

Oregon Public Affairs Network

Road map to Oregon's future: Invigorating civic participation



“Democracy
functions best
when it is open,
transparent, and
accessible to all.”

—Phil Keisling
Former Oregon Secretary of State

A C-SPAN for Oregon

Mission: OPAN’s mission is to invigorate our tradition of civic participation by connecting Oregonians with their state government and to one another. We use television and Internet technology to improve communication and understanding between public officials and citizens, to encourage participation in government, and educate Oregonians about the political process.

“A popular government without popular information, or a means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a farce or tragedy, or perhaps both.”

— James Madison

Untapped technology, disengaged citizens

Oregon’s political coverage “problems” are OPAN’s opportunities

- Most Oregonians get their information about state government from commercial media.
- Ratings competition and time restraints mean commercial political coverage is often “light,” focuses on the I-5 corridor and emphasizes entertainment value, not political significance or depth.
- This political coverage flows in one direction: From the network to the viewers.
- Hours of compelling noncommercial political content are generated, but remain virtually unused and unseen.
- The technology to bring Oregonians this content exists and is in place.
- This content and the capacity to broadcast it represent a vast, untapped educational resource.

Program Examples

- Debates: Supreme Court and Court of Appeals
- Judicial branch: oral arguments
- Programs about ballot measures
- Executive branch: board and commission hearings
- Oregon legislature: floor session and committee proceedings
- Programs that teach Oregonians how state government works and how to get involved
- Speeches, conferences and conventions organized by educational, political and civic organizations

What does OPAN mean for Oregonians?

What can we see on OPAN? All three branches of state government in action, civic events, speeches, debates, lectures, classes, conferences, court proceedings, hearings and more.

How will we watch it? On cable, over the Internet and in classrooms.

Where will it come from? All over the state (not just the I-5 corridor).

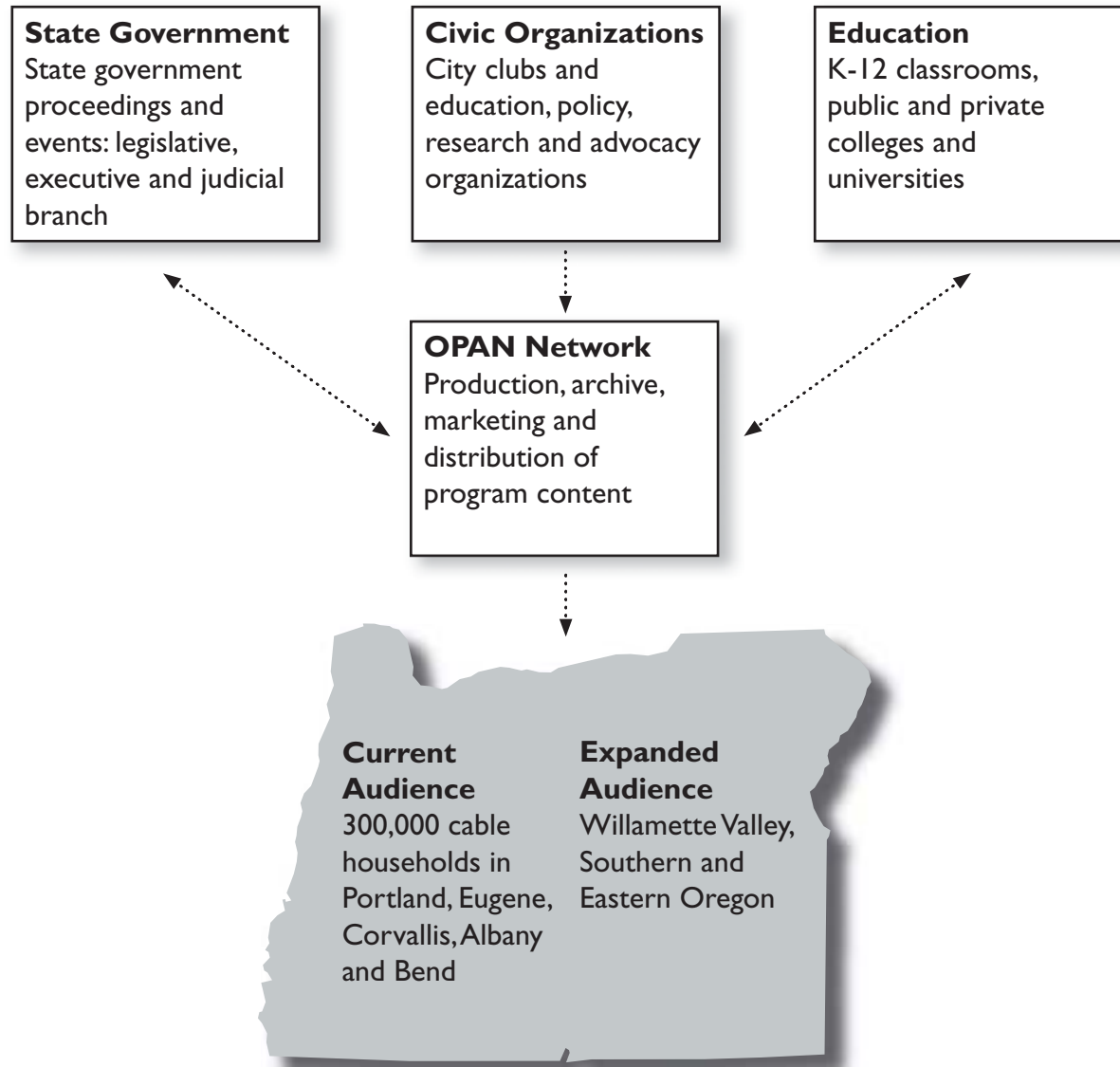
What will OPAN's web site provide? Civics education curricula, chat rooms, bulletin boards and online "town hall" meetings that use technology to create discussions and open lines of communication between citizens and leaders.

