Jazz.NEXT

USING TECHNOLOGY TO BUILD A HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE JAZZ ENVIRONMENT

MID ATLANTIC ARTS FOUNDATION

One thing I do know is that there is a world-wide audience for jazz. I get emails from people all over the world saying, "Man, great show last night" or "Wow, so exciting, wish I could have been there." It's going to involve new paradigms for reaching a larger community, and maybe the internet is the key to that. – NEW YORK CLUB MANAGER

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Jazz has long played a prominent role in Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation's programming. The Foundation's commitment to the music is both a reflection of the extraordinarily diverse and rich jazz communities that exist in the mid-Atlantic region and the recognition of jazz as one of America's great indigenous art forms. Today, the Foundation honors lifetime achievement through its Living Legacy Jazz Award; promotes the presentation of jazz through its Jazz Touring Network and regional touring programs; helps to sustain the careers of American jazz artists by supporting their engagements around the world through the USArtists International program; and adds to the dynamism of the form through the creation of new work and interchange of ideas fostered by the French-American Jazz Exchange.

While experiencing a period of artistic resurgence brought about by new influences and unparalleled musicianship, jazz is struggling in a time of transformative change. Like other performing arts disciplines, jazz is suffering from an aging and declining audience, as well as diminishing coverage in traditional media outlets. As their commercial jazz club circuit shrinks in response to dwindling attendance, jazz artists have struggled in economically difficult times to transition to nonprofit performance spaces that are attempting to build audiences largely unfamiliar with the music. As daunting as these challenges may be, it is the recent impact of technology on music consumption and distribution that has had the most destabilizing effect on the jazz community. Jazz artists have been reliant primarily on the traditional commercial sector, particularly record companies and shops, for the creation, promotion and sale of their work, the very sector that has been most negatively affected by the digital revolution.

Although the digital revolution has been a major contributing factor towards the demise of its traditional support structure, technology also holds great potential to reinvigorate the jazz community. With that in mind, Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation found a willing and enthusiastic partner in the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation to support an investigation into how the use of technology might build a more healthy and sustainable environment for jazz. The research and development laboratory known as Jazz.NEXT was born. The lessons learned and questions raised through that exploration are highlighted in this publication, which was so ably prepared by Catherine Maciariello of HieroResources. I hope you find this report and its findings illuminating and helpful towards your own deliberations about the crucial role of technology in fostering a robust arts sector.

ALAN COOPER, Executive Director

The jazz field has never benefited from the kind of cohesive infrastructure found in classical music, theater, or even dance, and today the system is more fragile than ever. Many say the art form itself has never been more diverse or vibrant, but changes in the recording industry due to the decentralizing influences of the Internet on music distribution and promotion, the decline of both jazz journalism and jazz on the radio, the demise in the commercial club circuit and an uneasy transition to nonprofit performing arts centers, and an aging and shrinking audience continue to push jazz to the margins.

In examining the environment for jazz, Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation (MAAF) and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF) saw an opportunity to help the field maneuver through a period of disruptive change. Believing that technology was a key lever in enabling artists and organizations to reach the public in more powerful ways, they designed Jazz.NEXT as a research and development laboratory for testing substantive and innovative projects that would broaden and deepen relationships with new and existing audiences, promote enhanced communication with the public, market and distribute the work of jazz artists more effectively, and build links that would create a more informed and cohesive jazz community.

With funding from DDCF, MAAF made two rounds of grants through Jazz.NEXT, awarding a total of almost $900,000 to nine organizations and one individual artist. Jazz.NEXT purposely cast a wide net, seeking to support a broad range of jazz stakeholders from across the United States and experiments that would produce important learning for the field. Grantees included: Berklee College of Music, Dave Douglas, Jazz Journalists Association, Manchester Craftsmen's Guild, Monterey Jazz Festival, National Federation of Community Broadcasters, National Public Radio, Savannah Music Festival, Symphony Space, and Walker Art Center. Projects addressed content for new, social, and traditional media; jazz education; journalism; marketing and promotion; and new application platform development, but at the heart of all the projects was a desire to connect with audiences, build communities of jazz enthusiasts, and expand the knowledge of jazz.

*Using Technology to Build a Healthy, Sustainable Jazz Environment o*ffers brief studies of six grantees representative of the program: Berklee College of Music, Jazz Journalists Association, National Federation of Community Broadcasters, National Public Radio, Savannah Music Festival, and jazz musician Dave Douglas. The report examines the issue each grantee sought to address, the project designed in response, surprises encountered during project design and implementation, and outcomes and learning from the process.

The projects profiled in the case studies covered a wide range of activity:

> **Berklee College of Music (Boston, MA)** developed an open-source interactive website for its annual High School Jazz Festival, featuring year-round access to student/faculty rehearsal clinics, performance and instructional webcasts, artist/instructor profiles, and streaming of Festival content and other material.

> **Dave Douglas (Croton on Hudson, NY)** developed four platforms, including applications for mobile devices, the revamping of Greenleafmusic.com to allow for more intuitive information management, integration of social media sites to facilitate communication between artists and fans, and the creation of an open-source database for other artists using these technologies.

> **Jazz Journalists Association (New York, NY)** created *eyeJAZZ*, an online training program for emerging and established journalists in the use of new equipment and techniques for effective video journalism.

> **The National Federation of Community Broadcasters (Oakland, CA)** designed *Jazz InfoVault*, a national metadata library for jazz stations, including consolidating existing noncommercial efforts, standardizing collection practices, and developing a prototype database for testing on up to two jazz stations.

> **National Public Radio (Washington, DC)** launched *npr.org/jazz*, a new website dedicated solely to jazz that would build on the organization's jazz blog (*A Blog Supreme*), its highly influential website (*npr.org/music*), and its on-air jazz programming.

> **The Savannah Music Festival (Savannah, GA)** expanded the reach of its music education program, *Swing Central High School Jazz Band Competition and Workshop*, to a broader national audience through the development of a *Swing Central* interactive website with online video lessons, student/faculty performance webcasts and profiles, streaming of Festival performances, links to artists' websites, and other content.

While the projects themselves were notably different, the experiences of the grantees produced similar learning about what it takes to create and sustain technology initiatives – regardless of their scale. With few exceptions, for example, organizations had difficulty completing their projects within the timeline the grant required. There were a number of reasons for this. Sometimes the issue and, therefore, the program design turned out to be different than the organization originally believed. In other

cases, delays occurred because of internal obstacles, financial challenges, rights issues, the need to learn more about how complex technologies work, rapid advances in technology that required organizations to rethink their approach, or even shifts in assumptions about the project itself. While content development was not really an issue for any organization, the time required to assemble, edit and post content certainly was. The time it took to develop mobile applications also was a common frustration among grantees.

For organizations not deeply immersed in technology – and generally without the staff resources they needed to take on projects in-house – the mere complexity of the projects meant time lost in a "learn-as-you-go approach." The real issue here is capacity, and the need for high-level resources around design and management is clear. So is the need for money. Using technology effectively is expensive over time. It requires a significant and ongoing investment in software and storage, as well as continuing content development and management, and marketing. Organizations need trained, savvy technology staff and/or the resources to work with third-party service providers.

The most successful grantees in the Jazz.NEXT cohort (like any program) were those who had a clear vision, intent and focus; a well-articulated strategy; knowledge of what it would take to be successful; the requisite resources to dedicate to the project; and a realistic understanding of their own institutional capacity. For some that fell short in one of more of these areas, they compensated with an intense and tireless determination to learn, an ability to amass resources and build ownership within the organization, and a nimbleness and flexibility that enabled them to adapt to the unexpected. In short, "their reach did not exceed their grasp."

As a general rule, solidifying institutional support for participation in a major endeavor like Jazz.NEXT was critical to a project's success, providing the best possible chance for long-term viability and impact. Going forward, smaller organizations may have trouble keeping up with the demands of content development and evolving technology, but at the same time, they may also benefit from the fact that their projects are closely entwined with the organization's core activities, making it easier for them to get the resources they need. Some projects live as discrete initiatives within larger institutions, and project managers may have difficulty embedding them unless they are already clearly and organically linked to existing initiatives, rely on internal resources, or create capacity for other parts of the organization.

The experiences of the Jazz.NEXT cohort raise some interesting questions about the implications of the work for the field and for those who wish to support it.

> There is a distinction between skill development and traditional capacity-building around technology (which the field clearly needs) and building the kind of adaptive capacity that will enable organizations to evolve in robust ways, particularly in their ability to embrace continued technological advancement. Using technology effectively – being aware of emerging trends and seeing how they might serve the organization – will require organizations to structure themselves differently, reset priorities, and change behavioral practices that impede rapid and timely decision-making.

> Jazz.NEXT helped grantees make a big leap toward understanding and embracing technology as a core strategy, not just as simple add-ons to the tools they were already using for marketing and communication. Yet many organizations are still "catching up," and the cost of technology remains an obstacle. Given the expense of technology applications, funders and others interested in helping organizations build their capacity around technology must be realistic about their expectations and match their investments to the strategic outcomes they hope to produce.

> In this context, right-sizing is everything. The potential for large-scale innovation may exist in the field, but it is not likely to happen or continue without significant investments in organizations that have the capacity to develop, manage and sustain projects over the long term. Some projects – especially those that aim to manage a wide range of ever-changing, robust and "digestible" content for consumers, or those that aggregate metadata – are just, by their nature, big. The danger is that these undertakings, however valuable, will be under-resourced, causing them to fall short of expectations and to wither away as the world continues to change. For the entire jazz field to play a role in building capacity through technology (and this would be a good thing), smaller creative experiments and the replication of best practices like those evidenced in many of the Jazz.NEXT projects are just as important as large-scale investment.

> The jazz field has been and continues to be under-resourced, and as the projects demonstrate, sustainability is often an issue – for a variety of reasons. While the Jazz.NEXT grantees demonstrated facility with the use of technology, competency was by no means consistent among them. Given the variable readiness among organizations to apply technology in creative ways, some additional capacity investments may be warranted.

> In seeking transformative (and immediate) achievements through technology, the field must close the gap between yesterday's solutions and tomorrow's trends. For learning around technology to have any meaning or transferability, it has to travel quickly through the field, and there are virtually no structures for that to happen. By the time an organization gets around to copying an innovation or imitating some best practice – especially if it means replicating something that requires significant resources – it is already too late. The answer, in part, may be to think smaller, and more incrementally.

> Although the problems and issues the grantees experienced were often quite similar, there was little sharing or collaboration among them. This is more an issue of time pressures (completing grants in a relatively short amount of time), institutional demands, and the general isolation that exists in the field than anything else. Encouraging organizations to share their knowledge and experiences more collaboratively, as well as providing documentation of specific technical learning from Jazz.NEXT would help newcomers avoid replicating recognizable pitfalls and mistakes.

> Institutional attitudes about technology may need to change. There is sometimes an inherent conflict between those highly gifted innovators within an organization and the institution itself. Bridging the gap between the creators – those who imagine, design and populate virtual space as a living platform in itself – and institutional leaders who see technology as simply a tool for promotion, fundraising, and/or branding – probably means changing the value proposition in many organizations.

> Most of the Jazz.NEXT projects focused in one way or another on disseminating programming content and information to consumers. Even the projects in media and journalism were driven by a desire to give "gatekeepers" (writers and radio stations) better information to promote the art form. The unspoken question is the degree to which any of these efforts recruit new people to jazz or simply enrich the experience of those who already are deeply engaged. Achieving greater participation and commitment among the music's core audience is certainly an honorable and desirable outcome, but to truly build the infrastructure for jazz, the impact must be broader.

Jazz.NEXT confirmed that there is an appetite in the jazz field for technology. Providers and users alike are hungry for information and for ways to interact with each other in unmediated ways. Even with a relatively modest investment, Jazz.NEXT produced some exceptional work, and the program certainly demonstrated the high level of creativity, dedication and intelligence that exists throughout the field. Jazz.NEXT did not stimulate technological innovation – and to be fair, that was not its purpose. Instead, the program encouraged artists and organizations to develop new models for using technology effectively for their own benefit. If the projects are as successful over the long term as they appear to be at the outset, the field will benefit from richer metadata available to writers, producers, researchers and artists; access to exceptional training for high school musicians; deeper connections between artists and their fans; and expanded opportunities for the public to explore a much broader jazz terrain.

Using Technology to Build a Healthy, Sustainable Jazz Environment

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

THE WAY THINGS ARE

For all the familiar talk about jazz being "dead," there is a surprisingly large amount of chatter these days about its richness and variety. That conversation, however, just isn't happening in all the usual places. Among other things, traditional print journalism is declining, and Howard Mandel, President of the Jazz Journalists Association, can tick off a litany of examples: the *Boston Globe*, *Newsday*, the *Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *New York Post* no longer have jazz writers on staff; coverage by the *Village Voice* is meager; *DownBeat* is focusing more on archived material than new pieces; and *JazzTimes* has become a thinner publication since it was sold to a Boston-based hobby magazine. The *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* still cover jazz, and there is dedicated jazz coverage in newspapers in Chicago, Seattle and Detroit — but not in San Francisco and Philadelphia.

Likewise, jazz on the radio is not as prevalent as it once was, as some stations have abandoned jazz altogether or changed their formats in response to market research that points them in other directions. A recent survey of 505 public radio stations conducted by National Public Radio showed that jazz programming as a percentage of weekly hours—already at a low 13 percent in 2006 – declined to 11 percent in 2010.[1] Even National Public Radio itself has decreased its on-air jazz programming (indeed all of its musical programming) as its commitment to news and information has grown. Nor are radio stations that once were good sources for feature stories on local jazz performances filling that role as they once did, leading jazz presenters to complain that they now have to buy advertising on the same stations that previously covered them for nothing. With even well-known presenters struggling to keep up, this is a discouraging trend.

