



# Union County Television

## Government Access Channel Report

**UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHARLOTTE**

**MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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In January of 2010, Mr. Matthew Delk and Mr. Brett Vines requested that, under the auspices of Dr. Maureen Brown and Mr. Jerry Fox, the UNCC MPA candidates enrolled in course MPAD 6187 conduct an investigation for the purposes of identifying a programming plan for UCTV 16. The goals of the initiative are to:

- Research relevant legislation, theories, and trends related to government access television.
- Research, develop, and define broadcast policies and practices of other government access television channels through a national survey of award-winning channels.
- Identify departments and elected officials with frequent public interaction; and conduct a local government survey to isolate the programs, services, or programming suggestions they can offer to UCTV 16.
- Obtain public input about UCTV 16 through a citizen survey.
- Create a strategic annual programming timeline of relevant County and municipality events and deadlines.

To develop the programming plan, we conducted four research activities: 1) a literature review, 2) a national survey, 3) a Union County local government survey, and 4) a survey of Union County citizens. These research activities yielded a series of recommendations aimed at improving the quality of and access to UCTV 16.

A search of the literature revealed that in recent years, social media like YouTube, Facebook and Twitter have emerged as a preferred information source for a more technologically savvy society. Increased Internet and social media usage challenges local governments to innovate their communications systems in order to keep pace. While television's popularity as an information source has waned, it remains an essential form of communication for certain segments of the population.

Surveys of the award-winning governmental access channels identified that most currently produce their own programming as well as borrow programming from other state and federal entities. Programming schedules are produced by the station managers on a weekly or bi-weekly basis and incorporate content in recognition of holidays and seasonal events. The survey also found an average staffing level of 2.5 full-time personnel and channels were funded solely by local cable franchise fees.

Surveys of Union County local government revealed that many public officials are unaware of how to submit requests for programming on UCTV 16 or the bulletin board. All of the departments surveyed are willing to provide service-level content for the channel. Many departments are willing to provide time from their staff members, and several are inclined to consider directing a portion of their budget toward UCTV 16. Lastly, most public officials agree that UCTV 16 could be a valuable tool to reach and inform citizens.

Surveys of Union County citizens found that many people view and enjoy UCTV 16, but far fewer consider it a primary source of county news and information. Most respondents cited the newspaper as their primary local government information source and primarily rely on UCTV 16 to view public meetings. Survey results indicated that most respondents are interested in seeing programs related to community news, sports/recreation, entertainment, and information on public services on UCTV 16.

The following report identifies in further detail the findings of the research activities. Along with a programming plan, we developed a sample programming schedule, standard operating procedures, and revised the current policies and procedures for UCTV 16.

From these findings a general programming plan is offered (see Appendix F) along with the following 15 broad-based recommendations:

1. **Utilize social media.** Strengthen and increase outreach to citizens through the use of social media tools (i.e., Facebook, Twitter & YouTube).
2. **Market UCTV 16 programs.** Promote programs through the use of TV and website advertisements, radio announcements, flyers, posters and other forms.
3. **Develop internal communications plan.** Create an internal communications plan with input from all departments.
4. **Seek Commissioner and County Manager feedback.** Solicit Commissioner and County Manager input/feedback on a regular basis.
5. **Promote the services of Union County.** Producing in-house programming provides UCTV 16 with a means to promote government services to its citizens.
6. **Develop programming plan.** Review the County's goals and priorities and gather important dates and events as part of an annual strategic planning process.
7. **Provide information in a timely manner.** Focus on airing current and relevant public meetings and programs.
8. **Distribute and display programming schedule.** Post schedules on the County website, in local TV guides and on the cable provider's preview channel.
9. **Develop plan for quality assurance.** Design and implement a quality assurance process for UCTV 16's programming to include routine audits.
10. **Establish partnerships with public and non-profit organizations.** Partnerships can provide UCTV 16 with no cost opportunities to supplement in-house programming.
11. **Use volunteers and interns.** Staffing needs can be met by utilizing qualified volunteers in the form of retired professionals and student interns.
12. **Train and develop employees.** Providing proper training and professional development for staff ensures quality programming and proper equipment use.
13. **Schedule ongoing maintenance and inventories.** Identify vendor for equipment maintenance and conduct inventory on a monthly basis.

