PUBLIC MEDIA
JOURNALISM
DATA PROJECT

August 1, 2022
The **PUBLIC MEDIA JOURNALISM DATA PROJECT** is an initiative currently led by SRG, GBH, and PMC to identify, track, understand, and share public media's local commitment to journalism.

The project is in its early stages and is initially focused on identifying the public radio organizations (“News-Oriented”) that have a clear focus on **local news** that goes beyond the regional, national, and/or international news sources that a public radio station may utilize.

**Note:** All data and insights collected so far are early drafts and should not be shared or assumed to be a definitive account of public media local journalism.
PUBLIC MEDIA JOURNALISM DATA PROJECT

Current Outreach:
• Presentations/Sharing of Initial Findings with CPB, NPR, Super-Regional Radio Conference Participants, SRG, and other interested parties

Next Steps:
• Additional data analysis in cooperation with NPR will include Beats and Daily Local Stories Published plus local digital reach and engagement analytics
• Mapping of local digital newsrooms to overlay with public stations
• Update of prior year data
LOCAL PUBLIC MEDIA JOURNALISM DATA PROJECT

DESIRED OUTCOMES:

• Continually updated database that tracks public media’s expanding role in local journalism to make the case locally, regionally and nationally for continued investment and expansion
• Support to fill the new deserts ‘holes’ in the map to ensure that public stations have needed resources to be local news outlets
• Be a catalyst for ‘actionable intelligence’ that enables public media organizations to benchmark and identify opportunities for improvement in core engagement areas, including digital/social
• Inform collaborative commitments between newsrooms (geographical, vertical, topic)
• Support creative partnerships with other news organizations (Baltimore, Chicago)
PUBLIC MEDIA’S LOCAL JOURNALISTS

• The largest distributed nonprofit news network in America
• Locally-owned, operated and governed
PUBLIC MEDIA IS RESILIENT

• Sustainable business model
• Free service to 98% of the US

In the first year of the pandemic public radio organizations committed to covering local news saw a net loss of just two positions

• News-Oriented stations account for 88% of public radio’s full-time local journalists
• Part-time journalists at news-oriented stations increased by a net of 39 positions (+12%)
• Contract journalism personnel among the organizations declined by four positions (-3%)
• Several stations with the largest losses as of January 2021 have since been hiring to levels above their January 2020 numbers
The numbers so far ...

124 Organizations
Public radio orgs with at least 1 local journalist

2,228 Journalists
Employed by 124 orgs (2020)
95 awards. News: 73% of sked

990 News Signals
News only or news/music mix

48 States
& Puerto Rico
Circles represent local news orgs, size of circle corresponds to # of journalists
Signals owned or operated by the News Organizations

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Compiled by GBH, PMC and SRG
NEWS FM COVERAGE MAP LOWER 48 ONLY

Total Broadcast Coverage: 245 MILLION PEOPLE
(approx. 75% of U.S. population)

Coverage Map & Population EXCLUDE AM STATIONS

Broadcast coverage area of FM signals operated by the News Organizations
DO YOU LIVE IN A NEWS DESERT?

In the U.S. 200 counties do not have a local newspaper. Half of all counties - 1,540 - have only one newspaper, usually a weekly.

Source: UNC Hussman School of Journalism and Media
# OF NEWSPAPERS BY COUNTY

People in News Deserts served by News Focus station:

0 newspapers: 2.41M (59% of 4.07M)
1 newspaper: 38.67M (59% of 65.37M)
Areas of the country with no local public radio newsroom or status of newsroom unknown
Zip codes unserved by a local public radio newsroom or status of newsroom unknown
NEWS DESERTS UNKNOWN LOCAL NEWS COVERAGE

82M people (25% of U.S. population) unserved by local public radio newroom (or status of local newsroom unknown)

1.7M have no local newspaper. 26.7M have 1 local newspaper

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Zip codes unserved by a local public radio news or status of newsroom unknown by number of local newspapers

Compiled by GBH, PMC and SRG
## NEWS DESERTS UNSERVED BY LOCAL RADIO NEWS BY STATE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total # of People in News Deserts Unserved by Local Radio News</th>
<th>Unserved People as % of State Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Texas</td>
<td>8.9M</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. California</td>
<td>6.1M</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Florida</td>
<td>5.6M</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Pennsylvania</td>
<td>5.3M</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Ohio</td>
<td>4.4M</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Tennessee</td>
<td>3.5M</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Louisiana</td>
<td>3.4M</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Mississippi</td>
<td>2.9M</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Illinois</td>
<td>2.9M</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. North Carolina</td>
<td>2.7M</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Nevada</td>
<td>2.3M</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Missouri</td>
<td>2.3M</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. New York</td>
<td>2.2M</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Arkansas</td>
<td>2.2M</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Alabama</td>
<td>1.9M</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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QUESTIONS FOR YOU

• Is this information/insight useful for you?

• What would make it more useful? What should we focus on next? Website?

• What ‘actionable intelligence’ do you need to strengthen your newsroom?

• What are the next steps for achieving that?
APPENDIX – DATA COLLECTED

- Station
- Cume
  - Average Weekly Cume News Audience
- Coverage Area Population (market size)
- Market Rank
- Market (City/State)
- % News Programming 6am-12am
- Total Journalist Staff
  - # FTE Journalists in Newsroom
  - # FTE Journalists TV
- Journalism Collaborations: regional, NPR, investigative, etc.
- Radio Genre
- Rank by Cumulative Audience
- University Affiliation
- Active Donor Count
- Annual Membership Revenue
- TV/Joint/Radio
- APM/PRX Affiliate
- Website Reach ME/ATC story contributions
- % of News 6am to Midnight
- Number of Local Programs
- Local Programming
  - Call-In Programs, interview, local news/magazine, podcast(s) public affairs, talk
- Syndicated News Programming
- Offers Newsletter
- Carries: All Things Considered, Marketplace, Morning Edition, 1A, Fresh Air, Here and Now, The World
- NPR Member/PBS Member
- Statewide Network
- Recognition/Awards: Murrow, Columbia, Peabody
- NewsHub
- Station Collaborative Memberships
- Statewide Network