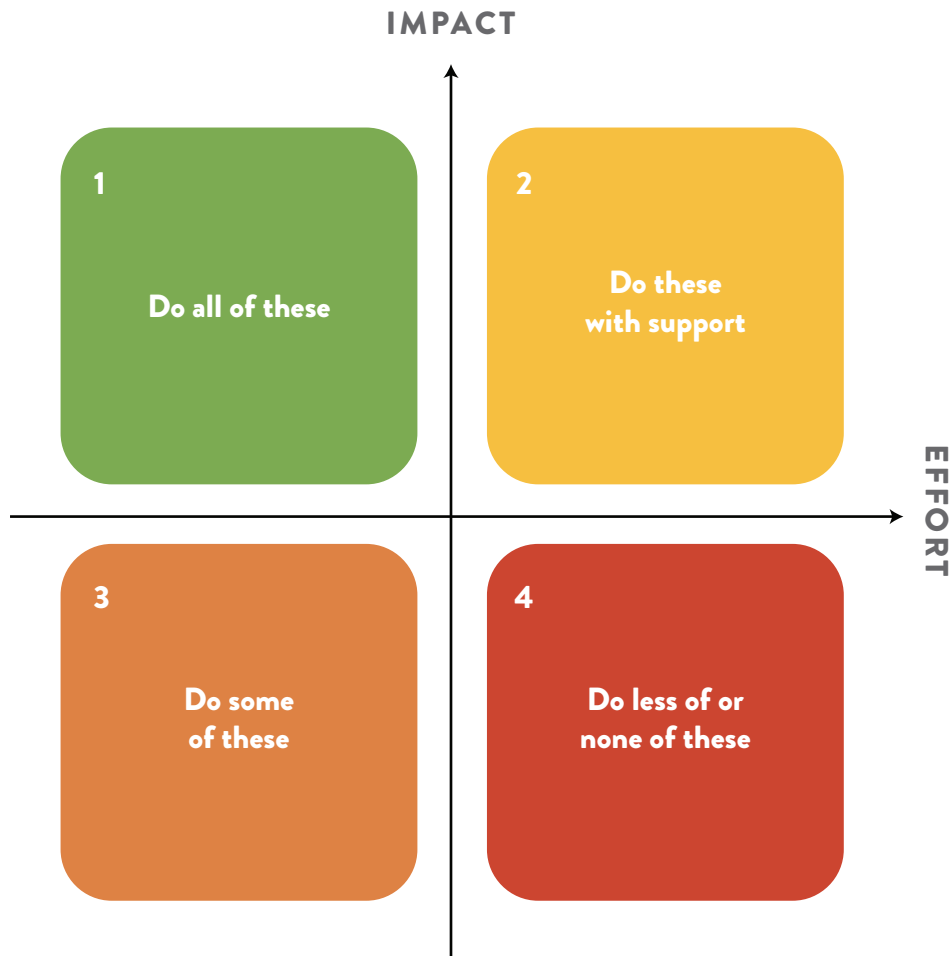
Most of the recommendations will fall into the top half of the grid, with extra points for low effort/high impact ideas – followed by those recommendations that achieve high impact but require a greater effort to execute. Some recommendations will require intensive time and energy, but the outcome is worth it; if an idea takes a lot of energy and time and does not make a big impact, it is not worth pursuing (Category 4).

For example, if the recommendation is to conduct a short survey of viewers annually, something that would require minimal effort to complete while providing valuable, actionable information, that would fit in Category 1. If an idea on the table was to conduct in-person interviews with all Seattle Channel viewers, it would not meet the criterion of "low effort" and its impact would not be worth the resources expended (Category 4).

The CTAB Seattle Channel Subcommittee

Many of the recommendations included in this document will benefit from the careful stewardship of an advisory body. The Seattle Channel Advisory Committee, convened for this project, should serve as a foundation for a broader, long-term effort to include outside stakeholders in Seattle Channel's important work. Seattle Channel's general manager should employ the time and talent of the Subcommittee to provide specific implementation recommendations and strategies for involving and including key stakeholders. Regular progress reports by Seattle Channel staff to the Subcommittee will keep recommendations top of mind and, with time, provide accountability.
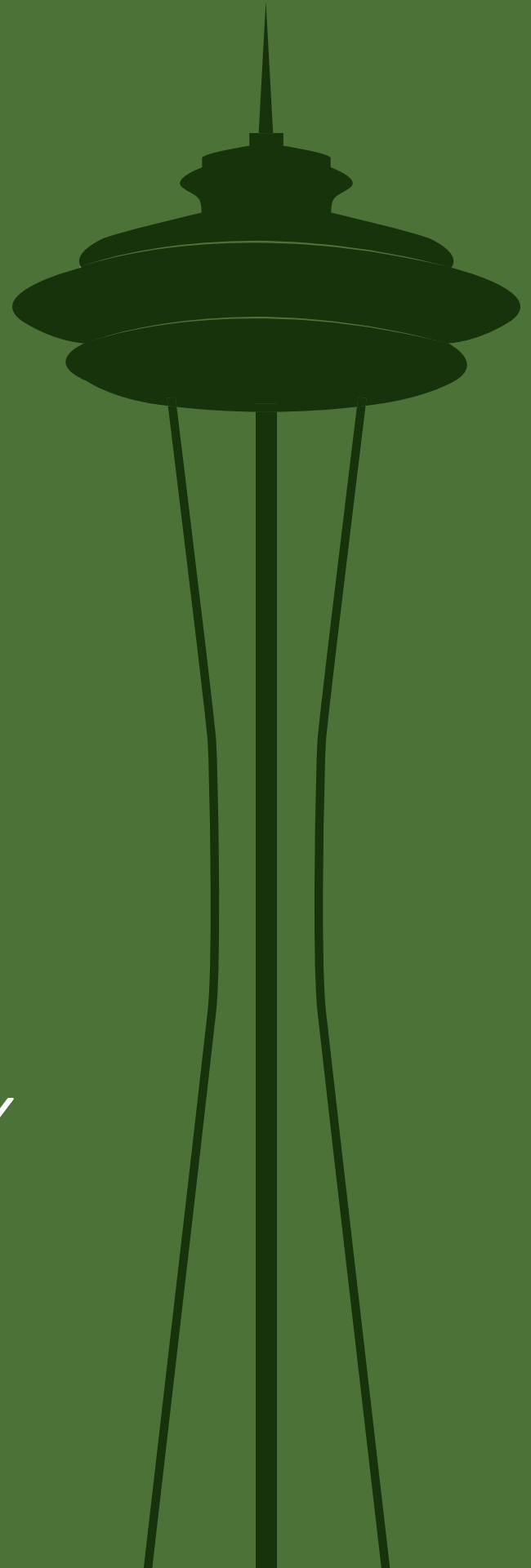
SUMMARY

SUMMARY

Government-access television is important to the health of democracy. It informs the public, connects the civic environment, and plays a critical role as an equalizer in an increasingly stratified society. To borrow a term from Connecticut's Simsbury Community Television, Seattle Channel is the City's "electronic public green space." It provides viewers with an oasis, free to all, and free from any commercial agenda or interests.

The City of Seattle is fortunate to have Seattle Channel – as are the residents of Seattle. Its content is of the highest quality, winning multiple awards for its artful and creative offerings of information, entertainment, and educational resources. There will always be opportunities to expand reach and impact, but with the use of defined metrics and consistent evaluation, the Channel can set the standard in a quantifiable way and deploy the latest techniques in marketing and engagement. However, given that it is funded by downward-trending cable subscriptions, and housed within City government, steps must be taken to ensure both its sustainability and journalistic independence.

Most of the decisions that truly affect daily life are made at the local level. Government-access television promotes community conversations – conversations that are key to building community. Seattle Channel is a resource for the City that will, with proper support and appreciation by key stakeholders, continue to serve the City and "channel Seattle" into the future.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SEATTLE CHANNEL
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Joni Balter
Multimedia journalist

Kate Becker
Director
Seattle Office of Film + Music

Ron Chew
Chew Communications

Diane Douglas
Executive Director
Seattle CityClub

Rob Dunlop
President & Chief Executive Officer
Cascade Public Media

Brandi Kruse
Correspondent
Q13

Renee Radcliff Sinclair
President & Chief Executive Officer
TVW

APPENDIX B

INFLUENCER AUDIT FINDINGS

February 2, 2018

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SEATTLE CHANNEL INFLUENCER AUDIT

TOP-LEVEL FINDINGS

FEBRUARY 2, 2018

In

---

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AGENDA

- Review methodology and data sources
- Review of responses
- Summary of key findings
- Q&A

2 In

METHODOLOGY

Goals:

– Collect the perspectives and recommendations of 10 – 12 subject matter experts

– identify themes in responses

Interviews:

– 30 minutes by phone

- 80 participants considered
- 20 invited to participate
- **12 interviews completed**

3 **In**

METHODOLOGY

- Participants represented a cross-section of civic leaders, media and communications experts

Sheila	Mullen	Freelance arts producer
Tom	Mara	KEXP
Rebecca	Gross	Seattle Channel comms intern/UW Daily editor
Hanson	Hosein	UW Communications
Frank	Catalano	Marketing strategist
C.R.	Douglas	Q13 (Formerly Seattle Channel)
Vivian	Phillips	Seattle Arts Commission
Travis	Quezon	International Examiner
Jose	Vasquez	CTAB
Tim	Burgess	Mayor of Seattle (Fmr.)
Chris	Daniels	KING5
Phyllis	Fletcher	NPR Bureau Chief, formerly NW News Network

4 **In**

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BEFORE WE GET TO THE FINDINGS...