The recording industry, too, has undergone a dramatic upheaval. Although jazz, like classical music, has always been a niche market, a number of iconic labels (like Prestige, Stax and Atlantic) helped advance the careers of many legendary figures in jazz. It would be naïve to think that relationships with major labels in the "old days" were of singular benefit to artists, and stories of exploitation are well-documented, but the old model did establish a public presence for artists through recordings and large-scale promotion. Today, that structure is non-existent. Jazz labels have been absorbed into huge multi-interest corporations like Sony, Warner Music, EMI and Universal, and many have all but disappeared as the industry struggles to cope with the increased competition from digital downloads. The roster of jazz artists on major labels has shrunk dismally, and there is no access for emerging artists through this structure. For awhile, Concord

(which purchased Fantasy Records in 2004 and so acquired Prestige and Stax) was diligent about re-releasing legacy recordings, but that practice has been compromised as well. For jazz artists, the days of making a career by signing a record deal have been over for a long time.

There certainly has been a burgeoning of small independent record labels that persist in documenting jazz, but their cost-sharing arrangements with artists mean that artists typically take on more and more of the total financial burden of recording projects up front, and there is little support for publicity or documentation. The disappearance of liner notes, for example, is one of the great prices to be paid in this system, say many. What artists gain from a record label affiliation these days is simply the association they have with other artists, and not much more.

Many argue that the demise of the recording industry is actually a good thing for artists. The number of artists who now produce and distribute their own recordings, for example, has increased exponentially, and according to Michael Cuscuna of Mosaic Records, they may be better off for it. "Musicians coming out of any reputable university these days are familiar with the technology, and they understand what it takes to do this," he says. "Maybe they'll have no big publicity machine behind them, and they won't be famous, but they will make more off the sale of a CD than they ever would have made through a label, and they'll own 100 percent of the work. It's harder, but it might be better."

The data about today's jazz audiences isn't encouraging either. In its 2008 Arts Participation Survey, the National Endowment for the Arts reported that the number of people attending a jazz performance declined for the first time in the history of the survey, falling below 1982 levels – a decline of nearly 20 percent over the 25-year period.[2] While the rate of attendance among baby boomers was relatively unchanged between 2002 and 2008, there was a significant drop in the age group under age 55, as well as among African-Americans, Latinos and other minority groups. Since 1982, attendance rates of people between the ages of 18 and 24 have dropped more than all other age groups.

Declining audiences for jazz have contributed to the demise of the traditional commercial jazz club circuit leading to even fewer opportunities for jazz artists to sustain themselves through touring. The transition to nonprofit performing arts centers to replace commercial opportunities has proven challenging as these spaces struggle to engage audiences unfamiliar with the music and many jazz artists adjust to the unfamiliar demands of the not-for-profit support structure.

The Recording Industry of America's 2008 Consumer Profile and the Nielsen Company's 2010 Music Industry Report reflect similar trends in consumer behavior among jazz audiences. According to the RIAA, jazz represented three percent of total sales in 1999, but just 1.1 percent in 2008. Nielsen data show that the total number of physical albums sold in all genres in 2010 declined by 13 percent, reaching the lowest level since the company began compiling data in 1993. Jazz fared much worse, with a decline of 25 percent in just one year.[3]

Perhaps just as discouraging are the data about "point of purchase." In 2010, one-third of people purchased albums at a mass market outlet (such as Walmart or Target); 26 percent purchased through a digital service; and 23 percent bought records at chain outlets such as Best Buy. Just eight percent purchased their albums at an independent

[2] Jazz participation rose slightly between 1982 and 2002—from 9.6 percent to 10.8 percent, but by 2008, participation had fallen to just 7.8 percent (17.6 million adults).

[3] Every genre except Rap experienced a decline in physical album sales. Only Country avoided a double-digit drop, coming in at five percent lower than the previous year.

[1] From an internal NPR report based on Corporation for Public Broadcasting data (Carriage Reporting Center, Spring 2006-2011).

music store. Cost and access are clearly big drivers of this behavior, but cultural trends and the disappearance of independent music stores do not help. As journalist Anil Prasad says, "It used to be you could go into a record store and talk to extraordinarily knowledgeable people about music."[4] Rarely does that happen anymore.

So where is everyone going – journalists, artists, consumers, jazz enthusiasts? Primarily the Internet. When jazz critic Don Heckman, one of the recognized deans of jazz journalism, lost his job at the *Los Angeles Times*, he started his own blog. Artists have begun marketing their CD's electronically. Nielsen reports that total digital track sales surpassed one billion for the third year in a row in 2010, and digital album sales reached an all-time high of 26 percent of sales. Digital music now accounts for 46 percent of all music purchases.[5] But this is confusing territory for many. As pianist Billy Childs says, "Now you have these computer programs, and it's become, like, 'I don't care who did it. I just want this song.' It is moving towards independence, where artists will have to cultivate their own relationships. Artists will have to take an active attitude… the art has to be more intrepid and more vigilant."[6]

Vigilance, flexibility, mobility… big demands in an uncertain world. Many describe the jazz community as fragmented, characterized by arguments over whether jazz has lost its roots or whether it is being replenished in new ways by the extraordinary range of musical influences from other cultures. The demise of the International Association of Jazz Educators created a void in the field that other organizations have struggled to fill. Concern over the shift of jazz performance from clubs to concert halls, "jazz" festivals that are programming an increasing amount of other music, the "institutionalization" of the field in ways that make some veteran musicians outsiders in their own genre, and the need for artists to "do it all" – these are just some of the frustrations artists describe when talking about the state of the jazz field. There is an overwhelming sense that the economics just don't work – if they ever did. Touring is becoming ever more costly, and artists find it nearly impossible to keep fixed ensembles together.

It would be a leap to say the jazz field was ever "organized" in any cohesive way. Yet there was a time when an infrastructure existed – good or bad – that everyone understood. Today, familiar parts of the system have been severely compromised or have disappeared completely. It's not so much that the field is fragmented – one could, in fact, argue that it has always been that way – but rather "decentralized." The parts of the system are shifting and changing, and how they will all fit together eventually (if they ever do) is not clear. The only thing that is clear is that nothing will ever be the same.

> "TO MAKE A SUCCESS OUT OF A RELEASE, MUSICIANS NEED TO APPROACH A COMBINATION OF MULTIPLE VEHICLES IN A SYNERGISTIC WAY. ALL THIS CONJECTURE ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE MUSIC INDUSTRY IS VERY TIRING TO ME. LET'S TALK ABOUT WHAT'S REAL RIGHT THIS MINUTE INSTEAD. I THINK IT'S GOING TO STAY THIS WAY FOR A LONG TIME TO COME."
>
> — ANIL PRASAD, CRITIC

> "IT'S HARD TO STAY FRESH SOMETIMES. BUT MORE THAN ANYTHING, IT'S HARD TO FIND TIME TO LEARN NEW THINGS WITH ALL THE DAY-TO-DAY LIFE STUFF… THERE'S SO MUCH ORCHESTRATION STUFF I WANT TO LEARN. I WANT TO LEARN TO WRITE FOR STRINGS BETTER. I DON'T KNOW IF I'LL EVER GET AROUND TO IT….I'M SO CONSUMED WITH MANAGING ALL THE MUSIC STUFF I HAVE GOING ON….THE WORK NEVER SEEMS TO COMPLETELY DISAPPEAR."
>
> — RUDRESH MAHANTHAPPA (FROM HYBRID ENERGY, AN INTERVIEW WITH ANIL PRASAD, ALLABOUTJAZZ.COM, MAY 2, 2011)

Confronted with this confusing landscape, it's easy to look to the past with nostalgia (however misplaced) and to the future with reluctance – or even panic. A major disruptive force at the center of all this unrest is technology – with its unfamiliar and increasing demands, and its unimaginable possibilities. The Internet – and all the networking tools that have emerged and are emerging on an almost daily basis – have created the ultimate decentralized environment, one that jazz artists and organizations have no choice but to enter and embrace.

In examining this environment, Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation (MAAF) and the and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF) certainly acknowledged the crumbling of the infrastructure for jazz, but they also saw a promising opportunity to help the field maneuver more effectively through what was clearly a period of disruptive change. Real impact, they believed, would not be gained by trying to "correct" overwhelming systemic weaknesses in the traditional system – weaknesses they had neither the resources nor the influence to control – but rather by building new capacities that would reshape future operating practices for jazz artists, organizations, and presenters across the United States. The funders, for example, could not reverse the decline of print journalism, the disappearance of independent record stores, growing breakdowns in the club circuit, or trends in the commercial recording industry that marginalize jazz, but they could stimulate new models that would improve communications and distribution practices, produce greater mobility and flexibility, and promote stronger engagement between artists and their audiences. In this way, Jazz.NEXT looked not to the past, but to the future.

MAAF and DDCF saw technology as an important lever in its effort, and in introducing Jazz.NEXT, they encouraged artists and organizations to imagine new operating models that could be enhanced or realized through the application of technology. In essence, Jazz.NEXT was designed as a research and development laboratory for testing substantive and innovative projects that would "broaden and deepen relationships with new and existing audiences, promote enhanced communication with the public, market and distribute the work of jazz artists more effectively, and build links that would create a more informed and cohesive jazz community better equipped to meet the challenges of a fast-changing marketplace."[7]

MAAF, with funding from DDCF, made two rounds of one-year grants through Jazz.NEXT, awarding a total of $899,582 to nine organizations and one individual artist.[8] The program was open to jazz artists who were citizens or permanent residents of the U.S., and to designated 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations with a history of programming jazz or providing services to jazz artists or organizations.[9] Jazz.NEXT did not support the use of technology in the creation or performance of work; nor was MAAF interested

> "I FIND IT INTERESTING WHEN MUSICIANS SAY, 'I'M WAITING TO SEE HOW THIS THING SHAKES OUT BECAUSE WE DON'T KNOW WHERE THE MUSIC INDUSTRY IS GOING.' FRANKLY, THE FUTURE IS NOW. THE MODEL HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED. IT'S HERE, SO DEAL WITH IT. IT'S A HYBRID MODEL: WE HAVE THE ITUNES/MP3 AND AMAZON WORLD, WE HAVE OTHER DOWNLOAD SOURCES AND AGGREGATORS, WE HAVE STREAMING, AND THERE'S STILL THE HARD COPY UNIVERSE…WHETHER IT'S GOOD OR BAD FOR THE ARTIST IS UP TO THE ARTISTS THEMSELVES….YOU CAN EITHER EMBRACE IT OR SIT AROUND AND BITTERLY COMPLAIN...YOU CAN TAKE IT INTO YOUR OWN HANDS RIGHT NOW. "
>
> — ANIL PRASAD, CRITIC

> INNOVATION: THE INCORPORATION OF CREATIVE APPROACHES, NEW TO THE APPLICANT OR JAZZ FIELD, THAT REPRESENT A SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS OPERATING PRACTICES WITH THE POTENTIAL TO FUNDAMENTALLY IMPACT THE ABILITY OF THE ARTIST(S) OR ORGANIZATION(S) TO EFFECTIVELY SUSTAIN THEMSELVES IN THE FUTURE.
>
> JAZZ.NEXT GUIDELINES

[4] Lang, Joe. Anil Prasad: Inner Views, Borderless Perspectives. allaboutjazz.com, December 28, 2010.
[5] Nielson Company and Billboard's 2010 Music Industry Report.
[6] Berlanga-Ryan, Esther. Billy Childs: The Perfect Picture. allaboutjazz.com. April 2011.

[7] Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation. Jazz.NEXT Round II Guidelines. p.1
[8] One organization received a planning grant in the first round and an implementation grant in the second round.
[9] Organizations without 501(c)(3) status could apply through a not-for-profit fiscal sponsor.

in supporting the preliminary exploration of technology applications, believing that its resources would be leveraged most strategically by investing in projects that were well planned and on their way toward implementation, and in applicants who already had demonstrated facility with technology.[10] Grants through Jazz.NEXT supported both projects that were new to the grantees as well as those that took their existing technology efforts to the next levels of development.

MAAF invited project proposals in the following areas:

> Audience Development: activities designed to attract new audiences to the work of jazz artists or deepen relationships with existing audiences

> Communications: methods for disseminating information to the general public (excluding ticket sales/products) about jazz artists and their work, organizations that serve the jazz field, or program jazz artists, and other issues relevant to jazz

> Distribution: methods for delivering and selling the work of jazz artists

> Marketing/promotion: methods of using media to advertise/sell specific performances or products

> Network-building: activities related to strengthening the jazz infrastructure by establishing connections among the various stakeholders who have the potential to create a more sustainable jazz environment (defined as increased public appreciation of jazz, increased touring and presentation, enhanced service delivery, and more effective advocacy)

MAAF assembled a diverse panel of jazz professionals representing presenters, funders, service organizations, festivals, the recording industry, clubs, touring and production companies, and the media and technology sector to review proposals. Panels made recommendations for funding based on the level of innovation demonstrated by the project, the quality and clarity of the implementation plan, the capacity to implement the project, the centrality of technology in realizing the project, the evidence of the applicant's prior use of technology, and the potential for the project to have broad impact through full or partial replication. In Round I, MAAF received 93 eligible applications (41 planning and 52 implementation) requesting nearly $4.1 million in funding. In Round II, there were 45 eligible applications requesting $2.5 million.[11] Approximately one-third of those applying in the second round had applied in Round I, and five of these received grants, suggesting that the feedback they received from MAAF helped them during the reapplication process.[12]

In all, Jazz.NEXT generated proposals from a variety of applicants in 27 states, with 53 percent of the applications split almost evenly between New York and the Mid-Atlantic region. The West/Northwest/Southwest region produced 15 percent of the applications, with the Midwest and South/Southeast following with 13 percent each. Applications from New England made up six percent of the pool. Among the applicants were jazz presenters and festivals, local arts councils, museums, public radio stations, service organizations, university-based centers for jazz studies, and individual artists. The second round saw a big drop in the number of individual artists applying – from 19 to 3 – probably because no artists received funding in the initial round.

