STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF RUSSIAN REGIONAL RADIO STATIONS TO PRODUCE INDEPENDENT, FAIR, AND BALANCED PUBLIC INTEREST PROGRAMMING 2004-2010

THE FOUNDATION FOR INDEPENDENT RADIO BROADCASTING (FNR)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. INTRODUCTION:

The notion that public service broadcasting is an essential component of democracy dates back to the birth of the radio medium itself. In providing fair and impartial information, public interest programming possesses the power – certainly the potential – to not merely entertain, but educate and enlighten the listening audience.

The following report seeks to inform its readers of the progress of the Foundation for Independent Radio Broadcasting (FNR) in promoting this public broadcasting ideal within the Russian Federation. Since 1999, FNR has worked for the development of quality radio across Russia through a combination of educational outreach, production of information programming, and capacity building of regional radio stations. The full range of FNR's activities – which include radio journalism and business trainings, a nationwide regional radio festival series, internship residencies, print publications, online/new media projects, as well as its own audio feature productions – are united in their effort to bring Russian radio in line with the highest international standards of broadcasting.

B. OVERVIEW OF FNR ACTIVITIES:

The activities described within are intended as an analytical overview of FNR’s work since 2004, when the organization launched a multi-year initiative in support of balanced informational programming as it relates to both traditional radio and online audio-related technologies. The program’s purpose stemmed from the relative weakness of both broadcast and public interest journalism traditions in Russia’s regions in particular – where state-issued propaganda and irrelevant commercial ‘infotainment’ tend to dominate local media markets and local universities were ill-equipped to provide modern broadcast journalism training to a new generation of students. The result was the marginalization and, at times, near-complete absence of regional radio stations that sought to provide serious coverage of local events, news, culture, and public affairs.

With core support from USAID and other partners, FNR sought to address this issue through a full range of program interventions that engaged both promising journalists and management at regional Russian radio station, while also expanding the organization’s mission to engage Russia’s emerging online audio community of citizen podcasters, online broadcasters, and student radio stations.

For traditional radio, FNR sought to provide core business, journalism and technology training to regional stations with a proven stake in local informational programming. While these stations remain relatively few in number, FNR’s approach has paid dividends in recent years by steadily reaching out to talented and underserved radio professionals in sometimes off-the-map locales. The emergence of successful listener-oriented stations such as Radio Maria FM - a private commercial station in Kirov, Radio Abakan – the Echo of Moscow partner in the republic of
Khakassiya, and GTRK Altai -- the state-run affiliate in Barnaul, attest to value training provides to regional stations that strive to honestly serve listeners’ informational needs.

Yet participation among regional stations in FNR events suggests that the demand for professional skills-building extends far beyond a few select stations.

Consider that during the past six years:

- 5,200 radio professionals from cities all over Russia have taken part in the annual FNR-run ‘Vmeste Radio’, Russia’s only nationwide regional radio festival conference and awards competition series1 dedicated to journalistic excellence in radio.
- 126 regional journalists have taken part in FNR’s in-house intern residency program, working closely with FNR staff to develop their skills as broadcast journalists.
- 9 books titles focusing on various aspects of radio journalism, marketing, and management have been published and distributed to hundreds of regional radio stations and university journalism departments via FNR’s Master of Radio library series.
- ‘Radio Portal’, the FNR-run industry resource page, has provided news and analysis on legislation and market changes affecting the industry. Over the years, the site has averaged near 2,000 hits daily.

While the impact of such efforts is significant on its own, the fact is these programs came during a period when radio – like many media systems – found itself in a position of rapid change. New Internet-based technologies such as blogging, podcasting, and online streaming have collectively transformed the radio environment -- opening up new possibilities for networking, content production, and program distribution in the process. FNR’s response has been to launch several ambitious ‘new media’ initiatives that seek to take advantage of these new audio-driven technologies and broadband Internet’s steady advance into Russia’s regions.

Consider that during the project period:

- FNR launched ‘Podstantsiya’ (www.podst.ru), Russia’s first and only podcasting portal dedicated to public interest programming. Conceived as an open source community platform for both professional regional radio journalists and amateur audio podcasters, Podstantsiya strove from the start to gain an online foothold for quality alternative news and culture while lowering traditional entry barriers to participation. The site’s current 1300 registered users consist of an eclectic group of regional journalists, citizen podcasters, students, and NGO-representatives who produce work outside current FM format offerings. Key trends from recent years include the emergence of quality sound-based multimedia work (such as slidecasts), launch of a quarterly FNR-produced audio magazine, and a general uptick in the serious political nature of user-produced podcasts. Moreover, the platform has shown hints of its potential as an alternative distribution system. A handful of regional stations now regularly carry Podstantsiya offerings (such as commentaries and features), and the site has a proven reputation for hosting the best in radio production. Several individual contributing producers have gone on to garner prizes

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1 6,948 radio professionals have taken part in the festival since it first launched in 2002.
in Russian as well as international audio festival competitions in Europe and the United States.

- FNR initiated the ‘UniverCity’ project with the goal of establishing Russia’s first network of volunteer-run ‘participatory’ radio stations at select regional universities. Employing a flexible combination of traditional in-house broadcasting and online audio distribution, the project sought to forge cooperative links between Russian university students, faculty, and the surrounding community. 13 regional universities have currently signed on to the program, contribute podcasts to a dedicated program exchange platform, and participate in FNR-sponsored student/community programming competitions. Several stations are preparing to expand their online presence with launch of online broadcasting this year.

The project period was also notable for targeted efforts to educate radio journalists on issues that have a significant impact on reporters’ ability to work in the regions.

In 2008, FNR ran a series of educational legal lectures aimed at informing journalists about important and – at the time - evolving nuances in Russian media/Internet law. Specifically, FNR organized a series of debates surrounding the draft of a new version of the “law on the media” via online debates and hosted discussions at various regional stages of the Vmeste – Radio conference festival series. In addition, FNR created an online database – hosted by its Radio Portal web resource -- which provides constant access to the resources related to legal aspects of the media companies work to broadcasters all over the country. The database now includes 50 experts and enables local companies to identify lawyers who work in their particular regions in case they need legal advise, consultancy or support should need arise.

In 2007, FNR coordinated an elections coverage workshop for journalists from small-to-mid-sized Russian regional cities – where elections tend to be relatively more competitive. Through the program, journalists applied to take part in FNR-run seminars examining various issues related to election coverage abroad and in Russia. In addition, FNR created a web database of election coverage best practices and related-legal advice, hosted on the Radio Portal website.

Finally, the past six years have significantly helped FNR build on its own reputation as a public resource for quality radio training and education. Since 2006, FNR has invited dozens of foreign colleagues to share their knowledge and skills to via trainings and workshops, hosted residencies for foreign colleagues visiting on Knight Fellowships and Fulbright grants, and aided in international co-productions when and where possible. In turn, the organization’s own programming has received recognition in both Russian and international competitions such as the Prix Europa, the International Features Competition, and the Third Coast International Audio Festival. Collectively, these experiences have helped FNR establish itself as a vital bridge to the international broadcasting community through the establishment of growing number of partnerships. Beyond providing important opportunities for Russian journalist to meet and learn from their foreign colleagues, these exchanges help the organization continue to serve its mission as it has throughout these past six years - by staying on the cutting edge.
II. KEY INDUSTRY TRENDS

A. STATE OF RADIO:

By now, it has become abundantly clear that radio, while maintaining its place as among the most democratic of media, can and actually does adapt to the Internet age. Indeed, the advent of Internet broadcasting and New Media delivery systems such as podcasting merely suggest a multiplier effect of radio’s reach in Russia – not, as some predicted, radio’s demise. But while today’s Internet-fueled technologies create the potential for radio that is more expansive in reach, these same digital advances have generated a great deal of uncertainty in the industry. Already access to information and knowledge resources is expanding dramatically in Russia and other parts of the world. Today, remote communities are increasingly better connected, digital tools have democratized the means of content production, and once significant barriers to sharing and networking have all but disappeared. The result has been that as radio stations go online, so too do podcasters and other new media players. As traditional stations, Internet broadcasters, podcasters, communities, and average citizens increasingly enter the media equation, it remains far from clear how these groups will intersect.

B. STATE vs. COMMERCIAL FACTORS:

Russian terrestrial radio broadcasting remains heavily influenced by political and commercial factors. More than 15 years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the state broadcaster -- known by its abbreviation ‘VGTRK’ (All-Russian TV and Radio Broadcasting Company) – continues to embody a state rather than public broadcasting mandate. 100% government owned, the VGTRK is openly used to champion the federal policies of the center – with only the most tenacious regional staffs contributing quality local segments. Meanwhile, a casual sweep of the FM dial finds Russian radio dominated by commercial music and entertainment interests. Nominally independent, these commercial stations work with an implicit understanding that state-issued broadcast licenses can be terminated at will. As such, the vast majority of station owners accordingly opt for music/entertainment programs and politically neutral content.

This ‘neutrality’ gives stations a degree of freedom from political influences and pressure – and simultaneously allows station owners decent commercial profits with minimal investments. It also lends itself to mainstream culture
and bland, homogenous formats. As a result, the vast majority of social and cultural events remain beyond the sphere of interest of local broadcasts. Broadcast journalism as such exists mostly in the form of news bulletins, often emanating from Moscow or culled from the Internet.

Despite the fact that most of the radio stations posit themselves as ‘local,’ franchise networks (known to many in the U.S. as ‘the Clear Channel effect’) are an increasingly common occurrence. As a result, the majority of local coverage tends to lack depth and ethnic or cultural diversity. As such, there is a very limited number of Russian stations that feel the necessity to cover public interest issues and honestly serve their listener base.

As the chart shows, by the end of the decade the commercial music radio still is at the top of audience rankings, particularly the three biggest franchised networks (Europe Plus, Russian Radio and Autoradio). Even the state-run talk stations (Radio Russia, Mayak) substantially lag behind the music/entertainment broadcasters

C. THE ADVENT OF DIGITAL COMMUNITIES:

Another widely discussed consequence of niche broadcasting is formation of online communities. In fact, the audience of such a channel would be a community of people with common interests, habits and demands. The similar thing has already happened in the Internet with the development of social networks, Live Journal, etc. The radio will inevitably be integrated with the Web in all possible ways. One of the first examples of suchlike incorporation is the Echo of Moscow radio station. Apart from the fact that the air programs are available on its website in text and sound, and that a listeners can submit questions through the Internet in advance or live, the station has created a community of listeners and a ‘club’ of the most active ones who are invited to the studio as public experts. All the programs can be discussed by listeners while the main journalists run their blog pages open for comments.

d. ECONOMIC CRISIS AND ITS IMPACT ON THE STATE OF RADIO, 2009-2010:

Radio has been dramatically affected by the financial and economic crises in Russia, the recession there was much more serious than in other media industries. After seven years of rather fast and stable growth, market analysts were forecasting a 12% raise in the overall advertising sales in the radio segment (see the graph). Instead, after the year of the crisis the overall advertising market has dropped by about 30%, and the overall income of the media market was about $4.4 bn. Advertising in the radio segment has dropped by 33%, which brought the broadcasters the income of $218M instead of the planned $6.5bn in 2009.
In first half of 2010 the media market has revived rather swiftly. There was a certain growth in the advertising possibilities, although the increase of the market in the radio segment was almost still half as big as was forecast previously – 7% in January-June compared to the same period in 2009 (see the graph). The only type of media that have substantially profited on advertising market was the Internet. In fact, web advertising is the only steadily raising market. In 2009 year it grew by 6% and the income has reached $163M (which is comparable with radio) and it continues to grow further: in January-June the increase was 33% compared to the first half of 2009.

The share of the radio segment has also decreased. Right before crisis 6% of the overall advertising was broadcast through radio. In the first half of the year 2010, despite the certain increase of radio advertising in absolute figures, its share in the market did not exceed 4%. The situation is absolutely opposite to what happened with the Internet. While in 2005 experts forecast the raise of the online segment up to 4.9%, its actual share in January-June 2010 reached 11% of the market (see the chart).

Radio in the big cities was affected by the crisis the most. Regional broadcasters have experienced much smoother recession and in some areas (e.g. Krasnodar, Kemerovo) there was even growth in the advertising sales. The growth is mostly seen in the areas where the state most strictly controls the media, and the raise can be explained by the support of the local budget to the broadcasters.

The recession caused substantial change in the function of the stations. Most of the regional broadcasters had to cut their staff to the minimum, reducing first the journalistic staff rather than sales departments. As a result, many local journalists have lost their jobs, while those who remain work under immense workload pressure.

The market in the regions survived mostly by developing local rebroadcasting of Moscow stations within the franchised networks. This requires minimum investment and staff expenses and the big brands attract more advertisers than private local stations.

From the point of view of the content, the broadcasters tend to rely more on the music formats (particularly on generic ones as opposed to niche formats) rather than on the development of information. At the same time the analysts state a certain growth in the audience interest to the information broadcasts as the listeners seek certain guidance and expert opinion in the crisis situation.

At the same time there is a certain growth in the influence of the state on the information content. Many regional stations have contracts with the local authorities for paid information services. In the situation where the state/local budget is perceived as a stable source of resources, the amount of ‘services’ offered to the authorities may raise.

In this situation it is vital to put more effort in the development of the radio in order to preserve information broadcasting, to support qualified journalists and to develop professional and fair
coverage of information. In the current reality it seem vital to combine the support of the broadcast radio with the Internet resources particularly in what regards professional education.

E. NEW MEDIA REGULATIONS AND AMENDMENTS TO THE MEDIA LAW

The attempts to put restrictions on the media, particularly on the Internet have been made for already several years. In the recent period the State Duma was going to debate the draft of the law that substantially broadened the concept of the media resources in the web. If the law was passed, any web site which enjoys more than 1000 visitors a day would be considered a media outlet and would have to be officially registered. As the new regulations would most seriously affect bloggers, social networks and other Internet communities the draft raised a strong wave of protests and its discussion was temporarily postponed by the Duma. However, the possibility that a law that puts restrictions on the dissemination of information in the Internet would again be put on the agenda is still very strong.

Meanwhile, the Duma is going to make several amendments to the current legislation which would put additional responsibilities on the media in the process of the dissemination of information. Although the amendments are not welcome by the media community, there is not much debate going on and in fact very few attempts are made to influence the new regulations.

However, earlier this year FNR has managed to give local radio broadcasters an opportunity to discuss the new laws on the media with the representatives of the legislative bodies and experts who take part in the actual designing of the laws. FNR managed to involve in the debate the representatives of the legislative bodies who play an important role in changing the legislation on the press, namely: Michael Fedotov, Secretary of the Russian Union of Journalists and one of the designers of the current legislation; Olga Noskova, head of the working group of the State Duma Committee on the Information Policy; Ilya Ponomarev, member of the State Duma Committee on the Information Policy; and Alexey Kolonitsky, deputy head of department at the Federal Service for the Press and Mass Communications. The debate showed that despite certain apathy in the professional community, there is a distinct interest among various players in the market in a serious discussion with the law-makers. At the same time it proved that the law-makers can also be involved into such debates. It is important that this line is pursued in the future as it opens certain perspectives for the professional community to influence the changes in the media regulations.