Our ask of you today:

Consider **strategies and tactics** that the Seattle Channel
can deploy to **address the findings** of the audit

5 **In**

---

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How do you describe the mission of the Seattle Channel?

– Inform and educate
– Connect people to their government
– Serve the community and enrich the civic spirit

Tell Seattle's Story

6 **In**

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How would you rate the Channel's success in fulfilling this mission on a scale of 1-10, 10 being the most successful?

Score: 6.5

7 **In**

---

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Factors influencing higher scores include:

- Pile of awards
- Highest quality content
- Great information
- Professional and creative
- Excellent production values
- Potential for greatness

8 **In**

Factors influencing lower scores include:

- Unclear how SC generates impact/spurs engagement
- Journalistic independence lacking
- Afraid to challenge the powers that be
- Kind of dry

Responses that didn't offer a score:
- "I don't watch TV anymore – who does?"
- Haven't watched SC in a long time, TV or online
- 30 minute programs may be great but I don't have time

9 **In**

How do you watch?

- Seattle Channel website
- My phone/social media feed
- "Whatever is convenient"

How do you NOT watch?

Cable Television

10 **In**

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RECURRING THEMES

- Awareness deficit
- Local feel
- Shareability
- Disinterested/Disengaged
- Accessibility

11 **In**

---

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How would you rate the quality of Seattle Channel original programming, on a scale of 1 – 10, 10 being the best?

Score: 7.75

12 **In**

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Factors influencing higher scores include:

- Best source of local video
- Excellent programming, well-produced
- Inclusive sourcing, not just "checking a box"
- Reflects the strength of Seattle, our diversity
- "Pretty darn good"

13 **In**

---

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Factors influencing lower scores include:

- 1:1 interview shows with "softball" questions
- Subject matter dry/dull
- Doesn't resonate with or reach the viewer

14 **In**

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How can the Seattle Channel reach new audiences?

- Serve as a "courageous convener"
  - Be seen as a neutral arbiter of tough conversations
- Satisfy demand vs. generate interest
  - Generate shareable, scaled-down content for social
  - Dedicate more resources to marketing and research
- Involve community in content creation
  - Partner with like-minded organizations to cross-promote
  - Consider close—captioning/subtitles

15 **In**

---

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How has Seattle changed over the past 15 years?

- Dramatic growth, increase in costs and population
- Homelessness crisis/traffic congestion
- Unaffordable/city for rich only

"The "overhead of life" has gotten bigger and heavier. SC can provide scale to issues that seem overwhelming or feel impossible to tackle."

16 **In**

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How would you rate the SC's job (scale of 1-10) of adapting to these changes?

Score: 5

17 **In**

---

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Factors influencing lower scores include:

– Stronger systems in place for content delivery across channels

– Format feels stale or dated

– Not enough accountability from officials

18 **In**

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How can Seattle Channel better respond to these changes?

- Make it easier to use
- Hyper-local content – neighborhood level.
- Tackle the tough issues – be brave.
- THINK BIG.

19 **In**

---

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INTERESTING RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Host a hackathon for programmers/engineers to develop tech solutions
- Involve communities in telling their own story on SC
- Become a one-stop shop for City resources, like 311
- Connect programming to City initiatives
- Highlight the great work done by departments

20 **In**

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SUMMARY

- The Seattle Channel is in a unique and important position to tell Seattle's story
- Seattle Channel sets the bar nationwide for content – now is a great time to raise the bar
- Content is smart, valuable, well-produced and deserves a larger audience – but people don't watch TV
- Huge appetite for hyper-local content, internally sourced
- Hard data and metrics need to play a role in all decisions

21 **In**

---

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Thank you!

22 **In**

APPENDIX C

CONSUMER POLL

February 2018

Seattle Channel
Report of Online Panel Survey Results
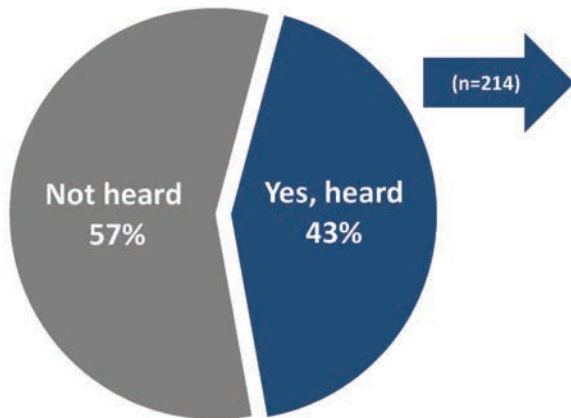**City of Seattle**
February 2018

Survey Methodology

▸ Online panel survey of Seattle residents age 18+

▸ Conducted January 24 – February 4, 2018

▸ 500 total interviews

▸ Weighted to reflect Seattle residents using key demographics

Please note that due to rounding, some percentages may not add up to exactly 100%.

18-6601 Nyhus Seattle Channel | 2

Seattle Channel Awareness & Associations

EMC research

Two-in-five (43%) panel respondents have heard of Seattle Channel. Among those who have heard, most (65%) associate Seattle Channel with general local, community, and government news.

Not heard 57%
Yes, heard 43%

(n=214)

What words or phrases first come to mind when you think about the Seattle Channel?	% of heard
Local/community news	**41%**
General positive (Interesting, good, great, etc.)	20%
Government news	**14%**
Boring/uninteresting	6%
Specific program (PBS, Artzone, Seattle Outdoors)	5%
General negative	3%
Other	11%
None/nothing	5%

Q1. Have you ever heard of the Seattle Channel?
Q2. Based on what you know or have heard, what words or phrases first come to mind when you think about the Seattle Channel?

18-6601 Nyhus Seattle Channel | 3

Awareness of Seattle Channel by Subgroup

EMC research

Awareness for Seattle Channel is highest among men, long term Seattle residents, and residents in North Seattle.

■ Yes, heard   ■ Prefer not to respond   ■ No, haven't heard

	Yes, heard	No, haven't heard
Overall	43%	57%
Male (50%)	51%	49%
Female (50%)	36%	64%
18 - 34 (26%)	34%	66%
35 - 44 (20%)	49%	51%
45 - 54 (16%)	45%	55%
55 - 64 (18%)	49%	51%
65+/Ref. (20%)	42%	57%
1 to 5 years (19%)	20%	80%
6 to 15 years (21%)	43%	57%
16 to 25 years (17%)	52%	47%
26 to 35 years (18%)	51%	49%
35+ years (15%)	48%	52%
North Seattle (34%)	48%	52%
Central Seattle (33%)	45%	55%
South Seattle (27%)	40%	59%
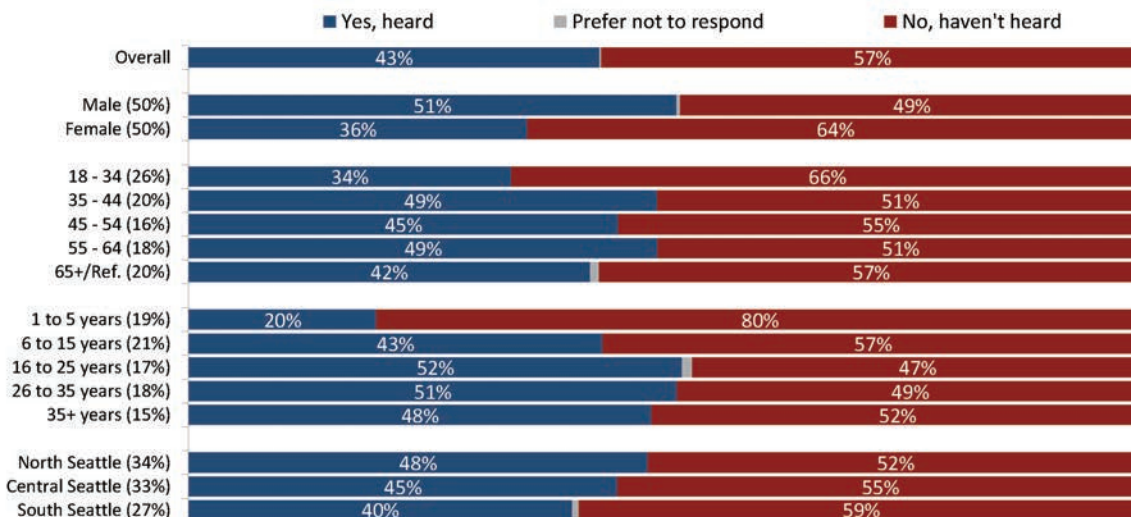
Q1. Have you ever heard of the Seattle Channel?