[10] In Round I, MAAF offered both planning grants and implementation grants. Planning grants proved problematic for two reasons: panelists had difficulty judging between the two kinds of applications, generally deciding to fund implementation rather than planning projects; and the rapidity with which technology was changing meant that planning was not always relevant (i.e. by the time the planning was over, technology applications had already evolved beyond what was being planned).

[11] No planning grants were invited in the second and final round of the pilot program.

[12] Overall, 83 percent of Round II grantees were also Round I applicants. One organization (National Federation of Community Broadcasters) had benefited from a Round I planning grant.

GRANTEES AND PROJECTS:

Berklee College of Music (Boston, MA)
Grant: $68,600[13]

Founded in 1945, Berklee College of Music is one of the leading institutions for the study of contemporary music in the United States. Berklee's annual High School Jazz Festival attracts more than 3,000 students and 200 big bands, combos, and vocal ensembles (primarily from the New England states) for performance and competition showcases, and education clinics. Through Jazz.NEXT, the college aimed to use new online technologies to extend the reach of this single annual event to a year-round, interactive, web-based, "cyber association" of high school jazz instructors and students, featuring online access to student/faculty rehearsal clinics, performance and instructional webcasts and artist/instructor profiles, and streaming of Festival performances, among other content.

Dave Douglas (Croton on Hudson, NY)
Grant: $74,750

Dave Douglas is widely recognized as one of the most prolific and original jazz trumpeters and composers of his generation, as well as one of the few jazz artists at the forefront of using technology. His own record label, Greenleaf Music, and website have created innovative and groundbreaking modes of distribution, promotion and marketing rare within the jazz industry. Douglas used support from Jazz.NEXT to develop four new platforms to include stand-alone applications for mobile devices; revamping Greenleafmusic.com to allow for greater intuitive information management; integration of social media sites to facilitate greater communication between artists and fans; and creating an open-source database to allow other artists to use these same technologies.

Jazz Journalists Association (New York, NY)
Grant: $38,200

Founded in 1986, the Jazz Journalists Association is an international professional organization of writers, broadcasters, photographers and new media producers primarily focused on jazz reporting. Established and emerging jazz journalists are challenged by the demise of traditional print and broadcast formats and struggling to adapt to new digital technology. The Jazz Journalists Association planned to solicit veteran and emerging jazz journalists and equip them with basic training in the use of new, inexpensive, Web-ready pocket-video camera technology. Jazz.NEXT support enabled the purchase and distribution of cameras, training workshops on video journalism techniques, and production of video clips on jazz related events and individuals for use on various jazz websites, blogs and other digital platforms. Each participant posted multiple video submissions over a six-month period, creating a viral jazz campaign that was promoted through online publicity and marketing, as well as through targeted advertising in traditional print outlets.

Manchester Craftsmen's Guild (Pittsburgh, PA)
Grant: $93,600

The Manchester Craftsmen's Guild is a multidisciplinary arts and learning center, which since 1987 has been one of the country's leading jazz presenting organizations noted for its MCG Jazz program's concert and recording series. Through Jazz.NEXT, the organization planned to continue the design and implementation of the next two phases of an interactive national jazz website designed to become a living repository of information on jazz presenters and engagements across the United States. Called the Jazz Information Commons, the site would capture and aggregate myriad information

[13] To help sustain the Jazz.NEXT grantees through the current economic crisis, the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation provided additional funding, totaling 31% of each grant, to be designated towards core operating support. The grant awards noted reflect this additional funding

and media about jazz presenters and performances such as programming calendars, artist personnel and biographies, instrumentation, set lists, venue descriptions, ticketing, routing, social media links and recorded audio and video. A consumer portal would connect potential jazz consumers to opportunities for purchasing concert tickets, subscriptions to live performance streams via all web platforms, artists' products, and access to jazz education content. The site would also use music recommendation technology to assist consumers in discovering new artists.

Monterey Jazz Festival (Monterey, CA)
Grant: $98,300

Founded in 1958, the Monterey Jazz Festival is one of the most renowned jazz events in the world. The Festival enhanced its Internet-based Digital Music Education Project, an interactive online music resource supporting jazz education, through the incorporation of new technology applications. The Festival planned upgrades that would combine digital sound files, music downloads, streaming video, and images from the organization's extensive photo archives, and link these elements together to create a compelling digital education environment responsive to the needs of each visitor to the site. While the site would be free-of-charge, the Festival saw opportunities exist for generating potential new revenue streams for the host and featured artists through downloadable music sales.

National Federation of Community Broadcasters (Oakland, CA)
Grant: $126,400[14]

National Federation of Community Broadcasters (NFCB) is a national alliance of noncommercial, educational, and public radio stations; producers; and related organizations committed to local, diverse, and mission-driven public service radio. With Jazz.NEXT support, NFCB designed a national metadata library for jazz stations, called Jazz InfoVault. Metadata is defined as "data about data," and, for jazz radio, that information represents crucial historical content, which currently is diffuse and often inaccessible. NFCB planned to consolidate existing noncommercial efforts, standardize collection practices, and develop a prototype database to be tested on up to two jazz stations. Once populated, the national metadata library would serve as a digital jazz encyclopedia for use by radio stations across the United States that program jazz.

National Public Radio (Washington, DC)
Grant: $98,300

National Public Radio (NPR) launched a new website solely focused on jazz, NPR.org/jazz. The new site is built on the organization's jazz blog, *A Blog Supreme*, which presents commentary, analysis, hyperlinks, streaming audio and embedded videos; their highly influential music website, NPR.org/music; and their on-air jazz programming. NPR planned to feature member stations producing original jazz content on the new site, while receiving support to enhance their own websites. With a weekly audience of over 27.5 million people and partnerships with more than 860 public radio stations in the United States, NPR.org/jazz presents the potential to dramatically reach new constituencies for jazz and deepen their relationship with existing jazz fans.

Savannah Music Festival (Savannah, GA)
Grant: $97,600

Using new technology applications, the Savannah Music Festival sought to expand the reach of its music education program Swing Central High School Jazz Band Competition and Workshop to a broader national audience. The existing program,

which provided intensive instruction by renowned jazz artists and music educators, was reaching students at 50 high schools across the United States. With Jazz.NEXT support, the Festival developed a Swing Central interactive website with online video lessons, student/faculty performance webcasts and profiles, streaming of Festival performances, and links to artists' websites, among other content, which would then be available as a pedagogical tool for interested jazz students and educators across the country.

Symphony Space (New York, NY)
Grant: $93,600

Symphony Space is a multidisciplinary presenting organization noted for its film, literary and performing arts programming, including the Selected Shorts, Symphony Space Live, and Wall-to-Wall series. The organization is currently poised to release more than 100 recordings of live performances, including jazz. With Jazz.NEXT support, Symphony Space aimed to create a smartphone application, called The Symph App, configured to stream jazz performances on Apple's iPod and iPad products as well as Google's Android and Google TV. The application would be open-coded and distributed free to the jazz community for use by other artists and venues. The organization is committed to streaming the content, rather than allowing for downloads, so that artists are given greater control over the use of their work.

Walker Arts Center (Minneapolis, MN)
Grant: $97,900

The Walker Arts Center is a multidisciplinary presenting organization noted for its effective use of new technologies to engage audiences across disciplines. Support from Jazz.NEXT allowed the organization to test multiple new and existing technological approaches to broaden its jazz audiences and deepen their experiences. The Walker Arts Center planned to develop content for mobile and Web-based applications, including blogs and webcasts, and purchase hardware to accommodate the technical demands of the expansion. The organization also planned to hire a one-year administrative Jazz/New Media Fellow to launch and coordinate all online jazz initiatives and fully integrate jazz programming and content throughout all digital platforms.

Selected Stories

Jazz.NEXT purposely cast a wide net, seeking to support a broad range of experiments that would produce important learning for the field. The following stories of selected Jazz.NEXT grantees represent the diversity of the program and the innovative approaches it inspired. There are stories from major institutions and small organizations, educational institutions, festivals, service organizations, and an individual artist. From the development of online learning programs for adults and young people, to interactive website design and fan-based technology, to mobile applications and metadata projects, the work of the following five organizations and one individual artist provides a range of models for building infrastructure in the jazz field. Two projects focus on jazz education, one on video training for journalists, one on providing direct service to individual artists, and two on media, but at the heart of all these projects is a desire to connect with audiences, build communities of jazz enthusiasts, and expand the knowledge of jazz.

JAZZ JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION:
GOING WHERE THE MUSIC IS BORN

HTTP://WWW.JAZZHOUSE.ORG

Established in 1986, the Jazz Journalists Association (JJA) is an international professional organization of approximately 350 writers, broadcasters, photographers and new media producers who cover all forms of jazz. Jazz journalists — most of whom are independent, freelance content providers — have played and continue to play an important role in promoting jazz in an environment that often favors more commercial and better funded music genres, providing context, historical perspective and musical insight on one of America's great indigenous art forms.

THE ISSUE

When JJA President Howard Mandel heard about Jazz.NEXT, he saw an immediate opportunity. Mandel says that for 25 years, JJA and its members "had been alert to the digital revolution." The organization already had been making presentations about the changing media landscape at conferences throughout the country, including the International Association of Jazz Educators, the National Critics Conference, and a variety of festivals and other gatherings of jazz professionals. It had built four websites for its programs (Jazzhouse.org; JJAJazzAwards.org, Jazzjournalists.org, and JJANews.org), and it had actively been pursuing new media platforms and campaigns that would move jazz journalism forward, including e-workshops, streaming events and social media platforms and campaigns.

Gaining real leverage, however, would require an entirely new approach. As Mandel says, "The current and ongoing disappearance of traditional print and broadcast outlets for jazz journalism challenges those of us who have established ourselves in the old media, as well as new generations who hope to write about, photograph and broadcast jazz. But there is great potential for innovative jazz journalism if we adapt to and master contemporary digital technology." Poised to take its next step, JJA turned to Jazz.NEXT for support.

THE PROJECT

Mandel wanted to do something that reflected the improvisational nature of jazz. He wanted to capture the dynamic spirit of the music, the eclecticism and diversity of jazz communities, and the variety of jazz performance across the United States. He wanted to put journalists "on the ground" and "in the streets." So he gave them pocket video cameras – believing that user-friendly, go-anywhere HD video technology that could be edited quickly on existing Mac or PC software, distributed at no cost on existing websites (such as YouTube and Vimeo), and connected to social websites would produce the kind of reporting that grabbed the attention of viewers. Because JJA is a small organization with limited resources, Mandel specifically wanted to use existing resources rather than create a new platform. So with funds from Jazz.NEXT, JJA bought 35 Kodak zi8 video cameras, and **eyeJAZZ** was born.

JJA imagined **eyeJAZZ** as a viral campaign to promote jazz to the vast and highly diverse audiences for video clips online. **eyeJAZZ** would recruit veteran and emerging jazz journalists and train them in video shooting, editing and online distribution.[15] JJA would facilitate shooting and production of videos, assist participants in uploading video clips to online video-sharing sites, and consult with producers on marketing and promotion of the videos. The goal was to produce 150 "guerilla video reports" over a six-month period that would be added to the ongoing stream of independently-created video and audio making up contemporary journalism. By design, **eyeJAZZ** did not aim to create a separate website, mobile application, protected brand, or fixed archive. Instead, it sought to devise a process and a format that independent content producers could turn toward their own ends.

The idea caught fire beyond all expectations, and nearly 190 people from all over the world applied to participate in **eyeJAZZ**. JJA invited 35 people to join the training program, and 33 accepted and received cameras.[16] JJA screened applicants according to their apparent facility with online tools, as well as their overall experience. Because JJA wanted to look across the spectrum of jazz, the organization also considered the age and geographic location of applicants. The big surprise was the number of people

who signed up for the training (offered free by JJA) even though they were not chosen for the program. In all, 19 additional people joined the online learning community, using their own cameras to shoot videos.

The core of the **eyeJAZZ** program was a series of 15 webinars conducted over an eight-month period, using a faculty of four led by Mandel.[17] Webinars covered technical topics, such as downloading video, editing techniques, dealing with poor lighting and sound conditions, using iMovie and other software, and integrating material into blogs and websites, among others. They also focused on journalistic requirements, including story structure, interviewing techniques, the differences between various types of news and features, and creating a story exclusively from video elements. **eyeJAZZ** also introduced participants to copyright and fair use standards, worked with them to build online communities, taught them about branding and marketing, and discussed the importance of developing relationships to gain access to artists and venues.[18] "Learning by doing" was critical to the **eyeJAZZ** experience, and participants were expected to shoot and post videos for review and comment on the project's dedicated (and closed) Facebook page. In order to qualify for certification, participants had to create three "finished" videos.[19]

SURPRISES

JJA proved to be very nimble in managing **eyeJAZZ**. According to Mandel, the teaching team fine-tuned the curriculum as they went along based on what they observed about the students' progress and needs. One of the biggest surprises, he says, was that people "generally didn't have a grasp of what the news angle of a story really was – that there was information that had to be conveyed, and you couldn't just turn on the camera and start filming." From the beginning, **eyeJAZZ** emphasized news – not filming performance as an end in itself – and this focus on context and situation was

[15] Of the participants who ultimately joined the program, most were emerging journalists or experienced journalists with little experience in video.
[16] All but one of these were from North America because the tariffs to send cameras abroad were prohibitive.
[17] The faculty taught from three different cities. JJA used Go To Webinar, an online service that Mandel says worked very well for them.
[18] All eyeJAZZ webinars are archived on http://vimeo.com/eyejazz/videos/
[19] A number of participants who did not receive certification posted at least one video.

frustrating to some participants. "Some people stubbornly said this wasn't what they were interested in and dropped out," says Mandel, "but at least we made them aware of what the requirements and possibilities are."