Who gets OPAN now? Current Audience: 300,000 cable households in Portland, Eugene, Corvallis, Albany, Lebanon, Bend and other Willamette Valley towns. Expansion coming soon.

How does it work?

How is the signal carried across Oregon?

Our partners form a vast web of cable and wireless connections that carry video and audio signals from all over the state to your television or computer screen. OPAN operates the hub of this vast infrastructure, cataloguing tapes, scheduling programs, coordinating broadcasts, building audiences, and expanding services to all Oregonians.



Win-Win Partnerships

OSU: OPAN benefits from having a studio and trained staff. The OSU Communication Media Center and OSU students benefit from opportunities to produce programs and operate a television network in a “hands-on” environment.

LAMS, Oregon Legislature: OPAN benefits from the Capitol programming provided by LAMS, the media arm of the Oregon Legislature. LAMS and the Legislature benefit by receiving direct unfiltered access to Oregon homes via OPAN.

Oregon WIN: OPAN benefits from having a carriage network through which to distribute programs. Oregon WIN, the Oregon Wireless Instruction Network, benefits because OPAN promotes expansion of the network, which is used primarily by public colleges and universities for distance learning.

PEG's: OPAN needs to reach Oregonians' homes. PEG's (public, educational and government cable channels) often have capacity they can share.

Synergy of partnerships: 1+1=3!

Combining symbiotic partnerships with excess capacity to efficiently create something new and innovative.

- Political programs are already being produced, but they reach few Oregonians.
- The technical infrastructure (“pipeline” to carry video signals) is already in place in many areas of Oregon, with excess capacity available to OPAN.
- Our public and private partners benefit just as much from the working relationships as we do.
- Economies of scale, win-win partnerships and tapping existing resources all add up to efficiency.

“When my students see state government in action, instead of just reading about it in textbooks, it brings Democracy alive, engaging them intellectually and emotionally.”

— Diane Thelan-Sager
public school teacher

Civics education

- A volunteer board of educators is creating curricula to dovetail with OPAN programming, helping K-12 teachers use this free resource to enhance civics lessons.
- Partnerships with colleges, universities will provide students with hands-on training.
- Our network will bring lectures and classes to cable viewers and K-12 classrooms.
- Our online archive will provide research services for schools, colleges and universities.
- OPAN conferences, workshops and other events will serve students and educators.

Scenarios: civics education

- A tenth grade civics class is interested in new high school graduation requirements. The teacher searches the OPAN web site and learns a bill about CIM/CAM is being introduced. She also downloads class handouts and curricula about how the state legislature works and schedules an OPAN broadcast for her classroom. Seeing the legislature in action inspires students to write their legislators and learn more about how their government works.
- Wildlife scientists working in the Hart Mountain Antelope Refuge take video footage of antelope population research. The tape is edited by OSU students and broadcast to university and community college classrooms across Oregon. Several months later, the archived program is downloaded by a citizens' group working on wildlife issues.
- Sixth graders across Oregon watch a live broadcast of a controversial Oregon Supreme Court case, following the program with a lively class discussion.

Not just a web site

opan.org: An online community for civics education, participation and two-way communication

- Schedules of political events are updated weekly.
- Online seminars teach Oregonians how government works.
- Searchable database of links and contact information for elected officials, government agencies and organizations provide a political portal for Oregonians.
- Bulletin boards, chat rooms and “town hall” meetings connect Oregonians with their elected officials, through prescheduled live events and archived text discussions.
- Online database of OPAN programs allow users to search for content and download or purchase content.
- Live programs broadcast special events (sound and/or video) over the Internet.
- opan.org is the gathering place for citizens statewide who care about and are engaged in public affairs. OPAN will connect citizens to one another and to elected officials—and reconnect them with what it means to be an Oregonian.