14. **Implement policies and procedures.** Seek County Commission approval of recommended policies and procedures.

15. **Survey citizens regularly.** Implement a continuous improvement process to include gathering citizen input/feedback.

# INTRODUCTION

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The effective communication of government information to the citizenry is a key responsibility of public managers. Effective communication channels ensure governmental transparency and thus, are important mechanisms for achieving government accountability. Union County utilizes its government television channel as one of its primary tools to disseminate information to the public. The purpose of this project is to assist Union County, North Carolina in improving the quality of its government access channel, UCTV 16.

The goals of the project are to:

- Research relevant legislation, theories, and trends related to government access television.
- Research, develop, and define broadcast policies and practices of other government access television channels through a national survey of award-winning channels.
- Identify departments and elected officials with frequent public interaction; and conduct a local government survey to isolate the programs, services, or programming suggestions they can offer to UCTV 16.
- Obtain public input about UCTV 16 through a citizen survey.
- Create a strategic annual programming timeline of relevant County and municipality events and deadlines.

Before Union County assumed control of the channel, programming consisted solely of Board of Commissioners meetings on a non-stop basis. Today, UCTV 16 has developed original broadcast content with entertainment value such as “This is Your Court” and “Union County Spotlight,” a series covering topics such as immunizations, the Farmer’s Market and the Animal Shelter. Since the County assumed operation of the cable channel, its public information officer has served as the channel administrator with no additional staff, no budget, and no dedicated source of revenue.

In order to assist UCTV 16 in improving its programming quality, we conducted a series of research activities. A literature review was conducted to determine the current state of and future trends in local government access channels. A national survey was undertaken to assess the key characteristics, processes, and best practices of award-winning government access channels across the United States. A local government survey was conducted to assess departmental utilization and availability of resources for UCTV 16, and opinions of public officials. Union County citizens were surveyed in order to gauge familiarity with UCTV 16 content and to determine future programming interests. The following report discusses the findings of these activities in detail.

# COMMUNICATION, TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

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Local governments, as servants of the people, render public goods and services, and thus are accountable to the citizenry for how public resources are expended.

Transparency and communication are critical underpinnings of accountability. As a result, public managers must not only make government operations transparent, but they must also carry the burden of informing the public of their activities.

Local government administrators employ a number of communications tools to foster community connectedness, demonstrate a willingness for transparency, and ultimately prove accountable to the public. In North Carolina, one communications vehicle that is often relied on is broadcast television. In 1972, a Federal Communications Commission Act was passed and mandated that cable television companies would set aside one or more channels for public, educational or governmental (PEG) organizations. These channels were formed through agreements between municipalities and cable providers with the restriction of producing broadcast content in accordance with its institutional mission and purpose. Government access channels, as they are commonly referred, have evolved since their inception into exclusive distributors of unaltered local policy debate and decision-making at all levels.

For much of its 40-year history, government access television has been an important venue for citizens to obtain information about their local government news and events. These channels served as the original information superhighways for local government departments to communicate with citizens about service changes and developments. Previous research illustrates that local government access channel programming has an immediate impact on citizen interactions with government entities. Moreover, these channels often influence civic behaviors by boosting knowledge of political issues and public operations (Snider, 1998).

Government access television functions exclusively for a local government entity to convey information about its agencies, services, and citizen responsibilities. As a communications medium made possible through cable providers, government access television is viewed as highly accessible for most residents who have access to cable services in their home.

Public participation is defined as involving and consulting the public in setting policy (Rowe & Frewer, 2004). While this describes traditional aspects of public participation, citizens are expanding their interaction with local government. Now more than ever, citizens participate and interact with local government by attending budget workshops, speaking at public hearings, observing procedural meetings and participating in elections. Because public officials have a significant amount of power and discretion

over the lives of citizens, it is critical that public administrators provide avenues for participation to maintain public confidence in social and government institutions.