18-6601 Nyhus Seattle Channel | 4

Seattle Channel Favorability Rating – Initial

EMC research

Opinion is overwhelmingly positive (71% "favorable") among respondents who are aware of Seattle Channel, however positive intensity (25% "strongly favorable") is low. There is very little negative opinion.

Aware of Seattle Channel: n=214

Favorable 71%

Somewhat 46%

Strongly 25%

Unfavorable 8%

Somewhat 6%
Strongly 2%

No opinion 21%
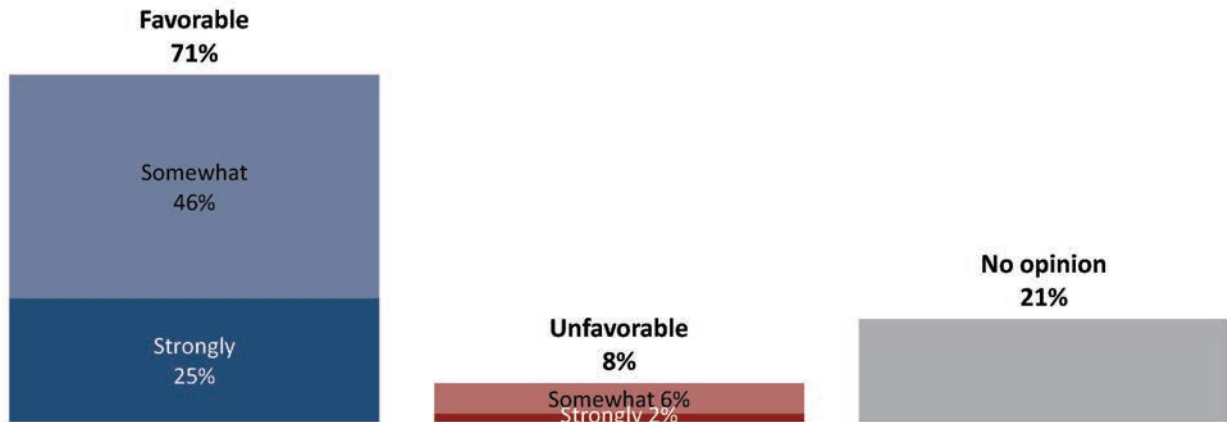
Q3. Based on what you know or have heard, is your overall opinion of the Seattle Channel

18-6601 Nyhus Seattle Channel | 5

Viewership and Viewer Frequency

EMC research

Among those aware of Seattle Channel, two-thirds (66%) have watched with over half (55%) saying they watch Seattle Channel at least occasionally.

Aware of Seattle Channel: n=214

Not watched 34%

Have watched 66%

n=139

55%

Frequently 17%

Occasionally 38%

Rarely 26%

Almost never 19%
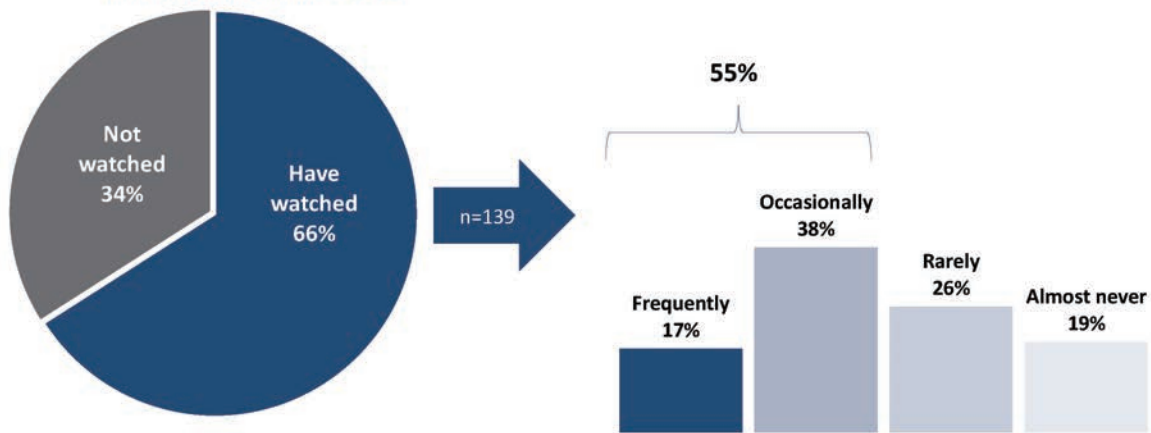
Q4. Have you ever watched the Seattle Channel?
Q6. How often do you watch the Seattle Channel?

18-6601 Nyhus Seattle Channel | 6

Viewer Platform

Of those who have watched Seattle Channel, most (67%) watch using cable television where as a third (32%) watch the channel online. One-in-five (19%) only watch via internet streaming.

Watched: n=139

32%

**Cable television
67%**

**Streaming internet
19%**

**Both TV and internet
14%**
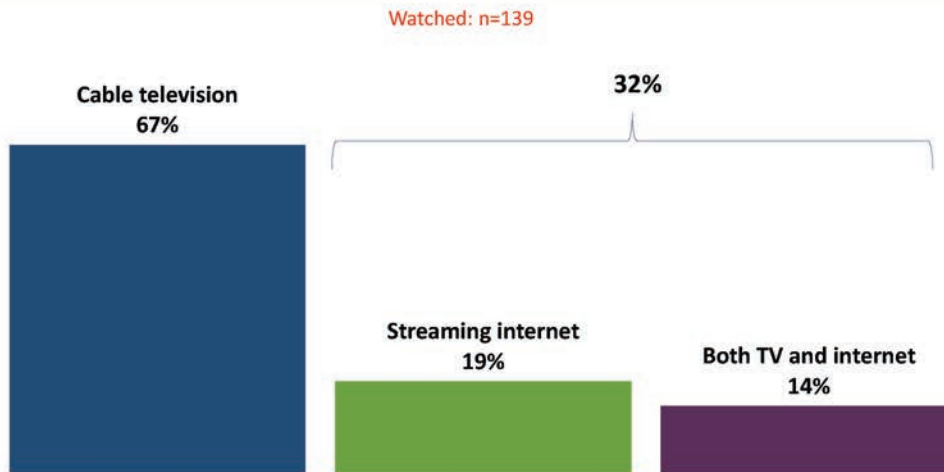
Q5. On what platform do you watch the Seattle Channel?

18-6601 Nyhus Seattle Channel | 7

Website Visitors

Among those aware of Seattle Channel a third have visited seattlechannel.org with 60% of those visiting the website at least occasionally.

Aware n=214

**Visited Seattle Channel website
34%**

**Not visited
65%**

(n=66)

60%

**Frequently
22%**

**Occasionally
38%**

**Rarely
26%**

**Almost never
15%**
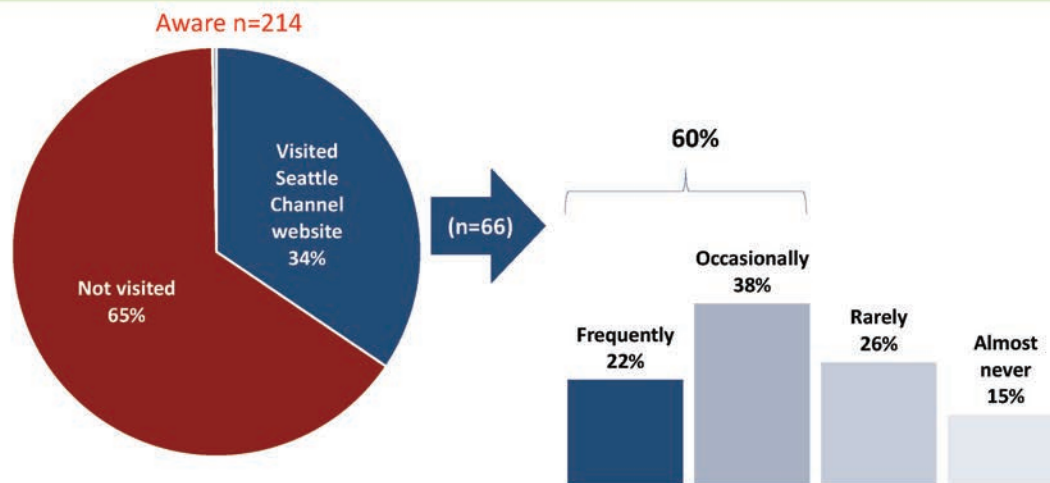
Q7. Have you ever visited the Seattle Channel's website, seattlechannel.org?
Q8. How often do you visit seattlechannel.org?

18-6601 Nyhus Seattle Channel | 8

Seattle Channel Website Rating

Most all who have visited seattlechannel.org rate the website positively.

