The Philadelphia Story
A model for the future of local news?
My journey: From ink ...

... to ivy, and insight.
The state of the States: Local news in peril
Print dollars, digital dimes
US Newspaper Advertising Revenue: Adjusted for Inflation, 1950 to 2015

Billions of 2015 Dollars

Newspaper Ad Revenue Has Fallen by 70% since 2000

Sources: Newspaper Association of America, Pew Research
U.S. Newspapers Under Siege

Map of the United States with highlighted newspapers:
- Seattle Post-Intelligencer
- The Oregonian
- Oakland Tribune
- Los Angeles Times
- ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER
- Tucson Citizen
- THE DENVER POST
- Rocky Mountain News
- PIONEER PRESS
- ANN ARBOR NEWS
- PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE-REVIEW
- The Honolulu Advertiser
- San Antonio Express-News
- The Times-Picayune
- THE TAMPA TRIBUNE
But does it matter? Should we care about local news?
The gate to civic engagement

Local newspaper readership has a strong and direct correlation to:

- Feelings attached to community
- Voting in local elections
- Participation in community and political groups

Source: Pew Research Center, 2016
In 24 of the top 25 U.S. markets, the highest-trafficked local site is ...

... the local daily newspaper!
Average monthly unique visitors for Top 50 U.S. newspapers
As advertising plummets, circulation revenue slowly grows
The road forward in Philly
A new model for local news
A unique ownership structure

Lenfest Institute for Journalism
Charitable nonprofit, owns 99% of PMN. Separate Board of Managers. Broad mission.

Philadelphia Media Network
Private “B” corporation. Owns 1% of stock, but all voting stock. Separate Board of Directors.

Philadelphia Inquirer

Philadelphia Daily News

Philly.com
A DEDICATED FOCUS ON METRO NEWS MARKETS
A LIVE LAB OF OWNED NEWS PROPERTIES
INNOVATION THAT ADDRESSES A NATIONAL NEED
What Gerry Lenfest did:

- Protected PMN from his own mortality and preventing capital accumulation
- Gave PMN a financial wisdom, with minimal profit imperative
- $20 million, created a research-and-development arm for PMN and foresaw the future of local news
THE MISSION

- To advance public-service journalism through local news in the digital age, using the properties of the Philadelphia Media Network as a primary laboratory
- To use Philadelphia as a demonstration program for other metropolitan areas
THE GOALS

- Superior technological acumen
- Best-of-breed academic resources
- Business savviness
- Full workshop approach
- Committed to great journalism
THE STRATEGY

➢ Εμπιστοσύνη σε κινητά
➢ Φοκιασι σε Συνδρομή πριν
➢ Παρτερσίπισι σχαϊσο εφοβολεμ
➢ Ρωσινγ μονεψ, γιωιγ γραντο
➢ Συπεριορ τεχνολογικάλ αχυμεν
➢ Προμοτιον οφ νεω τεκη τοολο
➢ Νεω απροαχης το ενγαγεμεν
Donors: Making journalism a public trust

- Gerry Lenfest: $20 million initial donation plus $40 million potential match
- 50+ individual donors
- Gifts range from $20 to $15 million
- Individuals, foundations and corporations
‘Venture Philanthropy’

“We encourage bold risk-taking on projects with the potential for major payoffs, recognizing some attempts at transformation will deliver important new insights… even if they miss the mark… will provide an array of support services to help advance promising ideas in the business of local journalism.”
Three Pillars of Local News Sustainability

- News technology, products and business methods
- Diverse, growing audiences
- High-impact journalism
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https://www.lenfestinstitute.org/solutionset/
A collaboration of 17 news organizations and two universities, focused on solutions journalism
The results so far...
## Strategic building blocks

| Substantial consumer revenue from digital subscriptions, membership, crowd-funding, and/or events. | Digital ad revenue from native ads, programmatic, sponsorships, etc. |
| A diverse set of highly engaged community members | Iterative product development that results in great user experience | Iterative marketing processes that speak to customer needs |

**Focus on Metrics**

- Digital Newsroom and Content Organization
- Highly effective at user engagement and repeat use
New structure for PMN newsroom

Break out print production to enable reporters + line editors to focus on audience, not platform.

Beat structure evolves to bring work into alignment with audience needs.

Multiplatform editors work across all channels.
Redesign of mobile products

Just right on every device

An optimized experience from the smallest smartphone to the widest widescreen.
Recruitment of great, diverse talent
Great start to digital subscription sales

*PMN paid digital subs 300% higher than projected in Q1*
High-impact journalism

Philly’s shame: City ignores thousands of poisoned kids

By Barbara Laker, Wendy Ruderman, and Dylan Purcell / Staff Writers
Photos and video by Jessica Griffin / Staff Photographer
Broke in Philly? Nearly half of us are; a new series will offer solutions | Opinion

Updated: APRIL 19, 2018 — 5:15 AM EDT
AT LAST!

EAGLES FINALLY WIN THE SUPER BOWL

THE TRICK PLAY: E2
It was a touchdown pass to... Nick Foles?

THE CRAZY ENDING: E4
Nothing could have prepared us for this.

THE MVP: E3
Nick Foles goes from backup QB to hero.

THE REACTION: E2-23
Relief, euphoria for nervous Philly fans, Exhausted players.