



**WIKIMEDIA
NEW YORK CITY**

Strategic Plan - Rough Draft

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Contents

Strengths and Weaknesses 3

What is the Chapters Purpose? 3

How to expand Outreach 3

Image, Both Online and Offline..... 4

Annexation of Other Areas 5

Membership 5

Fundraising 5

Budget..... 6

How we should move forward 6

 Finance Committee 6

 Outreach Committee 6

Timeline 7

Conclusion 7

Acknowledgements..... 7

This paper is a rough draft of how the Wikimedia NYC chapter can strengthen itself by making improvements to the core. The NYC chapter has great potential, but currently suffers from a lack of a strong core behind it. By changing some of the fundamental ways the chapter works it can become one of the most important cultural organizations in New York City and contribute substantially to the growth of the sum of all human knowledge. While reading this paper it is important to note that this is not a hard plan on how to proceed, but rather a conversation starter on how the Wikimedia NYC chapter will move forward in the future.

Strengths and Weaknesses

New York City has the largest economy of any city in the United States,¹ making it a prime area to interact with corporations for collaboration and donations. By being able to connect with these organizations the chapter will be able to remain self-sufficient from the Wikimedia Foundation as it will have its own cash flow. In addition to being a key economic city it is also a key cultural center and is home to various museums, libraries, and colleges.

The New York City chapter suffers from a central core of multiple people to facilitate day-to-day operations at a large scale. On average, 16 people attend a meetup; of those people about 7 actively serve on the board. For the chapter to grow an increased number of paid and non-paid staff will be essential. One of the most critical issues with the chapter is that it has no set task or goal to accomplish, thus leading to a lack of direction. A central focus on how to proceed is required.

What is the Chapters Purpose?

An idea of why the chapter is important and what its main goal is an important to moving forward. Country chapters are for the purpose of being able to represent the Foundation in countries besides the United States, but with the main headquarters of the WMF being in San Francisco, what is the purpose of the NYC chapter? At the moment it appears the goal is to work on collaborations with other cultural institutions to expand the various projects maintained by the WMF, but this scope is too narrow. By broadening the scope of the chapter it will allow the full potential to be used for the common good of the community of NY, and the projects we represent.

How to expand Outreach

As one of the main purposes of the chapter has been on the past, it is necessary to expand on the outreach currently being conducted. Historically, outreach has been conducted in art institutions and libraries for the most part, but only encourages current editors to do more editing, not help us gain more editors and members. By extending outreach to schools, both public and private, this

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy_of_New_York_City

can help recruit students to help further the goals of the chapter. The idea of targeting various professionals in workplaces is an idea that has not been commonly attempted. By targeting professionals to help with the projects we will be able to gain high quality Wikipedians.

In the past the idea of a fair, sponsored by Wikimedia NYC, has been said. This idea seems viable and further research should be performed to see if such an event is feasible and a good idea for the chapter to undertake. A brainstorming session should be considered to help develop other ideas for outreach in the NYC community.

A similar idea to a fair would be a “Summer of Wiki” in which several events will be planned through and aimed towards students and educators who are interested in learning the advantages Wikipedia offers them and how to get involved. It also would be a fun event in order to retain current membership of the chapter.

Image, Both Online and Offline

In order to become a bigger part of the NYC community and have a greater impact with regards to free culture, a more important focus will need to be put onto public image. By having a better public image, more outreach events will be possible throughout the region served and important relationships between us and other organizations will be able to be conducted.

In this modern day, more people find information about events through the internet, and it accounts for 22% of time online.² By being able to advertise the events we are organizing and target potential attendees that the chapter can increase its membership. By having biweekly tweets and information regarding what the chapter does, it can become part of the social media sphere of the city.

Awareness of what the New York City chapter does and how it serves the community is also important. By sharing the basic ideals of the chapter at events an increased recognition of the chapter is established with the attendees and community. This can be accomplished by investing in advertising materials such as banners, posters, and flyers. Information about who attends, such as name and email, should be collected at events and if the person approves, they should be added to the official chapter newsletter. An official, independent Wikimedia NYC website should also be considered, similar to Wikimedia DC’s³ or Wikimedia UK’s.⁴

² <http://blog.nielsen.com/nielsenwire/global/social-media-accounts-for-22-percent-of-time-online/>

³ <http://wikimediacdc.org/wiki/Home>

⁴ http://uk.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_Page

Annexation of Other Areas

At the moment the New York City chapter is in charge of a large geographic area that comprises of over 30 million people. In order to be more effective in management, it will be important to “annex” other areas besides the New York Metropolitan areas, which in itself is a large geographic area and home to over 20 million people.