Visited Website n=66

**Positive
84%**

Good
51%

Excellent 33%

**Negative
12%**

Only Fair 12%

**(Don't know)
3%**
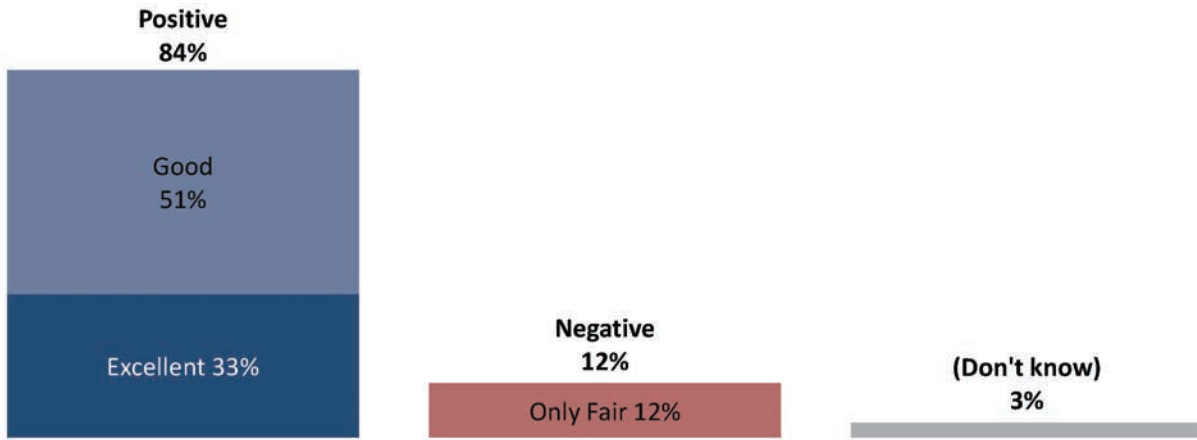
Q9. How would you rate seattlechannel.org website overall?

18-6601 Nyhus Seattle Channel | 9

Seattle Channel Importance to Community

A majority of respondents rate Seattle Channel important to the local community, however intensity is low.

52% Important

Importance to the local community							
7%	4%	9%	25%	24%	14%	13%	**Mean Rating 4.58**

■ 1 - Not Important   ■ 2   ■ 3   ■ 4   ■ 5   ■ 6   ■ 7 - Extremely Important
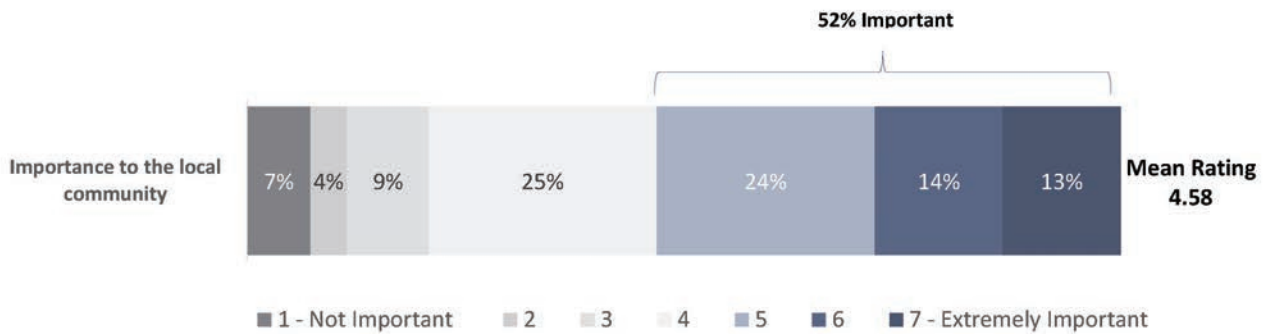
Q10. Regardless of whether or not you watch, how important do you think the Seattle Channel is to the local community? Rate on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 is not at all important and 7 is extremely important.

18-6601 Nyhus Seattle Channel | 10

Seattle Channel Favorability – After Information

Seattle Channel's favorable rating improves by 5 points in intensity (25% to 30%; strongly favorable) after respondents are told basic information the mission and programming.

Statement: "The Seattle Channel is a government-access cable channel that belongs to the residents of Seattle and exists to inform and involve them in government, civic and community affairs. Its goal is to produce compelling content that informs residents about city issues, resources, and services. Seattle Channel works to help residents get the information they need to engage in civic dialogue, to make civic decisions, and participate in the life of the city. Programming also includes series and special features highlighting the diverse communities and cultural landscapes of Seattle."

Initial Favorable Rating

Favorable 71%

Somewhat 46%

Strongly 25%

Unfavorable 8%
Somewhat 6%
Strongly 2%

No opinion 21%

Favorable Rating After Information

Favorable 76% (+5)

Somewhat 46%

Strongly 30% (+5)

Unfavorable 9%
Somewhat 7%
Strongly 3%

No opinion 15%
15%

Q11. Knowing this, is your overall opinion of the Seattle Channel:

18-6601 Nyhus Seattle Channel | 11

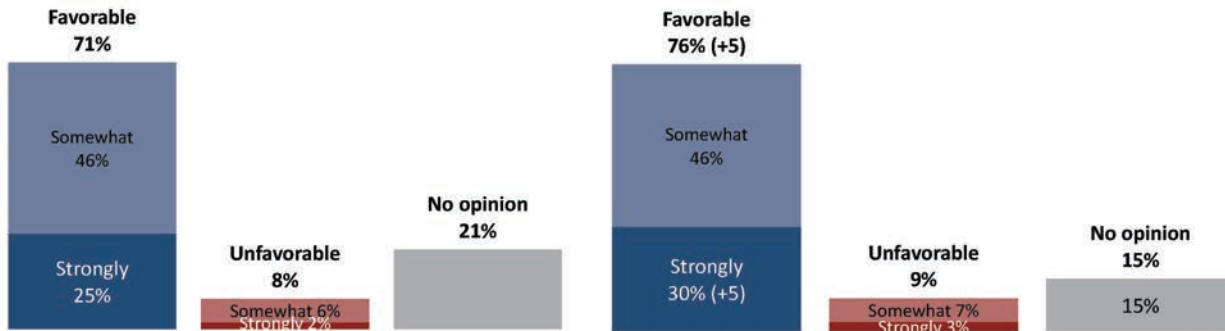# Seattle Channel Programming Ratings

Shows covering public affairs, local issues and politics are rated as the most valuable type of programming followed closely by shows about community stories/documentaries about Seattle's people, programs, cultural traditions, and history.

■ Mean   **Extremely Valuable '"7- Intensity"**

	Mean	Extremely Valuable
public affairs shows covering local issues and politics	5.41	27%
community stories/documentaries about Seattle's people, programs, cultural traditions, and history	5.29	23%
live coverage of local government meetings and press conferences	5.26	25%
civic conversations and town halls featuring an audience	5.25	23%
programs about local arts and culture	5.22	21%
panel discussions and interviews with local leaders, national figures, and authors	5.18	21%
feature magazine show with a focus on local people, events, organizations, and places	4.91	15%
programming covering local bands and music	4.61	12%

Q12-19. And how valuable do you think each of the following types of Seattle Channel programming are for the community:

18-6601 Nyhus Seattle Channel | 12

Programming Suggestions

Over half of respondents (57%) cannot give a specific type of other programming that they think would be beneficial. Of those that can, 8% think more education programs and general local news would be beneficial.

Are there other types of programming that you think would be beneficial?	%
Educational programming	8%
General local news	8%
Local government/political news	7%
Local arts/Culture/Entertainment	6%
Civic engagement/volunteering	4%
Local/Seattle history	2%
Local/Highschool sports	2%
Other	8%
No/None	**57%**

Q20. Are there other types of programming that you think would be beneficial?

18-6601 Nyhus Seattle Channel | 13

Reasons Unlikely to Watch

After hearing more information about Seattle Channel, over half (56%) of respondents say they are likely to watch Seattle Channel, however intensity is low (17% "very likely to watch"). Of those unlikely to watch Seattle Channel, the top reason given is that the channel is boring or uninteresting followed by seldom watch TV or don't have a TV/cable.

Likely 56%
Somewhat 40%
Very 17%

Unlikely 37%
Not very likely 24%
Not at all likely 13%

Not sure/Refused 7%

And what is the primary reason you say that you would be unlikely to watch Seattle Channel? (n=180)	% of Unlikely
Boring/uninteresting	27%
Rarely/Seldom watch TV	21%
No TV/cable	12%
No time	11%
Get news/entertainment elsewhere	10%
Negative view of channel/government	8%
Not aware of programs/Schedule	4%
Other	13%

Q21. Now that you know a little bit more about the Seattle Channel, how likely do you think you would be to watch the channel?
Q22. And what is the primary reason you say that you would be unlikely to watch Seattle Channel?

