



WJSU EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WJSU strives to preserve the legacy of jazz and blues, as well as enhance the image of the School of Journalism and Media Studies, and Jackson State University in its entirety. The station staff works toward this ambition by providing high quality, informative and innovative news and music programming, while preparing the next generation of broadcasters.

OPERATIONAL GOALS and OBJECTIVES for 2015-16

Goal#1

Make needed equipment upgrades. Since WJSU's move to the eCenter, the station has been in need of major system upgrades. The control room board, production room board and automation system were in dire need of replacement.

Objective 1: Research systems and equipment needed to replace outdated systems by looking at new technologies and industry standards. An approach of incorporating scalable systems ensures a cost effective upgrade path for future improvements.

Objective 2: Secure funding for upgrades. This process has taken several years in that previously promised funds ended up not being available or repurposed.

Objective 3: Implement an action plan and/or flow chart that designates the order in which equipment/systems/infrastructure improvements are deployed.

Goal#2

Broadcast live from a major musical event. As a means of increasing the public visibility of WJSU and Jackson State University and providing variety and value to listeners, a live broadcast from a major jazz festival is seen as a means of accomplishing all of these things at once.

Objective 1: Secure needed equipment to provide a quality broadcast that meets with WJSU technical standards.

Objective 2: Ensure that staff is adequately trained and has an action plan to make the broadcast a success.

Objective 3: Research an event that closely matches WJSU's mission and establish a relationship with the presenting organization.

Goal#3

Make infrastructure improvements. While WJSU has thrived with its relocation to the eCenter, the station staff has used creativity and ingenuity to get around challenges in infrastructure. Improvements, upgrades and additions are necessary to improve efficiency and productivity of the station's staff.

Objective 1: Designate which improvements are most needed and the order in which they should be accomplished.

Objective 2: Research the compatibility of upgrades with existing WJSU/eCenter infrastructure, as well as how these improvements fit with planned future expansion.

Objective 3: Secure funding for equipment, supplies and labor (where appropriate).

Goal#4

Provide compelling and diverse content in the area of news. Through its news department, WJSU will deliver captivating content to Mississippi and beyond that informs, inspires and entertains, while giving voice to disenfranchised Mississippians, as well as the diverse cultures, ethnicities and religions of the world.

Objective 1: Book influential, diverse and interesting guests, including government officials, community activists, entertainers and individuals who are not necessarily being featured in the news, but whom people should be hearing about.

Objective 2: Closely follow local, state and national news to keep up with developments so that WJSU engages in smart, relevant and pertinent discussions.

Goal#5

Produce joint programming content with established partners in the community and nationally. In this era of tight fiscal resources, it just makes sense to combine efforts with established organizations. This adds personnel and new ideas to the WJSU programming stable without adding a fiscal strain to the programming budget.

Objective 1: Choose a partner(s) who are engaging in important and interesting work in the community that is relevant to the WJSU audience.

Objective 2: Use the production and distribution resources of WJSU programming affiliate the African American Public Radio Consortium (AAPRC).

MEANS of ASSESSMENT

The means of assessment included, a two part question: 1.) Were goals met? And, 2.) Were these accomplishments received favorably by the audience served?

WJSU met all of its goals, as well as received favorable responses from audience members about programming and technical quality, which was a result of equipment purchases, through personal contacts at station events (Ex. Steel City Jazz Festival), phone calls, emails, and personal letters.

CRITERIA for SUCCESS

The criteria for success included ensuring each staff member was properly trained in their respective areas.

RESULTS

Goal#1

Make needed equipment upgrades.

In late 2015 and early 2016, WJSU installed a Tascam DM-4800 production board, a Wheatstone E1 broadcast console system and a WideOrbit automation system. All equipment is state-of-the-art and scalable to grow with the station's needs. These systems are in use daily, giving WJSU its best sound ever.

Goal#2

Broadcast live from a major musical event.

On June 3 and 4 of 2016 WJSU broadcasted live from the Steel City Jazz Festival in Birmingham, Alabama. This festival has grown to be one of the largest jazz festivals in the world. Live-to-air interviews were done with artists, promoters and concert goers using the sounds of smooth jazz artists performing live as a backdrop. Objective listeners were very complimentary of the sound quality.

Goal#3

Make infrastructure improvements.

In late 2015, the station's 10/100 megabit network was upgraded to a gigabit network in advance of the WideOrbit automation upgrade, increasing network upload speeds exponentially.

In the spring of 2016 an interview/recording booth was added to allow phone interviews to be recorded by the news director and music manager. This recording booth is also capable of audio/video production and available for student use and other media center personnel.

Additional ethernet connections were added in the control room to expand the capabilities of the network-ready Wheatstone console system.

With the help of Bellsouth technicians, work has been done to improve the reliability of ISDN lines, which the station has used to host guests such as Tom Joyner and his Morning Show staff, Jesse Jackson's Sunday talk show and talent from the Ricky Smiley Morning Show.