The new amendments were planned to be debated in the Duma in late 2009, however by the end of the project period there has been no parliamentary discussion yet.

F. DIGITAL BROADCASTING COMING SOON:

According to the plans widely announced by the Russian government, by 2015 all Russian citizens will have the opportunity to receive not less that 24 TV channels in the digital format. Similar perspectives are supposed to be provided to the radio broadcasts. However, the analysts’ view of the real situation is by far less optimistic.

The main problem in the transfer to the digital broadcasting is the formation of the multiplex channels. Analysts point out that the digitals channels will mainly include main state-run channels while the interest of more that 800 regional broadcasting companies are being ignored. The latter have little possibility to lobby their interests. This may lead to the redivision of the media market
and the growth of big monopolies. To avoid this special measures are to be taken which are now debated by the main stakeholders.

Apart from that the state authorities tend to start the transfer to the digital broadcast from the remote regions in Russia, namely the Far East, in order to prevent media expansion of foreign broadcasts to the Russian territory. Analysts say this policy has little reason and makes the process much more expensive. As a result, the whole process may become very slow and extended in time.

At the same time there are technical difficulties since the audience has to obtain special equipment to decode the digital signal. The equipment is rather expensive and a big part of the audience will not be able to purchase it on their own. Unlike other countries where there are special government programs to subsidize the transfer to digital broadcasts, such measures are not so far foreseen in Russia.

In any case, at the moment the top priority for the government is TV and the perspective of digital broadcasts in the radio are unclear. Most analysts agree that the transfer will take place not earlier than in the coming 5-7 years.

G. THE NEW CONTENT MAKERS:
The most recent developments show that Internet technologies have already become a substantial part of the information dissemination. Much has already been said about independent non-professional who are using new technologies to publish uncensored information in blogs, social media etc. In the situation when a big part of the information is censored at the mainstream media outlets, this has already become an alternative information channel.

However, the new technologies can give opportunities even for professionals, particularly those who work in faraway regions, to reach much broader audience than they have in their localities. The most recent example is the accident at the Sayano-Shushenskaya Hydro-Electric Power Plant in August 2009. The plant is situated in a remote area in Siberia. When the accident happened all the information was coming from the local journalists sitting in a small town of Abakan. In addition to the local newscasts, local journalists were posting the newest information and interviews at the Podstantsiya web-site. Not only they got an opportunity to reach massive audience through the Internet and provide other media with authentic interviews in sound, but also to react to the questions that arose because of the uncertainty of the situation. Having got the questions, they could immediately react to this and provide the audience with clarifying information, make additional interviews, etc.

Given that, and also the steady economic development of the Internet, combination of radio and web-technologies can contribute to the viability of radio and make it a reliable source of independent information.
III. PROGRAM GOALS

A. PROGRAM STRATEGY

Rationale: This program has employed a two-track approach to regional public programming development – embracing both traditional terrestrial broadcasting as well as new Internet-technologies. Radio stations, at least over the immediate term, remain the primary producers of audio programming in Russia’s regions. As such, FNR perceives its strategic role as continuing to provide radio journalists, editors, and management with critical skills and training --- particularly as broadcast journalism traditions remain relatively weak and either state/commercial entertainment interests continue dominate the industry.

Meanwhile, the radio industry continues to face a moment of tremendous innovation and change – where stations face hurdles, in particular, in adapting to disruptions involving digital technologies. Meanwhile, these same digital technologies offer opportunities for new content creators --- such as citizen journalists, students, and NGOs – to become a valuable part of the media equation. Accordingly, FNR sees an important role in providing these new media stakeholders with skills, training, and opportunities to develop and promote new ideas, voices, and genres for radio. Ultimately, it is the position of FNR that both of these new and old media cultures offer much to the cause of public interest programming – and integration between the two should be encouraged where possible.

See Table below for additional details on FNR’s selection and support criteria.

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**SELECTION AND REGIONAL SUPPORT CRITERIA**

**In the realm of traditional ‘terrestrial’ broadcasting, FNR will:**

- Work with regional radio stations that have shown initiative in production of news and public affairs programming to further improve the quality, depth, and impact of their work.
- Work with these same regional stations to strengthen business practices of these same regional stations, under the belief with that strengthened financial independence comes greater editorial independence.
- Support platforms that promote the experiences and best practices of these regional stations to raise industry standards overall.
- Aid worthy regional stations as they strategically seek to adapt to future technologies offered in the realm of new media, cross-media, and Internet broadcasting.

**In the realm of new media/Internet broadcasting, FNR will:**

- Aid communities and citizens ability to serve their own programming needs where they are not met.
- Provide platforms for these communities to develop and express themselves.
- Seek whenever possible to incorporate existing public and/or private infrastructure.

**In the realm of integrating new and traditional broadcast media, FNR will:**

- Promote shared platforms and joint learning opportunities, thereby encouraging diversity in media and public interest programming.
- Promote innovative business models that support broadcast/online integration.
B. OBJECTIVES/RESULTS:

In implementing programming, FNR determined the following to be the project's primary objectives and sought after results:

1. Improve quality of news and public affairs programming produced by regional radio stations via radio festivals, seminars, residency internships, and other events that enforce best practices and industry standards for excellence.

2. Provide objective analysis and monitoring of industry wide trends – including promising regional models of innovation – via print publications and online resources.

3. Raise journalistic and business standards of the regional radio industry through regular exchange of information and knowledge.

4. Offer guidance and technical leadership to regional stations and journalists confronting changes through the integration of broadcasting with new media technologies.

5. Promote alternative platforms and genres of public interest programming using new media web technologies.

6. Provide media training, technical guidance, and technical support to Russian communities and citizens on broadcast and radio-related New Media issues such as podcasting and Internet broadcasting.

7. Strengthen business practices and values of regional radio stations that leverage their financial independence to promote good journalistic practices.


9. Build on FNR’s reputation as a national resource center and business support institution for regional radio industry and radio-related New Media users.

C. PROGRAM STRUCTURE:

In pursuit of these objectives, FNR implemented a number of interconnected activity modules during the project period. Each consists of multiple programming components, listed below (See next page for an overview of 2004-2010 modules).

- Module #1: Monitoring/Analysis
- Module #2: Radio Festival Series
- Module #3: Training/Education
- Module #4: FNR Programming/New Media
- Module #5: Student/Community Radio Network
- Module #6: Elections
- Module #7: FNR Development Capacity
MAP OF FNR PROGRAM MODULES

**Monitoring/Analysis**
1. Print/Web Materials document best practices and industry models in support of informational and public interest programming.
2. Additional web/print publications track industry news, media law, and trends that affect public interest-oriented stations.

**Regional Radio Festival Series**
1. Festival Journalism and Business Seminars bring learning to the regions and address critical media issues in real time.
2. Open Jury Competition recognizes and awards quality works in informational programming.
3. Festival Special Prize category addresses critical gaps in programming – such as documentary and youth programming.
4. New regional talent emerges and plays increasingly role in regional festivals.
5. Community-building creates support networks and discourages isolation.

**Training/Education**
1. Internship Journalism Residency Program provides in-depth skills building to regional festival winners.
2. Long Distance Learning Courses, and in-house Seminars provide learning and support on key journalistic, management, marketing, and legal issues.
3. ‘Master of Radio’ Book Series offers the best of festival seminars and essays to additional underserved audiences, such as university journalism departments and geographically remote stations.
4. Media Training Outreach via online resources and public events bring newcomers into the fold.

**Programming/New Media**
1. Radio Portal and Podstantsiya re-air the best of regional programming – helping to establish standards of excellence.
2. The Podstantsiya podcasting website provides platform for contributors to develop new genres and ‘off-format’ public interest programming.
3. Creative Commons, RSS subscription download, and streaming offer new delivery models for web users.
4. FNR-sponsored special content actions push socially relevant content onto the site.
5. Simplified online recording technologies lower entry barriers for participation by radio newcomers (such as NGOs, citizen journalists, and student podcasters).

**Institutional Development**
1. Continuing educational for FNR staff keeps the organization well placed to provide assistance and fulfill its mission to regional media players.
2. New Media and other small scale workshops help FNR and its partners shape the debate for quality programming in the Internet radio age.

**Related Support**
1. Legal outreach via radio festival sessions devoted to mass media and Internet legislation. Creation of regional media law database.
2. Specialized election coverage training for regional journalists in small-to-mid-size cities, where elections remain somewhat competitive.

**University/Community Radio Network**
1. Participatory radio model enables students and communities to serve their own information needs;
2. FNR programming actions synch local events with public programming-themed discussions.
3. Format-free volunteer radio works to introduce new genres and forms of radio.
4. A new generation of talent in broadcasting/journalism and not-for-profit
IV. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT:

A. COST-SHARE/SUPPORTING PROJECTS:

FNR regularly seeks opportunities to diversify and expand its base of support – both internationally and within Russia -- provided funding opportunities meet with the organization’s core mission in support of regional radio development.

1. Cost-share agreements ongoing through 2010 include:

- **DRL Community Media Grant**: FNR and the New Eurasia Foundation’s Eurasia-Media department are currently in Year 2 of a two-year Department of Human Rights and Labor-supported initiative called ‘Strengthening Russian Local Media and Linking Them to their Communities’. As a result of the program, 18 quality small market newspapers and radio stations are participating in targeted training seminars aimed at strengthening outlets’ Internet presence and helping journalists put digital tools to better use in their reporting. Among the 8 radio stations currently participating in the project, all were selected based on their performance and active participation in FNR’s current USAID-funded work.

- **Nation Health League Grant**: In 2008 FNR got a grant from this Russian foundation to support the contest of radio programs for children for the Special Prize of the Vmeste – Radio festival

- **The Tolerance Institute**: This Russian foundation supported several FNR projects, including production of series of programs to be distributed to local radio stations.

- **Friedrich Naumann Foundation**: The foundation supported participation of FNR journalists in the journalism training seminars in Germany in 2008; apart from that the foundation participated in the funding of some training events under the UniverCity project.

2 Key underlying objectives of the DRL program are, to:

- Improve the quality and reach of news produced by small market media outlets through use of technology-based ‘new media’ tools;
- Strengthen ties between media organizations and the communities they serve through on-line interactive community journalism; and
- Bolster professional links between print and broadcast journalists across targeted communities through virtual networks and face-to-face exchanges.
• **British Embassy’s Global Opportunities Fund** – In October of 2009, FNR was awarded a grant from the Global Opportunities Fund supporting legal education seminars within the *Vmeste – Radio* nationwide regional festival series. In addition, a regional media law expert database was created by FNR and posted to the Radio Portal web platform to serve as a permanent resource for stations finding themselves in legal peril.

• **BBC World Service Trust/UK National Lottery Community Fund** – in 2006-2007 in a consortium which included BBC WS Trust and a Chelyabinsk-based NGO *A Helping Hand*, FNR ran a project aimed at developing internal radio broadcasts in penal establishments of the Urals regions. The FNR producers trained inmates in 6 colonies in the area and assisted in setting up of the studio equipment. One of the programs produced by inmates won the second prize in the *Vmeste – Radio* Special Prize feature contest and was later short-listed at the *Prix Europa* festival in Berlin.

• **IREX International Media Partnership Program (IMPP):** 2008 marked ‘Year 2’ of FNR’s participation in the International Media Partnerships Program (IMPP) administered by IREX Russia. The program provides opportunities for FNR to foster exchanges and, through them, working partnerships with leading international radio organizations, broadcasters, and annual industry events. (See Bill Siemering’s essay ‘Working as Weavers’ on p.14 for an example of how partnerships fostered by USAID, IREX, and other donors pay dividends over the long-term.) In 2009, the program build on partnerships with the following radio-related organizations:

  • *The Third Coast International Audio Festival* (Chicago, USA), a key conference/competition for public radio producers in North America. FNR staffers and regional producers presented at the 2008 event. In addition, Podstantsiya contributing producer Charles Maynes was announced a prize-winner in the 2009 competition.

  • *The International Features Conference* (location: rotating), an annual educational/listening forum for international documentary makers sponsored by the European Broadcasting Union. FNR Editor-in-Chief Andrey Allakherdov travelled with regional journalists to the conference in 2008 in Bulgaria. FNR productions were screened at the 2007 and 2008 events. Due to scheduling conflicts, FNR was unable to send producers to the 2009 event in Dublin, Ireland. Nonetheless, FNR maintains ties with the conference and the EBU (see *Prix Europa* below).

  • *Prix Europa* (Berlin, Germany), an annual juried awards competition sponsored by the European Broadcasting Union, the event is considered a key networking and exchange event for European media. In October of 2007, an FNR-sponsored production was admitted as the official Russian entry to the documentary
competition. In 2009, two programs first published by FNR’s Podstansiya podcasting portal were nominated as the official entries from Russia for the 2009 radio documentary/feature prize. In addition, FNR Editor-in-Chief Andrei Allakhverdov participated in a Prix-Europa-sponsored international roundtable discussion comparing trends in American, German, Russian, and Chinese radio.

- Open Society Institute/New Media Projects (NMP). In 2006 FNR has received a grant to develop Podstantsiya, an interactive podcasting website for professional journalists. The grant covered the expenditures for the site construction and design, as well as running costs for the first year and establishment of the file exchange system.

2. Ongoing cost-share agreements 2009-2010 included:

- Charles Stuart Mott Foundation, which provided additional core funding for a 3-year initiative by FNR, USAID, and the Charles Stuart Mott Foundation to develop student/community radio stations in 9-12 universities across Russia.

- Public Radio Exchange, PRX (Cambridge, MA), an online marketplace for direct distribution, review, and licensing of public radio programming to radio stations. PRX is also a growing social network and community of listeners, producers, and stations collaborating to reshape public radio in the United States. PRX Director Jake Shapiro held consultations with FNR in conjunction with an IREX Russia-sponsored New Media Conference in Moscow in September of 2008. In May of 2009, FNR Director Natalya Vlasova visited the PRX office in Massachusetts during a working tour of the United States. As a result, FNR and PRX agreed to a low cost access fee to PRX web content. In addition, the organizations have agreed to work towards development of a Russian-version of the PRX platform, to be administered by FNR.

3. Vmeste Radio Festival Sponsors: The Vmeste Radio nationwide regional radio festival series remains a key undertaking for FNR throughout the year. While USAID support has been essential to the festival’s success over the years, FNR has also developed relations with a variety of organizations, embassies, and businesses that provide donations, cost-share, and sponsorships of the event.

General Sponsors for the time of the project included:

- Radio Deutsche-Welle (Russian service), which provided two-week Bonn, Germany-based internships for festival national prizewinners in the Best Reportage and Best Feature Program categories.