Wikimedia participants in Philadelphia and Boston should be encouraged to break away from the NYC chapter and form their own. This will allow for more direct management of those areas, prevent neglect, and allow us to have a more central focus. Despite the fact that this will be an official separation, it is important to remember that this will not mean the NYC chapter will not provide assistance to any of the annexed areas if it is requested.

Membership

A key issue encountered is the lack of volunteers available to manage and maintain the projects that could be explored and executed. Since the chapter only has around 20 members who are not going to receive any monetary compensation for their work, it is a frivolous belief that a healthy all the tasks at hand can be done. What is needed is some sort of membership campaign in the New York tri-state area to collect an addition thirty members who are interested in helping the chapter peruse its goals.

Another option to consider is hiring a core group of professionals to help the chapter full time and part-time. This staff would comprise of an event manager, development manager, and a president. This would be beneficial to the chapter as running an organization to its full potential is a large task that cannot solely be completed by a corps of volunteers. Assuming that some financial goal is set for the future of this project it is feasible that this staff can be hired by December 2012.

Fundraising

Typically, one of the most forgotten parts of a chapter is the need for funding; to do that there must be some form of relationship between us and other organizations. To facilitate this we will require someone who is experienced in business and has the skills we will require to form these bonds and acquire corporate donations. Public fundraising should also be conducted, such as simply having a donation box on site at outreach events.

Another factor to consider is how much money we plan to raise and an idea of how it will be spent, to get a better picture of what will be required. It is possible that the chapter will be able to raise \$20,000 by March 31, 2011 if changes are made and more dedication is put into this area.

This money would go to an office space, and other outreach projects. An official Wikimedia NYC office is required to allow for better collaboration between volunteers and to allow for a physical space in which to hold meetings with other institutions.

Before discussing how to preform fundraising with institutions with regards to fundraising, what the chapter is willing to give in exchange for donations is key. Some ideas for this are having the company's logo posted on various marketing materials such as banners and posters at events or allowing them to give us promotional materials to be offered to attendees.

An administration committee needs to be formed with one of its purposes to search for sponsors that would be willing to donate money to help us further our goals. The companies should then be contacted and ideally long term relationships between the chapter and institution will be formed.

Budget

While ideally a valuable amount of money will come from a variety of sources, it is very important to manage it wisely and keep reserved. The treasurer should form some sort of committee that will determine how the money that will be raised will be spent and how much will be kept in reserves. In general it is important to put the needs of the community first so most of the money should go to purchasing additional materials for furthering education, buying a dedicated workspace for volunteers to collaborate in, and most importantly, providing venues for the purpose of conducting outreach programs.

How we should move forward

Before moving forward and officially creating strategic plan two committees need to be formed for finance and outreach. The committees would meet monthly for three months and discuss how to advance their areas and come up with their own plan. Progress on the status of all of the committees will take place at the central meetup monthly. The scopes of the committees are listed below.

Finance Committee

The finance committee will be in charge of creating a budget, control grants, and publish monthly reports to the main webpage.

Outreach Committee

The main tasks of the outreach committee will be to manage and plan events in the tri-state area and maintain membership.

Timeline

January 15th - Form committees

February 26th - Finalize budget and Finalize plans for outreach until 6/30

March 31st - \$20,000's raised

April 15th - Purchase an official office and organize an official sponsorship (soft deadline)

May 12th – Convene and discuss final ideas of the committees

June 17th – Finalize plans for outreach until 12/31

June 31st – Publish the strategic plan

Conclusion

By working together, the Wikimedia New York City community can work in a cohesive manor that will allow for the ability to draft, and implement an official strategic plan that will answer the key issues raised in this paper. If a strategic plan is implemented it would greatly contribute to the expansion and healthy development of the Wikimedia New York City chapter.

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