What came up over and over again, Mandel acknowledges, was the issue of music copyright. "We didn't anticipate that we would need legal counsel to discuss legal issues," he adds, "but we did." Eventually, JJA engaged a legal advisor who developed a set of standards around core rights issues and gave trainees suggestions about how to approach artists and venues. "It probably wouldn't get anyone through court," says Mandel, "but it established a good framework: get permission from venues and artists to film, get waivers in writing, and establish relationships with artists and venues before filming. There are legal protections videographers should understand, but basically if you give people context, you generally can get them on your side."

A pleasant surprise was the flexibility and capability of the Facebook platform for training. Mandel says he had expected the participants to request more one-on-one tutorials, but discovered they could do much more of this on Facebook than they had originally anticipated. "It was a very searchable and flexible platform," says Mandel, "and we found it worked better than other options. This was a big surprise." Soon after the webinars began, JJA also began using Facebook's chat function simultaneously with each webinar because it proved to be a much better tool for the immediate exchange of information than the online platform provided.

OUTCOMES AND LEARNING
In all, 23 participants completed the **eyeJAZZ** program and received certificates, 12 of them with "distinction."[20] The most successful participants were people in their 30s and 40s who were already successful in their careers and had an ability to focus and follow through, but some journalists who were just out of college also found the program valuable. The rigorous training, the amount of time and discipline required, and the straightforward critique from instructors were difficult for some, but for those who persisted the pay-off was positive. One participant noted that he "picked up work editing and organizing video," and another said, "The class helped me with my regular job… I see a new future for myself as a result of my **eyeJAZZ** training." Overall, participants in **eyeJAZZ** rated the program an average of 7.9 on a 10-point scale, and they reported

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"THE MOST DIFFICULT, AND THEREFORE MOST REWARDING, PART OF THE PROGRAM WAS THE INSTRUCTORS URGING US TO GO BEYOND SIMPLE MUSIC VIDEOS AND VENTURE INTO THE PROCESS OF STORYTELLING."

"*EYEJAZZ* LIT A FIRE UNDER ME AND SHOWED ME HOW POWERFUL THE MEDIUM CAN BE."

"THE ONLINE COMMUNITY OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IS A RICH SOURCE OF FEEDBACK, INFORMATION-SHARING, AND INFORMAL LEARNING."

"IT WOULD BE GREAT TO HAVE A MASTER CLASS TYPE PROGRAM FOR PEOPLE MORE ADVANCED IN VIDEO."

— *EYEJAZZ* PARTICIPANTS

an average increase of four points in their skill level when asked to compare their video knowledge at the beginning and end of the program.

Trainees reported producing 215 videos before the program ended in July 2011.[21] Nearly all were posted on Vimeo or YouTube, and 175 are still active. In addition, 40 participants posted videos on their own blogs and/or public blogs, and 20 videos reached the websites of WBGO, *JazzTimes*, and CapitolBop, among others. Mandel says he knew that making cameras available and providing training would help people make better videos about jazz, but he doesn't know whether JJA reached imitators outside the **eyeJAZZ** program. "That's really hard to track," he says, "but I do know that the people who completed the training are getting good feedback in their communities and are continuing to practice what they learned." Mandel also reports that he has received many compliments about the program from others in the field and believes JJA has gone a long way in raising awareness of the possibilities of video journalism.

Students learned a lot, and so did JJA. Students learned to "find the news story" and to tell their stories visually, using techniques like titles and voiceovers effectively. They learned to use editing software, and became very good at it, according to Mandel, successfully creating pieces of five minutes or less to correspond to the attention span of online users. In fact, says Mandel, it was surprising to everyone how easy and enjoyable it was to use the equipment and the editing software.

JJA says that the webinars were a useful tool, but they took a great deal of organization and personal investment by the faculty – more than JJA would be able to sustain without additional funding. And, Mandel advises, distance learning should be done in tandem with other online platforms to allow for continuing comment and dialogue. The feedback to students through the online learning community, for example, was an extremely effective learning tool, and the **eyeJAZZ** Facebook Group continues, allowing JJA to stay in touch with participants even though the program has ended. Renamed the **eyeJAZZ** Videographers Forum, the online group continues to serve as a valuable platform for sharing and critiquing jazz videos works-in-progress and for discussions about new video tools and professional opportunities. Several new members have joined the group since **eyeJAZZ** officially ended.

A significant output of the program is the 200 hours of **eyeJAZZ** training sessions. "The curriculum is a great resource," says Mandel, "but we haven't done anything to market it yet. To do so would probably require us to edit the webinars because they were done live. That's great if you're participating, but it doesn't always work as well if you are viewing the sessions afterward. But the webinars are there if people want to use them."

While **eyeJAZZ** succeeded in raising the profile of video journalism and giving journalists new skills, its focus was creating supply, not demand. "To make this really work," Mandel says, "we would work next on stimulating demand so that online magazines and venues would see what a powerful tool videos are and begin to commission them. Getting people making stuff is great, but building a core of people or institutions that

actually use the videos is necessary to build a truly robust enterprise. Otherwise it's an incomplete cycle." While one participant did establish his own business and has begun to sell his work, there is still much to do on this front, and Mandel says he would love to have another phase of **eyeJAZZ** that would nurture distribution and strengthen ties between journalists and the outlets for their material.

At the outset of the **eyeJAZZ** program, JJA aspired to create "a wave of jazz video" and a grassroots network of jazz journalists, creators, listeners, presenters and supporters that would lead to collaborations across the jazz field and give rise to sustainable business models. Given its grand ambition and the relatively small investment MAAF made in **eyeJAZZ**, JJA was enormously successful. Mandel is most proud of the diversity the program inspired, citing projects in Philadelphia's African-American churches, northeast Georgia and central Colorado. "We were able to get to places where there is no commercial TV and no newspaper coverage of jazz, and it was so gratifying to see how much music there is in remote places where you don't expect to see it. This was a watershed, and we learned we can't see the world through the lens of our New York myopia." Mandel was especially touched by the work of one northern California journalist who began sending videos from a mall where people of all ages and skill levels turned out one Saturday a month to play music together. "We had no idea anything like this was going on," Mandel says, "but we gave people cameras, and they looked at their communities and showed us where the music is. There was just so much joy."

National Public Radio, Inc. (NPR) is an internationally acclaimed producer of noncommercial news, talk, cultural, and entertainment programming. Its flagship news and information programs, *All Things Considered* and *Morning Edition*, are the two most listened to programs in public radio and two of the four most popular programs in broadcast radio overall. NPR was founded in 1970 and operates as a privately-supported not-for-profit membership corporation. Its programming — offered in partnership with more than 860 independently operated noncommercial public radio stations across the United States — reaches a weekly audience of 27.5 million. In a time of shrinking arts journalism, NPR is a vital resource, and the depth and range of its cultural reporting is unmatched in broadcast news.

THE ISSUE

NPR has always been committed to jazz. Its on-air and online coverage includes *JazzSet with Dee Dee Bridgewater* and *Marian McPartland's Piano Jazz*, as well as album reviews, interviews, profiles of jazz musicians, a weekly sampler of songs called *Take Five*, and its popular blog, *A Blog Supreme*. In partnership with member station WBGO, NPR simultaneously broadcasts and webcasts concerts live from the Village Vanguard in New York. But at NPR, like most public radio stations, music of all genres was beginning to be "gently squeezed" to make more time for news and commentary. Jazz, with an already low share of weekly programming, was most threatened.

Anticipating these trends, NPR already had begun to develop a vigorous online presence that would not only maintain, but also expand, its music coverage. In 2007, after two years of intensive planning, NPR launched *npr.org/music* in partnership with 12 member stations, and according to Anya Grundmann, Executive Producer of NPR Music, the site is "on its way to becoming the music exploration site worldwide." Grundmann notes that NPR is more popular as a resource for discovering new music than iTunes or Amazon, and that 73 percent of the site's visitors have made music purchases.

Could this model – already highly functional and widely acclaimed – be used to further jazz appreciation, education and innovation? Grundmann believed it could, and she and her staff set out to do it. Using the capacity of NPR and *npr.org/music*, they quietly began building their jazz ambitions online in preparation for launching a new NPR jazz portal that would "capture and communicate the live jazz experience." The new website, *npr.org/jazz*, was on its way, and Jazz.NEXT was there to help.

THE PROJECT

Grundmann and her staff envisioned *npr.org/jazz* as an online ecosystem for jazz that

would be "innovative, interactive, lively, and comprehensive… a go-to resource for jazz devotees and casual fans alike to discover new artists, discuss the music and its origins, and listen to and watch live and archived performances." In setting out, the project team already had a highly sophisticated model with *npr.org/music*. In 2008, NPR built an open interface to give affiliate stations and the public easier access to NPR's digital content. Where music and licensing rights allow, NPR Jazz content is well represented in the NPR interface, and users may develop and customize their own applications and pages using NPR's Artist Index, Jazz Profiles, and other programs. Given the existing technology, as well as NPR's commitment to make its digital initiatives just as robust and popular as its radio programs, *npr.org/jazz* was a likely success from the beginning.

In designing the project, the NPR music team conducted a thorough industry survey and found that nothing like what they imagined existed. "We found that current online resources relied too heavily on reviews and news releases, applied registration or user fees, and were largely uncurated," they said. "We want *npr.org/jazz* to be an open, active and current archive that appeals to both casual and sophisticated audiences."

In the first phase of the project – prior to the launch of the new website – NPR focused primarily on internal technology enhancements, working with a designer and NPR's technical staff to update content management systems and to bring the NPR Music site in line with recent changes to *npr.org*. NPR also made improvements to the technical capacity of *npr.org/music* to allow for easier integration with affiliate station content and websites. Meanwhile, NPR's *A Blog Supreme* – an ongoing conversation about jazz with NPR producers and guests – was continuing on *npr.org/music,* and NPR also continued to post reviews, concerts, and interviews, and feature stories on jazz.

In February 2010, NPR launched an improved *npr.org/music* website and *npr.org/jazz*. The sites feature upgraded design and navigation, a style more integrated into *npr.org*, back-end changes for added flexibility, and the capacity to get jazz news via RSS feeds from other sources, making NPR a one-stop destination for jazz coverage. Navigation is indeed quick, easy and seamless, and the integration is robust and organic.[22] With the site up and running, NPR established a permanent, more prominent home for *A Blog Supreme* on the NPR Music homepage; unveiled logos for NPR Jazz; launched an NPR Music iPhone app with jazz hub; embedded WBGO's video feed from the Village Vanguard; improved live chat and blog capabilities; and added Twitter and Facebook widgets throughout the site, including blog posts, to allow users to share their jazz discoveries more easily through their social networks.

SURPRISES

Not much surprised the savvy NPR project team. Their only real frustration, says Grundmann, was the inability to develop an Android application. "We were disappointed that we couldn't support Android more effectively," she says, "but because it is an open platform every company adapts it to different hardware and uses some things and cuts out others. That means we would have needed about 20 different versions. It just isn't scalable." Like other grantees, NPR expressed some frustration with Apple's iron-fisted control over apps for its devices, but "at least you know where you stand," Grundmann says.

While it didn't come as a big surprise, trying to innovate within a large institutional structure was not always easy, since the team often needed to access resources in other parts of the organization. Getting the timing to work was the biggest challenge,

[22] Users access *npr.org/jazz* directly or they get there by clicking on "Genres" and then "Jazz" from the *npr.org/music* site. Getting *npr.org/jazz* from the main NPR website is three clicks away ("Music", "Genres" and then "Jazz").

but it was a small price to pay, says Grundmann. "Some of the things we imagined maybe didn't happen, but some really gratifying things *did* happen because we were so threaded into our organization. Their support helped us keep jazz at forefront, and the things NPR does in other genres came back to help jazz."

OUTCOMES AND LEARNING

NPR succeeded in creating a rich, interactive, well integrated, and visually stimulating platform. NPR certainly had significant intellectual, financial and technical resources to enable its vision, and it leveraged them to the maximum extent. Grundmann acknowledges that NPR's assets were integral to the team's success, but she notes that competing for resources within a large organization is never an easy task. "I can control or activate certain resources," she says, "but I don't control the resources around technology, so that can be a challenge. I come at this from the perspective of a content producer, and I want the technology to serve the content, but it has to be win-win for everyone, including the tech staff."

At the same time, Grundmann says, it was beneficial that the team was able to work "on the side," and out of sight of the larger institution. "We got a lot of support, and we had a lot of autonomy," she says. "The support came at a pivotal time. It allowed us to put a stake in the ground for our vision of a lively, multi-genre project." The freedom and creativity that drove the team shows itself dramatically in the new website. As Grundmann describes, "We are an agile team. We can try things, and we can do *big* things because the process is so open. Even though we're part of a big organization, we move quickly and opportunistically, and we want that energy to come from the page. Multiple genres come alive in multiple ways, and we need to support all of that."