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3The competition is traditionally run among state broadcasters. As such, the choice of an FNR production over Radio Rossiya was, at the time, considered usual.
• Radio Liberty (Russian Service), which provided two-week Prague-based internships for festival national prizewinners in the Best Current Affairs/Discussion/Talk Show Programs and/or Best Newscast categories.

• BBC Russian Service, which provided two-week London-based internships for festival national prizewinners in the Best Newscast categories.

• Ford Foundation: The Ford Foundation covered travel costs for Neo-Futurists Theater founder Greg Allen (Chicago, USA) to present at the festival finale in Moscow.

• Regional Russian Universities, which played host to the regional stages of the 2009 festival with free space donations. In exchange, students and faculty were able to attend the festival educational seminars for free.

• MediaProfi, which provided free subscriptions to its radio trade publication to festival winners.

• Synadyn Media Software, which provided free copies of its Russian language media software program to festival station winners.

• Digiton media software company, which provided free copies of its Russian language media software program to the festival winner stations.

• D&K audio equipment trading company which provided hardware given out as prizes

National Festival Finale sponsors for the project years included:

• The American Embassy, which covered transportation and accommodation costs for This American Life host, Ira Glass and the Managing and Program Director of the WFMU radio station, Ken Freedman, to attend the Moscow festival finale in 2009 and 2010 respectively.

• The Norwegian Embassy, which covered various expenses related to the transportation and accommodation of the Finale participants as well as experts and trainers.

• The Embassy of Poland, which covered travel and accommodation expenses for producer Anna Sekudevich to present at the festival finale in Moscow.

• The Danish Embassy, covered travel and accommodation costs for New York-based producer Pejk Malinovsky (Studio 360, WNYC) to lead a cultural programming workshop and expenses related to the workshop run by the new media expert Bjarke Myrthu (Project Storyplanet) in April of 2009 and March 2010 respectively.

• The Swedish Embassy, covered travel and accommodation costs for the short-listed participants of the Special Prize contest for the best program for children in 2008.
• **ProfMedia**, which covered travel costs for American independent producer Alex van Oss to attend and present at the festival finale in Moscow.

• **The American Cultural Center**, which donated equipment and space.

• **The French Cultural Center**, which donated equipment and space.

• **Radio Bulgar**ia, which covered travel arrangements for RB journalists Angel Grigoriev and Lena Bozova to attend and participate in the 2009 festival finale.

• **Mikhail Prokhorov Fund**: Mikhail Prokhorov Fund covered travel and accommodation expenses for regional participants of the cultural seminar from regions of Russia where the Foundation operates. Specifically, the awarded a grant covering expenses for seminar participants from the Ural, Siberian and Far Eastern Federal Districts to participate in the 2008-2009 Special Prize seminar.

4. Related Cost-Share Agreements:

**Korporatsiya Radio/IREX.** In September of 2008, FNR’s partner organization Radio Corporation (RC) applied was awarded an International Media Partnerships Program (IMPP), as administered by IREX Russia. Under the grant, RC has developed active partnerships with international broadcasters and other like-minded organizations in promoting public service ideals within the radio management industry.

Partnerships established to date, include:

• **Developing Radio Partners**, a Washington DC-based non-profit committed to building vibrant, participatory communities internationally, through the development of financially and editorially independent media services with a focus on community radio. In January of 2009, RC partnered with Developing Radio Partners on the Radio of Our City project. As a result of the project, a community outreach workshop was held in Moscow in February of 2009. In addition, 10 regional radio managers travelled to Minnesota in May of 2009.

• **Bulgarian National Radio (Sophia, Bulgaria)**, a leading Central European broadcaster well regarded for its transition from a state-to-public broadcasting model. Radio Corporation Director Natalya Yakimovskaya and FNR Director Natalya Vlasova traveled with a group of leading regional Russian managers to Sofia to learn more about the Radio Bulgaria success story in September of 2008. In addition, BNR producers presented at the Vmeste Radio finale in Moscow in June, 2009.

**B. PENDING GRANTS/PROJECTS:** At time of writing, FNR was preparing to submit several project proposals in support of the current project’s goals to further develop regional Russian radio journalism.

These include:
• **SIDA ‘SUPPORTING INDEPENDENT MEDIA’ grant**: In 2010, the Swedish Agency for International Development (SIDA) renewed its commitment to media support in Russia. The three-year long project grant will be awarded through the Swedish Press Institute Fojo. Together with the printed press supporting partner – Association of Independent Regional Publishing Houses (ANRI) – FNR and Radio Corporation are supposed to get funding for the support of the independent journalism, particularly youth audience oriented and new media reporting approaches as well as consultancy offered to independent local media to introduce European experience of successful local media business. The project stipulates series of trainings for journalists (in new media, in addressing young audiences, etc.) and managers (in new and traditional media management); study trips to Sweden to visit leading national and particularly small local media outlets; consulting of the local media with the participation of Swedish experts.

• **TALKING ABOUT MIGRANTS’ LIVES IN RUSSIA**: FNR has applied for a grant of the European Commission in partnership with the Deutsche Welle Akademie, the training branch of FNR’s long and traditional partner in the festival project. The application was submitted to the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)/Country Based Support Scheme (CBSS) for Russia. The project will offer a series of intensive journalism and media training courses throughout Russia intended to professionalize journalists and NGO activists working on migration issues. These courses are designed to introduce radio journalists to new ways of social reporting. At the same time, they are aimed at raising awareness among journalists about their role in society, especially with regard to the important tasks of providing a platform for discussion within society and informing the public about the situation of different segments of society.

• **AUDIENCE RESEARCH FOR LOCAL MEDIA**: FNR together with Radio Corporation applied for funding to the European branch of the Open Society Institute (George Soros Foundation). The project envisages development of a scheme that would enable local broadcasters to study their audience being based on locally available financial, organizational and human resources. The project will be worked out by an audience research expert, while FNR and Radio Corporation will provide supervision providing that the final scheme meet the demands of local media.
We know that lasting change is the result of careful, collaborative work, with excellent partners, overtime, often with small investments. Here’s the story of a recent project that illustrates how we’ve gathered threads from many sources, and like weavers created a lasting durable fabric.

The story begins in 2001 when I was on the staff of the Open Society Network Media Program and read about FNR working to improve the quality of local radio. At the same time, public radio station WBEZ in Chicago was organizing the first Third Coast Radio Festival to celebrate excellence in radio production. Although unprecedented, I contacted Natalya Vlasova, the director of FNR, and told her I would organize a study tour for her in the U.S. including the Third Coast Festival. She and her colleague, Andrei Allakhverdov traveled to Chicago for the festival, then on to Minnesota Public Radio, the ICFJ and other organizations. When they returned to Russia, they organized seven regional festivals that also included training workshops, including a final Radio Together national festival. The Third Coast Festival artistic director and many U.S. based producers have joined Russian colleagues in these festivals, including this year, Ira Glass of This American Life.

Natalya Vlasova and her colleague Natalia Yakimovskaya, director of the FNR’s sister company Radio Corp, asked Developing Radio Partners to join them in a project funded from the International Media Partnership Program, administered by IREX –Russia. The project consisted of four parts:

1. A competition which aimed to get stations to develop concepts for Radio of Our City projects and programming. Key criteria for winning concepts were the extent and depth of citizens’ engagement and positive, lasting impact of the project for listeners.

2. A seminar in Moscow in February 2009, which included sessions on community engagement led by DRP’s Jean Fairbairn. At the seminar, eight winning Radio of Our City concepts were selected. The prize was a study tour to the USA for a representative from each of the winning stations.

3. A study tour to the USA organized by DRP, which took place in May of 2009 in Minnesota, organized by DRP president, Bill Siemering and Julia Barton, a Knight Fellow with FNR.

4. Final, debriefing seminar, lead by Jean Fairbairn, during the FNR/Radio Corps annual VMESTE, Radio Festival in Moscow, and presentation of certificates to Radio of Our City winners.

One of the winners was Mariya-FM in Kirov, a project aimed to involve schools in a road safety campaign. Schoolteachers invited children to write letters to drivers appealing to them to drive better so as not to put children’s lives at risk. About 3,000 letters were given to the traffic department, and when traffic officers stopped cars for infringements, they would be given a fine and a letter from a child. The traffic department cooperated fully because the project fit their own safe-driving campaigns. In addition to the 3,000 children who wrote letters, the project engaged 140 teachers and 80 police officers.

As a result:

- The station drew attention to children’s safety during vacations. Accidents decreased by 30%.
- The project was effective, but not expensive.
- It was socially meaningful – and got approval from government officials.

During the Study Tour, the managers spent time at Minnesota Public Radio, seven Clear Channel stations, CBS owned WCCO, community radio station KFAI, African-American community radio WMOJ and family owned KSTP. Because Russia only licenses state and commercial radio, public radio was a new concept to the managers. In evaluating the experience, a manager from St. Petersburg wrote:

The idea of public radio became close to me and I hope I (can) implement a similar project in Russia….Probably for the first time in my life I not only saw but also felt I understood people who work not just for money. They work for the heads and hearts of the listeners.

So as the result of a study tour in 2001, now several thousand independent radio managers, journalists and producers throughout Russia have raised their professionalism, expanded their visions of the possibilities of local radio, all to the benefit of listeners and their communities, thanks primarily to the imagination, hard work and the leadership of FNR/RC. As you can see, there are thousands of threads in this fabric, woven by many hands, over a long time. We’re also like the Weaver bird that carefully gathers grasses and interweaves the most elaborate nests of any birds.

Bill Siemering is the President of Developing Radio Partners and a co-founder of National Public Radio (NPR).
C. PUBLICITY:

In administering its various programs, nearly all of FNR’s activities seek to promote the work of regional radio journalists and, through it, the FNR whenever and wherever possible. 4 For example, the Vmeste Radio organizing committee conducts a range of promotional activities surrounding the festival competition. 5 In addition, FNR’s Podstansiya regularly uses social networking tools to promote the FNR podcast platform. Yet another example includes FNR’s various partnerships – as participation in festivals, conferences, and other such events provide regular opportunities to amplify the work of Russian regional radio journalists. While all these efforts work to raise the profile of the mission FNR and its partners, several public events are worth particular mention.

- **FNR’s Podstansiya featured on PBS’s Frontline World:** In March of 2010, PBS’s Frontline World online video series profiled Podstansiya’s coverage of the Moscow metro bombings in a piece called ‘Metro Bombings: Online Radio’s Raw Response’. 6 The video included web-based interviews with Podstansiya staff producers Elena Uporova and Alkhas Selezneov (see image capture this page) and featured content curated on the site about the terrorist attacks.

- **Ira Glass ‘News Ways of Making Radio’ Lecture:** In 2009 Vmeste – Radio finale featured a public lecture by renowned ‘This American Life’ host Ira Glass at the Library for Foreign Literature in Moscow. Ultimately, the free This American Life…in Russia’ lecture was attended by approximately 350 people – full capacity at the Library for Foreign Literature auditorium. The event received attention in the press (Echo of Moscow radio, Russia Today, Akzia newspaper, etc.) and in the Russian blogosphere.

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4 As according to the USAID Marking Agreement, FNR makes a point to credit major donors at events and on publications and promotional materials.
5 Promotional activities extend from web and mailings to regional radio stations, phone calls to station owners, radio jingles for broadcast on local stations, outreach to host city media companies, as well as production of souvenir marketing materials (such as posters, bags, and pens).
6 [http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/blog/2010/03/moscow_bombings.html](http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/blog/2010/03/moscow_bombings.html)
- **Third Coast International Audio Festival:** In October of 2008, two FNR staffers and 2 regional radio producers hosted an information booth at the annual Third Coast Audio festival in Chicago, attended by nearly 300 radio journalists. For the event, FNR also worked with a team of regional producer volunteers to produce a limited edition multi-media CD, titled “Lenin’s Ears.” Recorded works from the CD were presented at part of a public hearing during the conference’s opening plenary session. In addition, FNR Editor-in-Chief participated in a public question and answer session with the Third Coast Festival Managing Director, Julie Shapiro. Finally, Charles Maynes—a contributing producer to the Podstansiya podcasting platform—was announced a winner of the 2008 competition, winning the Director’s Choice prize for a feature published to the FNR-run website. In 2009 Charles Maynes’s feature ‘Three Records to Dawn’ won the Third Coast Festival Directorate Special Prize. Maynes subsequently represented FNR on an international jury for the 2010 competition, which included representatives from the BBC, NPR, American Public Media, and the Association for Independents in Radio (AIR).

- **Ken Freedman’s ‘WFMU: How to Be Successful Outside the Mainstream’ Lecture:** Radio finale featured a public lecture by the General Manager of WFMU, a freeform radio station based in Jersey, NY, and named the best US radio station by The Rolling Stone magazine. For the event, FNR also designed poster and distributed them at arts cafes, universities, and to the press (see event flier, this page). It also promoted the event through the Podstansiya site and accompanying social media platforms such as VKontakte, Twitter, and Live Journal. Despite the abnormal heat in Moscow, the lecture was attended by about 200 people. In addition to the public lecture Ken Freedman run his weekly 3-hour long morning show from Moscow, broadcasting from Tsurtsum-Café – a club in Moscow’s well-known Vinzavod artistic area. The show sought to demonstrate the relative ease with which one can broadcast alternative formats online, and included Russian rock music, live interviews with local musicians, passersby, and FNR journalists. As the broadcast was a public event, simultaneous translation was provided for those who attended.

**Prix Europa, 2007-2009:** In 2007 FNR submitted a feature ‘The Edge of the Road’ made by the FNR-trained inmates in one of Chelyabinsk penal establishments. It was the first time Russia was presented by a non-state run broadcaster which was warmly welcomed by the international radio community. In 2009, two FNR-associated productions were selected as the official country entries from Russia to the prestigious annual Prix Europa in Berlin, Germany. Daniella Hanneman, and Nastya Gorokhova, a German/Russian podcaster team based in Moscow, were selected for their program ‘Music of the Past is Present’ – about the revived interest in the Soviet

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era Alexandrov Ensemble. In addition, Podstansiya Editor Lena Uporova was invited to present her program *The Pink Bra* – a radio feature about the plight of young male prostitutes in Moscow.

- **IREX Russia New Media Conference (Moscow State University, Russia):** In September of 2008, FNR’s Lena Uporova gave a presentation on the state of radio and Internet convergence at an international New Media conference in Moscow. As Editor of the FNR-run *Podstansiya* website, Ms. Uporova sought to explain the challenges facing contemporary radio journalists in Russia as well as ways online audio programming can work to better serve the cause of independent journalism. Additional guest speakers at the event included Glenn Brown of Google/YouTube and Jake Shapiro of the Public Radio Exchange (www.prx.org).