In order to achieve government accountability, citizen participation must be present. Such participation allows for direct observation of the government decision-making process. Local administrative agencies have historically attempted to obtain citizen feedback through surveys and public forums (i.e., town hall meetings, focus groups, etc.). These tactics are employed to provide the perception of citizen influence, and increase the concept of democratic participation in decisions that hold a direct effect on citizens' lives (LeRoux, 2009).

Government transparency is promoted through honest and accurate communication from government to citizens. Providing an abundance of citizen access is an indicator of good governance and serves to provide transparency. It follows logically that an increased level of transparency leads to an increased level of proper governance, as well as an increased level of citizen trust (Boyte, 2005). There are many mediums available to connect citizens to the services provided by their local government (Vironche, 1998). For example, the City of Seattle serves as a model of government transparency. Posting 36,000 pages of searchable information resources on the Internet has allowed citizens to monitor policy processes relating to different agencies, and thusly, fosters a culture of government transparency (Lang, 2004).

While government access channels continue to be an important vehicle for communication, not all citizens have access to cable television services, which creates a greater challenge for local governments to communicate information and important deadlines to their residents. In many rural communities that lack cable access, as well as an infrastructure to support such communication technology, government agencies have had to pursue other types of communication modes to reach the public. Moreover, given the resource limitations that many governments encounter, finding an affordable and effective way to communicate with the public is of utmost concern. More recently, the Internet has begun to replace government television and even local newspapers as a primary source of information.

In summary, governments are required to communicate vital information to citizens to better assist them in making informed decisions and to allow them to fulfill their civic responsibilities. Regardless of the medium used to communicate between a citizen and their government, there are universal concepts that must be emphasized. Among these concepts are communication, transparency, and accountability. Effective government communication speaks to a government's acknowledgment of the importance of transparency and its willingness to be held accountable by citizens. In order to show the representation of best practices concerning communication, transparency, and accountability, we looked at a national sample of award-winning local government access channels. The next section presents the results of the survey of National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA) award-winning government access channels.

# NATIONAL SURVEY

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In order to assist UCTV 16 in its goal to better serve the citizens of Union County, a national survey was undertaken to assess the key characteristics, processes, and best practices of award-winning government access channels across the United States. This information serves as a model for Union County to reference when developing programming schedules, considering funding mechanisms, and alternative communications mediums. The survey data was collected between February 2 and February 16, 2010. Phone interviews were conducted with channel managers using a structured survey instrument. A copy of the survey is included in Appendix B. Detailed profiles of each channel surveyed are included in Appendix C of this report.

## Sample

An initial non-random, purposive sample of twenty government channel operating municipalities was selected from NATOA's 2008 and 2009 government programming award winners and honorable mentions. The final sample consisted of the following nine local governments that were willing and available to participate in the national survey interview process.

- Allen, TX
- Broomfield, CO
- Carlsbad, CA
- Gwinnett County, GA
- Lakewood, CA
- Los Angeles, CA
- Oak Park, IL
- Roseville, CA
- San Diego, CA

The following discussion focuses on the major survey areas including policies and procedures, programming, viewership, personnel and operating budget.

## Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures are important to government access channels because they dictate and govern the operation of the channel. Our survey looked into specific policies for scripting, approving content, contracted services, content retention, and advertising. The results show that content approval and advertisement policies are the most prevalent. Policies for contract services, scripting and procurement are present but not frequent. We found that many channel managers rely upon their own good judgment or refer to the municipality's general counsel to resolve questionable issues.

## **Programming**

Goals and priorities guide the programming practices of any television station, but are paramount to the mission fulfillment of government access channels. We found that each of the survey participants have a robust set of priorities often tied to the municipality's overall goals and vision for its government and citizenry. However, the program plan and schedule are typically developed by the channel manager with input from government management and other public officials. We gained the following insights related to program plan and schedule development.

### *Programming Plan*

- Written program plans are not common to the industry.
- Channel managers opt for programming covering short periods of time rather than formal, multi-year plans.

