

Webinar: Compensation

**Lesli Blount - Director of Corporate Support
Vermont Public Radio**

**Christine Sadic- Director of Corporate & Foundation Support
WOSU**

**Cynthia (C.J.) Railsback- Corporate Support Director
Colorado Public Radio**

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Lesli Blount:

Director of Corporate Support

Vermont Public Radio



Corporate Support Team Approach

Background:

- Team includes Director and 3 Corporate Support Associates
- 2017 Revenue: \$2.2MM FY18 Goal: \$2.3MM
- Compensation: Was base plus 1% commission paid out twice a year. Higher commission prior to 2008. Moved to salary only in 2014



Corporate Support Team Approach

PROS: For underwriters:

- Same attention regardless of business size.
- Focus is on providing effective schedule that meets their goals and budget with the intention of creating a lasting relationship.
- Any member of team will take time to assist as needed.



Corporate Support Team Approach

PROS:

For listeners/Sound of Station:

- Broad range of underwriters represent pubradio audience interests.
- “Sounds like Vermont”

Corporate Support Team Approach

PROS: For Corporate Support Team:

- Supportive and collaborative work environment. Sounding board for sales strategy, proposals, and copywriting
- Allows time for stewardship/servicing. “Let’s get it right”
- Account distribution is equitable and logical



Corporate Support Team Approach

PROS: For Corporate Support Team (cont):

- Less stressful: Livelihood not affected by copy challenges, economic changes, using vacation time.
- Opportunity to engage in the workplace and community, and develop additional skills. Feel part of the organization, not like a contractor. Valued beyond the revenue generated.



Corporate Support Team Approach

PROS: For VPR:

- Organizational and departmental compensation equity.
- Team members work for VPR, not themselves ,not against each other. Focus on what we need to do as a department to meet our revenue goal, what trends we're seeing, what opportunities there are, and who best should pursue.



Corporate Support Team Approach

PROS: For VPR:

- Director carries a book of business and spends no time managing incentive plan.
- Team members use time and skills to benefit station as a whole.
 - Enter their own contracts (no support staff)



Corporate Support Team Approach

PROS: For VPR (cont):

- Manage trade accounts- offset substantial expenses, source prizes for membership drives/ donor events.
- Develop specialists/spread the workload. For example: podcast sales expertise, sales material design, underwriter tiles/banners. Web/mobile banners.
- As engaged and connected employees, team members better represent VPR in the community.



Corporate Support Team Approach

CONS:

- We are likely losing some business to commercial sales people or leaving money on the table.



Christine Sadic

Director of Corporate and Foundation Support

WOSU Public Media- THE Ohio State University

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WOSU Public Media Compensation Plan

Background:

- Mid-Size Market, Dual Licensee (THE Ohio State University), Broadcast platforms; NPR 89.7, Classical 101.1, WOSU TV.
- Team includes Director, 3 Account Executives, and 1 Coordinator.
- Compensation: Base Salary (\$35K starting) + Commission percentage of billed revenues. Average salary is \$70K.



WOSU Public Media Compensation Plan

History 2006-2018:

2006: 100% Salary- Need for more competitive salaries.

2007: Incentives Plan introduced- Tracked by contracts written and by revenues in the door.

2011: \$10K Base Salary Increases- Adjusted base salaries to attract right people, be more competitive in the market.

2015: Market Equinuity; Assessment and Consulting

2016: Commissions Plan Introduced- Lowered base salaries by \$10K due to more lucrative commissions plan. Average earnings \$14,400 vs. \$24,500.

WOSU Public Media Compensation Plan

CONS:

- Gap between \$5K clients and \$10K, difficult to move so many above \$5K.
- \$10K clients take twice as long to secure (or longer).
- Only department w/commissions, internal confusion on what duties are considered “part of base salary” (trade accounts, no billing, no commissions).



WOSU Public Media Compensation Plan

CONS:

- Limiting ability for higher earnings by only soliciting for program support. (production funding, events, & capital campaign)
- Difficulty with applying earned revenues to various internal teams and application to specific goals, or counting something twice.
- Less interest in taking on smaller clients, don't work them as hard if no big potential for pay-off.
- Internal cannibalism; other project-driven or time-sensitive station initiatives competing for same revenues, same clients.



WOSU Public Media Compensation Plan

PROS:

- Ability to customize Market Equivity plan to fit WOSU.
- Operating plan, 3-years of stretch growth goals, AE's more in control of earnings.
- Team is tracking, less mistakes, less time-consuming, no issues with aging.
- Focus on what's aired for billing, connection for AE's with client and their goals.



WOSU Public Media Compensation Plan

PROS:

- Review plan annually; ability to customize compensation to fit changing needs of WOSU and the market.
- More awareness across station as to corporate support team's responsibilities.
- Have to be flexible and adapt to station growth and market changes.
- Planning for the unknown, can't sustain double-digit growth for next 3 years, will this present a need in near future to revise current compensation plan?



Cynthia (CJ) Railsback

Corporate Support Director

Colorado Public Radio



Compensation plan overview Colorado Public Radio

- Denver metro underwriting team is comprised of six experienced sales reps with commercial radio and television sales experience who were highly compensated (\$125,000+) in their previous careers
- CPR AE salaries range from 55%-65% of prior earnings
- Account executives are responsible for annual revenue goals ranging from \$550,000 - \$950,000 annually, with individual goals for monthly new business generation (\$25,000/mo.in FY18,) digital, music



Addition earning potential is as follows:

- \$100/month for achieving monthly new business goal, as long as monthly pacing goals toward annual goal are achieved (pacing chart attached in email)
- At the end of the fiscal year, account executives can earn 5% of any net incremental revenue* they have sold above their annual target, as long as the total team goal has been met. If the team goal isn't met, account executives will get 1% of incremental net revenue as a year-end bonus.



Addition earning potential (cont):

- Most AE's also handle trade agreements to help offset CPR's operating expenses. At the end of the fiscal year, AE's receive 5% of the net value of the trade agreements they have handled, as long as the trade agreement was done to meet a specific business need. This bonus is paid only if the annual team revenue goal is met, and the account executive meets his/her annual goal.

*Net revenue is defined as sold underwriting and trade revenue less agency commissions, billing adjustments and accounts that are 121+ days past due. The past due balances are recoverable for the following fiscal year as long as they are collected within 60 days following the close of the previous fiscal year.

Pros of the current CPR compensation plan

- Because the team isn't paid on commission, everyone works toward ensuring the annual goal is met
- Competition over accounts isn't as fierce as it would be in a commercial, commission-based environment
- Higher salaries ensure that team members can meet their basic financial needs



Cons of the current CPR compensation plan

- Low sales incentives aren't very motivating for experienced sales team used to higher commercial media earnings.
- Risk of losing account executives to competitive media and other industries because our compensation plan doesn't meet the overall broadcast industry standard in Denver. While our team isn't primarily money-oriented, it can be tempting to listen to offers with higher earning potential.
- Current plan doesn't adequately reward exceptional efforts.

Contact info

Lesli Blount

lblount@vpr.net

802.654.4320

Christine Sadic

Christine.sadic@wosu.org

614 247-4469

CJ Railsback

CRailsback@cprmail.org

303-871-9191, ext. 355

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