- **Goethe-Institute ‘Hear Now!’ Listening Series (Washington DC):** In September of 2008, Podstansiya contributing producer Charles Maynes presented a ‘Glimpses of Russia’ audio evening as part of the ‘Hear Now!’ listening series at the Goethe-Institute in Washington DC. The lecture provided an audio journey across the Russian Federation – acquainting audiences with the work of both the FNR and its regional radio partners (see sidebar «Glimpses of Russia» this page). FNR Editor-in-Chief Andrey Allakhverdov joined in on the discussion via Skype from Moscow. In addition, Allakhverdov contributed pre-recorded commentary from regional producers across Russia, including Nizhni Novgorod, Syktyvkar, Abakan, and Kamchatka.

**Podstansiya Public Listening Events** – In March of 2009, FNR’s Podstansiya started a series of free listening events featuring podcasts and audio works by regional producers. Attended by approximately 60 people, the first event also sought to promote opportunities for volunteers to get involved with Podstansiya via programming, translation, and time share donations for training. Similar events ran throughout the 2009-2010 season in all the *Vmeste – Radio* festival events in the Russian regions. In 2010, inspired by FNR, Radio Abakan in Khakasia ran a public listening event in their city attended by some 60 people. In Orel, Podstansiya podcasts were publicly played at the festival of chamber theaters ‘Ludi’.

**Peter Høeg Interview Presentation.** In 2009 FNR producer Elena Uporova was requested by the Cultural Department of the Danish Embassy to make a special presentation of an exclusive interview recorded by her with the famous Danish writer Peter Høeg in 2008. A slidecast produced by E.Uporova was played within the framework of the ‘Non-Fiction’ book fair at the presentation of

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Subject: ‘Glimpses of Russia’

For me, the most interesting part was learning about the individual producers: seeing their pictures, hearing their voices, learning about the stations they work for and the conditions they are up against - and then hearing their work. It gave me a sense that these are our colleagues - struggling to do the work we all do - only under much more difficult circumstances. I hope you will pass along my sincere thanks, from all of us at Hear Now!, for the effort you all made to tell us about FNR and the very important work you that is being done there.

Neenah Ellis, ‘Hear Now!’ Washington D.C.

[9](http://www.podst.ru/posts/4589/)
the Russian edition of Høeg’s new novel ‘The Quiet Girl’ published by ‘Symposium’. The presentation was attended by about 50 people and was greatly appreciated. 10

‘The Time of Silver’ Sound Art. A slidecast combining photographs of Alsace area and audio track was created by Elena Uporova, chief editor of Podstantsiya, for the exhibition ‘The Time of Silver’ at Vinzavod in late 2009. E.Uporova gave a lecture on soundscapes for 30 designers and photographers.

Projections of Reality. In June 2010 Andrey Allakhverdov, FNR editor-in-chief, took part in the round table discussion on the new media and modern media approaches within the framework of the international exhibition ‘Projections of Reality’ at ArtStrelka. The project was run by the photography-supporting NGO ‘Objective Reality’ and introduced cutting-edge visual storytelling to a wide audience in the context of the rapidly changing media market, digital and participatory media.11

Chir-Chayan International Theater Festival. Elena Uporova gave a master-class on cultural reporting At Chir-Chayan festival in Abakan, Khakasia. The event was attended by about 70 people – local journaliata and theater actors.12

“Lieu du genie” Exhibition. Within the framework of the Year of France in Russia, FNR took part in an exhibition dedicated to prominent Russian and French writers in the memorial house of Alexandr Pushkin in Moscow. The exhibition combined visual art (photography and design) and audio tracks inspired by the photographs of the places connected with the writers. Audio tracks were produced by FNR’s Podstantsia project journalists: Elena Uporova, Charles Maynes and Andrey Allakhverdov. The work was based on original recordings as well as Podstantsiya’s free sound library.13

Radio Festivals Juries. FNR and Podstantsiya journalists were regularly invited to be jury members to the ‘Living Word’ festival in Boldino and ‘My Province’ in Sochi.

Local Broadcasts. In Orel the local ‘Nashe Express Radio’ broadcast an hour-long program on the special issue ‘The Wall’ of Podstantsiya’s magazine ‘Noise and Fury’

Print Publications: During the project period FNR issued two double-editions in its ‘Master of Radio’ book library series. (See A. Module #1 Monitoring/Analysis ‘Publications’ for additional information.)
V. 2004–2010 PROJECT ACTIVITIES IN FOCUS:

A. MODULE #1: MONITORING/ANALYSIS

Objectives:

• Provide objective analysis and monitoring of industry wide trends – including promising regional models of innovation – via print publications and online resources.

• Raise journalistic and business standards of the regional radio industry through regular exchange of information and knowledge.

• Build on FNR’s reputation as a national resource center and business support institution for regional radio industry and radio-related New Media users.

The vastness of Russia’s territory poses significant challenges in terms of understanding the state – or as is often the case – states of regional media markets. Regional stations’ geographic isolation in turn results in a lack of awareness of industry developments and commonly accepted journalistic practices. As such, FNR sees an important role for the organization in helping to fill this void through monitoring and analysis activities. Through its print and web publications, educational outreach, and the regional radio festival series, FNR seeks to keep regional media stakeholders informed on the key events shaping radio and broadcast journalism today.

Programming activities related to monitoring and analysis include:

1. The Radio Portal: FNR launched its Radio Portal website (www.radioportal.ru) in 2001 with the goal of creating a platform for regional radio stations to keep apace of key industry developments and educational opportunities for professional growth. Over the years, the scope of the website’s services has gradually expanded to meet the diverse needs of regional stations.

In 2010, Radio Portal’s offerings consisted of:

• Industry news, including original reporting on Russian radio developments as well as translated news segments from abroad.

• Feature interviews with industry leaders

• Federal Contest Commission announcements, including monthly updates on available tenders for radio frequencies.

• Stream-format broadcasts of Russian radio stations (local as well as nation-wide networks)
Legal Advice, including news updates on registration, licensing, advertising, and defamation issues affecting radio stations.
- Career Development and Training Opportunities for professionals.
- Links to quality third-party informational resources for radio stations
- Grants and Awards Competitions
- Information on FNR events, including ‘Vmeste – Radio’ festival related news.

During the project period, the Radio Portal web-site experienced major changes which transformed it from a purely corporate site to one of the industry’s major resources, which supplies users with main media developments news; offers consultancy and organizational and legal aid; provides professional training and career opportunities for individuals as well as funding and promotion possibilities for companies; and links to other relevant and reliable resources, including access to broadcasts of Russian and foreign stations.

According to the Google Analytics data, there are about 1,000 unique visitors to the site per day, including holidays. The total of about 1,440 industrial news reports were published during the last project year, including 730 items in the news section.

The site provides online access to 48 broadcast streams of the stations in Russia and abroad. The stream software is in the process of being optimized and the range and the quality of the listening will substantially improve shortly.

One of the most important change to the site came in the form of various new sections dedicated to legal issues. One of these sections – the online database of local media experts – provides constant access to the resources related to legal aspects of the media companies work to broadcasters all over the country. The database was compiled as a result of monitoring and analysis of local professional resources conducted by FNR in collaboration with the Media Lawyers Bar, a Russian NGO offering legal services to media outlets. The database that at the moment includes 50 experts, enables local companies to identify lawyers who work in their particular regions in case they need legal advise, consultancy or support in concrete cases. Easy access to the legal expertise significantly adds to the ability of radio-makers to avoid violations of law, to effectively solve emerging problems and to protect their companies and the staff from unjustified charges. It also helps to improve the legal relationship between employers and the staff.

Another opportunity to monitor and discuss the amendments to media/Internet legislation as well as their concrete implications is the special online section: the Lawyers Club (http://www.radioportal.ru/law-club/). Total visits to the Lawyers Club page - 2,500 (including 1,500 unique visitors). The cases discussed there are taken from the current practice of local broadcasters and the discussion helps them to find ways in sophisticated situations that emerge in various regions of the country. Of the 15 stories suggested for the discussion at the web-site, the most widely commented were the stories related to the rights of an employees.

2. Publications: FNR remains Russia’s only consistent publisher of books, informational pamphlets, and other literature addressing the unique aspects of working in radio and broadcast journalism in Russia. Its books, pamphlets, booklets, and online materials provide fair and
balanced analysis of the Russian radio market, as well as promote best practices in international broadcast journalism. Moreover, these FNR materials serve as one of the few available resources to broadcast journalism departments at major universities across the country – where a shortage of radio-related materials is commonplace.

By 2010, FNR has published 11 editions of its library series ‘Master of Radio’ (four of them were double editions). Culled from Vmeste – Radio festival presentations as well as in-house seminars, submissions to the series came as a result of the international partnership which FNR intensively developed throughout the year. The books featured lectures by foreign journalists, who came to Russia as well as of Russian professionals who contributed to the partnership. In some cases FNR made the decision to publish lengthier ‘double editions’ to resolve complications with distribution and rising printing costs. As a result, 1,000 copies of each book were published and later distributed directly through the FNR regional radio festival series. In addition, FNR delivered multiple copies to journalism departments at all participating universities in the ‘UniverCity’ student/community radio network. (Note: Copies of all of these publications were submitted to USAID).

In 2010 edition 7 (11) ‘Legal Issues’ was published. The edition featured the debate around new amendments to the laws and case studies that related to broadcasts as well as internal issues of employer/employee relationship.

Apart from that, during the project FNR has published other professional editions, which include:

- **Our City Radio** (2006). The book looks into the success stories of several Russian local stations and tries to summarize the factors that provided their commercial success and popularity with the audience. The book is based on the case studies made by the FNR journalists in the cities around Russia.

- **Good Radio. How to Make It** (2009). The articles looked into various aspects of making programs on cultural issues. It focused on modern methods of covering cultural aspects of the life of society in the broad sense as opposed to the traditional clichés featuring only classic arts.

- **Successful Radio** (2010). The book is completely dedicated to management issues: from running a daily morning show to running a new niche radio station. The edition is based on the lectures given at the Vmeste – Radio festival and other seminars. The lectures were organized by Radio Corporation which was the co-publisher of the book. It is opening a series of publications on media management branded ‘Library of Radio Corporation’. This first edition was supported by IREX IMPP program.

3. **Radio Festival** (see below): The nationwide regional festival conference series Vmeste – Radio plays an important role in FNR’s ability to monitor and analyze industry trends. The regional gatherings provide a firsthand opportunity to discuss and assess regional trends with colleagues. Moreover, the festivals’ educational component provides content add-ons for FNR web and print publications –
to the benefit of regional journalists. For example, FNR ‘Master of Radio’ series compiles the best of festival lectures and presentations into a compendium of the best in radio industry thought and analysis. In addition, FNR’s Podstantsiya web team live streamed, podcasted, and posted video of presentation/lectures at the Vmeste – Radio festival finale in Moscow.

B. MODULE #2: REGIONAL RADIO FESTIVAL SERIES

Primary Objectives

- Improve quality of news and public affairs programming produced by regional radio stations via radio festivals, seminars, and residency internships that enforce best practices and industry standards for excellence
- Strengthen business practices and values of regional radio stations that leverage their financial independence to promote good journalistic practices.
- Provide objective analysis and monitoring of industry wide trends – including promising regional models of innovation – via print publications and online resources.
- Offer guidance and technical leadership to regional stations and journalists confronting changes through the integration of broadcasting with new media technologies.
- Build on FNR’s reputation as a national resource center and business support institution for regional radio industry and radio-related New Media users.

1. About the Festival: FNR first launched the Vmeste Radio nationwide festival conference series in 2002, with the aim of promoting learning and community among regional radio professionals, while honoring the best works produced in the regions each year. Now in its 8th season, the FNR-organized festival remains the only competition/conference event for regional Russian radio broadcasters – one that visits a major city in each of Russia’s seven Federal Districts throughout the year before wrapping up with an expanded Conference/Awards Finale in Moscow.14 All festival-related news and events are published on the www.radiofestival.ru website.

While changes are introduced into the festival from year to year, the festival has consistently been focused on two key components:

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While changes are introduced into the festival from year to year, the festival has consistently been focused on two key components:

14 The host cities vary from year to year. See the sidebar this page for a list of 2009-2010 festival events.)
1) *Educational Workshop Program:* Separate educational programs are developed for each two-day stage of the festival series, with the goal of making each festival event a place to learn about industry developments that concern both journalists and management. Examples of topics covered in sessions include journalistic ethics, programming/production tips, and new media trainings but to name a few. As in past years, presenters at the festival consist of some of the most respected figures in the Russian radio industry – including leading voices of Echo of Moscow and Radio Free Europe’s Russian service. Yet in keeping with the festival’s mission to promote networking within the broader radio community, these leading national broadcast figures share the program bill with emerging regional talents. International producers and experts, too, have become an increasingly important part of festival presentations, and offer a wider glance at events and practices abroad. Notable international guest presenters include Ira Glass of *This American Life*, Ken Freeman of the community radio station WFMU in New Jersey (once voted the best radio station in America), Julie Shapiro of the Third Coast International Audio Festival (founded by public radio station WBEZ in Chicago), as well as leading producers from the European Broadcasting Union member stations.

Finally, FNR staff experts provide perspective on often overlooked aspects of the Russian radio industry. Throughout the festival season, FNR seeks to further promote the most useful of these presentations to regional radio stations via FNR-run websites and the *Masters of Radio* library publication series.

2) *The Juried Competition:* The festival’s competition component seeks to recognize the best works in Russian radio journalism produced annually, under the concept that the competition encourages journalists to meet the highest standards for excellence in radio. As is tradition with the festival, regional prizes are awarded in four areas of informational radio programming, with regional winners going on to compete for the national prize at the end of the festival year. (See sidebar on this page for a full list of 2009-2010 journalism category winners.) In addition, the regional stage competition has worked to help FNR identify emerging regional talents. 2nd and 3rd place winners in the regional stages are offered additional training via in-house internships. Finally, the competition is notable for its annual Special Prize, traditionally awarded for an area of programming where FNR sees a particular need for development. (Additional information on the Special Prize can be found below). As is tradition, all recognized works are publicized and promoted as quality works via FNR-run websites.

3. *Additional Components to the Festival:*  

While the mission and purpose of the radio festival has remained largely unchanged over the years, FNR introduces new components to the festival each year with an eye towards keeping the event interesting for both past and new attendees.
Changes introduced over the years include:

- **Expert/Open Jury System:** Beginning in the 2007, FNR introduced a combined expert/open jury system of evaluating festival entries. Under the rules of judging, an expert jury currently evaluates and short-lists entries for each entry category at each stage of the regional festival according to pre-announced criteria and a 10-point system. However, once the short list has been determined, each station attending the short listening/discussion session of the regional festival is given one vote per nomination category to determine regional award winners. As with the expert jury, judging is again based on the same 10-point system of criteria. In order to maintain standards for quality, winning totals for each nomination are compared against the mean average of votes at the regional stage – with no 1st prize nomination awarded when winning entries fall short of their own region’s standards for excellence. (Under these circumstances, winning entries receive a 2nd place prize). For the Finale and awarding of national prizes, the festival returns back to the Expert Jury, which chooses among the open jury-selected regional finalists. FNR first adopted this system in the belief that transparent and participatory competition was the best way to keep the festival fair, trusted, and vital. That appears to be the case, with few if any reported incidents of complaints about prize nominations. Moreover, FNR has found the open jury system an effective means to promote serious discussion of programs among regional festival attendees on the whole.