Where are we now?

- Created an initial network of nearly 500,000 cable households statewide, with approximately 300,000 to carry OPAN weekday broadcasts during the 2003 session in the Willamette Valley and Central Oregon.
- Received gift support from more than 30 donors in 2002.
- Secured two matching grants with total value of \$46,000 from Rose E. Tucker Charitable Trust and The Renaissance Foundation, both of Portland.
- Phase one of new web site completed (redesign scheduled for late spring 2003).
- Conducted public relations campaign to introduce Oregonians to OPAN (official launch date: February 19, 2003).

Financial highlights

Fiscal Strategies

- Initial expenditures will focus on transmission, marketing and promotion.
- Substantial gift support will sustain OPAN for first three years.
- Costs will remain very low: 10-25% of programs in other states.
- By the end of year three, substantial revenue will come from fees, not gifts.

Income	2002	2003	2004
Donations	20,000	75,000	105,000
Service fees	0	0	50,000
Special events	0	40,000	50,000
Foundations	20,000	60,000	100,000
Transmission (in-kind)	21,000	150,000	150,000
Total	61,000	325,000	455,000
Expenses			
Staff	37,000	70,000	80,000
Overhead	4,500	10,000	15,000
Civic education	0	10,000	10,000
Marketing/pr	5,000	13,000	20,000
Fund-raising	5,000	15,000	20,000
Business planning	0	5,000	10,000
Operations	10,000	45,600	150,000
Transmission (in-kind)	21,000	150,000	150,000
Total	82,500	313,600	450,000

“OPAN is a model of the pioneering Oregon spirit at work, of people and institutions across Oregon working together on a shoestring budget to create this critical tool for our democracy.”

— Jeb Bladine

Publisher, McMinnville News Register

Toward sustainability: income opportunities

- Currently, OPAN is sustained by members and foundations.
- Our plan is to reduce reliance on gifts over the next three years.
- Once the infrastructure is functioning and we are well-known, we will generate more income from sponsors.
- OPAN will continue to provide free services to schools and communities.
- Potential income sources that OPAN is investigating in 2003-4:
 - Sponsors will underwrite events and programming.
 - Producers (including those not involved in public affairs) will rent excess distribution capacity.
 - Institutions and businesses (for example, trade associations or law firms) will pay to access our digital archive.
 - Individuals and businesses will subscribe to receive notice of hearings and other events of special interest. Oregonians will buy tapes, DVD's and downloads of programs, as well as detailed minutes of meetings.

Board and governance

Co-Chairs

Honorable Mark O. Hatfield former
Oregon Governor and U.S.
Senator

Honorable Barbara Roberts, former
Oregon Governor

Board of Directors

Phil Keisling, President

Jeb Bladine, Vice-President and
Treasurer

Rob Brading, Secretary

John DiLorenzo

Kim Duncan

Dave Henderson

Scott Shorr

Kathie Wiper

Tim White

Executive Director

Vision Farm, Rick Hanson

Key program partners

WIN, John Greydanus

Oregon Legislative Media, Bill Gross

OSU, Curt Pederson

MCTV, Rob Brading

PCATV, Carl Kucharski

Metro TV, Robert Lewis

Bend Cable, Matt Hand

Board of Advisers

Steve Jolin, CEO MuniCom

Bill Gallagher, News Director KPAM
radio

Richard Meeker, Publisher Willamette
Week

Barnes Ellis, Jr, investment executive
Gussie McRobert, former mayor and
member of the LCDC

Jeannette Hamby, former state senator

Steve Clark, Publisher Community
Newspapers

Anita Johnson, Publisher Eugene
Weekly

Curt Pederson, Oregon State
University CIO

Tom Wiper, TLW Development

Mick Schafbuch, retired General
Manager KOIN

Mike Greenfield, deputy Superintendent
of Public Instruction

Pete Belcastro, Rogue Community TV

Maynard Orme, President and CEO
OPB

OPAN is a 501(c)3 nonprofit
corporation governed by a board of
directors. The corporation receives
counsel and support from a board of
advisers and key program partners.

How you can become a part of OPAN

- Join OPAN by making a tax-deductible donation (OPAN is a 501(c)3 nonprofit).
- Become an OPAN subscriber.
- Endorse OPAN.
- Introduce OPAN to others who might be able to help.
- Help us to secure programs.
- Help us to secure additional distribution and channel capacity.