18-6601 Nyhus Seattle Channel | 14

Local News Sources

EMC research

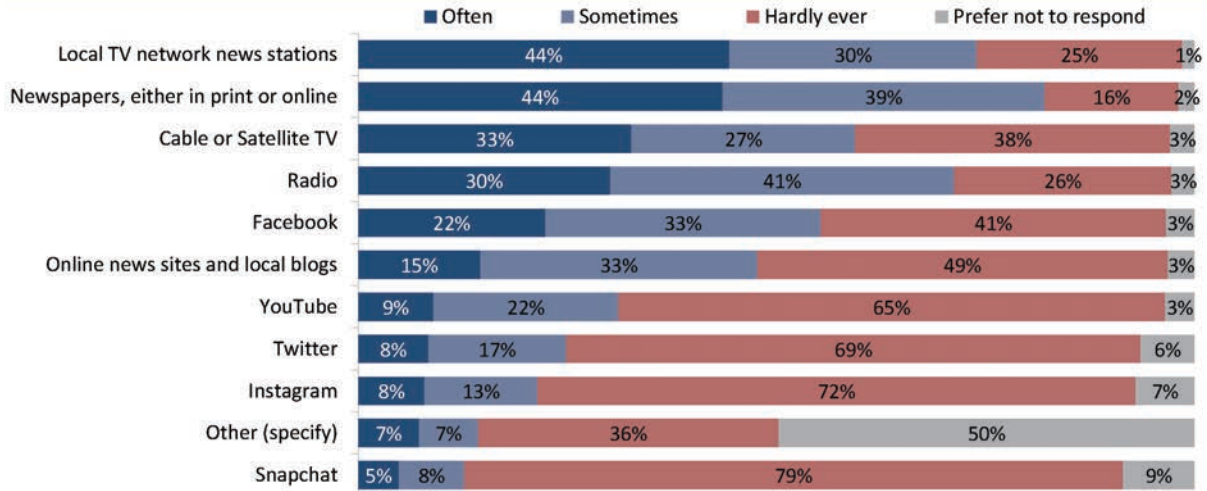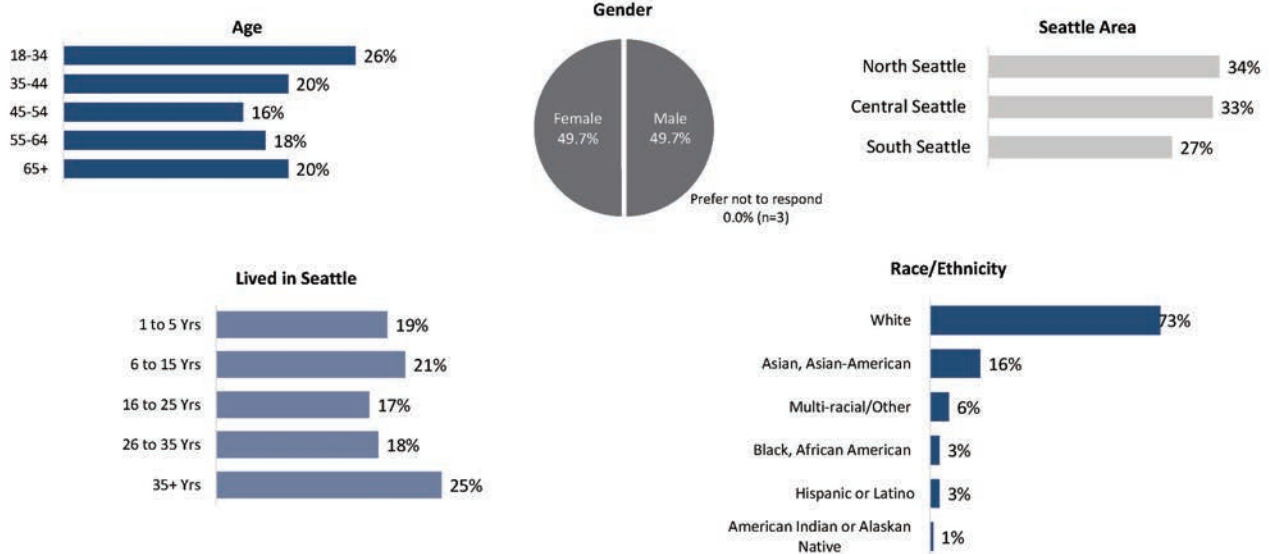Local TV network news stations, newspapers and cable or satellite TV are the most frequent sources for local news, politics, and events.

Legend: ■ Often ■ Sometimes ■ Hardly ever ■ Prefer not to respond

Source	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever	Prefer not to respond
Local TV network news stations	44%	30%	25%	1%
Newspapers, either in print or online	44%	39%	16%	2%
Cable or Satellite TV	33%	27%	38%	3%
Radio	30%	41%	26%	3%
Facebook	22%	33%	41%	3%
Online news sites and local blogs	15%	33%	49%	3%
YouTube	9%	22%	65%	3%
Twitter	8%	17%	69%	6%
Instagram	8%	13%	72%	7%
Other (specify)	7%	7%	36%	50%
Snapchat	5%	8%	79%	9%

Q25. How often do you get information about local news, politics, and events from each of the following sources:

18-6601 Nyhus Seattle Channel | 15

Overall Demographics

EMC research

Age
- 18-34: 26%
- 35-44: 20%
- 45-54: 16%
- 55-64: 18%
- 65+: 20%

Gender
- Female 49.7%
- Male 49.7%
- Prefer not to respond 0.0% (n=3)

Seattle Area
- North Seattle: 34%
- Central Seattle: 33%
- South Seattle: 27%

Lived in Seattle
- 1 to 5 Yrs: 19%
- 6 to 15 Yrs: 21%
- 16 to 25 Yrs: 17%
- 26 to 35 Yrs: 18%
- 35+ Yrs: 25%

Race/Ethnicity
- White: 73%
- Asian, Asian-American: 16%
- Multi-racial/Other: 6%
- Black, African American: 3%
- Hispanic or Latino: 3%
- American Indian or Alaskan Native: 1%

18-6601 Nyhus Seattle Channel | 16

EMC research

Dominick Martin
Dominick@EMCresearch.com
206.204.8033

APPENDIX D

EMPLOYEE SURVEY

January 2018

SEATTLE CHANNEL STAFF SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

Thank you for participating in one of the in-person Seattle Channel staff meetings. The goal of this survey is to enable Seattle Channel employees the opportunity to provide additional anonymous feedback and expand upon what was discussed in the earlier sessions.

Quick refresher: Our goal is to craft a comprehensive and thoughtful strategic plan for Seattle Channel. The resulting plan will identify the following:

1 Priority areas for programming and content
2 Opportunities for meaningful partnership, collaboration, and community engagement
3 Marketing and engagement recommendations to expand reach and attract a broader, more diverse audience
4 Methods to measure and evaluate Seattle Channel's impact and project outcomes

Priority Areas For Programming and Content

1 How long have you worked for Seattle Channel? (select one)
   - Less than a year
   - 1-2 years
   - 3-5 years
   - 6-10 years
   - 10+ years

2 What is your favorite part(s) of working at Seattle Channel? (select all that apply)
   - Contributing to the civic conversation in our city
   - Producing high-quality content
   - Department culture and colleagues
   - Pay and benefits
   - Learning and career development
   - Other (fill in the blank)

3 What is your favorite content to produce and/or work on, contribute to? (select one)
   - Public affairs
   - Arts/culture
   - Features
   - Documentaries
   - Interactive programming (i.e., Civic Cocktails and town halls)
   - Other (fill in the blank)
   - Not applicable

4 What content are you most proud of? Why? (open-ended)

5 Do you have the opportunity to provide input about Seattle Channel programming (e.g., possible interview subjects, ideas for new shows or segments, etc.)?
   - Absolutely
   - Somewhat
   - Not really
   - Not applicable/not important to me
   - Other (fill in the blank)

6 Any additional comments or suggestions regarding the Channel's programming and content? (open-ended)

Partnerships and Collaboration

7 One of the goals for the strategic plan is to evaluate opportunities for growth, given declining cable TV viewership and the move to online/mobile platforms. One possibility is for Seattle Channel to partner with organizations outside City of Seattle. What is your reaction to this statement?
  - Absolutely supportive – we should consider this
  - I'm glad we're looking into this but I have a few reservations or concerns
  - I think our current partnership model/structure is fine
  - Other (fill in the blank)

8 Thinking about current Seattle Channel partnerships, which ones do you think work well? Why? (open-ended)

9 What communities are you most interested in connecting with Seattle Channel? (open-ended)

10 Do you feel that you play, or could play, a role in cultivating partners? (open-ended)

11 How can Seattle Channel connect with its viewers, or engage with them in a dialogue? (open-ended)

12 Are there any organizations or individuals you recommend the Channel consider pursuing for partnership? (open-ended)

13 Any additional comments or thoughts on Partnerships and Collaboration? (open-ended)

Marketing and Engagement

14 How can/should Seattle Channel help raise awareness of the Channel and its programming and attract new audiences? (select all that apply)
  - Paid advertising
  - Social media
  - More meaningful/beneficial partnerships
  - Live events in the community
  - Our current efforts are fine
  - Other

15 Seattle Channel is committed to expanding its reach and attracting new audiences. How can Seattle Channel achieve this goal? (open-ended)

16 Seattle has changed dramatically in the fifteen years since a volunteer commission developed short- and long-term recommendations to transform Seattle Channel, then known as TVSea. In what ways do you feel the city has changed the most? (open-ended)

17 On a scale of 1-10 (with 1 being "poor" and 10 being "excellent"), how would you rate Seattle Channel's effectiveness at adapting to these changes?