- **Local Station Tours:** FNR added a new networking component to the festival's educational program by providing group visits to a host city station offering 100% local content. Station visits took place on the Friday eve before the formal start of the conference and sought to inform attendees of stations working closely within their communities. (See table this page for list of host stations at each regional stage). Stations visits consisted of a full tour of the studio facilities, a presentation by host station staff relating to local programming and community outreach projects, as well as an informal exchange gathering hosted by the station. Attendees were encouraged to use the occasion to ask – structuring of airtime, production issues, organizing the newsroom, and programming for the station.

- **Regional University Partners:** FNR also sought to further build on its ties with regional university journalism faculties, with regional universities making space donations to host all regional stages of the 2008-2009 festival series. In exchange, students were provided with free access to festival sessions and opportunities to learn from professionals working in the field. Over a third of students have since used the opportunity to arrange internships with local stations. In addition, FNR invited students to participate in a special student podcast award, administered through its UniverCity student/community radio project (SEE Module #5 Student/Community Radio Programming).

- **Beginner's Program for Festival-goers:** FNR introduced a separate track of conference workshops for all stages of the festival with the goal of appealing to relative newcomers.

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15 The exception was Moscow, where FNR worked with the Library of Foreign Literature to host the event.
to radio. The workshops reflected the increased presence of journalism students at the festivals, as well as a desire to attract newly opened stations that lack experienced news staffers. Response to the experiment was by and large positive – particularly among editors and station owners who noted that their younger staff members have few opportunities to learn about basic aspects of radio newsgathering.

- **Legal Training (See Module).** Media Law experts presented at each stage of the festival.

3. **The Special Prize:** As is tradition, each year the festival season includes an additional Special Prize award category aimed at addressing aspects of regional programming that FNR perceives as underserved. This ‘Special Prize’ differs significantly from other competition categories in a number of respects: submissions represent works of individual journalists, rather than radio stations; and entries are judged by a special jury consisting of experts in the chosen area, often beyond the radio broadcasting field. Given the competition’s goal of promoting quality programming in the prize area, the competition also includes a special mid-year educational seminar to explore various avenues for compelling program making. In turn, the Moscow Finale also features a special half-a-day session dedicated to short-listed programs as well as master-classes by prominent presenters in the field. For the 2009-2010 season, FNR turned its attention to audio-based multi-media work -- with the aim of encouraging innovation in the use of audio online.

Key components to the Special Prize season include:

- **Announcement of the Competition:** The competition is first announced in the beginning of the festival season and promoted at the regional stage through lecture presentations. Apart from the overview of the contest pattern and rules, each presentation has an educational angle, showing best examples of the chosen special prize area, and providing analysis.

- **Mid-year Educational Seminar:** In order to help promote quality works, FNR runs an extended 4-5 day seminar in Moscow dedicated to teaching skills and understanding in the announced Special Prize category. For example, in 2009-2010 the mid-year workshop consisted of 5 days dedicated to building multimedia skills.) Participants in these seminars are selected on a competitive basis - following submission of concept letters and rough-cut samples of work to gain entry to the seminar.

Workshop components include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIAL PRIZE WINNERS 2009-2010: “MULTIZVUK”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1st Prize:</strong> Katerina Gradaboeva (Yekaterinburg) for Village Pictures, a Public Encyclopedia of Villages in the Sverdlovst Oblast. <a href="http://www.derevnya-so.narod.ru/">http://www.derevnya-so.narod.ru/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2nd Prize:</strong> Alexander Soleev, Lira Valeeva, Stepan Martyanov, Eugene Sigalaev (Nizhny Novgorod) Community Radio «Openstream» <a href="http://www.openstream.ru">www.openstream.ru</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3rd Prize:</strong> Dmitry Lukyanchikov (Oreol) for “Here” <a href="http://www.myspace.com/zdesorel">http://www.myspace.com/zdesorel</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPECIAL PRIZE CATEGORIES 2004-2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005: Jury’s Choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008: Children/Youth Programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009: Cultural Programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010: Multimedia Audio ‘Multizvuk’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1) Presentation of program concepts by regional producers.
2) Lectures by various local presenters on subjects related to the Special Prize area.
3) A master class by a special guest international lecturer. For example, last year’s seminar featured a 3-day multi-media workshop by Bjarke Myrthu (Storycorps/formerly of Magnum-in-Motion) focusing on unusual approaches in multimedia online storytelling.
4) Practical exercises.

- **Festival Finale Competition:** For each year of the Special Prize, FNR assembles an independent jury consisting of journalists as well as people working in fields related to the subject. (For example, the 2009-2010 multimedia competition jury consisted of well-known Russian bloggers and online journalists, the cultural programming jury included well-known figures from the arts, etc.) Note that often those who take place in the seminars and reworked their program concepts have subsequently been awarded finalist prizes by independent jury.

- **Festival Finale Special Prize-related Programming:** Beginning in 2006, the Vmeste Radio festival finale started to include a half-day devoted to aspects of Special Prize-related programming. Sessions featured additional guest lecturers, presentation of short-listed works, and discussion about future development of the genre in question.

- **Publication of all works and master class sessions onto FNR-run websites, including the festival website (www.radiofestival.ru), Radio Portal (www.radioportal.ru) and FNR’s podcasting site Podstantsiya (www.podstantsiya.ru).**

**3. Analysis of Festival Attendance:** Though festival attendance has remained relatively stable throughout the years, it’s clear that FNR witnessed a peak attendance during the 3rd and 4th festival seasons. Organizers attribute the subsequent lower attendance first and foremost to the varying economic conditions facing regional markets as opposed to the capital. Many stations were simply unable to cover costs for tickets and hotel accommodations to participate in the event. Another factor was the relative increase in costs of travel in parts of Russia – particularly the Far East -- as well as the expanded regional market share of franchised brands (for ex. Avto-Radio) that has brought fewer ‘first time’ stations to the festival. Indeed, these franchise brands often bring their own in-house management brand systems that offer little in the way of local news programming. In contrast, support for the festival from locally owned regional stations remains strong – as reflected in the fact that the vast majority of participants in the festival are return stations. (See table below for key statistics).

**Festival Attendance by Year (2002-2010)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Festivals (2002-2010)</th>
<th>Participating Cities</th>
<th>Program Entries</th>
<th>Participating Radio Stations</th>
<th>Festival Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year I</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>634</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>909</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year II</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>703</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year III</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>711</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>1054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year IV</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>847</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>1008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year V</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>855</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year VI</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>726</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year VII</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year VIII</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>832</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Federal District (FD)</th>
<th>Participating Cities</th>
<th>Cities Submitted Programs</th>
<th>Program Submissions</th>
<th>Stations Submitted Programs</th>
<th>Participating Radio Stations</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ural FD</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siberian FD</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern FD</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwestern FD</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volga FD</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far Eastern FD</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central FD</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>65</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>59</td>
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<td>75</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>121</td>
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<td>Total:</td>
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<td>89</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>832</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>469</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. New Business-related Awards: While quality journalism remains at the heart of the Vmeste Radio competition, the festival’s organizers recognize that management and business play an important role in the success of any radio station’s newsroom. Accordingly, FNR partnered with its sister organization «Korporatsiya Radio» to introduce a series of management related contests.

Specifically, festivals since 2008 include:

- Radio Image, a competition whereby stations are recognized for creative promotion of the radio industry through advertising campaigns.
- 'Best Publication about Radio in the Press/Internet' an additional category to Radio Image designed to encourage coverage of the radio industry by other forms of media.

C. MODULE #3: EDUCATION/TRAINING

Objectives:

- Improve quality of news and public affairs programming produced by regional radio stations via radio festivals, seminars, and residency internships that enforce and/or encourage standards of excellence.
- Offer guidance and technical leadership to regional stations and journalists confronting changes through the integration of broadcasting with new media technologies.
- Promote alternative platforms and genres of public interest programming using new media web technologies.
- Strengthen business practices and values of regional radio stations that leverage their financial independence to promote good journalistic practices.
• Build on FNR’s reputation as a national resource center and business support institution for regional radio industry and radio-related New Media users.

In 2004-2010, FNR provided a variety of educational opportunities for working journalists from Russia’s regions. Indeed, these training and educational outreach programs provide the only radio broadcasting training with a national scope.

Formal training/educational programs include:

1. **Journalist Residency Internships:** In the project years, FNR offered select winners of the regional stages of the *Vmeste – Radio* regional festival series with possibilities to participate in FNR’s resident internship program. The program was conceived to allow regional journalists time to develop additional skills by working closely with FNR trainer/producers on various aspects of radio production and broadcast journalism. Since in 2004, FNR offered training to 126 interns.

The whole system of the internship is aimed at stimulating creative and journalistic abilities of trainees as they are encouraged to apply unusual approaches when speaking about important social issues. The training combines theory and practice in order to develop the interns’ professional skills in sound recording and editing, conducting interviews, writing scripts, structuring radio stories, and other advanced aspects of radio journalism/production.

Interns are selected mainly from those who received prizes at the regional stages of the festival – with the idea that given additional training these individuals may emerge as future festival winners. However, as FNR is making efforts to develop the system of independent freelance radio production, some of the interns were selected from talented independent producers, selected on the basis of FNR’s evaluation of their activities.

Another change was made in the intensity and the schedule of internships. Normally, three interns would be selected from each of Russia’s seven federal districts. They would come to FNR in groups of 3-5 interns for the period of 3 weeks. However, this season FNR faced two main difficulties:

- In some of the federal districts (e.g. in the Far East) there is a limited number of radio stations in general, and of strong players in particular. This results in the fact that the same radio stations become prize-winners many years in succession. If FNR followed the usual practice, it would have to train the staff of the same radio stations over and over again.
- Particularly due to the economic crisis, many radio stations were forced to reduce their staff to the minimum. In this situation, it would become impossible to send a staff journalist for three-week long internship. There is, in fact no replacement for this journalist.

Based on such realities FNR decided to following:

- FNR will not limit itself by the strict rule of three journalists per federal district. Instead, interns are selected where different radio stations are active. At the same time FNR makes sure that if possible, all the federal districts are covered by the internship program at least in the minimum scale.
- The whole internship must be restructured, so that interns will be absent from their radio stations for as short period as possible.
The final scheme was introduced in 2009-2010. In fact the training was intensified to stay within the limits of two weeks. Instead of theoretical course the program was restructured so that interns get the same quality knowledge while doing practical work, gathering materials for a program.

Apart from that FNR was seeking opportunities to run internship program in other cities. This would broaden the variety of trainer who are supervising the training and, on the other hand, would make it easier and more realistic to leave their workplace for a fortnight. In 2010, FNR made a first attempt to run 4-day long internship courses on the basis of the Radio Abakan. Taking into account the necessity to develop multimedia qualities, interns were representing not only radio but also Internet resources, local news agencies, TV and newspapers. The internship was supervised by the FNR deputy editor-in-chief Elena Uporo va and run by the journalists of Radio Abakan.

Apart from that, the Tochka Treff project of the German Cultural Center proposed to run a joint program of a 4-day long internship in Berlin. Four journalists from Russian regions and 3 journalists from Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan took part in the program.

Thus, in 2009-2010 the internship program was split in the following way to train the total of 21 journalists:

1. Internship in the FNR office – 9 journalists (including last year’s festival award winning journalism students)
2. Internship in Abakan – 8 journalists
3. Internship in Berlin – 4 Russian journalists

2. Long Distance Learning Courses: FNR began the Long Distance Learning Program as an affordable and cost-effective means for regional radio professionals to learn and develop their skills in the realm of radio journalism, marketing, and management. Courses seek to offer a classroom experience virtually – with practical exercises, interactive discussions, and remote consultation between students and the instructor.

In the project years the distant courses included the following ones:

- news reporting
- making a radio show
- sound editing
- DJ skills
- accounting
- advertising sales
- legal issues

In 2010 FNR and Radio Corporation were designing a series of new distant learning courses which take into account the changing situation in the post-crisis radio market. The courses due to start in 2010.

3. ‘Beyond Radio’ Master Class Series: During the project period, FNR continued the master class workshop series called ‘Beyond Radio.’ Intended for experienced regional journalists, managers, and sound designers, the courses are conceived as a way for skilled professionals to
gain exposure to cutting edge changes in the field working directly with well-known international
guest lecturers. An additional purpose of the series was to aid FNR’s own institutional capacity –
helping maintain the organization relevance and expertise amid an era of rapid change and
innovation.

In the project years, the following master classes were offered to groups of 15-20 people –
consisting of FNR staff:

- Brendan Greeley (Multi-Media Editor, The Economist and former ‘Blogger-in-Chief’ at
  Radio Open Source) donated a private in-house workshop for FNR’s Podstantsiya team
  exploring ways to enhance community around the site.
- Ira Glass (producer/host, This American Life) led an in-house editorial pitch session for
  Podstantsiya exploring unusual angles to storytelling.
- Alex Van Oss (Independent Producer, USA) led a workshop exploring ways FNR could
  adapt regional producers content for an American audience via US/Russian co-
  productions.
- Oleg Kozyrev (blogger/journalist/social media expert) gave a private workshop for FNR
  staff on ways to better employ Russian social networking tools.
- Jake Shapiro (Public Radio Exchange) who met with FNR while in Moscow to explore
  ways of adapting the PRX platform to help independent producers in Russia.
- Glenn Brown (You Tube/former-Creative Commons), who met with FNR while in
  Moscow to discuss the finer legal points of Creative Commons licensing.
- ‘Scanner’ Robin Rimbaud (Sound Artist, UK) who met with FNR to show new methods
  of sound processing, creative sound art and making socially oriented sound projects
- Davia Nelson of ‘The Kitchen Sisters’ (Independent Producer, USA) Lectured at FNR
  presenting her renowned way of covering social issues, particularly related to multi-
  ethnical culture, through national cuisine
- Ylva Mårtens, (Producer, SR, Sweden) talked about the methods a journalist should use
  while interviewing children

4. Time to Work in Radio Seminar Series: FNR and Radio Corporation have been running
workshops for the radio stations management since 2001. The seminars covered virtually every
aspect of radio management: running a station, sales, advertising, accounting, managing HR,
legal issues, etc. At the same time, in 2008, FNR has changed it pattern of running its traditional
business seminar for regional broadcasters. Taking into account the fact that during the economic
crisis radio stations tend to refrain of sending their staff to long-distance travels to attend trainings
it was decided that the seminars will be run during the festival events. Nevertheless, as in
previous years, stations were required to meet certain set standards for participation in the
program, namely that outlets be:

- Non-governmental
- Independent
- 100% locally programmed (or minimum 40% of local broadcasting if a station has a talk
  radio format)
- Minimum 20% of information broadcasting with demonstrable use of programs of social
  importance.
The following trainings run to provide managers consultancy during the crisis:


Special training on sales and advertising by Denis Vishnya, Executive Director of the ‘Autograph’ production center, Yekaterinburg. Several sessions at the 2008-2009 Vmeste – Radio regional festivals.