### *Schedule*

- Channel managers typically assume the schedule development role; however, in larger operations this function is delegated to other segment producers.
- Schedules are commonly developed on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, but are mainly driven by broadcasted government meetings.
- Time of year is of particular importance when planning the schedule (i.e., holidays, community events, elections).

### *Content*

- The majority of programming is created and produced in-house and typically covers the day-to-day functions of local government, educational programming (such as local history documentaries), and event coverage.
- During non-peak hours, borrowed or shared programming is widely utilized.
- Public service announcements and other filler content are accessible from sister stations or the National Ad Council at no cost.

### *Languages & Closed Captioning*

- English tends to be the primary programming language for government access channels.
- Accommodations for the hearing impaired are cost prohibitive and are only offered by request or where mandated by state statute.

## Viewership

Since government channels are a key component in disseminating information to the public, the ability to capture and retain the interest of citizens is critical to its success. Measuring the number of viewers and viewer satisfaction continues to be challenging for government channels, and is therefore rarely undertaken in a meaningful way. We found that channels employ such methods as streaming programs live on the municipality's website to gather the number of hits from visitors, and using YouTube to broadcast easily accessible content while using its data collection features to gather site traffic statistics. This practice is most common with stations seeking to take advantage of popular Internet social media.



Government channel viewer satisfaction is often measured through survey data in two forms. Channels are either included in a broader government services survey within the communications department or channel operators place a separate survey on their section of the municipality's website. The channel managers we surveyed who gauged viewer satisfaction said they consider viewer feedback in the development of programming aspects such as background music and special event coverage. Overall, though, the participants conceded that most of their viewership data is anecdotal and somewhat less accurate than they would prefer.

## Personnel and Operating Budget

The national survey participants have an average of 2.5 staff persons ranging from full-time, senior level positions to skilled volunteers. Many of the stations reported having either one full-time person or a split staff when they initially began operating the channel. All of the channel managers have extensive experience in broadcasting both commercially and/or with other PEG channels.

When asked to suggest an initial start-up budget for UCTV 16, the average response was \$202,000 (not including salaries and benefits). The operating budgets for our sample ranged from a low of \$210,000 to a high of \$550,000 (again, not including salaries and benefits) for the current fiscal year. We found that budget allocations vary greatly and are not highly correlated with municipality size, general fund or number of staff. The operating budgets for all of the survey participants are generated from cable television franchise fees in the general fund.

In conclusion, the findings of the national survey can serve as a guide to better enhance the programming plan, scheduling, and the broadcasting content of UCTV 16. The information can serve as a model for Union County to reference when dealing with budgetary constraints and funding issues. It also outlines alternatives to programming and information dissemination, which can better meet the needs of the citizens of Union County.

The next section explores the results of the local government survey, which gives the opinions of Union County public officials in regards to their utilization of UCTV 16 as well as their familiarity with the resources available for the channel.

# UNION COUNTY LOCAL GOVERNMENT SURVEY

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A Union County local government survey was conducted to gather the opinions of public officials regarding potential program content, the usefulness of government access television in Union County, prior use of UCTV 16, and the availability of resources. Information regarding the services offered by each department and departmental goals was also collected. Assistant County Manager, Matthew Delk, identified Union County public officials with frequent citizen interaction to participate in the survey, and an invitation was extended to members of the Union County Board of Commissioners. The departments that participated in the survey included:

- Cooperative Extension
- Elections
- Fire Marshal's Office
- Health Department
- Library Services
- Parks and Recreation
- Public Works
- Register of Deeds
- Sheriff's Department
- Social Services
- Veteran's Affairs

## **Survey Questions and Administration**

Respondents were contacted either in person or by telephone during the month of February 2010. These officials were asked questions from a structured survey instrument. A copy of the local government survey is available in Appendix B. Detailed survey results and a summary of services offered by departments are located in Appendix D. The following discusses the overall perceptions, opinions, and prior use of UCTV 16 by Union County public officials.

## **Prior Use**

Responses regarding familiarity and prior use varied. Some departments work closely with the channel both currently and in the past, while others are only vaguely familiar with the channel as an information outlet. Those departments that had use UCTV 16 consider it a valuable source of information dissemination for their activities.