18 How can Seattle Channel better adapt to both Seattle's changing demographics and trends in media consumption? (open-ended)

19 Any additional comments or thoughts on Marketing and Engagement? (open-ended)

Methods to Measure and Evaluate

20 Currently, it is challenging to obtain viewership data from the cable companies. What viewership information would you be interested in gathering if it were available? (select all that apply)
- General viewership information (Type of device used to watch content, times of days)
- Viewership data specific to a program (what viewers watch)
- Demographic information (zip code, age, gender, household income, etc.)
- Other

21 Seattle Channel's mission is "To inform and engage citizens in the governmental, civic and cultural affairs of Seattle through compelling use of television, Internet and other media." On a scale of 1-10, 10 being the most successful, how would you rate the Channel's success in fulfilling this mission.

22 On a scale of 1-10, 10 being the highest, how would you rate the quality of Seattle Channel's original programming?

23 What factors influenced your rating in Question 22?

24 Any additional comments or thoughts on how e Seattle Channel should measure its success? (open-ended)

CONCLUSION:

Thank for participating in Seattle Channel Employee Survey. Your answers are an integral part to share shaping our efforts and recommendations for the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Planning process is scheduled to conclude in March 2018.

SEATTLE CHANNEL
EMPLOYEE SURVEY

JANUARY 2018

AGENDA

- Methodology
- Interesting Findings
- Key Learnings

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RESEARCH GOALS

- Gain insights related the development of the Seattle Channel Strategic Plan
    - Priority areas for programming and content
    - Opportunities for partnership, collaboration and community engagement
    - Marketing and engagement recommendations to expand reach and attract a broader, more diverse audience
    - Methods to measure and evaluate Seattle Channel's impact and project outcomes
- Build on insights gained during two in-person briefings with Seattle Channel employees
- Provide employees the opportunity to share anonymous feedback on current operations and help shape the future of the Seattle Channel

3 **n**

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METHODOLOGY

- On-line survey of Seattle Channel full-time employees and contractors
- Survey was conducted between Dec. 4, 2017 – Jan. 31, 2018
- Participants (n)=37

4 **n**

KEY INSIGHTS

5 **In**

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INTERESTING FINDINGS

- Staff longevity
- Staff inertia
- Employee empowerment
- Measurements of success

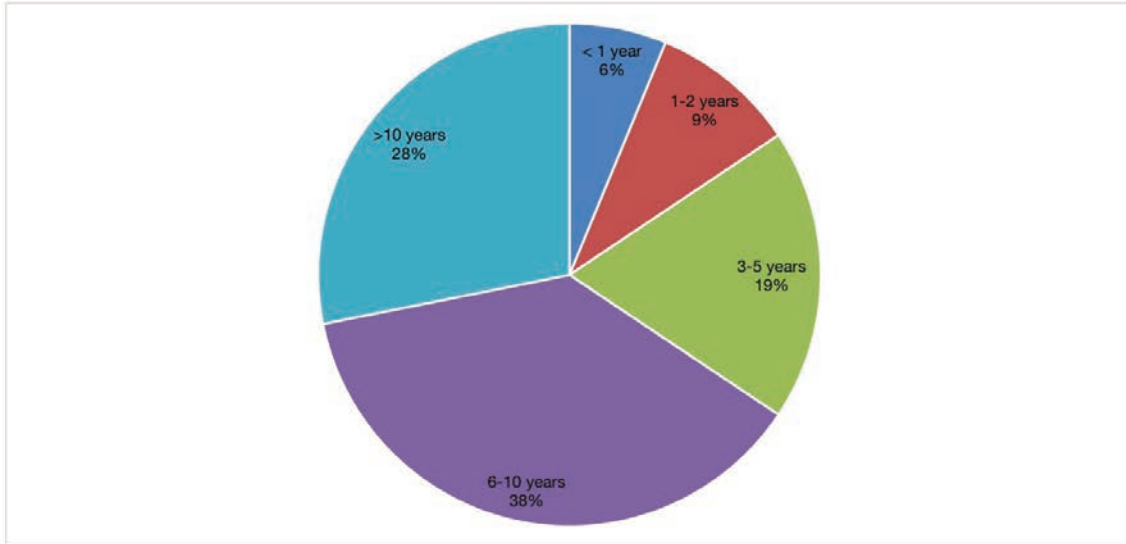6 **In**

KEY LEARNINGS
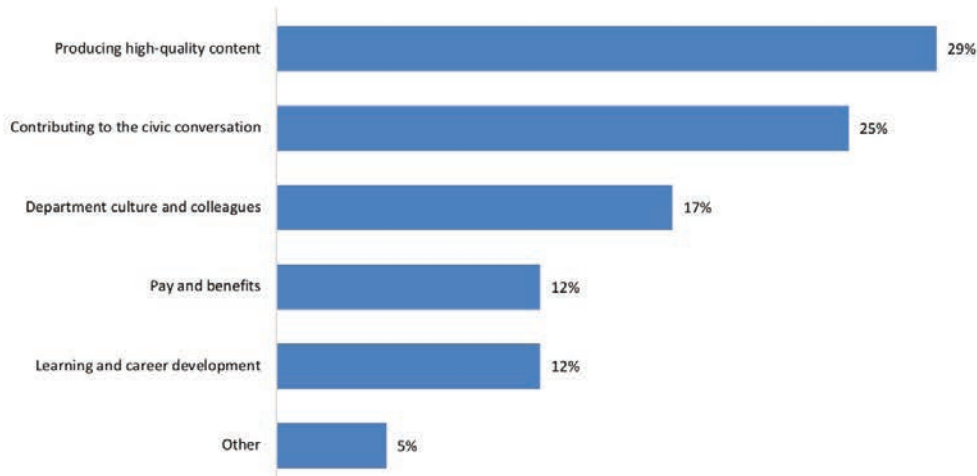
How can we build audience?

4 major themes:
- A more robust presence on social media platforms
- Increasing advertising efforts
- Cultivating meaningful and beneficial partnerships
- Expanding presence at existing community activities and events

7

DEMOGRAPHICS

8

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HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED FOR SEATTLE CHANNEL?

< 1 year 6%
1-2 years 9%
3-5 years 19%
6-10 years 38%
>10 years 28%

9

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KEY DRIVERS OF EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

Producing high-quality content	29%
Contributing to the civic conversation	25%
Department culture and colleagues	17%
Pay and benefits	12%
Learning and career development	12%
Other	5%

10

FAVORITE CONTENT TO PRODUCE AND/OR WORK ON

| Category	Percentage
N/A	3.13%
City Council meetings, etc.	3.13%
Interactive programming	6.25%
Other	6.25%
Documentaries	12.50%
Features	18.75%
Arts/culture	25.00%
Public affairs	25.00%

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CONTENT MOST PROUD OF (most mentioned shows)

- City Stream
- Art Zone
- Community Stories
- City Leaders
- Civic Cocktail
- City Inside Out
- Seattle Speaks
- Alice at the Store
- Citizen University

13 **In**

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QUALITY OF PROGRAMMING

When asked "On a scale of 1-10, 10 being the highest, how would you rate the quality of Seattle Channel's original programming?," Seattle Channel employees averaged a submission of 9.

14 **In**

AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK?