During the last four months of NPR's project, there were more than 188,000 unique visitors per month to *npr.org/jazz* and a total of 1.68 million page views. There were more than 330,000 page views to the Village Vanguard Concert series, and three percent of these resulted in clicks to other features on *npr.org/jazz*. Nearly 4,000 total followers joined the *A Blog Supreme* Twitter feed – up more than 100 percent over the course of the grant period.

One obvious and continuing challenge for NPR – as for other organizations – is the rapidity with which technology is changing. That makes planning difficult and requires a nimbleness that many organizations do not have. For this process – as for other new initiatives – NPR used an Agile Development Process, a team of seven working to realize the *npr.org/jazz* vision. Grundmann admits that "developing technology to serve content and allow it to be distributed is a challenging dance." She observes that her ambitions and what is available on the website are two different things. "Our ambitions are always two years ahead," she says. "For example, we are thinking about a live event platform – as a theatre experience, we think that would be really cool."

SUMMARY OF NPR JAZZ CONTENT DURING THE GRANT PERIOD:

> MORE THAN 500 ENTRIES TO *A BLOG SUPREME*
> MORE THAN 600 ONLINE FEATURES
> 175 JAZZ CONCERTS FOR LISTENING OR DOWNLOADING
> 86 ARTIST INTERVIEWS AND PROFILES
> 66 THEMED LISTENING LISTS AS PART OF THE *TAKE FIVE: A WEEKLY JAZZ SAMPLER SERIES*
> 47 NEW ALBUM REVIEWS, WITH PHOTOS AND AUDIO EXTRAS
> 15 JAZZ ALBUM PREVIEWS, WITH ADVANCE AUDIO STREAMS
> 6 TINY DESK CONCERTS, WITH VIDEO (INTIMATE PERFORMANCES RECORDED AT THE DESK OF *ALL THINGS CONSIDERED*)

ON THE IMMEDIATE HORIZON FOR NPR:

> IMPROVE VIDEO FEEDS OF LIVE EVENTS
> DEVELOP A CHAT FEATURE OWNED AND OPERATED BY NPR
> PARTNER WITH NPR STATIONS TO PROVIDE MORE LIVE EVENTS NATIONWIDE
> EXPAND COVERAGE OF THE NEWPORT JAZZ FESTIVAL AND OTHER FESTIVALS
> MAKE PERFORMANCES AT THE VILLAGE VANGUARD AVAILABLE IN MORE COLLEGE CLASSROOMS

Partnerships, as well as NPR's own stature and reputation were vitally important to NPR's success. WBGO provides content for the Village Vanguard series, and a relationship with the Newport Jazz Festival will enrich NPR's live jazz offerings even further. NPR learned a great deal about covering festivals during its first collaboration with the Newport Jazz Festival in 2011, and in 2012, the station plans to introduce an even more robust technological infrastructure and expand editorial coverage, including more interviews with artists. In 2012, NPR and the Newport Jazz Festival expect to stream performances, provide more video and live chats, and collaborate on marketing. Clearly, NPR's stature and reach are key levers in establishing partnerships with festivals, other content providers, and individual artists. As a result, NPR did not report the same level of difficulty with licensing and copyright that some other grantees did, since many artists and venues are proactive in asking NPR to broadcast their music and videos.
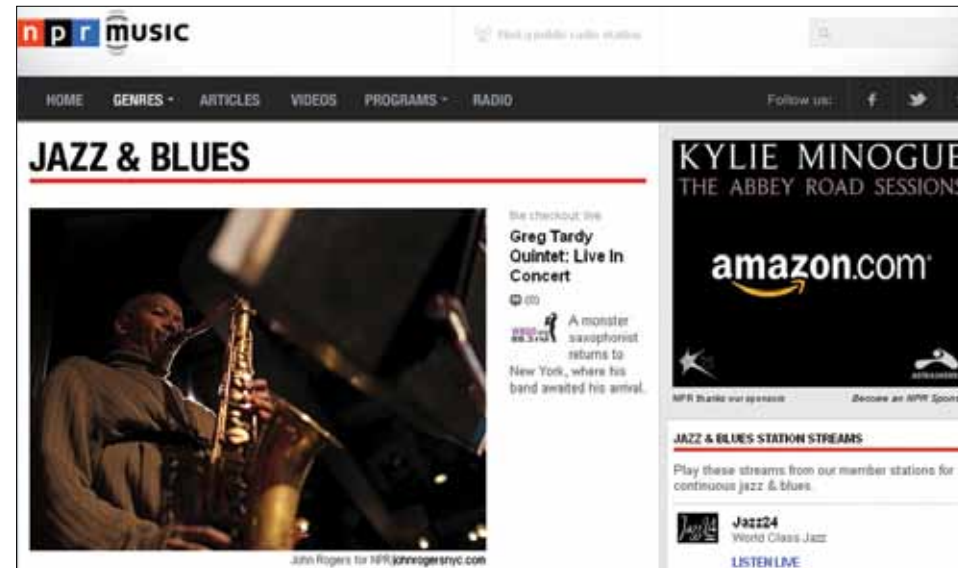
Working with affiliates is both an advantage and a challenge for NPR. Affiliates are important content providers, as well as important distribution channels. Yet different stations see their digital interactions with audiences differently, and even without the technological challenges, there are inherent philosophical questions. "Everybody has their own fiefdom," says Grundmann, "and everyone wants to own their own piece. We want to do big things, but there are always competing interests and different levels of understanding about what the platform can deliver and what the future could be." She goes on to say, "Sometimes in the arts we simply want to create our own gardens – gardens that we can own and cultivate – but content has to travel, and maybe we all need to realize that sometimes we are not the best keepers of our own gardens. For me, the basic question has to be, 'How can you make it possible for people to engage with your work?'"

For Grundmann and others at NPR, NPR Music has the potential to redefine how people think of digital space. For a long time, she says, people thought about digital space in a transactional way – a place to market or sell something (such as tickets or merchandise) or to develop an organizational brand. NPR, however, likes to see its digital space as a "context platform" in which there are a number of other platforms (interviews, streaming, blogs, etc.) to connect with audiences. "*This* is our venue," says Grundmann, "It is an experiential platform in itself, not a way to connect to another platform like the radio or a concert hall. This is an entirely new way to think about digital space, and we are really curious now about how these principles might change how people think about and use actual physical space."

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF COMMUNITY BROADCASTERS: A *"COOL HEAP OF METADATA"*

HTTP://WWW.NFCB.ORG

Founded in 1975, the National Federation of Community Broadcasters (NFCB) is a grassroots alliance of over 200 noncommercial radio stations, producers and related organizations committed to a local, diverse and mission-driven public radio — often in communities that are not served by mainstream media. Forty percent of NFCB's members serve rural communities, and 50 percent of member stations are owned or operated by people of color. NFCB advocates for public policy, funding and resources on behalf of its members, while providing services to strengthen community broadcasters. NFCB publishes a variety of resources for its members, including *The Public Radio Legal Handbook*, *Guide to Underwriting*, the *Rural Program Directors Manual*, and *Digital Audiocraft*, among others, and serves as a convener through its Annual Community Radio Conference.

THE ISSUE

For NFCB, the problem was clear: The recording industry had collapsed, thousands of record stores had closed, and jazz – which always had claimed a small market share – was being pushed further to the margins. Yet despite cries of cataclysm, NFCB saw an opportunity. "Jazz lives on public radio," says NFCB President Maxie C. Jackson III, "and it is still the dominant format on 70 public stations throughout the country, as well as claiming a smaller presence on hundreds of multi-format stations." What NFCB member stations needed was new capacity – particularly around the use of digital technology – to help them keep up with the demands of the rapidly advancing digital environment. With more and more artists moving to digital recording and distribution in order to survive, Jackson believed that the need was critical and the moment to act had arrived.

When Jackson took over as President in January 2010, NFCB had already applied for a planning grant through Jazz.NEXT. When the grant was awarded, NFCB convened nine premier noncommercial jazz stations from throughout the United States to explore their needs.[23] What NFCB learned, Jackson says, was eye-opening. Stations told NCFB that their biggest obstacle to maneuvering effectively in the digital age was the collection and storage of jazz metadata. For them, this meant historical information about the music itself – artist names, song titles, recording studios, and anecdotal histories, among other information. As the musical record of the art form, metadata is vital for programmers wanting to present jazz in thoughtful and engaging ways. Yet most stations were forced to turn to aging programmers and hosts for this information – a practice that would not serve over time and that placed the vitality of jazz programming at risk.

[23] NFCB was the only organization among the Jazz.NEXT cohort to receive a planning grant.

To preserve jazz oral and written history, and to promote the growth of jazz stations, the field needed a customized metadata library. While some resources did exist, Jackson says they were inadequate or ineffective in meeting the needs of NFCB's members. Existing metadata collection efforts by the Library of Congress' SONIC (Sound Online Inventory and Catalog), musicbrainz.org, and Smithsonian Jazz were incomplete, according to Jackson, and commercial services like alljazz.com were too costly for stations to afford. NFCB's answer was **Jazz InfoVault**.

THE PROJECT

Jackson envisioned **Jazz InfoVault** as a national metadata library for jazz stations – a digital jazz encyclopedia – with two major functions: to serve as a repository for historical information stored in text, audio and video formats; and to be a bank for station programmers to draw on when developing their online content and on-air programming. When fully realized, **Jazz InfoVault** would allow programmers to search its digital libraries for songs emphasizing a specific lyrical content or subject matter, cross-reference artists with studio musicians and sidemen, locate date-specific information on tracks and artists, and link to online content. Jazz stations also would be able to use their own websites to connect playlists to images, audio and video clips, and

other online references. Programmers would be able to collaborate with one another, sharing their proprietary knowledge through the database network. The ultimate goals, says Jackson, were to deepen stations' engagement with their audiences and to preserve and advance jazz in markets across the country.

NFCB's survey of leading stations confirmed that there was a big appetite for such a resource. When asked, for example, which sites they used to find information about jazz, stations identified allmusic.com, allaboutjazz.com, Wikipedia, and Google as their top four choices. Since Wikipedia and Google are not jazz-focused search engines, there was an obvious opportunity for someone to fill the void. Response to the idea was enthusiastic. Writing in *Current*, Mike Janssen called **Jazz InfoVault** the "hottest, coolest heap o' metadata."[24]

It was a big ambition and an even bigger undertaking. Knowing full well the scope of the project and the demands it would place on his organization, Jackson took on the role of project manager himself, noting that his participation would validate **Jazz InfoVault** as a key institutional priority. NFCB's initial work involved back-end and website designs, and with the help of Jazz.NEXT, NFCB engaged Modular Media and Bella Lane Designs to do this work. Working on an accelerated four-month timeline that began in July 2011, the project team selected a design for the front-end landing page,[25] finalized the database design, completed coding for **Jazz InfoVault's** back end, designed and tested the search functionality of the site, set up the project on a remote server, and developed data entry protocols.

Jackson also understood the value of prototyping, and NFCB is using its Jazz.NEXT grant to pilot **Jazz InfoVault** with the nine stations that participated in the planning survey.[26] In preparation for the initial test, staff loaded content for 100 tracks from lists of "Top 100 Albums" submitted by three radio stations. They began by inputting data for the albums that appeared on all three lists (there was remarkably little overlap) and then added additional albums from the submitted lists. Once 100 tracks are loaded, staff will begin researching links to reviews and other material. In the meantime, they are using links to Wikipedia, musicbrainz, allmusic, allaboutjazz, and discogs, among others. "It is amazing," they say, "how different details like time of cuts and even catalog numbers are among different sources… what a job it will be to actually develop an accurate, definitive metadata database. It sure doesn't exist now, and it will be a great service if we can pull it off."

One interesting aspect of the project was the collaboration that developed between NFCB and Manchester Craftsmen's Guild (MCG). MCG had spent six months automating and debugging an import/export function that would allow allaboutjazz.com to pull data from its system and automatically deliver it to MCG's new platform.[27] MCG's work was a definite benefit to NFCB, since, as Jazz.NEXT program evaluator Jonathan Peizer noted, "NFCB will absolutely need an automated data interface if it does not expect to enter every new record by hand." Because MCG's catalog data was not always entered consistently, NFCB staff needed to clean up the records and change the file format but once that work is done, NFCB should be able to automate the parsing and input of those records.

SURPRISES

Jazz InfoVault was clearly a compelling idea, but the project got off to a rough start. Between November 2010 and January 2011, NFCB suffered a near financial collapse. As a result, the organization experienced severe capacity issues that jeopardized its ability to move ahead with **Jazz InfoVault** on the timeline originally projected. Jackson was forced to lay off staff, including the project director, and to raise funds to close the budget gap. For a period of time, Jackson served as NFCB president, chief fundraiser, and **Jazz InfoVault** project director – enough responsibility to stretch even the most energetic and competent leader. Once sufficient funds were raised to stabilize operations, however, he was able to contract with an outside development consultant and devote himself to **Jazz InfoVault**. While the financial crisis was threatening, it was by no means debilitating, and Jackson

> "EACH STATION WILL HAVE AT THEIR PROGRAMMERS' FINGERTIPS A POWERFUL RESOURCE THAT WILL ALLOW THEM TO PRESENT BETTER PROGRAMS, EDUCATE THEIR AUDIENCE MORE WIDELY, AND CONNECT THEIR BROADCAST CONTENT INTO ONLINE PRESENTATIONS."
>
> — MAXIE JACKSON, PRESIDENT, NFCB

says it enabled the organization to narrow and focus its priorities more strategically and to link **Jazz InfoVault** more closely to NFCB's mission. In addition, Jackson's new role (as mentioned earlier) had a powerful influence on the institution's commitment to the project.