Goal#4

Provide compelling and diverse content in the area of news.

WJSU began presenting locally produced news content at the end of 2015. The initial focus has been on production of the magazine news show "The Full Spectrum." The goal has been to get the show up and running and to book diverse influential newsmakers, entertainers and ordinary citizens who are making a difference in the local community and the world at large.

The station featured guests as diverse as Mayor Tony Yarber, Congressman Bennie Thompson, Mississippi Republican Chairman, Joe Nosef and Republican National Committeeman, Henry Barbour and the head of the Mississippi Immigrants Rights Alliance. featured CNN host and comedian Kamau Bell and one of Prince's back-up singers. The discussions have been provocative.

Goal #5

Produce joint programming content with established partners in the community and nationally.

During this fiscal year, WJSU launched a segment within "The Full Spectrum" news magazine called "The Institute of Government Report." The Institute of Government at Jackson State University advances small to mid-size urban regions through problem solving and opportunities

for growth, development and community sustainability. Housed on JSU's main campus close to city, state and federal offices in the capital city, the Institute is JSU's public service center and was the perfect partnership to present relevant content to the listening audience.

With the institute's Executive Director, Dr. Otha Burton, at the helm of the roundtables, this popular segment took an in-depth look at some very important topics. They included education, income disparity, the attempted Jackson Municipal Airport takeover and racial justice. Jackson Public Schools Superintendent, Dr. Cedric Gray, has joined the panel, as has Dr. Robert Luckett, Director and Associate Professor, Margaret W. Alexander Research Center.

Additionally, WJSU partnered with the AAPR to distribute "Profiles in Women's History." The 15-part series was narrated, written and co-produced by WJSU General Manager, Gina Carter-Simmers, with editing support provided by communication students. The series aired on 10 stations across the country in March 2016.

USE of EVALUATION RESULTS TO IMPROVE SERVICES

The above equipment upgrades were the result of the WJSU general manager's formal request and written justifications for unspent Title III funds one year prior. WJSU does not foresee a similar opportunity, nor a designated station fund raiser in its immediate future. Because WJSU's survival is dependent on periodic technological upgrades, it will reintroduce twice yearly pledge drives to its audience and special events, enlisting the School of Journalism and Media Studies board members as pledge drive hosts and fund-raising ambassadors.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- With no full-time news director during a 6-month period of the fiscal year, WJSU won 8 Mississippi AP Awards.
- New programming was created through creative partnerships with the Institute of Government and the AAPRC.
- WJSU served as home to nationally syndicated "The Tom Joyner Morning Show" for one week of the FY (2 ½ weeks total).
- Communication students served as weekend and early morning announcers.
- Station staff helped students create on-air checks to use with their resumes.
- The news magazine "The Full Spectrum" was launched.
- Students helped with pre-production for "The Full Spectrum" and edited the nationally AAPRC distributed "Profiles in Women's History."
- The station's General Manager, Gina Carter-Simmers, was nominated for "Programmer of the Year" and WJSU was nominated as "Station of the Year" for 80+markets by JazzWeek in August 2015.
- WJSU continued to provide 15 hours weekly of jazz programming to MPB Music Radio through the station's locally produced program "Evening Jazz" hosted by Music Manager Meredith Hairston.
- WJSU continued to provide 10 hours weekly of jazz programming to SiriusXM Channel 142 through "Jazz Reflections" hosted by station volunteer and JSU webmaster Gerard Howard.
- Station staff members introduced national artists Marcus Anderson and BWB (Rick Braun, Kirk Whalum and Norman Brown) during its first appearance at the 2016 Steel City Jazz Festival.

- WJSU staff and volunteers interviewed some big names in the jazz world, including Latin vocalist, Eliane Elias; the father of Gospel-Jazz, Ben Tankard; multi-Emmy and Grammy nominated lyricist Lorraine Feather; and contemporary jazz sax man Kirk Whalum, who has the distinction of having one of the most famous solos for Whitney Houston's "I Will Always Love You."

OPERATIONAL GOALS and OBJECTIVES for 2016-2017

Goal #1

Secure funding to upgrade transmitter air conditioning unit to prevent heat-related off-air occurrences

Goal #2

Broadcast live from 3 major news events (the 2016 Democratic and Republican Conventions and the 2017 Steel City Jazz Festival) to increase our national reputation

Goal #3

Redesign station website

- Shift the focus of the website toward WJSU produced programming.
- Continue to feature nationally produced programming and news, but not as the primary focal point.

Goal #4

Leverage institutional talent and resources to create education based programming

Goal 5

Re-introduce twice yearly pledge drives to its audience and special events, enlisting the School of Journalism and Media Studies board members as pledge drive hosts and fund-raising ambassadors