Pie chart:
- Absolutely 63%
- Somewhat 22%
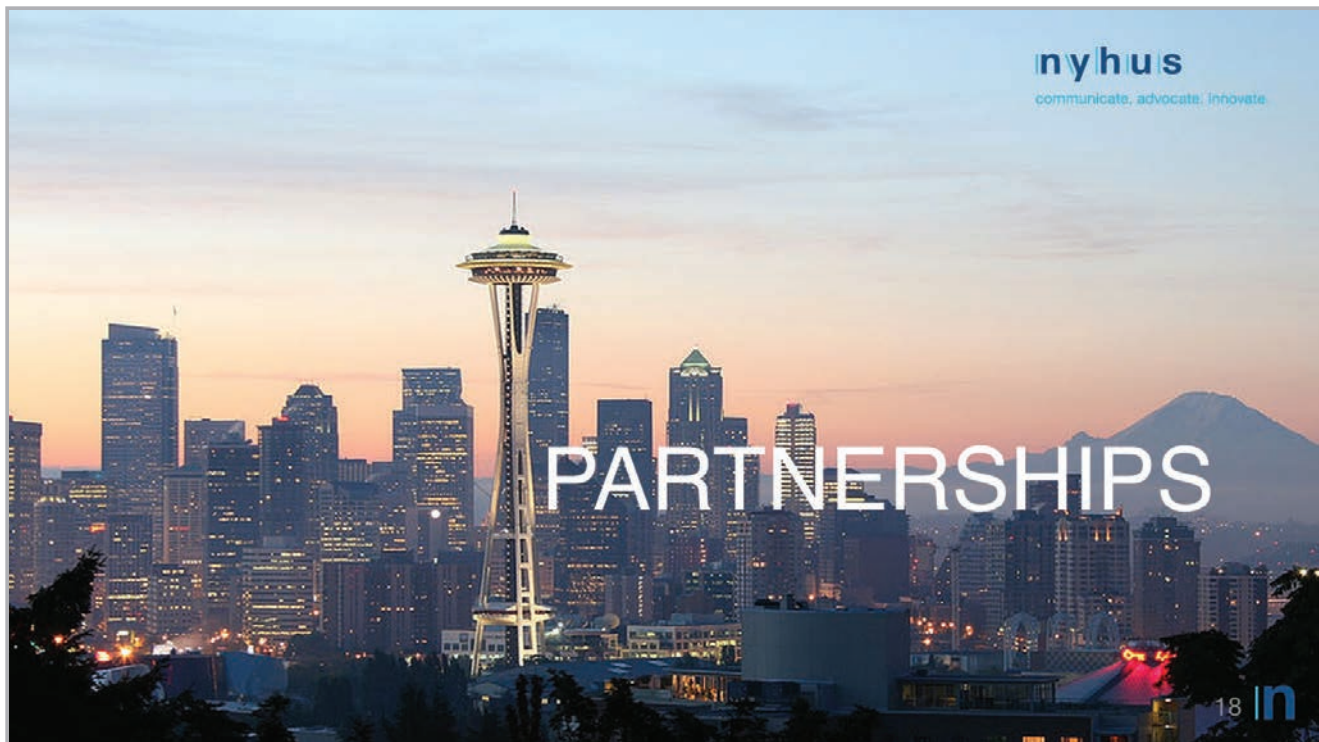- Not really 9%
- N/A 6%
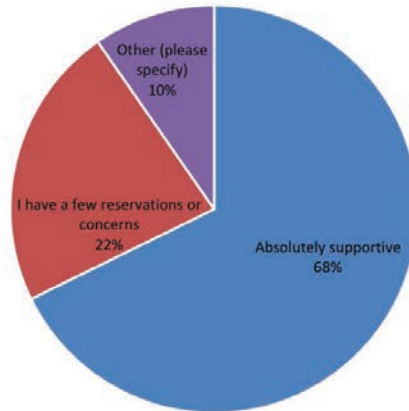
15
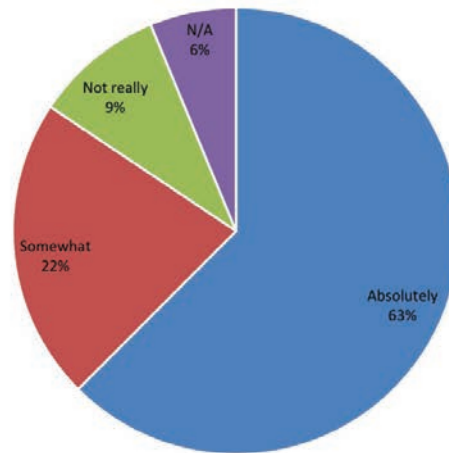
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS (most common themes)

- Coordinate with other City department for content
- More autonomy from City Council
- Diversity
- Quicker to air
- Shorter segments
- Rebrand programs/update graphics
- Explore opportunities with Apple TV, Roku, etc.

16

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS (select submissions)

- "The content needs to be refreshed and in some cases a complete overhaul. Many of the programs have been running, with little content changes for 10 plus years. We need to sit down and really look at what the audience wants. Television and media in general are changing greatly and the Seattle Channel needs to evolve or be left behind. Despite the fact that the SC is the top gov't station in the country, that doesn't matter in Seattle. Our audience is very sophisticated and politically tuned in and we need to give them more of what they want."

- "Seattle Channel is a leader for its original local content. However, it has very limited resources for both understanding the impact of our content and what viewers want to watch. We need to access, track and leverage data to better adapt our content to online and mobile platforms. This means more short segments. We need to take a hard look at our content and decide what to defend and what to disrupt."

17 **In**

PARTNERSHIPS

18 **In**

SUPPORT FOR EXPLORING PARTNERSHIPS OUTSIDE SEATTLE GOVERNMENT

Pie chart:
- Other (please specify) 10%
- I have a few reservations or concerns 22%
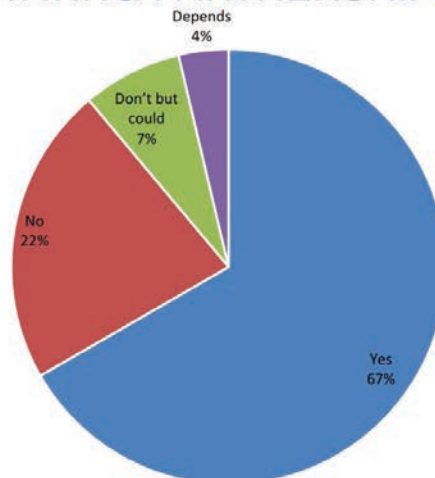- Absolutely supportive 68%

19 **n**

WHICH CURRENT PARTNERSHIPS WORK WELL
(most mentioned organizations)

- City Club
- N/A – don't know enough about existing partnerships
- Other local news outlets
- City Non Profits

- Town Hall
- Other City Departments
- Other devices
- Private storytellers
- Local Airlines

20 **n**

COMMUNITIES INTERESTED IN CONNECTING?
(most mentioned)

- Minorities/communities of color
- Youth
- All
- New Seattle residents
- Other arts organizations and artists
- Seniors
- Women
- Broader communities (King County, Bellevue, Tacoma, Everett)
- Activists
- LGBTQ

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21 |n

DO YOU FEEL THAT YOU PLAY, OR COULD PLAY, A ROLE IN CULTIVATING PARTNERSHIPS?

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Depends 4%

Don't but could 7%

No 22%

Yes 67%

22 |n

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HOW CAN SEATTLE CHANNEL CONNECT WITH ITS VIEWERS, OR ENGAGE WITH THEM IN A DIALOGUE?

Social Media	9
Live-events	5
Targeted marketing campaigns toward current viewers	4
Advertising	3
Viewer Survey	2
TV/Don't Change	1
Smaller orgs aligned with goals	1
Leverage new mayor and interest in working with the media	1
Community Colleges	1
Podcasters	1
Multi-language programming	1
Submission contests	1
New shows in locations away from City Hall	1
More camera angles	1
Presense at community events	1

23 |n

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WHAT ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD THE CHANNEL PURSUE?
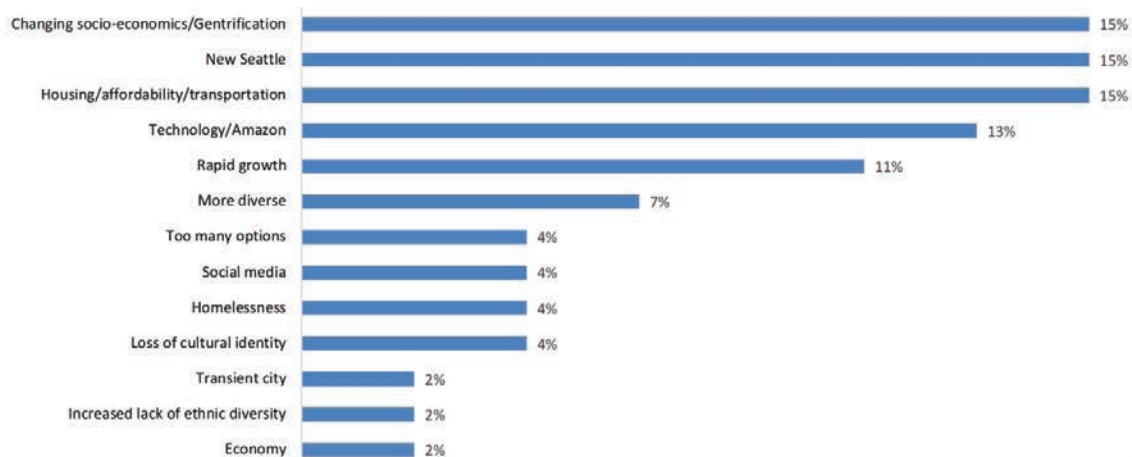
- Other media outlets (KUOW, ST, Seattle Met/Magazine)
- Independent media orgs (Globalist, Stranger, Seattle Emerald)
- Other City Departments
- Community Colleges
- Amazon/Amazon Video Services Team