‘Sales at a Radio Station’, a special training in Moscow by Graeme Moreland, owner of Graeme Moreland Media, Edinburgh, UK. June 28-30, 2009, Moscow.

‘How to create a winning strategy and how to implement it’ a special training by Sam Zniber, vice president of Radio Intelligence, France, June 28, 2010 Moscow

‘What management needs to know about creative types’, a special training by Benjamin Walker, WFMU, USA, June 28, 2010 Moscow

5. Consulting: FNR also provides essential business consulting to regional stations seeking to launch and/or rebrand their programming to include more local news and informational content. Over the project period, consultancies were offered to several regional station partners, including assistance with concept bids to the Russian State Broadcasting Commission.

Winning bids/concepts included:

- October 24, 2008: Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. won right to the 105,5 Megahertz frequency with the concept of the 24-hour-a-day broadcasting

- January 29, 2009: Novokuznetsk. The locally-owned «Radio Sibir – Kuzbass» won the 98,7 Megahertz frequency with the concept of the 24-hour-a-day broadcasting

- March 25, 2009: Kurgan. The locally-owned «Vizmedia» won the 103,7 Megahertz frequency with the concept of the 24-hour-a-day broadcasting

- April 22, 2009: Chita. The local media company «Media Alliance» won the 100,7 Megahertz frequency with the concept of the 24-hour-a-day broadcasting

- September 30, 2009: Nizhni Novgorod. The local media company “A-Radio” won the 98,6 Megahertz and 99,5 Megahertz with the concept of the 24-hour-a-day broadcasting

- January 27, 2010: Petropevlovsk-Kamchatsky. The locally owned company “Kamchatmediaservis” won the 106,5 Megahertz with the concept of the 24-hour-a-day broadcasting
• **March 2010: Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk.** Development of frequencies in the band of 88-108 Megahertz by the locally-owned «Media-Partner»

• **March 31, 2010: Ulan-Ude.** A local company “Radio Sibir – Baikal” won the 106,5 Megahertz with the concept of the 24-hour-a-day broadcasting

• **31 March, 2010: Tyumen.** The media company “Za Oblakami Tyumen” won the 92,0 Megahertz with the concept of the 24-hour-a-day broadcasting

6. **Public Lectures Events:** During the project period, FNR held several public lecture events designed to encourage awareness of radio, the challenges facing radio journalists, and opportunities to participate in radio via podcasts and other online media. (See p. 11 'Publicity' for additional details on events.)

7. **Other Training Events in 2010:**
   - One-day workshop for the participants of a seminar on multi-media run by the National Association of TV and Radio Broadcasters (NAT)

Podstantsiya team constantly runs online and individual training and consultancy for journalists in Russia and CIS on request

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D. **MODULE #4: PROGRAMMING/NEW MEDIA:**

Objectives:

- Offer guidance and technical leadership to regional stations and journalists confronting changes through the integration of broadcasting with new media technologies.

- Promote alternative platforms and genres of public interest programming using new media web technologies.

- Provide media training, technical guidance, and technical support to Russian communities and citizens on broadcast and radio-related New Media issues such as podcasting and Internet broadcasting.

- Assist development of alternative business models for participatory media and/or volunteer-run stations.

- Provide objective analysis and monitoring of industry wide trends – including promising regional models of innovation – via print publications and online resources.

- Build on FNR’s reputation as a national resource center and business support institution for regional radio industry and radio-related New Media users.

Over the years, FNR has provided partner stations with regular access to education programming covering a range of important – and underreported - issues such as human rights, minority views, and the environment. Beyond helping maintain standards for excellence in terms of quality journalism, range of programming, and production value, these in-house productions play an important role in maintaining FNR’s reputation as a resource center for those looking to further develop their skills and expand their horizons.
Moreover, the potential for increased distribution of these and like-minded programs on public interest issues lies at the heart of FNR’s new media efforts. As noted earlier in this report, technological changes – coupled with expansion of broadband into Russia’s regions – provides new opportunities for program development, distribution, interaction, and discussion.

FNR-related programming from the past period include:

1. Special Programming:

Special Programming Projects completed during the project period include:

- ‘Hear and Now’ From 2004-2006, FNR produced a weekly short documentary series for Radio Rossiya focusing on various issues related to civic society. Unfortunately, the series was cancelled when the state broadcaster changed its policy ahead of elections and decided it would no longer allowed outside programming.

- Lenin’s Ears: a multi-media series that allowed volunteer contributors to record stories and reflections of people as they bid “a final farewell” to the late Soviet leader. 23 radio producers and 14 volunteers from Russia, Germany, the United States, and Thailand contributed to the project (http://www.podst.ru/lenin/). In total, 25 radio programs were produced along with 14 video interviews with prominent young Russian artists, writers, activists, and political leaders discussing the role Lenin had played in their lives. The project was then presented at the Third Coast International Audio Festival (Chicago, IL) in September 2008 as well as all 7 stages of the FNR-organized Vmeste Radio nationwide festival series. Further promoting the event were small souvenir items, including stickers, t-shirts, an accompanying English/Russian multi-media CD, and a homemade miniature scale Mausoleum.

The event received some media coverage, though primarily in the blogosphere:


2. New Media Programming via the ‘PODSTANTSIYA’ Podcasting Portal:

First launched in 2007, FNR’s Podstantsiya (www.podst.ru) continues to serve as the lone Russian language website employing podcasts and related online audio distribution mechanisms to promote public interest, cultural, and social media technology issues in the Russian sphere of the Internet. Pursuit of this mission has led Podstantsiya site to serve as a warehouse for a wide range of programming and programming-related materials.

These include:

16 It's worth noting that the agreement at the time gave FNR complete editorial freedom over content.
Exclusively produced audio programs and audio podcasts from project staff and varied contributors such as regional journalists, amateur podcasters, and NGO personnel.

Quality regional broadcasts/programs, providing archived long-tail value to the best regional radio productions.

Programs and ‘as live’ rebroadcasts of student productions and lectures from a network of regional Russian universities.

Public 'audio challenge' contributor campaigns around themed programming concepts.

American and European radio documentary features, with accompanying Russian language transcripts (sorted for online language study into English, German, and French categories) providing opportunities for discussion and analysis.

A contributor-based free sound library (ranked #1 in Russia according to the popular Yandex.ru search engine).

Education and outreach, too, are an important part of Podstantsiya's work. A particular emphasis has been on building ties with regional producers and podcasters, among whom new media issues are emerging in importance but still poorly understood. As a result, the project staff regularly post text, audio and video-based educational materials that promote awareness and understanding of issues related to radio journalism, podcasting and related audio-based online distribution methods, as well as Internet-community issues such as the Creative Commons and Open Source movements. ‘Offline’ educational/outreach events are also offered, as the Podstantsiya staff regularly lead public events, seminars, and volunteer trainings both in Moscow and in the regions. Finally, all postings to the site feature forums for comment, feedback, and discussion. Under an ‘open door’ policy of learning, these activities are freely offered in seeking to impart new media skills that build on a foundation for alternative radio journalism while raising awareness about opportunities to participate in the site.

**Podstantsiya Content:** The primary goals of the project team are to steadily strengthen the role of Podstantsiya as a laboratory of new radio genres, to provide research on new ideas in the realm of audio, and to serve as a publishing platform for regional independent journalists and podcasters. Toward that aim, the project period saw Podstantsiya continue to make significant gains in terms of quantity of postings. Currently, an average of 118 new podcasts are posted to the site each month.

The site also made strides in terms of quality and range of content offerings. While visitation figures varied during the report period, the site’s reputation for improved content is supported by several new projects that aim to ‘rebroadcast’ Podstantsiya offerings on-air. For example, Radio Bim – a youth radio station in Kazan (Republic of Tartarstan) has begun airing an hour-long Podstantsiya digest on Friday evenings. Similarly, the online community-radio Open Stream in Nizhnmy Novgorod, Radio Abakan, and Radio Master in Kachkanar (Sverdlovst Oblast) also carry occasional Podstantsiya commentaries and features.

Specific featured content to the site currently includes:

1. **Social Podcasts of Underreported Issues**, including works by regional producers deemed...
unfit for air on local stations either due to format or political concerns.

Examples include:

- The arrest of liberal youth movement leader\(^{17}\)
- The world’s first rock concert for the deaf \(^{18}\)
- The plight of young men who resort to prostitution \(^{19}\)
- A regional newspaper editor beaten for his criticism of a local mayor ahead of elections. \(^{20}\)
- An interview with best selling author Boris Akunin about the arrest of the oligarch Mikhail Khodorkovsky \(^{21}\)
- Reaction related to the death of miners in the Urals Mountain region. \(^{22}\)

2. *Quality Regional Station Productions*, archived and offered to new ‘long-tail’ audiences.

Examples include:

- Radio Abakan’s (Abakan, Republic of Khakassia) series on the Russian exploration and subsequent expansion into Siberia.
- Radio Abakan’s exclusive interview with Albert Kuvezin, the leader of the well-known Tuvan throat-singing rock group ‘Yakh-ta.’ The interview is the only one Kuvezin has given to Russian radio.
- Radio Volgorechensk’s (Volgorechensk, Kostromskaya Oblast) feature series on local Afghan war veterans and others affected by the war.
- Echo of Rostov’s look at the relationship between art, artists, and alcoholism.
- Echo of Perm’s (Perm, Permiskiy Kray) analysis of President Medvedev’s first public interview and it’s impact on the local ‘Dissenters March’.

3. *Contributor Themed ‘Audio Challenges,’* intended as fun exercises to develop skills and community among site contributors using public interest themes.

Examples include:

- ‘Our City’, whereby contributors create audio-podcasts that offer real-life ‘tours’ of their communities, \(^{23}\)
- *Best Reportage*, a podcast series that highlighted the best Russian work produced in the genre, including winners of past Vmeste-Radio festival awards.
- *Favorite Poems: Mayakovsky*, where contributors were encouraged to read and submit recordings of their favorite poems by the poet.
- *Epigraph for Stalin*, whereby contributors weighed in on ‘Stalin’s role in history’ debate.
- *Hour of Darkness*, special podcasts inspired by the WWF’s worldwide campaign

\(^{17}\) [http://podst.ru/?area=posts&id=2115]  
\(^{18}\) [http://www.podst.ru/?area=posts&id=2467]  
\(^{19}\) [http://www.podst.ru/?area=posts&id=1982]  
\(^{20}\) [http://www.podst.ru/?area=posts&id=2373]  
\(^{21}\) [http://podst.ru/?area=posts&id=2223]  
\(^{22}\) [http://www.podst.ru/posts/4400/]  
\(^{23}\) [http://www.podst.ru/blogs/1032/?page=3]
to conserve energy consumption.\footnote{24}
\begin{itemize}
\item Futurist Lunch,\footnote{25} tied to the 100th anniversary of the Futurist art movement.
\item The Suitcase,\footnote{26} a podcast series where contributors were encouraged to produce podcasts that explore ideas of memory and the past.
\end{itemize}

4. Sound and Fury Audio Magazine: In 2009, Podstansiya staff launched the ‘Sound and Fury’ audio magazine – a quarterly program posted to the site in the ‘as-live’ format.\footnote{27} Beyond the main staff hour-long production, ‘Sound and Fury’ sought to build in listener contributions in the form of photographs, audio files, and text. Topics explored through the magazine include ‘The Wall’ – to mark the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall; ‘What No One Knows’ – to promote alternative view points on politics, culture, and the like; and ‘My House as a Museum’ – to promote ideas of collective memory and forgetting.

5. Language Learning: Where possible, Podstansiya has sought to link to and/or directly carry international programming in translation. As a result, the project team created a special section of the site for language learning, with programs categorized according to language. Thus far, featured material includes works in English, French, German, and Russian.\footnote{28}

6. Feature Articles: The project team routinely posts feature articles with accompanying audio and/or video – introducing site visitors to unusual forms of radio, socially-oriented projects, and sound production.\footnote{29}

7. Convergent Journalism Skills: As part of its mission, the Podstansiya team regularly seeks to help its contributor community develop convergent media skills – a necessity in the new media environment. Since the start of the project, the site has seen as significant spike in user-submitted audio-photo slidecasts\footnote{30}

8. Sound Library: ‘Shumoteka’ -- Russia’s only free and public Internet sound library launched in 2009 – continues to remain a popular resource. Several thousand recordings now posted to the site, and a ‘request’ form allows users looking to ask for help finding whatever sound they need. Since August 2008, the Shumoteka has ranked #1 for the keyword search ‘sound library’ on the leading Yandex Russian language search engine.

B. Audience/Community

Statistics: As of September 2010, there were 1030 registered users to the site\footnote{31} -- up from 400 since the beginning of the report period in August of 2008 – with a relatively stable average of

\begin{itemize}
\item \footnotesize{\url{http://www.podst.ru?area=blogs&id=636}} \footnote{24}
\item \footnotesize{\url{http://www.podst.ru?area=blogs&id=527}} \footnote{25}
\item \footnotesize{\url{http://www.podst.ru?area=blogs&id=454}} \footnote{26}
\item \footnotesize{\url{http://www.podst.ru?area=blogs&id=530}} \footnote{27}
\item \footnotesize{\url{http://www.podst.ru?area=blogs&id=526}} \footnote{28}
\item \footnotesize{\url{http://www.podst.ru/blogs/554/?page=1}} \footnote{29}
\item \footnotesize{\url{http://www.podst.ru/blogs/554/?page=1}} \footnote{30}
\item \footnotesize{\url{http://www.podst.ru/blogs/554/?page=1}} \footnote{31}
\end{itemize}
400 unique visitors per day. While these figures indicate slow but steady growth, the reality is that problems related to hacker attacks significantly depressed visitation to the site during the site’s first year launch. Indeed, the negative trend in site visitation reversed only after intensive efforts by project staff to correct the situation.

Currently, the majority of users to the site come from Central Russia, the Volga region, the Northwest Federal District, and the Urals. (Further down the line comes Southern Russia, the Far Eastern District, and the Caucasus. Other large visitor communities are located in the United States, Germany, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. An estimated 50% of these visitors arrive to the site directly, with the other half finding their way through search engines and/or 3rd party links.

Based on both the project staff's observations and data, Podstantsiya community members include:

- Regional radio journalists
- Students, often from journalism faculties
- Sound engineers
- Musicians
- Individuals with a distinct interest in alternative programming topics not found on commercial radio
- Individuals interested in foreign language programming
- ‘Their’ friends.