Jackson says his biggest surprise was actually the project itself. He knew that stations needed significant help in converting their existing CD and vinyl libraries. Beyond that, however, they needed support that would improve their ability to accept and use music presented in digital form, and to use technology to access more jazz artists, present new music, and store and distribute that music though multiple platforms. As Jackson says, "Most public radio jazz stations – traditionally offering some of the best

[24] Janssen, Mike. *Jazz InfoVault plans the hottest, coolest heap o' metadata*. November 29, 2010.

[25] NFCB circulated three options to the nine participating stations and allowed them to vote on their preferred design.

[26] NFCB's grant will not conclude until 2012, so some major activities are still underway.

[27] MCG's *Jazz Information Commons* was conceived as an interactive website to enable visitors to support jazz through live performance, purchases of recorded projects, social networking and advocacy. MCG's work through Jazz.NEXT involved the development and implementation of presenter and consumer interfaces.

opportunities to connect emerging and independent artists with audiences – do not have the infrastructure or the training to access, catalog and store digital music." As a result, he thought NFCB's Jazz.NEXT project would be an audio-based effort to develop a unified system for digitizing jazz. The enormity of such a project was overwhelming.

What NFCB found in talking with member stations was that they really wanted metadata. This, too, was a huge challenge, but Jackson felt it was inherently more manageable and potentially more beneficial. "The project changed because we learned something very important early on," Jackson says. "One of the big things missing in jazz presentation is that we don't promote and celebrate the music or its legacy. We just throw everything into the mix and let it happen. We are not programming in ways that create best practices in the creation of fans. Metadata can help with that."

OUTCOMES AND LEARNING

NFCB experienced repeated delays in its project, resulting primarily from depleted staffing and lack of financial resources. "Once the funds for consultants ran out," says Jackson, "so did our ability to move the project forward." NFCB hopes to proceed with testing in 2012 in order to determine the value of the pilot site. Jackson sees a number of compelling possibilities, including collecting oral histories of jazz historians, programmers and producers. He wants to bring record labels on board, too. "We need all of their database information," he says," but we have to court them and convince them that what we are doing is functional and valuable."

The biggest question, of course, is where **Jazz InfoVault** will live. Although it could provide a new revenue stream for NFCB, Jackson isn't certain that NFCB is the right organization to own it. Once testing is complete, Jackson says the next step will be to seek additional funding to support the project or transfer it to a partner station capable of moving things forward. Already some radio stations are jockeying for position, and universities offer another possible home. "The bottom line for me is that we get it up," Jackson says, "but the next six months will involve a major strategic planning process, and we'll have to answer that question." The sustainability of **Jazz InfoVault** and the usefulness of all its "hot, cool metadata" will depend on the answer.

DAVE DOUGLAS/GREENLEAF MUSIC: *"ONE FOR ALL…"*

HTTPS://WWW.GREENLEAFMUSIC.COM

Since he began his solo career in the early 1990's, Dave Douglas has been widely recognized as one of the most original jazz artists of his generation. With more than 400 compositions and 35 recordings, Douglas is a prolific innovator. He was nominated for Grammy Awards in 2003 and 2006, and the *DownBeat* Critics Poll named him Trumpeter of the Year from 2000-2009 and Composer of the Year from 2000-2002. He received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2005. Douglas regularly reaches outside the wide umbrella of his own extensive composition and performance, collaborating with artists across genres and styles.

Not only is Douglas a gifted trumpeter and composer, he also operates his own record label (Greenleaf Music), which he founded in 2005. Greenleaf Music releases Douglas' own recordings, as well as recordings by other unique artists in the jazz idiom. Douglas is also Director of the Workshop in Jazz and Creative Music at Canada's Banff Centre, and Director of the Festival of New Trumpet Music, which he co-founded in 2003. By providing a platform for emerging artists and creative pioneers, the festival – like all Douglas' efforts – reflects his commitment to exploring the relationship among musical genres, to promoting education and artistic collaborations, and, above all, to supporting his fellow artists.

THE ISSUE

For the most part, jazz artists are on their own these days when it comes to disseminating their work and connecting with their fans. Douglas has always been at the forefront of artists who record and distribute their own music, and he is one of the few jazz artists who have embraced the innovative possibilities of technology. For three years, Greenleaf's website and Douglas' own website existed independently, but in 2008 Douglas imported his own website to Greenleaf. By then, Douglas and Greenleaf were aggressively pursuing digital applications, creating innovative methods for distributing, promoting and marketing his music, including digital albums, a digital store, and a blog, among others. Douglas offers music for purchase in two digital formats: the traditional and common MP3 (but at a higher quality than iTunes, Rhapsody, Emusic, Amazon, and others) and FLAC, a lossless digital format that is equivalent to CD quality at about half the space.[28] Digital sales account for approximately 60 percent of Douglas' sales in Greenleaf's store and 25 percent of his total worldwide sales on current releases.

Douglas also offers an innovative subscription package that allows his followers to receive new releases and direct access to him and other Greenleaf artists by paying a small yearly fee. He believes this is a critical factor in building fan loyalty. Douglas' fan-based approach was serving him well, but when it came time to update his website and store in 2010, he and his former manager, Ben Levin, were already thinking of new

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[28] Douglas says that to his knowledge, he is the first artist to offer FLAC files directly.

opportunities. In fact, they had a very big dream. Understanding the obstacles artists were facing in the digital environment, Douglas and Levin wanted to create multiple fan-engagement platforms based on Douglas' successful web-based distribution and promotional model. Jazz.NEXT gave them the additional resources they needed to design solutions that would serve not only Douglas, but countless other artists as well.

THE PROJECT

"There are a lot of ways to quietly or not so quietly build up your audience," says music journalist Anil Prasad, "and if you're willing to do the work it's a really great thing. If you're not willing to do the work, you have a problem on your hands."[29] Doing the work has never been one of Douglas' problems, and he believed his experience with technology could be a good resource for others. "Jazz artists don't like technology very much," says Levin, and he began working with Douglas to design a four-platform approach: stand-alone applications for mobile devices; upgrades to Greenleafmusic.com to allow for more intuitive information management; the integration of social media sites to facilitate greater communication between artists and fans; and an open-source database to allow other artists to use these technologies easily and effectively. In the end, what they wanted most of all was something that would be so easy for others to use that it would demolish barriers for artists who were uncomfortable in digital space. This, they believed, "would build a stronger and more connected jazz community." Levin says, "We wanted to do as much free-coding as possible so that other artists could use it."

In conceiving the project, Douglas and Levin didn't want to create an entirely new platform, but rather to "repurpose" existing platforms and integrate them more seamlessly. "To our knowledge," says Douglas, "there is no competing or complete open-source, free-information jazz site community for both artists and fans." There are sites that offer artist templates that the artist can use and update, but they do not allow artists to sell their music directly from the site digitally, nor are they "simple and intuitive enough to let artists control not only their own space, but also the other spaces on the Internet where current and potential audiences interact." There are also social aggregators that update social networking pages instantly – but from outside the artist's website. Douglas and Levin wanted a customized and creative solution – one that would add their own "personal touch" to the technology. The plan was to make the application available first to Greenleaf artists and then to others.

Douglas and Levin took on a lot of work in a short period of time, but they made considerable progress. Early on, they had to upgrade the Greenleaf server to ensure proper content delivery for users of the website, the mobile site and the mobile applications. They also had to solve open-source plug-in issues, notably simplifying the process of propagating and linking messages across as many platforms as possible. Finally, they needed a mobile site media player that would work on all browsers and mobile device platforms and systems.

With this work accomplished, the new Dave Douglas/Greenleaf website was launched successfully in the summer of 2011. The site now offers users the ability to download music and sheet music more easily, to stream and download content via the new Cloud Player, and to browse the Greenleaf catalog more quickly and efficiently. A new CD Library function to help maintain the artist catalog has been completed, and coding for the shared Wordpress open-source plug-in is nearly finished as well. Mobile applications for both the iPhone and the iPad were approved by Apple and can be downloaded from iTunes. In the end, Levin says, they invested extra time and energy in customizing the

iPad app in order to better accommodate downloading of music and lead sheets.

The open-source template for other artists to upload their content is the clear driver behind Greenleaf's vision, and the final step in the process will be to complete the plug-ins and conduct the beta test and launch. In addition, Douglas and Levin are writing a 'how to' manual so everything will be easy for artists to understand. "We're still in the middle of this," says Levin, "and the work will continue for some time. The key thing is that other artists will be able to use this. That was a big motivation for us. It's such a huge occurrence when an artist gets a grant like this, and it has taken the longest because it's got to be right."

SURPRISES

The big surprise – and frustration – in the project so far has been the complexity surrounding the development of mobile applications. Because of Apple's restrictions, Greenleaf had to remove links to artist websites in order to gain approval for its apps. The Cloud Player wasn't functional on the app as Levin and Douglas had originally hoped it would be, and they now are hosting the Cloud Player on Greenleaf's website. "We got a little hung up on that," Levin says, "and lost some time, but now people can come to the website, pay a small fee, and stream anything the label has ever released." Levin does not regret the additional time, saying, "We really had to do all this work at once. We couldn't have just done the app by itself because it was so integral to everything else. We had to gut and redesign the website so we could figure out how the app would work."

Development of artist apps on the Android platform turned out to be too expensive for the project – increasing from an original bid of $8,000 to $22,000 – and while Levin says he expects they will pursue the Android app in due time, the resources that had been allocated for Android were shifted to support iPad design, the open-source platform and plug-ins. "They just have a bigger potential for impact," Levin says.

[29] Lang, Joe. Anil Prasad: Inner Views, Borderless Perspectives. allaboutjazz.com. December 28, 2010.

The pressure to keep up with rapid changes in technology was no surprise to Douglas and Levin, but they admit that continuing upgrades and advancements in technology, as well as the relentless shift to cloud computing, cost them some time. Levin comments, "We could have used help negotiating the technical complexities of the project. A good technology consultant would have eliminated some trial and error."

OUTCOMES AND LEARNING

Douglas and Levin are enthusiastic about what they've accomplished so far. "One of the cool things that came out of this," says Levin, "is that Dave created a 'digital only' series that put artists together who don't normally play together and let people stream it." The new platform opens up a new range of artistic possibilities, but it is also building Douglas' visibility. The number of subscribers to the site has increased by 30 percent, and 492 subscribers use the new mobile player. Helped along by the exclusive "first listens" of Douglas' most recent titles, the Cloud Player is one of the top five "most viewed pages" at Greenleaf Music. "First listens" to Douglas' release of *Orange Afternoons* produced the largest single-day traffic in company/artist history, and a recent digital release reached Number One as an iTunes download.

At the same time, Levin says, it's interesting to watch the behavior of the current fan base in relation to technology, and he adds that there is still a "pretty big resistance to the digital platform among jazz consumers." Despite the success on iTunes, for example, few people bought the release in digital format, and Douglas is now offering it physical format. Levin acknowledges that it will take time for the momentum to shift, but he and Douglas are not sitting still. "When we imported the website in 2008, Facebook was still a relatively new phenomenon, the iPhone had just been released, and Twitter didn't even exist. Looking at all this, we definitely saw the need for a single-destination place for all our content, but technology changes so rapidly. We don't know what will come next, but we have to be ready."

BERKLEE COLLEGE OF MUSIC AND SAVANNAH MUSIC FESTIVAL: EDUCATION 24/7

HTTP://WWW.BERKLEEJAZZ.ORG
HTTP://WWW.SWINGCENTRALJAZZ.ORG

BERKLEE COLLEGE OF MUSIC (BERKLEE) WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1945 AS ONE OF THE FIRST SCHOOLS IN THE UNITED STATES TO TEACH JAZZ.[30] TODAY, BERKLEE SERVES APPROXIMATELY 4,000 STUDENTS, ENGAGES A FACULTY OF 500, AND OFFERS 12 PERFORMANCE AND NONPERFORMANCE MAJORS. SOME OF THE COUNTRY'S MOST INFLUENTIAL JAZZ FIGURES HAVE STUDIED AT BERKLEE, INCLUDING QUINCY JONES, BRANFORD MARSALIS, PAT METHENEY, JOE LOVANO, AND ESPERANZA SPALDING. ANNUALLY, BERKLEE PRODUCES THE ONE-DAY *BERKLEE HIGH SCHOOL JAZZ FESTIVAL* WHERE HIGH SCHOOL BIG BANDS, COMBOS AND VOCAL JAZZ ENSEMBLES PERFORM AND COMPETE FOR $175,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS TO BERKLEE'S SUMMER PROGRAMS. IN 2010, THE FESTIVAL FEATURED MORE THAN 3,000 STUDENTS AND 200 BANDS.

The Savannah Music Festival (Savannah) – which was founded more than 20 years ago to attract tourists during the winter season – is widely recognized as one of the country's leading cross-genre music festivals. Like Berklee College of Music, Savannah is dedicated to jazz education. Through its *Swing Central High School Jazz Band Competition & Workshop*, Savannah provides instruction to 12 high school jazz bands annually. Selected competitively from an average national applicant pool of 60 bands, participating bands work with *Swing Central* clinicians in their home communities, and then travel to Savannah for a three-day workshop during the festival where jazz faculty work with more than 300 young musicians through break-out sessions, improvisation clinics, master classes and jam sessions. In a hugely popular culminating event, *Swing Central* bands compete for artistic prestige and recognition, as well as for monetary awards to support their school's jazz program.