24 |n

MARKETING

25

HOW CAN SEATTLE CHANNEL RAISE AWARENESS OF PROGRAMMING/ ATTRACT NEW AUDIENCES

Other 7%
Paid advertising 18%
Live events 23%
Social media 26%
Partnerships 26%

26
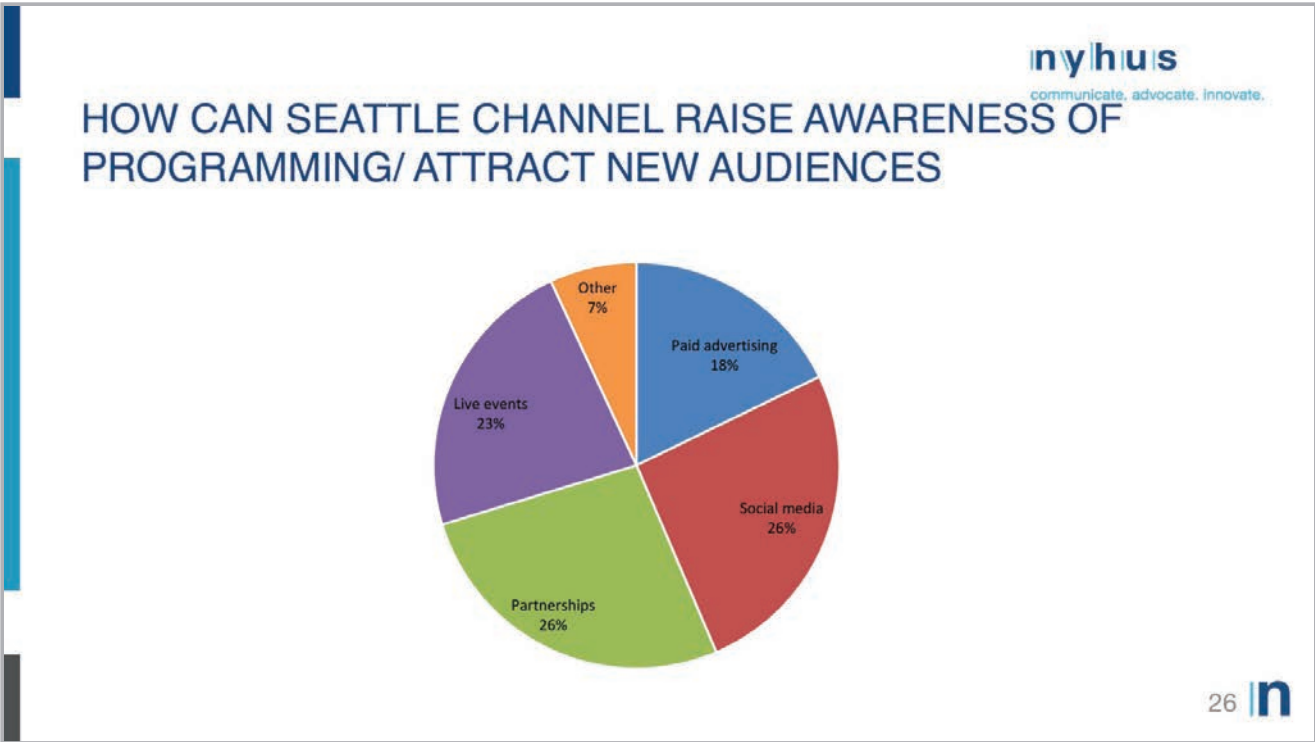
HOW CAN SEATTLE CHANNEL EXPAND ITS REACH? (most common themes)

- Advertising/promotions
- Live events/Forums at large local events (i.e., Bumpershoot, PAX, SIFF)
- Marketing/Guerilla marketing
- Increased partnerships
- Engage younger viewers

27

HOW HAS SEATTLE CHANGED THE MOST SINCE THE CREATION OF TVSEA/SEATTLE CHANNEL?

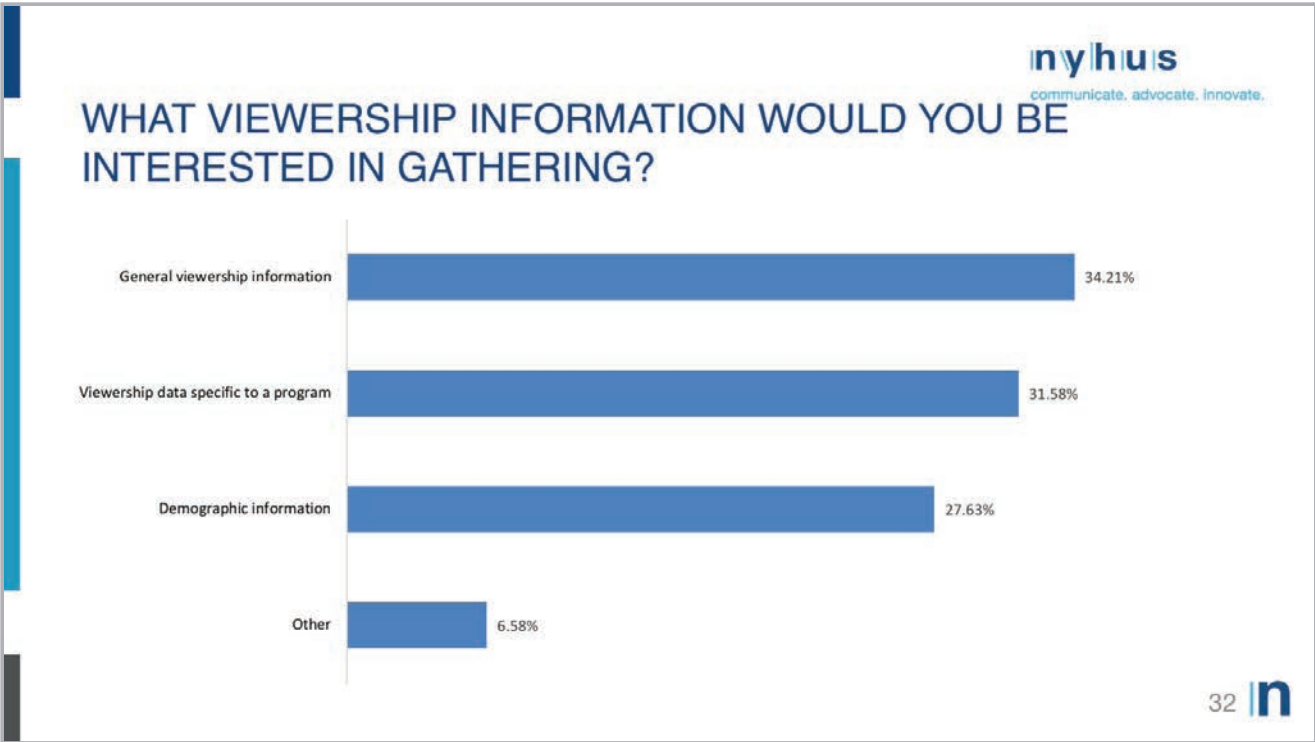| Category	Percentage
Changing socio-economics/Gentrification	15%
New Seattle	15%
Housing/affordability/transportation	15%
Technology/Amazon	13%
Rapid growth	11%
More diverse	7%
Too many options	4%
Social media	4%
Homelessness	4%
Loss of cultural identity	4%
Transient city	2%
Increased lack of ethnic diversity	2%
Economy	2%

28

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HOW CAN THE SEATTLE CHANNEL BETTER ADAPT TO CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS AND TRENDS IN MEDIA CONSUMPTION? (most common themes)

- Increase social media/online presence
- Create content for digital - not TV
- More content/increase output/shorter content
- Partnerships
- Funding - grow SC team

29 **In**

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ADDITIONAL COMMENTS (select submissions)

- "We may not be competing with the commercial news stations, but they're definitely competing with us."

- "More of a focus on marketing, engagement and outreach, not just content."

- "We don't seem to have a cohesive marketing strategy. 'it's not what you think' campaign was great but it's probably past useful life. need something like that again but perhaps bigger and deeper."

- "I wish the marketing/social media team had more help."

30 **In**

WHAT VIEWERSHIP INFORMATION WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN GATHERING?

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MISSION STATEMENT

When asked "On a scale of 1-10, 10 being the most successful, how would you rate the Channel's success in fulfilling this mission?," Seattle Channel employees averaged a submission of 8.

33 **In**

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ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR THOUGHTS ON HOW SEATTLE CHANNEL SHOULD MEASURE ITS SUCCESS?

- "Through social media engagement, Facebook live events, website hits."

- "Not by Emmy's"

- "Measurements should not be limited to a numerical approach, viewer, client, and partner feedback should be rated higher than audience numbers. The existence of the channel is an important right for residents."

34 **In**

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APPENDIX E

POTENTIAL SEATTLE CHANNEL PARTNERS FROM DISCOVERY PHASE

City Departments and Organizations
Seattle Center
Seattle Public Library
Seattle Public Schools

Higher Education
North Central Community College
Seattle Central Community College
University of Washington

Individuals
Matty Brown, *Commercial Director*
Enrique Cerna, *KCTS journalist*

Media Outlets
Globalist
KUOW
Seattle Emerald
Seattle Magazine
Seattle Met
Seattle Times
The Stranger

Sports Teams
Seattle Mariners
Seattle Seahawks
Seattle Sounders
Seattle Storm
Seattle Timberwolves

Other Businesses and Organizations
4Culture
Amazon/Amazon Video Services Team
American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)
Asian Counseling and Referral Service (ACRS)
Audubon Society
Citizen University
David Albright Media
Hopelink
League of Women Voters
Local arts councils
Municipal League
Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI)
NW Film Forum
Pew Charitable Trust
Pike Place Market
Public radio
Real Change
Seattle Art Museum (SAM)
Seattle Neighborhood Associations
Vera Project