**Analysis:** Within the community, an estimated 60 users regularly and actively participate in the site – either by posting content, writing comments, or contributing to group projects as volunteers. Yet the project team assumes these numbers are somewhat depressed by aforementioned broadband issues in the regions. In other words, if some users report difficulties downloading or stream material, the same problem exists (if not more so) for those seeking to upload content.

As has been noted in previous reports, there is no tradition for alternative radio formats in Russia – a problem perhaps amplified by the lack of easily available recording gear that creates necessary room for a diverse recording culture. (Even among professional radio producers the problem is surprisingly acute). With these factors in mind, the Podstantiya team has attempted to orient audience contributions heavily around commentary and discussion rather than solely podcast uploads. For example, Podstantiya editors regularly filter out repostings of overtly commercial radio in podcast form under the belief that these programs detract from the site's purpose (Honest peer revenue – rather than self-promotion – motivates newcomers to the site.) When asked what prompted them to post their work, newcomers often respond that they want feedback, be that positive or negative.

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33 This follows similar trends surrounding contributor-to-reader ratios elsewhere on the web.
34 Project staff refer them to other commercially-oriented podcast resources.
Given the increased importance of the discussion forums, the project staff recently made the decision to open up comment forums to unregistered 'guest' visitors. In addition, the team's programmer has worked to add a range of new features to the comment threads – including the ability to post photographs, sound, hyperlinks, and video – that will hopefully sponsor greater creativity in the discussions.

Another additional measures related to community include:

- Addition of a featured commentary to the main page, intended to reward thoughtful reviews and responses to posted audio works.
- A Podstantsiya designed audio player plug-in for direct use on Live Journal and other sites.
- A ‘my recommendations’ list by which registered users can tag particularly memorable works.

**Successes relative to Community:** Another aspect of the Podstantsiya's mission is to broaden the horizons of its contributor community. By regularly posting opportunities to participate in workshops and internships as well as 3rd party audio competitions in Europe and the United States, the project team seeks to raise standards for excellence among users.

During the project period, there were several notable examples, including:

- Chicago Public Radio: Yana Sakharova, a Podstantsiya contributor based near the southern seaport of Sochi, worked with Podstantsiya to produce a segment on the impact of the town's mayoral elections on the 2014 Olympic games for the NPR affiliate in Chicago, IL. The American-based producers were able to assess Sakahorova's reporting skills through her Podstantsiya postings.

- Podstanstiya contributers 'Project Nada4to' were selected for participation in the 2008 Prix Europa competition following publication of their work on Podstantsiya. In addition, their work were awarded a prize at the international «Petersburg Dialog» competition.35

- Vladimir Noskov, a blind Ukrainian radio producer who was unknown to FNR until he began publishing material on Podstantsiya, was invited to participate in a month-long internship at the organization based on the quality of his work.

**Setbacks relative to Community:** Despite the importance of discussion on the site, some regional radio journalist/producers have indicated they prefer to not to comment but discuss issues with FNR staff directly (by phone, at festivals, etc). Their reluctance stems from potential problems with regional stations’ management, who regard the site as harmful to their commercially format standards.

**C. Education/Public Events**

35 [http://www.podst.ru/?area=blogs&id=207]
In order to motivate the podcasting community and promote opportunities for newcomers to participate in the website, the Podstantsiya team hold open public events as well as specialty seminars on issues related to radio journalism, community journalism, community management and new media. On several occasions, these events have featured prominent radio and community producers from the US and Europe as guest lecturers. While several of these events gained mention under the ‘Publicity’ section earlier in this report, a few other noteworthy examples include;

- A ‘Listening Event’ in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) with the support of the local Internews organization and was attended by local bloggers and journalists.\(^{36}\)
- A Documentary Radio Evening at the Drama Theatre in Abakan, Khakassiya.\(^{37}\)
- A Podstantsiya-led master-class related to cultural programming at the ‘Chir-Chayan’ theatre festival in Abakan.\(^{38}\)
- A special-hour long radio program dedicated to the Podstantsiya audio magazine “Sound and Fury” on “Nash Express Radio” (Oreol)\(^{39}\)
- Podstantsiya journalists took part in seminars and presentations of the UniverCity student/community radio project in a host of project cities including Nizhny Novgorod, Moscow, Yekaterinburg, Rostov-on-Don, Syktyvkar, and Vladivostok but to name a few. The presentations were aimed at promoting the concept and practice of student community radio and attended by students of various universities in these cities.

**Youth Podcasts:** Beyond the journalistic community, Podstantsiya journalists ran in training sessions on podcast production for teenagers. The first took place in the Podstantsiya studio, where project staff worked with a local charity NGO to teach children with various forms of cancer about new media. In addition, Podstantsiya staff ran a workshop at the “Maria’s Children” Creativity Centre for teenage orphans.

The Podstantsiya team offers regular on-line consultations for local journalists, trainings and internships for the local broadcasters’ staff and amateur podcasters, and often meets them in its editorial office.

**Amateur Podcasters:** Podstantsiya encourages and works with non-professionals interested in radio production/podcasting to produce programmes, podcasts, slidecasts, etc. and post them regularly at the Podstantsiya website.

Examples include:


\(^{38}\) [http://abakanradio.livejournal.com/27337.html](http://abakanradio.livejournal.com/27337.html)

• A Russian physician with the International Red Cross who works in Thailand, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam and regularly produces podcast stories. Recently, he tried his first slidecast photo/audio production.

• A Moscow gardener posted natural sound recordings to the Podstantsiya-run Shumoteka sound library.

D. Volunteers

Podstantsiya friends take part in the seminars as volunteer participants and help with a number of organizational tasks, including translation of foreign-language programs, search for grant projects, locating information and contacts for radio programmes, and sharing equipment and skills with other members of the community. In certain cases they offer free publicity for Podstantsiya’s public events, make photos and write for the pages in social networks (e.g.: http://vkontakte.ru/club1594704 - the page was created and kept by a Literary Institute student).

Foreign journalists and producers grant Podstantsiya the right to free (but reserved) posting of their radio programmes at Podstantsiya with an accompanying Russian translation of the work.

E. Website Programming and Development

At the moment, the site allows users access to a full range of multimedia options, including photos, video, audio, text, hyper-links and person-to-person communications. The design is such that it’s flexible enough to use various approaches depending on the project. The FNR adapts the range of content for projects, seminars, presentations, and convergent journalism works when appropriate. The system was created with the help of which the community can control server and software errors. Apart from that an automated scheme of content protection is being developed (The Creative Commons agreement currently doesn’t hold in Russia, and so special mechanisms for built-in ID coding are required to prevent freely available content – such as sounds from Shumoteka – from commercial use by outside resources).

In addition, the interface and editing template designed for visually impaired people has improved and become more user-friendly. At the moment, the team is in the process of designing audio versions of Twitter and infographics.

40 (http://www.podst.ru/?area=blogs&id=391)
41 (http://www.podst.ru/?area=noise_posts&id=2766).
43 http://www.netvibes.com/ifc#RADIO_FEATURES_in_SOUND
E. PARTICIPATORY STUDENT/COMMUNITY RADIO NETWORK:

Objectives:

- Promote alternative platforms and genres of public interest programming using new media web technologies.
- Provide media training, technical guidance, and technical support to Russian communities and citizens on broadcast and radio-related New Media issues such as podcasting and Internet broadcasting.
- Provide objective analysis and monitoring of industry wide trends – including promising regional models of innovation – via print publications and online resources.
- Assist development of alternative business models for participatory volunteer-run stations.
- Build on FNR’s reputation as a national resource center and business support institution for regional radio industry and radio-related New Media users.

FNR launched the UniverCity project in 2007 with the goal of employing emerging technologies related to radio and the Internet in establishing a small network of volunteer-run ‘participatory’ radio stations at Russian regional universities. Seeking a flexible combination of traditional ‘terrestrial’ broadcasting and ‘virtual’ Internet-driven technologies, the project sought to define ‘stations’ in the loosest general terms, but based on clearly defined joint partnerships between the universities and the FNR. To enter the program, universities would offer existing computer and broadcast studio facilities on campus for radio use. In turn, FNR would lead a series of offsite and onsite trainings as well as follow-on supportive measures designed to forge cooperative links between students, faculty, community stakeholders, and – eventually - local listeners. Ultimately, the goal of the program is to create an independent, flexible, and self-sustaining model for disseminating community programming to universities and their wider communities in Russia.

Using successful student/community stations in the U.S., Canada, and other parts of the world as operating models, the trainings seek to provide students with skills in the areas of programming, volunteer staffing/training, conflict resolution, community building, and fundraising. Moreover, the project seeks to encourage students’ involvement in their surrounding community through a series of interventions.

44 On occasion, this also has meant FNR helps universities purchase technical equipment for student stations – with the university covering costs as per agreement. For example, during the past year FNR arranged for Syktyvkar-radio «Wave» to purchase two Zoom H2 recorders and professional equipment, which allows to make high quality sound recording. In addition, Radio PSU purchased a Zoom H2.
These include:

- Training Actions: Providing open access to training, production and distribution facilities;
- Creative Actions: Promoting local creative talent and fostering local traditions;
- Informational Actions: Producing programs for the education and development of local communities; and
- Competitive Actions: Encouraging quality programming through competitive prizes and participation in FNR’s nationwide regional radio festival.

**UNIVER-CITY PARTICIPATING UNIVERSITIES TO DATE:**

**Year 1:**
1. Moscow State University (Moscow)
2. Nizhny Novgorod Linguistic University (Nizhny Novgorod, Volga region)
3. Perm’ State University (Perm, Urals region)
4. Higher School of Economics (Moscow and regional branches)

**Year 2:**
5. South Federal University (Rostov-on-Don, South Federal District)
6. Urals State University (Yekaterinburg, Urals Federal District)
7. Syktyvkar State University (Republic of Komi, North-East Federal District)

**Year 3:**
8. Saratov State University (Saratov)
9. Far-Eastern State University (Vladivostok)
10. Urdmurtsky State University (Izhevsk, Urdmurtia)

**Additional Partners:**
11. South-Ural State University (Chelyabinsk)*
12. Cherepovetskii State University (Cherepovets)*
13. Vologda State Pedagogical University (Vologda)*

Key Project Activities include:

1. **Selection of New Participant Universities**

   Following an outreach and technical capacity assessment, FNR signs agreements with incoming participant universities, based on project criteria of minimal investment of equipment and administrative support.

   For example:

   - **Urals State University** was selected as potential partner on the basis of FNR’s survey and monitoring as early as in 2006. However, since the university was in the process of restructuring its radio station and refurbishing its studios, the project team decided to involve it in the project at a later stage. At the moment the university has sustainable technical
facilities, 24-hour/seven-days-a-week Internet broadcasts. The station is based in a very strong university located in a Russian region with developed industries.

- **Syktyvkar University** hosts a closed circuit radio station that has actively broadcast inside the university buildings via loudspeakers for the past three years. During the FNR assessment, the administration and journalism department expressed eagerness in expanding coverage to Internet-broadcasting as well.

2. **Initial Training Seminars:**

At the beginning of each project year, FNR has run a 5-day training seminar in Moscow for university radio stations’ core staff in a range of areas related to running a station. Seminars are run by guest-lecturers as well as FNR staff and include topics such as:

- Experience and problems of university partnership: evaluation, experience, opinions of the first-year participants and project coordinators. General discussion.
- Programming and design of a university radio station: selection of the target audience, interaction with listeners. The role and participation of the volunteers in the station activities, how to involve them and organize their work.
- Priorities and relevant topics to be discussed with the student community and discussion methods at the student radio. Interview, search for the interviewee and experts.
- Introduction of various models of foreign university radio stations (USA, Germany): programming, management of a radio station, responsibilities of staff and volunteers, editorial policy in news coverage, music policy, etc.
- Cooperation with communities, engagement with the audience, use of Internet options: social networks, civil web-journalism, multimedia technologies.

The training session also features a round table discussion with Moscow-based NGO activists so as to give trainee participants better insight into the relationship between NGOs and the media. Apart from the media/radio training, the seminars trainers will run brainstorming sessions in which project participants will work out the general “rules of the game”, presenting ideas for joint actions, developing strategies for interaction with local community groups, and conceptualizing plans for content production. (For example, the 2009 seminar saw students develop 20-30 minute live broadcasts incorporating various formats such as on the street interviews (vox populi), reportage, in-studio interview, and audio essay).45

Past trainers have included:

- Erik Albrecht (independent producer, Germany)
- Lorenzo Anania (International Association for Community Broadcasters- AMARC (Italy)

3. On-location Workshops/Presentations at Universities

As part of each of the university’s participation in the site, the UniverCity team - with the assistance of Podstantsiya staff and local students trained at initial seminars in Moscow - run 5-day workshops to help launch the stations. The purpose of these workshops is to impart broadcasting skills, work to resolve any technical problems on the spot, present the participatory radio concept to members of the NGO community, and begin an active promotion campaign in the community.

Specific issues covered during the sessions include:

- 3-day production training workshop on a host of issues related to running a station. Sessions generally included a core group of 10-15 students. Topics covered during the seminars include:
  - formatting student radio
  - searching for stories of interest to students and the community
  - interview techniques
  - sources within your community
  - website creation and use of social networking resources
  - working with multimedia
  - web photography

- A public launch for the station, whereby the wider student body could learn of opportunities to participate and volunteer, through an ‘as-live’ broadcast of the new student station.46 Local community leaders were also included in these public events, allowing students to learn about dynamic civil initiatives happening in their cities. On average, 50-60 students have attended each presentation session.

4. Content Production

Once core groups at university stations are formed, FNR’s UniverCity staff work by remote to encourage students to produce and publish community-oriented work to a dedicated student

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46 See [http://www.podst.ru/posts/4134/](http://www.podst.ru/posts/4134/) for an example of a public launch in Saratov. Other programs recorded during the seminar and debuted during the launch include:
location on the Podstantisya site (http://univercity.podst.ru/). The goal of the site is to help students get comfortable with online publishing, expose them to constructive criticism about their work, and open the door to program networking with partner universities. Since the start of the project, 385 student podcasts have been published to the site, with a particular spike in activity during the past year.47

5. Student Program Competition in Vmeste Radio Finale

Each year of the project, FNR has sought to further encourage excellence in student programming in the community via an annual ‘themed’ podcast competition. While the criteria of the competition vary from year to year, the aim of the competition is to encourage students’ interest to the events and problems in the local community.48

In each competition thus far, students have been required to search beyond their campuses for interesting stories and people in their community. Another important aim of the competition was to get rid of stereotypes and clichés derivative of standard FM-format broadcasts – a problem in the first year of the program in particular. The participants were encouraged to work out their own vision of the community coverage and to make the student station competitive and really different from the other broadcasters in the city. The competition had no genre limitations, although entries had to meet certain criteria for social relevance.