THE ISSUE

Berklee and Savannah faced a similar challenge. Both had extremely successful festivals, workshop and competition programs for students that were in high demand among high schools nationally; they engaged a highly respected faculty; and they either had a substantial archive of teaching resources or the ability to build one. Both, however, saw a missed opportunity. Berklee's festival is a one-day event, and *Swing Central* lasts for just three days. Given the large and increasing demand for these programs, the two institutions began thinking about leveraging their resources and expanding the reach of their education programs. Technology, they both knew, was the way to build a 24/7 jazz education platform and to transfer learning from the festivals to the nation. From their efforts came berkleejazz.org and swingcentraljazz.org.

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[30] The school was founded as Schillinger House. It became Berklee School of Music in 1954 and in 1970 changed its name to Berklee College of Music.

THE PROJECTS

Berklee and Savannah both imagined a vigorous platform that would give high school jazz band instructors, musicians and others across the country access to an array of online instructional experiences led by their respective faculties; provide information about participating bands; highlight outstanding high school bands and instructors; and provide opportunities for social networking among their participating communities. They even used similar language to describe their goals. Berklee wanted to create a "cyber association" of high school jazz instructors – a "year-round web community… that would engage jazz communities, distribute educational materials, and exchange ideas about jazz performance." Savannah sought to "digitally document and disseminate the creative and academic work of jazz artists, enhance communication between students and teachers, and connect members of the jazz community with each other." Both organizations had similar visions and compelling content around which to build their platforms, but they took two different paths to achieve their aims.

Initially, Savannah grappled with how to use the more generic social networking sites like Facebook and integrate them into the *Swing Central* website, ultimately deciding to create a moderated Facebook group for the project. Prior to the 2010 festival, band directors from the 12 participating bands began administering their band's profile on a *Swing Central* microsite; student musicians created their own profiles, linking to their band's page and enabling them to access all instructional and performance content and discussion threads.

For all practical purposes, Savannah began its project with no archival audio and video content of its own, requiring the organization to build the new site from scratch. The organization hired a video crew from the Center for New American Media in New York to accompany faculty clinicians Wycliffe Gordon and Marcus Printup on pre-festival visits to Pennsylvania (State College High School) and Florida (Dillard Center for the Arts Jazz Band) in February 2010, where they worked with two of the festival's participating bands.[31] During the festival itself, Savannah filmed 12 clinician interviews, audio concert material, and concert footage – including a five-camera shoot of the *Swing Central* finale and the *All-Star Swing Summit*.[32]

In all, Savannah gathered 55 hours of video content for editing and posting on the website. For the sake of efficiency – and to create the greatest possible impact – they decided to complete all the initial profiles, clinician video lessons and artist interviews prior to unveiling the new website rather than posting elements one at a time, and *Swing Central Jazz* was officially launched in September 2010. The organization continues to build its content in all areas, including edited video lessons (49 – up from zero), additional interviews, and video captured at the 2011 festival. Because of the popularity of the webcasts and continuing streaming of 2010 *Swing Central* performances, Savannah expanded its webcasts in 2011 to include the festival's competition rounds.

Research and feedback from band directors informed many of Savannah's web development decisions, according to Rob Gibson, Executive and Artistic Director. For example, the organization opted to offer *Swing Central Jazz* video lessons through multiple streams (YouTube and Vimeo and as Quicktime downloads) for classroom use since many schools have firewalls blocking YouTube access. In addition, the demand for more web curriculum led Savannah to hire Jim Ketch (University of North Carolina's

Director of Jazz Studies) to help frame the web content with supporting materials and a *Swing Central* teaching method. The impact of the teaching tools is being magnified in unexpected ways as several *Swing Central Jazz* clinicians are already using the video lesson content on their own websites.

Berklee College of Music is the largest music college in the world. Larry Bethune serves as Vice President for Student Affairs at the College, as well as Executive Director of the *Berklee High School Jazz Festival*. He admits that the Jazz.NEXT grant came as a bit of a surprise to the festival staff. "Berklee is kind of like a centipede," says Bethune, "and the festival is not in an academic area. The grant was initiated by the provost's office, and when we learned about it, the reaction was mixed. We wondered, 'What if we build something we can't sustain?'" Bethune's worry was a realistic one. Because Berklee is built almost completely on a tuition model, there is general resistance to creating programs that cannot be supported through earned revenue.

At the same time, Bethune saw the possibilities – and the need. With the demise of the International Association for Jazz Educators, he thought Berklee could fill a key role in replacing some important services to jazz educators. Yet the festival itself was small – with a budget of just $300,000 – and its most visible activity was compressed into a single day. Only through technology could Bethune hope to achieve his vision of a national and international cyber-association of students and educators. While the College was committed to supporting the festival itself, there were no extra resources to invest in even the most elemental technology solution, such as developing a comprehensive website. The festival had a Facebook page and a dedicated web page accessible through the College's website, but nothing more.

Berklee got off to a somewhat slower start than Savannah primarily due to delays in hiring a project manager. Ultimately as important as identifying the appropriate project director, Berklee hired four of its students who Bethune describes as "whizzes" at site design and maintenance and abandoned plans to build a totally new and robust platform in favor of integrating berkleejazz.org with Facebook and other social media. This turned out to be extraordinarily beneficial to the project, and according to Jazz.NEXT evaluator Jonathan Peizer, "The focus on process, student participation, and combining existing social network platforms with the revamped website constitute the real innovation in this project." Bethune agrees, saying he sees the very real skills of students every day.

Did a light bulb go off for Bethune about the potential advantages of using students to manage the online community and help build content? "No, he says, "not everyone came to this at the same time. Some people were afraid of students. We are a *college*, after all, and some students have very advanced skill levels. Frankly, this terrified and threatened some people." The key to overcoming resistance, says Bethune, is to help the people running the project better understand how content management systems work. "We want them to learn the essentials," he says, "not to *do* the content development, but to understand just enough to help them lose their fear. This is the only way we'll keep the project going." Bethune adds that Berklee will not replace the project web designer when the grant ends, but instead will continue to use students to "build rich content and community."

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[31] Savannah faculty visits all 12 selected bands in February of each year to provide instruction on improving sound/intonation, rhythmic precision/articulation, jazz conception, and soloist techniques.

[32] Savannah conducted clinician interviews in each of the four areas tagged on the website: practice, performance, rehearsal and inspiration

Despite some early delays, Berklee made considerable progress. There are frequent blog posts on the website, as well as a *News and Community* feature that includes interviews with Berklee faculty, high school music directors, festival participants, and Berklee students who got their start at the festival. The team began a regular electronic newsletter, started producing a series of clinics featuring faculty member Phil Wilson, offered live coverage and blogging from the 2011 Berklee Beantown Jazz Festival, posted video of the 2011 festival winners showcase, and completed its interactive online registration system. "*Berklee Jazz* has the feeling of a hometown newspaper even though it's national," Bethune says. "That's how we get kids to look at it and then dig into the educational content." *Berklee Jazz* began as a site designed for high school participants in the festival, but now, Bethune says, he wants to find ways to reach out to college students. "It's totally open," he says. "Anyone can – and does – join."

SURPRISES

Both Savannah and the Berklee have small staffs, and overcoming this challenge was central to both their efforts. While Berklee found a pleasant and surprising resource in its students, Savannah discovered it had to increase staff training in video processing, web development and audio recording. In addition, production and education staff had to learn cutting-edge digital editing programs. "That is a good thing," says Gibson, adding, "This training will have a positive on marketing and other new media work within the organization."

The biggest surprise (and challenge) for Savannah, Gibson says, was the discovery that the HD video files they were amassing required a huge amount of storage space. "This was new to us," he says, "and while you can back things up in the Cloud, we felt we really needed the stuff onsite." In the end, Savannah had to purchase an additional server. "The project took us three months longer because of this, and cost us some additional money, but that's not the end of the world," Gibson adds. In response to the need for larger file capacity, Savannah integrated more storage with back-up systems. The content in this hard-disk space can be accessed through a new asset manager that will allow footage to be searched and sorted. "This will streamline the process for our design and marketing team, web development, and radio production," says Gibson.

Berklee's challenge was more institutional. Although the festival is small in relation to Berklee College, and is staffed by "can-do people," according to Bethune, this project was not part of the College's well-established strategic planning process. "That was a challenge," says Bethune. "We have a formula for planning that takes thousands of ideas and streamlines them into 14 strategic initiatives. Because we were working with something that wasn't part of the established process, it took a big effort to work it through the institutional culture." Now that things are up and running, Bethune says he has encountered another unexpected obstacle. "We have lots of ideas, but even the simplest idea takes so much work," he says. "Resistance is normal. If I change one thing in the curriculum, I break threads all over the place. "

OUTCOMES AND LEARNING

Both Savannah and Berklee have been successful, in part because both organizations adapted their ambitions to their capacity. As Peizer says, "Had Berklee used students to build a sophisticated end-to-end platform like the one in Savannah… the issue of long-term maintenance may well have proved nightmarish as the original developers graduated and other volunteers – all with their own ideas – took their place."

Just one month after integrating berkleejazz.org with Facebook, the *Berklee High School Jazz Festival* Fan page increased from 50 to over 2,900 fans, and the festival posts frequently on Facebook as a way to drive people to the festival's website. Since Savannah launched swingcentraljazzz.org, the site has had more than 1,500 unique visitors and nearly 5,500 page views. Both organizations have built (and are continuing to build) significant content, they have begun building a dedicated online community, and they have increased staff capacity around technology.

The challenge, both leaders say, is in maintaining what they have built, and they have learned a great deal about what this means. "We thought the grant was a lot of money," says Savannah's Gibson, "We spent everything on the website, but it's costly to keep it up to date." Bethune agrees that keeping the site fresh is critical. "When you have a 24/7 operation, you have to keep people constantly engaged. Expanding from one day to 365 days with an international presence – this is the hard work. Technology is only the first step. Then you have to market the site effectively to keep coming back." He suggests that *Berklee Jazz* is not far enough along in building its online community and that the organization needs to stop building things on the website and focus on this. "We have started a series of ten-minute interviews with high school jazz band teachers about their favorite tips for running the band, but we need to have 30 of these in the can to serve the anticipated demand. And that's just the beginning." Gibson adds, "We are a tight-knit group devoted to the project, but content development is a challenge for us. "Kids want to click and see something new each time."

Bethune and Gibson stress that there have been powerful outcomes of their projects that go beyond innovative uses of technology. Bethune, not surprisingly, is proud of the way Berklee students are beginning to own the community-building effort, and he hopes to raise additional funds to keep a graduate student employed part-time to work on building energy among the project team. Gibson notes the buzz Marcus Roberts created when he came to talk about artistic vision. "Here's a blind artist who has never seen a website," says Gibson, "and his input produced the four key sections of our site: practice, rehearsal, performance and inspiration." Another unexpected outcome of Savannah's project was a documentary that came out of the 2010 advance visits to participating bands. When the film crew came back from Florida, Gibson says, they told him, "We've got this unbelievable footage, and we think we could make a film." To Gibson's surprise, Savannah quickly raised an additional $10,000 for the 40-minute documentary *You Got to Swing*. "That moment of seeing how people reacted to the film was so uplifting," he says.[33]

[33] The Dillard Arts Center Jazz Band ended up winning the 2010 Festival. The film has been screened at numerous film festivals, and Gibson notes it has become an incredible marketing tool for the Festival.

Observations and Reflections for the Field

Projects through Jazz.NEXT grew from two discrete, but equally legitimate, motivations. Program evaluator Jonathan Peizer notes that some organizations focused on using technology primarily to promote their own institutional goals, programs and brands; others combined a similar organizational strategy with creating training and platforms that others could use as well. Grantees also employed the technology itself in fundamentally different ways. Some organizations concentrated on building entirely new technology platforms, such as online sites and mobile applications, while others preferred to use existing public social media platforms as the principal vehicle for achieving their project goals. Of course, one approach does not preclude the other, and those who developed new platforms also used social media in often remarkable ways.

The experience of Jazz.NEXT grantees offers significant insight into the field's technology needs, and it suggests a number of pitfalls for organizations to consider when undertaking technology initiatives. Following are some of the key lessons for the field, as well as some larger questions and implications emerging from the program.

KEY ISSUES AND LEARNING

TIME AS A CRITICAL RESOURCE

With some notable exceptions – like National Public Radio, the Savannah Music Festival, and the Jazz Journalists Association – organizations discovered it took longer to complete their projects than they originally imagined. There were a number of reasons for this. Sometimes the issue (and therefore the program design) turned out to be different than the organization originally believed, as in the case of the National Federation of Community Broadcasters. In other cases, delays occurred because of internal obstacles, financial challenges, staff capacity, rights issues, the need to learn more about how complex technologies work, rapid advances in technology that required organizations to rethink their approach, or even shifts in assumptions about the project itself. While content development was not really an issue for any organization, the time it took to assemble, edit and post content certainly was.

The time it took to develop mobile applications was a common frustration among grantees. In some cases (Dave Douglas and Greenleaf Music, for example), the desire to create flexibility and functionality for artists meant an initial rejection of their apps by Apple. In other cases, delays were related directly to the experience of the project manager. Mobile applications were relatively easy for NPR and Symphony Space, but not for others. For many, working with outside providers was especially challenging. Symphony Space used an outside provider, but had "a pretty tight project management process, as well as in-house technical support," says Peizer, who noted, "This was impressive as many organizations underestimate the amount of management required to use an outsourcing firm successfully." Even so, Symphony Space says the organization had to build a layer of web services on top of its current database in order to facilitate the creation of the apps, and "that took a few extra weeks."