## **Programming**

Department managers were asked about specific content that they may be interested in providing. Some have ideas of specific content that is either already available or could be created and then aired on the channel. Alternatively, Library Services has the ability and equipment to create its own programming.

## **Viewership**

In terms of viewership measurement, responses to the question: “Do you think your customers utilize UCTV 16?” elicited the following responses:

*“Many on the eastern side would have much better access if they could actually see the channel; I myself would feel better informed if I could see the channel at the department’s location.”*

*“People come to me all the time and say, ‘I saw you on TV’.”*

- Many public officials mentioned the ability to use UCTV 16 primarily as a reminder service, advertising information through bulletin boards.
- While very few indicated that budgetary contributions were a likely possibility, most noted the availability of staff that could dedicate time and specialized knowledge towards programming creation.
- Several departments noted no clear chain of communication to pass along programming information to the Union County Public Information Officer, and cited this as the primary reason for not using the channel.

## **Board of County Commissioners Input**

Two members of the County’s Board of Commissioners responded to a request to participate in a survey.

The findings are as follows:

- A government access television channel is an extremely important information source for the citizens of Union County.
- The most important content UCTV 16 can offer citizens is coverage of board meetings, the needs of volunteer agencies, the impacts of new federal and state legislation, and the types of services offered.
- The channel does not adequately meet the Board of Commissioners needs. A desire for more information on charities and public education was expressed.

In summary, the results of the local government survey provides insights into the kind of information key government officials feel must be communicated to citizens. The results also highlight the need for increased communication between these individuals and UCTV 16 administration. Ultimately, the information can be used to determine types of content to include in programming to best serve Union County citizens, and ways to close any gaps that may exist in communication.

The following section presents the results of the Union County citizen survey including citizen knowledge of UCTV 16, their opinion of current programming, and what programs they would like to see broadcast in the future.

# UNION COUNTY CITIZEN SURVEY

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While it is the responsibility of government to decide what types of information will be readily available and communicated, some consideration must also be given to what citizens want to see and learn from their local government. In order to obtain a thorough understanding of the types of programming and information citizens of Union County are interested in seeing as well as get a sense of their current familiarity with UCTV 16, Union County citizens were surveyed.

## Survey Administration

A total of 72 surveys were conducted between March 8 and March 13, 2010. Face-to-face interviews were conducted at a Union County Wal-Mart, and self-administered surveys were conducted at the Union County Government Building. Telephone surveys were conducted by selecting numbers at random from the Union County phonebook. Online surveys were administered and collected through the Union County Government website. A copy of the citizen survey, additional details regarding its administration and the complete statistical findings of the survey are located in the Appendices at the end of this report.

## Findings

- The majority (32 percent) of respondents reported getting Union County government information solely from the newspaper, while 24 percent reported getting this information from a combination of various sources (television, newspaper, internet, etc.), and 17 percent reported using the Union County website. The remaining people surveyed reported using local news, Internet sources other than the Union County website, television, work, telephone and coworkers.
- Fifty-three percent reported watching the channel in the past 12 months, while 44 percent had not, and three percent did not have cable access.
- The majority of citizens (42 percent) cited watching public meetings on UCTV 16, 26 percent were not sure what they watched, and 11 percent viewed a bulletin board. The remaining responses included documentaries, school related programming, and community news.
- Seventy-six percent of those surveyed reported enjoying the show they watched, 21 percent did not enjoy it, and three percent were not sure.
- Twenty-five percent of people surveyed wanted to see community news. Eighteen percent wanted to see public services information, which was followed closely by recreation and entertainment information, social services information, and public education information. The remainder of those surveyed wanted to see seasonal information, youth and children's programming, and travel and tourism information.

While the majority of citizens surveyed did not report using UCTV 16 as their primary information source, most of them did report watching the channel to some extent and enjoying its programming. This supports the notion that while only a small segment of the population obtains information solely from government access television, this segment does exist, and it is the responsibility of Union County to provide for them.

