

# GOTHAM GAZETTE

location: New York, NY

founded: 1999

web: <http://www.gothamgazette.com/>

twitter: @gothamgazette

## **PARTICIPANTS AT MONDAY'S MEETING**

Gail Robinson, Editor in Chief

Dick Dadey, Executive Director

## **PART 1: OVERVIEW QUESTIONS**

### **1. What is the purpose and focus of your organization?**

Gotham Gazette is a non-partisan site on New York City policy and politics. Our aim is to inform New Yorkers about key issues in their city and state in the hopes of helping them be more informed and engaged citizens.

We are published by Citizens Union, a long time good-government group in New York City.

### **2. How are you different from "traditional" media online?**

Our policy and politics emphasis, and the way we approach these issues, set us apart from more general local news sites. We are more likely to focus on an issue than on a specific news event or person. And our election coverage again is characterized by looking at issues in the campaign along with the more conventional discussion of personalities, polls and fundraising.

### **3. What is your financial sustainability plan?**

#### **4. What are your most reliable sources of revenue?**

Individual giving is the most reliable source currently. As foundation funding has declined, Citizens Union Foundation has increased its general fundraising activity and dedicated a portion of that income toward publication of Gotham Gazette.

#### **5. What are two technological innovations - or services made possible by recent technological innovation - that you've introduced in the delivery of news and information to your readers?**

About two years ago, we introduced "Who's Running for What," a database that allows readers to search for candidates in local races by searching for the incumbent, a candidate in a give race, or the office itself. In the months since then, we have continued to build out this service, updating it for every election cycle, adding new features and keeping it current. We are not aware of another service quite like this.

In January we launched a redesign of our site, incorporating our blog in our home page, emphasizing our own original content, making better use of visuals and organizing the site by subject area. Most importantly, the redesign marked GG's evolution from a site that posted most content on Monday a.m. to one that features new, original content throughout the workweek.

Later this year, we will unveil Councilpedia, our crowd-sourcing project on money and politics, funded by the Knight Foundation. The pilot is already available. Let me know if you'd like a look.

#### **6. How effective are you in getting your content to people?**

Not as effective as we would like. Marketing has proved a thorny problem for us, partly because of our limited resources. In addition, the local on-line news scene in New York has become crowded, with blogs and other media increasingly reluctant to cite other sources, which they see as rivals. (One

mainstay of Gotham Gazette continues to be, that we do link to many other sources, serving partly as a portal site.)

Marketing -- and increasing traffic -- is one of our key goals for the coming year.

**7. How do you measure your success?**

Traffic, and the quantity and quality of reader comments. Certainly the success of our reader fund drives is an indicator. And we try to gauge how much our stories get referenced in other sources and how much they shape other coverage and the discussion of New York issues.

**8. What do you hope to learn or get out of the Austin meeting?**

We hope to get ideas from what other people are doing -- both in the area of financial sustainability and technological innovation. We also hope to make connections that could lay the groundwork for future cooperative efforts and for more informal exchanges of ideas and information.

**PART 2: DETAILS ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION**

**1. What is your technology platform?**

A homegrown content-management system

**2. Do you share technology platforms and costs with other organizations?**

No

**3. How many full-time journalists (journalists or editors) do you have?**

Three

**4. How many part-time journalists or freelancers do you retain?**

Difficult to say. We have eight to 10 journalists who write for us regularly -- several articles a year. Then many more people write one or two pieces for us, either news features or op-eds. We also have about a dozen interns a year who provide articles.

**5. What is the percentage breakdown of revenue by sources?**

Users/viewers donors: 49%

Ads 8%

Foundations 40%

Corporate 2%

**6. Without foundation support, what would your organization look like?**

Gotham Gazette's current budget could be cut roughly in half. Given how stretched our resources already are, it would have a huge impact on our ability to serve our readers.