For organizations not deeply immersed in technology – and generally without the staff resources they need to take on projects in-house – the mere complexity of the projects meant time lost in a "learn-as-you-go approach." A number of grantees said they often felt they were working through trial and error, and while they were glad for the learning experience, they regretted the time lost. As Monterey's Education Consultant, Dr. Rob Kleven says, "We are not a techno-phobic organization, but we are challenged, so it doesn't always come naturally." In fact, says Kleven, the creation of a customized content management system was one of their greatest challenges. "The complexity and scale of managing the *Digital Music Education Project's* 8,000 links created engineering problems (bugs) that took months to repair. In an environment where technology continues to change so rapidly, using time efficiently and productively will be critical for organizations to keep up."

INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY, RESOURCES AND AMBITION

Time lost to on-the-ground learning was one of the unanticipated costs of the limited technical capacity of some grantees. The need for high level human resources around design and management are also clear. So is the need for money. Using technology effectively is expensive over time. It requires a significant and ongoing investment in software and storage, as well as continuing content development and management, and marketing. Organizations need trained, savvy technology staff and/or the resources to work with third-party service providers.

Berklee appears to have circumvented some of these pressures by scaling down its expectations and using students to manage the social media platforms with which they are uniquely familiar. Many grantees noted the versatility and flexibility of the Facebook platform as a cost-effective alternative to building and maintaining their own platforms.

The National Federation of Community Broadcasters is evaluating opportunities to shift its project to an organization with adequate infrastructure to sustain it over the long-term. The Jazz Journalists Association mounted a relatively low-tech, low-cost project that produced admirable outcomes in relation to the investment, but knew from the beginning that its training program – which was well within the organization's capacity to do with the support of Jazz.NEXT – would end when the grant period was over, despite the high impact it produced. Potentially an easily transferable project, **eyeJAZZ** has not been picked up by another organization, and while its influence may continue for participants in the program, it is impossible to know how much further it might or could have spread. Even more important, the Jazz Journalists Association has yet to realize its ambition to affect the other side of its equation – the *demand* for exceptional video journalism.

The most successful organizations in the Jazz.NEXT cohort (like any program) were those that had a clear vision, intent and focus; a well-articulated strategy; knowledge of what it would take to be successful; the requisite resources to dedicate to the project; and a realistic understanding of their own institutional capacity. For some that fell short in one of more of these areas, they compensated with an intense and tireless determination to learn, an ability to amass resources and build ownership within the organization, and a nimbleness and flexibility that enabled them to adapt to the unexpected. In short, "their reach did not exceed their grasp."

It's easy, however, for an organization's ambitions outrun its capacity, and that can compromise results. No one, for example, can fault Manchester Craftsmen's Guild for its vision or integrity. MCG Jazz – which focuses on presenting jazz – has been a key component of the Guild since 1987. For 25 years, Executive Producer Marty Ashby has been "working to consolidate assets in the jazz community," and he imagined a *Jazz Information Commons* that would include a robust consumer interface. Working with jazz presenters throughout the United States, Ashby wanted to turn the volumes of data and media about past and future jazz performances into a living online repository of information. The organization's aspirations were laudable, but as Ashby noted, "The complexities in creating automated feeds from multiple, disparate partners were greater than we anticipated, and aggregating information into one database required a more nuanced understanding of the open-source format and its associated coding." One can hope that the recent progress MCG has made in tackling these issues will lead to the eventual realization of the project.

SUSTAINABILITY AND LONG-TERM IMPACT

It's too early to know what will be the long-term impact of the Jazz.NEXT projects. Smaller organizations may have trouble keeping up with the demands of content development and evolving technology, but on the other hand, they may benefit from the fact that their projects are closely entwined with the organization's core activities, making it easier for them to get the resources they need. Savannah Music Festival's *Swing Central Jazz*, for example, is deeply integrated into the larger organization because jazz education is such a key strategy. Some projects live as discrete initiatives within larger institutions, and project managers may have difficulty embedding them unless they are already clearly and organically linked to existing initiatives (like Symphony Space and NPR), rely on internal resources (like Berklee), or create capacity for other parts of the organization (like Savannah's *Swing Central Jazz*).

As a general rule, solidifying institutional support for participation in a major endeavor like Jazz.NEXT is critical to a project's sustainability. The Walker Art Center team, for example, created excellent content and opportunities for its jazz audiences to engage

more deeply with jazz, but they admit they did not exploit their efforts as well as they might have. "We had hoped to partner with the new media department," the team says, "but institutional priorities prevented this from happening because the department was engrossed in a redesign of the entire Walker website." At the same time, the Walker team says its Jazz.NEXT experience "reinforced the importance and effectiveness of inter-departmental partnerships in communicating messages about Walker Jazz and all programmatic threads."

CRITICAL QUESTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

In many ways, what grantees learned through Jazz.NEXT was not surprising: aggressive technology initiatives (and even small ones) place costly ongoing demands on institutional resources; technology changes rapidly, exacerbating the pressure on organizations to respond; and finding the balance between creating sufficient freedom to enable breakthrough designs and ensuring that there is adequate cooperation between technology experts and other staff can be challenging. So what should the field – along with the funders and service organizations that support it – be thinking about?

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

> There is a distinction between skill development and traditional capacity-building around technology (which the field clearly needs) and building the kind of adaptive capacity that will enable organizations to evolve in robust ways, particularly in their ability to embrace continued technological advancement. A number of projects demonstrated the value of iterative processes, including rapid prototyping, but how can this become part of daily life in organizations that don't yet have the capacity to be this nimble?[34]

> Using technology effectively – being aware of emerging trends and seeing how they might serve the organization – will require organizations to structure themselves differently, reset priorities, and change behavioral practices that impede rapid and timely decision-making. The importance of creating space for this kind of thinking within the institutional framework – relatively unencumbered by organizational bureaucracy – is critical. At the same time, there must be clear understanding about shared goals and desired outcomes, transparency among departments, and pathways to integrate technology initiatives seamlessly within the organization. This systems-based approach may be new for many organizations, and funders and service organizations can do much to increase institutional capacity in this area.

> Jazz.NEXT helped grantees make a big leap toward understanding and embracing technology as a core strategy, not just as simple add-ons to the tools they were already using for marketing and communication. Yet many are still "catching up," and the cost of technology remains a big obstacle. Unless organizations are large, they have to rely on outside providers – or scale down their expectations. In addition, their efforts are often disrupted by internal conflicts and pressures, such as financial problems, staff turnover, etc.

> Budgeting for technology support and upgrades (research and development, hardware, new applications, staffing, etc.) must become standard practice. Allocating resources to technology does not always mean the most cutting-edge applications; often it can mean simply that organizations have resources to implement best practices they observe in other organizations.

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[34] Although the grant period was not long enough (and did not intend) to include a prototyping component, the "trial and error" experience of many grantees suggest that it could be extremely beneficial as an institutional practice, provided organizations have the knowledge and resources to employ it. In a rapidly changing environment, prototyping may be much more effective than planning, for example.

> While the Jazz.NEXT grantees demonstrated increasing facility with the use of technology, competency was by no means consistent among them. If these organizations are the best examples of "capacity" in the field – whether defined by their ideas or their knowledge of technology – what does that mean for the rest of the field? What needs to happen to raise the field's general level of "readiness" to use technology in creative ways? Investments in training, technical support and other learning opportunities will likely be critically important.

RIGHT-SIZING

> "Right-sizing" is everything. The potential for large-scale innovation may exist in the field, but it is not likely to happen or continue without significant and strategic investments in organizations that have the capacity to follow through over the long term. Some projects – especially those that aim to manage a wide range of every-changing, robust and "digestible" content for consumers, or those that aggregate metadata – are just, by their nature, *big*. The danger is that these undertakings, however valuable, will be under-resourced, causing them to fall short of expectations and to wither away as the world continues to change.

> For the entire jazz field to play a role in building capacity through technology (and this would be a good thing), smaller creative experiments and the replication of best practices like those evidenced in many of the Jazz.NEXT projects are just as important as large-scale investment. Is there a way to think organically about how *all* the pieces – both large and small – fit together in a way that makes sense for both providers and users? For example, by linking artists, audiences and organizations together in virtual ways – many times over – it may be possible to create a new kind of infrastructure that will serve for years to come. Can lasting innovation be built more effectively one piece at a time? Perhaps Dave Douglas/Greenleaf Music – providing easy solutions to as many artists as possible – offers an answer.

> Funders, in particular, can best support the field's efforts by keeping a close eye on the scale of projects. Those who want to do large-scale projects will likely be more successful if they focus on large institutions with the internal knowledge and capacity to implement them effectively; at the other end of the spectrum, however, they can achieve cost-efficiency by investing more modestly in smaller organizations and individual artists, provided they work together to understand the real potential impact

of a project, the possible hidden costs that might be associated with long-term success, and the capacity of the artist or organization to do the work. High expectations coupled with under-investment will be devastating for any project, large or small.

TRANSFERRING LEARNING

> In seeking transformative (and immediate) achievements through technology, the field must close the gap between yesterday's solutions and tomorrow's trends. For learning around technology to have any meaning or transferability, it has to travel quickly through the field, and there are virtually no structures for that to happen. By the time an organization gets around to copying an innovation or imitating some best practice – especially if it means replicating something that requires significant resources – it is already too late. The answer, in part, may be to think smaller, and more incrementally. As several grantees demonstrated, using existing platforms (like Facebook) and customizing them for a particular purpose or audience, can be just as effective as building a new platform from scratch.

> Although the problems and issues the grantee cohort experienced were often quite similar, there was little sharing or collaboration among them. This is more an issue of time pressures (completing grants in a short amount of time), institutional demands, and the general isolation that exists in the field than anything else. At the same time, as some grantees demonstrated, strategic partnerships can create significant leverage when working with technology. What mechanisms – convening, technical assistance blogs, and others – might be used effectively to provide organizations with the tools and knowledge they need to maneuver through some of the technical issues identified through Jazz.NEXT? How could organizations be encouraged to share their knowledge and experiences more collaboratively?

THE INTERNAL VALUE EQUATION

> Technology is both a tool and a creative engine, and perceptions within organizations about the usefulness and impact of technology often vary widely. Does institutional attitude about technology need to change? Is there an inherent conflict between those highly gifted innovators within an organization and the institution itself? How can we bridge the gap between the creators – those who imagine, design and populate virtual space as a living platform in itself – and the tendency of organizations to see technology as simply an institutional advancement tool for promotion, fundraising, and/or branding? This probably means changing the value proposition in many of our organizations.

AUDIENCES

> Most of the Jazz.NEXT projects focused in one way or another on disseminating programming content and information to consumers. Even the projects in media and journalism were driven by a desire to give "gatekeepers" (writers and radio stations) better information to promote the art form. The unspoken question is the degree to which any of these efforts recruit new people to jazz or simply enrich the experience of those who already are deeply engaged. Achieving greater participation and commitment among the music's core audience is certainly an honorable and desirable outcome, but to truly build the infrastructure for jazz, the impact must be broader. While there is a large terrestrial audience for jazz on the radio (since stations are spread across the country), data on internet traffic seem to suggest that the same people are listening to everything. With the inexorable shift to online and mobile platforms as the primary means of communicating with the public, how can the efforts and investments being made by institutional and individual leaders in the field reach as broadly and deeply as possible, creating a consumption infrastructure that earns money for artists and the organizations that support them?

> Interestingly, there was feedback from some Jazz.NEXT grantees that jazz artists and their constituencies aren't comfortable using technology. Others, however, said that younger musicians and audiences are well versed in multiple applications – from composing to social media. This may suggest that there is a generational divide in the field that funders and service organizations might consider as a point of leverage for investment and support. What are the generational obstacles that need addressing in order to nurture greater capacity in the field among both artists and audiences?

Jazz.NEXT confirmed that there is an appetite in the jazz field for technology – an appetite that is shared by artists, media professionals, presenters, festivals, education institutions, service organizations, and consumers. Providers and users alike are hungry for information and for ways to interact with each other in unmediated ways. Even with a relatively modest investment, Jazz.NEXT produced some exceptional work, and the program certainly demonstrated the high level of creativity, dedication and intelligence that exists throughout the field.

Jazz.NEXT attracted and funded an admirable variety of organizations (presenters, festivals, media and service organizations, and educational institutions). A big question remains, however, about what it all means for the artists who make the music. Today's jazz is remarkably vital and diverse, and it is being transformed by the creative influence of artists working in a variety of styles and cultures and across multiple genres. Musicians coming out of training programs are playing with unprecedented technical proficiency. Nonetheless, jazz artists worry that as more and more talented and forward-thinking musicians enter the field, the audiences who spend money on their work in clubs, concert halls, record stores, and online are, at best, holding steady. In this context – and in today's decentralized environment – Dave Douglas/Greenleaf Music may be on the right track, putting the power directly in the hand of artists to build deep, reciprocal and lasting relationships with their fans. In the end, providing this kind of open access is the only way to ensure that the incredible diversity and vitality of the field thrives in the future. The degree to which the other projects – large and small – serve up mechanisms for direct interaction between fans and artists (and most of them do) may be the most important legacy of Jazz.NEXT.

One thing I do know is that there is a world-wide audience for jazz. I get email from people all over the world saying, "Man, great show last night" or "Wow, so exciting, wish I could have been there." It's going to involve new paradigms for reaching a larger community, and maybe the internet is the key to that. – NEW YORK CLUB MANAGER

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Page 26: Video screen grab of Don Gardner from "The Philadelphia Clef Club of Jazz and Performing Arts." Photo by Jason Fifield.
Page 30: Screenshot from NPR's new jazz site.
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