In conclusion, these survey results provide insight into the types of programming Union County residents want to see, what they currently watch, and where they currently get information. This information can be used to improve UCTV 16 through the development of programming that better meets the educational and informational needs of Union County citizens.

## SUMMARY OF SURVEYS

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The national sample of award-winning local government channels provided a great deal of insight into how the nation's best government access channels are educating and informing their citizens. The local government survey provided insight into the types of information and resources local government entities can and would like to contribute to the channel. The Union County citizen survey allowed for citizen opinions and desires to be expressed, which will assist Union County in meeting more of its citizens' needs.

While the channels interviewed in the national survey have varying budgets and resources, there are some common elements. Most currently produce their own programming and borrow from other federal and state entities as needed or deemed appropriate. Many take advantage of free public service announcements or filler content provided by the Ad Council or sister stations. Programming schedules are produced on a short-term (weekly or bi-weekly) basis and are developed with regard to the time of year and the associated seasonal changes or holidays. Schedule development is often times the duty of the channel manager, but this task is delegated to other employees in some larger operations.

Measuring viewership and viewer satisfaction proved to be a substantial challenge to many of the channels surveyed. These measurements are typically obtained through surveys or by measuring webpage hits, which can result in a large degree of inaccuracy. Such inaccuracies make it difficult to determine the effectiveness of programming. An average staffing level of 2.5 people was determined from the national survey and these positions ranged from full-time to volunteer personnel. An average start-up budget of \$202,000 was recommended for UCTV 16, and the operating budgets of all departments were provided by cable franchise fees. Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter were used by some national sample channels for information dissemination and to provide readily accessible information to citizens.

The results of the local government survey show that many government officials are unaware of how to communicate with UCTV 16 and make requests for programming or bulletin board information. Union County must address this issue in order to ensure that all citizens have access to vital government information. This internal communication can also be used as the foundation of an effective and consistent programming plan. All of the departments surveyed are willing to provide content related to their department for the channel. Many departments are willing to provide time from their staff members, and several are willing to consider directing a portion of their budget toward UCTV 16. Most public officials agree that UCTV 16 could be a valuable tool to reach and inform citizens. The majority of Union County public officials feel their target audience consists of all Union County citizens, while a few feel their target audience is narrower.

The citizen survey results showed that many people view and enjoy UCTV 16, but far fewer consider it a primary source of County news and information. Most respondents stated that they mainly watched public meetings on UCTV 16, and cited the newspaper as their primary local government information source. The most popular types of programming that people wanted to see were community news, information on public services, recreation and entertainment programs.

The current practices of award-winning government access television channels provide a model that UCTV 16 can follow to improve the quality of informational and educational content on the channel, and make it more accessible to citizens. The wants and opinions of Union County public officials provide insight as to the types of information departments can disseminate to better inform and educate the citizens. The desires of Union County citizens provide some idea of what they would like to see from the channel. Mirroring the practices of successful channels across the nation and remaining responsive to local needs and desires will help UCTV to meet both the needs of government and the needs of all citizens.

The results of the surveys presented in this report uncover several specific areas of need for UCTV 16, and opportunities to adopt methods used by other channels that have proven to be successful. The recommendations proposed in the following section are meant to assist UCTV 16 in meeting these needs and adopting these new methods. These recommendations will assist Union County government in becoming more accessible, transparent to citizens, and ultimately, will increase governmental credibility and allow for more efficient government operations.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

A total of fifteen (15) recommendations were developed based on potential areas for improvement identified by the national, local government, and citizen surveys. An examination of literature on current trends in government access television as well as local government communication systems also contributed to the recommendations. Figure 1 shows the recommendation descriptions grouped by task.

**Figure 1. UCTV 16 Recommendations Overview.** A total of 15 recommendations for improvements in government access channel programming and operations are grouped within seven (7) tasks.