6. Evaluation of programs and approaches:

Each year of the competition, submissions have been evaluated by an independent jury consisting of both project staff and guest journalists. On whole, jury members reacted positively to the variety of subject matter, formats and techniques, as well as the choice of characters. Similarly, jury members noted that the student programs differed from professional productions by virtue of their fresh sound and experimentation with form. Examples of short-listed entries included profiles of people representing various walks of life: people who take care of stray animals; those who search for the remnants of the last war soldiers; actors; musicians; people with disabilities; proactive students; etc. In this sense, the challenge - to bring the student radio outside the university walls, was indeed achieved. (See 2009-2010 prize winners list on previous page for insight into the range and depth of winning entries).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2009-2010 STUDENT PRIZE WINNERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1st Prize:</strong> Electricity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elena Martianova, Marina Pyrkova, (Moscow State University)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2nd Prize:</strong> Booze, Bees, and the Story of Two Villages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anastasia Borovaya Catherine Prokudin, (Moscow State University)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3rd Prize:</strong> Is the City for or Against the Komi?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ksenia Kowalczyk, Elena Kashtalyan, Syktyvkar State University</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

47 While a relatively similar number of programs were published to the site, larger numbers were downloading the programs. Indeed, UniverCity saw over 8,000 downloads in the past year alone.
48 See http://www.podst.ru/posts/4054/ for an announcement of the 2009-2010 competition, which received 32 submissions.
The award ceremony took place at the Finale of the festival of regional broadcasters *Vmeste – Radio* (Radio Together) in Moscow on June 30, 2009. Apart from the prizes, the winners were offered internships at the FNR in the autumn of 2009.


Finally each year ends with a presentation of the UniverCity program by students and FNR staff at the annual FNR-run *Vmeste Radio* conference finale in Moscow. During the session, UniverCity staff discuss the aim of the project as well as allow students to present examples of their work. Moreover, the gathering provides a forum for open discussion of further plans for the project.

8. **Internships:** As a supplement to the awards ceremony, winning entries are offered short-term in-house internships with the FNR where they can further refine their skills. Prize winners to participate in the intern program to date include:

- Darya Danilova, Moscow State University (Faculty of Journalism)
- Anastasia Borovaya, Moscow State University (Faculty of Journalism)
- Ekaterina Prokudina, Moscow State University (Faculty of Journalism)
- Anna Pogacheova, Moscow State University (Faculty of Journalism)
- Ksenia Donskaya Moscow State University (Faculty of Journalism)
- Nina Dubatova, Southern Federal University (Faculty of Geology and Geography)
- Vera Chaika, Rostov State Energy University (Faculty of Linguistics and Journalism)

In addition, FNR hosted two students from Cherepovetskii University, after the professors from the university specially requested participation in the program. Note that as a result of the internships, participants produced and published work to Podstantisya and the UniverCity site.

9. **Additional Networking Events with International Students:**

In September 2008 FNR arranged a meeting of the students from MSU and HSE with students from the Faculty of Media Arts and Design of London Westminster University. The discussion was directly addressed to the issue of student radio in general and in particular, about [*Smokeradio*](http://www.smokeradio.co.uk) station at London Westminster University. The debate “Modern Metropolis: an Ideal Environment or a Cemetery for Creative Individuals” was recorded and posted at the UniverCity web-page together with a program recorded by the British students in Moscow during their internship at MSU.

10. **Analysis/Prospects for Future Development.**

Looking ahead to the coming year, the UniverCity project team will expand on the program’s training to focus more on technical issues related to launch of online broadcasting. Indeed, despite stated support from students and the administrations of participating universities, the

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49 Zoya Kuzetsova (Faculty of Journalism) and Nadezhda Lapochkina (Faculty of Journalism).
equipment issue seems to play a big role in hindering some station’ development and much depends on the financial state of the university. One solution has been a small earnings program in 2009 by FNR, whereby university stations could ‘earn’ points towards acquisition of a Zoom digital audio recorder – provided students actively submitted programs to the UniverCity portal. As a result of the effort, student teams from 4 universities managed to acquire the equipment and are continuing to make programs.

F. EDUCATION IN ELECTION REPORTING

- Improve quality of news and public affairs programming produced by regional radio stations via radio festivals, seminars, and residency internships.
- Raise journalistic and business standards of the regional radio industry through regular exchange of information and knowledge.
- Build on FNR’s reputation as a national resource center and business support institution for regional radio industry and radio-related New Media users.

Between September 2007 – March 2008, FNR coordinated and hosted an educational project on elections radio reporting.

Specifically, the proposed project consisted of the following components:

1) Two 5-day Round Table Seminars/Practical Sessions “The Work of Journalists during Election Coverage: Professionalism and Responsibility”: The aim of the training set was to develop and raise professional skills of radio reporters in order to inform listeners to the best possible degree. Seminar participants consisted of 15 representatives from small, medium, and large radio stations across Russia -- and included journalists, program hosts, and news editors. The first seminar was held in October 4th -7th 2007 before Russia’s parliamentary election; the follow on workshop was head January 14th -17th 2008 – ahead of the Presidential election. Both seminars took place (at FNR) in Moscow.

Program participants were selected based on criteria consisting of both submitted application statements and consideration of prior experience in election coverage. In addition, foreign expertise was deemed an important component for the workshop. FNR initially planned on bringing International Center for Journalists trainer/expert (and former NBC News Moscow bureau chief) Magda Walter for the first seminar, but she postponed her visit due to personal circumstances. In the end, Ms. Walter presented at the follow-on workshop in January.

Seminar 1: The first seminar was aimed at developing the discussion skills of the visiting Russian journalists – with the initial portion of the workshop led by a facilitator/moderator. The moderator’s task was to lead situational workshops as well as promote the search for problem solving methodologies. Following that, Russian experts and trainers presented on issues related to local experience in election coverage – raising questions for discussion where appropriate. Three Russian experts -- Mikhail Chernysh, Dmitry Oreshkin and Natalia Budarina -- addressed
particularly sensitive technical and legal areas pertinent to Russian mass media, such as defamation of character, impartiality, and unequal opportunities among other issues. In addition, the workshop consisted of several interactive discussion sessions – including the participation of young politicians in real debates (part of the master-class by Dmitry Gubin). During each day of the seminar, the participants had educational on-site visits to relevant TV discussion and/or radio programs around Moscow.

Following Seminar 1, all participants were to send their own locally produced programs on election coverage. At the same, FNR published the second call for the next seminar – with participants selected according to the quality of presented programs and ambitions for the workshop. FNR faced some constraints of political pressure during the elections, given that most of the radio stations and their journalists failed to produced election coverage in accordance with international journalistic norms. Nevertheless it is worth mentioning the programs from Khabarovsk (Radio Vostok), Kazan (Echo of Moscow, Kazan) and Tomsk (Radio Siberia) as being of higher quality than most.

Seminar 2: The second seminar was focused on outside expert opinion/analysis. American-British journalist/trainer Magda Walter began the course with a 2-day workshop on fair and impartial election coverage. Participants gained in-depth exposure to the press’s role in election season as well as reporting issues typical of the genre. These include dealing with polling and public and expert opinion studies, reporting vs. analysis, as well as legal and ethical issues related to elections and journalist job.

The rest of the workshop consisted of seminars conducted by Russian professionals/specialists – including journalists (Marina Koroleva, Dmitry Gubin) and political observers/ex-journalist Kirill Rogov (Institute of Transitional Economics). Working with the trainers, FNR producers, and sound editors, participants had a chance to run through a series of election coverage simulation exercises. Finally, trainers, the moderator, and participants discussed and analyzed produced programs and FNR collected the feedback via questionnaires.

The seminar was moderated by Andrey Allakhverdov and Natalia Kopelyanskaya.

Invited experts/trainers for the workshops included:
- Dmitry Oreshkin (“Mercator” Group)
- Natalia Budarina (Foundation “Elections and Mass Media”)
- Galina Kozlova (Foundation “Discussion Space”)
- Mikhail Chernysh (Institute of Sociology, RAS)
- Alexey Vorobyov (deputy editor in chief “Echo of Moscow”)
- Magda Walter (International Media Consultancy/International Center for Journalists trainer)
- Kirill Rogov (Institute of Transitional Economics)
- Dmitry Gubin (“Vremechko” TV-program, TVC)
- Marina Koroleva (“Echo of Moscow”)
- Elena Uporova (FNR)

2) Creation of an Educational Internet Resource Page

When: Materials posted from September 2007 till January 2008

That Internet space was made to accumulate the resources and contents of the educational workshops available to FNR partner stations across Russia. That site served as an active link between regional stations and relevant media and legal expertise.

Specifically, the site consists of the following:

Audio: Including FNR produced ‘case studies’ on election coverage
Text: Including links to key documents relevant to electoral campaign coverage and Russian media law. The text and audio versions of the lectures with interviews featuring independent experts on media law/campaign law issues
Resource: Including links and contact information for a variety of legal, sociological and organizations specializing in election coverage.

3) FNR Audio Programs (Election Case Studies)

What: Seven 7-10 minute audio programs – available as a one-week special series.

Where: All programs were posted and available for station use via the FNR exchange network  http://raen.net/elections and via Podstantsiya  http://podst.ru

The purpose of election program series was to highlight historical case studies of vibrant democratic electoral campaigns – where candidates campaign, debates happen, views are discussed, citizens engage, and so on. Informative and fun, the election program series seeks to present these ‘case studies’ in a style and format likely to appeal to – and find a home on the air of - independent commercial stations.

Programs for the series follow:

1. How We Vote: How do we make decisions? Is the skill to make a choice innate or does it have to be developed?
2. The example of the first Russian Duma elections (1906) and history of American democracy development with the help of experts we try to answer the question how to prepare voters to make the rational choice..
3. About the role, money, advertisement and mass media within election campaigns.
4. Do the democratic elections always bring to the victory of democracy? It happened not always. The people are used to make mistakes. Sometimes it leads to the cancel of democracy. Let us remember 1933 in Germany. Sometimes the winning politician who got the majority quickly lose the popularity as it happened in Germany two weeks after the Schröder’s third victory. Why could it possible? The issue was clarified in the programme.
5. Multi-party system. How many parties do we need? What system is more efficient? What says the world experience?
6. Soon we have to go to vote. How do we make our choice, what is voting for us?
Primary Objectives

- Build on FNR’s reputation as a national resource center and business support institution for regional radio industry and radio-related New Media users.
- Improve quality of news and public affairs programming produced by regional radio stations via radio festivals, seminars, and residency internships that enforce best practices and industry standards for excellence.
- Raise journalistic and business standards of the regional radio industry through regular exchange of information and knowledge.
- Promote alternative platforms and genres of public interest programming using new media web technologies.
- Strengthen business practices and values of regional radio stations that leverage their financial independence to promote good journalistic practices.
- Provide objective analysis and monitoring of industry wide trends – including promising regional models of innovation – via print publications and online resources.
- Offer guidance and technical leadership to regional stations and journalists confronting changes through the integration of broadcasting with new media technologies.
- Provide media training, technical guidance, and technical support to Russian communities and citizens on broadcast and radio-related New Media issues such as podcasting and Internet broadcasting.
- Assist development of alternative business models for participatory volunteer-run stations.

FNR’s programming choices in recent years have consistently sought to bridge the gap between the needs of traditional so-called ‘terrestrial’ radio and the demands placed on these stations by new digital and Internet related technologies. Indeed, the present moment is one of enormous change within the radio industry and keeping apace with the latest ideas and developments is essential for regional stations. Yet this need applies to FNR as well. While its staff remains among the most experienced in Russia relative to radio programming, the shifts in technology demands new skills – particularly if the organization is to continue to lead and influence regional Russian media.

As a result, FNR placed a great deal of importance on further developing its own institutional capacity in 2008-2009, including participation in the following events:

In-House Workshops:
Brendan Greeley (Multi-Media Editor, *The Economist* and former ‘Blogger-in-Chief’ at *Radio Open Source*) donated a private in-house workshop for FNR’s Podstantsiya team exploring ways to enhance community around the site.

Ira Glass (producer/host, *This American Life*) led an in-house editorial pitch session for Podstantsiya exploring unusual angles to storytelling.

Alex Van Oss (Independent Producer, USA) led a workshop exploring ways FNR could adapt regional producers content for an American audience via US/Russian co-productions.

Oleg Kozyrev (blogger/journalist/social media expert) gave a private workshop for FNR staff on ways to better employ Russian social networking tools.

Jake Shapiro (Public Radio Exchange) who met with FNR while in Moscow to explore ways of adapting the PRX platform to help independent producers in Russia.

Glenn Brown (You Tube/former-Creative Commons), who met with FNR while in Moscow to discuss the finer legal points of Creative Commons licensing.

‘Scanner’ Robin Rimbaud (Sound Artist, UK) who met with FNR to show new methods of sound processing, creative sound art and making socially oriented sound projects.

Davia Nelson of ‘The Kitchen Sisters’ (Independent Producer, USA) Lectured at FNR presenting her renowned way of covering social issues, particularly related to multi-ethnic culture, through national cuisine.

Ylva Mårtens, (Producer, SR, Sweden) talked about the methods a journalist should use while interviewing children.

**Events that demonstrated FNR increased institutional capacity and expertise included:**

- **IREX International Media Partnership Program:** Exchanges and newly formed partnerships between FNR and radio organizations in Europe and the United States have provided multiple opportunities to learn new skills and network with potential international partners and trainers.

- **Third Coast Festival Presentation Lenin’s Ears Presentation:** FNR’s attendance at the 2008 annual festival included a feature presentation of the Lenin’s Ear project, as well as an informational booth for attendees to learn about the work of the FNR.

- **Globe International/Internews Europe seminar in Mongolia:** A 4 day seminar taught by FNR Editor Andrei Allakhverdov on business journalism provided 23 Mongolian radio professionals with the fundamental principles of business news reporting. FNR’s Mongolian colleagues have since inquired about organizing future FNR-led trainings in the region.

- **Prix Europa International Roundtable:** FNR Editor-in-Chief Andrei Allakhverdov was invited to participate in a moderated roundtable discussion of German, Russian, American, and Chinese radio. The event was attended by some 50 colleagues from countries across the world.

- **In 2010 FNR organized the live 3-hour long WFMU morning radio show broadcast from a a club in Moscow’s well-known Vinzavod artistic area. The show sought to demonstrate the relative ease with which one can broadcast alternative formats online,**
### VI. CONTACT INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title:</th>
<th>STRENGTHENING CAPACITY OF RUSSIAN REGIONAL RADIO STATIONS TO PRODUCE INDEPENDENT, FAIR, AND BALANCED PUBLIC INTEREST PROGRAMMING.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applicant:</td>
<td>The Foundation for Independent Radio Broadcasting (FNR)</td>
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</table>
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| Location:     | Russia (Nationwide)                                                                                                             |
| Duration:     | (2007-2010)                                                                                                                     |