Task	Recommendation	No.	Description
A	Market UCTV 16	1	Utilize social media, such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube to communicate UCTV 16 information quickly and frequently.
		2	Market UCTV 16 programs.
B	Internal Communications Plan	3	Develop a communications plan with departments and public information officers.
		4	Seek Commissioner and County Manager feedback on the goals and priorities of Union County to align with program content.
C	Content and Scheduling	5	Promote the services of Union County through production of in-house programs.
		6	Develop a programming plan. (See Appendix F)
		7	Broadcast current and relevant public meetings and programs.
		8	Continue to develop a program schedule that can be distributed and/or displayed for citizens in advance of airing.
D	Quality Assurance	9	Develop a plan for quality assurance for all recorded programming.
E	Partnerships	10	Develop partnerships with public and nonprofit organizations for the purpose of information dissemination and programming.
F	Management of Resources	11	Utilize retired professionals and student interns.
		12	Train and develop employees.
		13	Schedule on-going maintenance and perform inventories of equipment.
		14	Implement policies and procedures and update annually. (See Appendix I)
G	Citizen Feedback	15	Survey citizens regularly to gauge interest and performance.

The recommendations focus on both internal and external improvements to meet the County's communications needs and achieve seamless citizen services. Estimated costs for implementing the recommendations and the return on investment are not included in this report. Actual implementation of the recommendations, including specific design will be up to the discretion of the Public Information Officer for UCTV 16 and will require active participation with key stakeholders and other sister agencies.

### **Task A: Market UCTV 16**

Governments have a variety of channels at their disposal to interact with their citizens. Having realized this, Union County can promote and market UCTV 16 through multiple means of communications tools available. Using other channels of communication to inform the citizens about UCTV 16 can be done easily and at a low cost in today's technology driven society.

**#1: Utilize Social Media.** Strengthen and increase outreach to citizens through the use of social media tools:

We recommend the utilization of social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to reach more diverse populations and to communicate UCTV 16 information quickly and frequently.

**#2: Market UCTV 16 Programs.** Promote programs through the use of traditional marketing tools:

We recommend that special programs are marketed to citizens through the use of TV advertisements, website advertisements, radio announcements, flyers, posters, and other forms of marketing tools to increase knowledge and spark interest in the programs that are offered. This will help to make citizens aware of what and when programs of interest are broadcast.

### **Task B: Internal Communications Plan**

Without knowing the activities and services of the departments within Union County, UCTV 16 would not have any content to produce. Internal communications is critical to getting the message of the department out to the citizens. An essential component of implementing these recommendations is to establish a plan for internal communication with departments.

**#3: Develop Internal Communications Plan.** Establish an internal communications plan with all departments:

We recommend that the Public Information Officer establish a formal plan for communicating on a department and enterprise-wide basis. This plan should identify key staff, such as department public information officers, that will be knowledgeable and capable of assisting with content formulation and delivery of information. The key staff should be able to discuss department announcements, events, changes in service, and other relevant information and assist in formulating a strategy for

disseminating this information. Additionally, a plan should be established to meet with all identified department key staff on a monthly basis for information gathering and consistency.

- #4: Seek Commissioner and County Manager Feedback.** Establish a communications plan with Commissioners and County Manager:  
We recommend that UCTV 16 seek commissioner and county manager feedback on a regular basis. This can assist in aligning departmental programming and messages with the goals and priorities of Union County officials and the County Manager.

### **Task C: Content and Scheduling**

When programs do not have a relevant or clear message, they lose their audience. When programs are scheduled at times when citizens are not able to watch TV, the message does not reach the intended audience. Therefore, it is imperative to have a clear message that is easily understood and a well-developed schedule to help increase its chances for delivery.

- #5: Promote the Services of Union County.** Developing in-house programming provides UCTV 16 with an opportunity to promote the services Union County provides to its citizens. We recommend that UCTV 16 produce in-house programming as often as it can in order to control and tailor the message and delivery of information to its citizens. We also recommend that in-house programming be produced in a way that it can be recycled as department services repeat themselves throughout the year(s). The programs will then serve as UCTV 16 assets and increase the size of its media library.

- #6: Develop Programming Plan.** A programming plan will help in planning for future programming and announcements. We recommend that UCTV 16 develop a programming plan which encompasses all important Union County events and dates. This will assist in gathering content and strategically planning what to show and when.

Additionally, a programming plan can help UCTV 16 reach its target audiences at different times of the day. An organized plan will assist in determining when different types of programs air and at which time. After analyzing the programs that other channels are airing throughout the day, UCTV 16 can then air programs that do not conflict with other highly watched programs. For example, it would not be a best practice to air your most popular preschooler's program at the same time as Sesame Street. On the contrary, if most stations are airing drama programs at 8 p.m. on weeknights, you might try airing programs such as concerts, performing arts or theatrical presentations in order to attract the same audience to UCTV 16. In summary, by providing alternatives and being aware of other programming, UCTV 16 can better capture a variety of audiences.

**#7: Provide Timely Information.** When distributing information to citizens, it is important to reach them in a timely manner. It is recommended that only current and relevant meetings and programs are aired on UCTV 16. This will benefit the citizens and decrease confusion from out-of-date information that is broadcast. Additionally, we recommend that County Commissioner meetings, and other meetings that are taped in-house, have a timestamp displayed on them so viewers are confident in the timeliness of the meetings.

**#8: Distribute and Display Programming Schedule.** Distributing and displaying programming schedule is another way to promote UCTV 16. This allows citizens to see, in advance, what shows will be aired and at what time. Schedules can be posted online, in local TV guides, and on the cable provider's preview channel, if applicable. We recommend UCTV 16 contact Time Warner Cable to establish the process for submitting program schedules in time for display. This will benefit the citizens as they will be able to see what programs are being aired currently and in comparison to other channels. Program schedules could also be distributed and/or displayed on flyers and posters that market UCTV 16.

#### **Task D: Quality Assurance**

Communication involves being able to effectively and efficiently reach your target audience. UCTV 16 should regularly review programming content to ensure broadcast information is factual, plausible, and seasonally appropriate. The programming plan provided in this document will assist UCTV 16 in developing programs that are informative and relevant to the community.

**# 9: Develop Plan for Quality Assurance.** Design and implement a QA process for UCTV 16 programming to include routinely scheduled audits of program quality. It is recommended that key stakeholders such as resources from Union County departments, County Commissioners, and other related agencies be involved in the process design and audit. Survey results can also be used to determine which programs are reaching the desired target audience and the quality of production. Implement these processes at all stages of programming from program content, user performance, and equipment quality.

#### **Task E: Partnerships**

It is common practice for government access channels to form partnerships with multiple organizations. These partnerships can help on many levels including sharing information on local events that benefit citizens and providing no cost, easily accessible programming to be aired.

**# 10: Establish Partnerships with Public and Nonprofit Organizations.** Partnerships are very important in the communications industry. They can allow for opportunities to share information and resources. Partnerships with other public and nonprofit organizations can provide UCTV 16 with opportunities to broadcast and fill time with other programming without the cost of in-house

production. We recommend UCTV 16 develop partnerships with organizations that can benefit Union County citizens. These organizations may include, but are not limited to, federal and state agencies, or informational affiliates such as NASA. These providers are likely to have informational programming suitable for UCTV 16 viewers. Forming partnerships can maximize opportunities and resources, and content can be used to fill off-peak times where producing programs would be too costly. Rather than relying solely upon the channel's own resources, partnerships can improve the quality of programming, saving in production costs, and increasing the quantity of programming.

### **Task F: Management of Resources**

UCTV 16 resources are very important to the operation of its government access channel. Therefore, it is imperative that UCTV 16 manage them properly in order to be most effective and efficient.

**# 11: Use Volunteers and Interns.** Due to the small size of the current budget and staff for UCTV 16, we recommend the utilization of volunteers and/or interns to assist the PIO with daily duties. UCTV 16 may also want to contact educational institutions for interested and talented communication and marketing students. In addition, utilizing retired marketing and communication professionals as volunteers could be a great source of expertise.

**#12: Train and Develop Employees.** It is important to keep all staff up to date on the effective use of all equipment through ongoing training and professional development.

**#13: Schedule Ongoing Maintenance and Inventories.** We recommend conducting an inventory of equipment on a monthly basis to ensure it is present and functioning properly. This will assist in assuring that materials are present when needed and the programs produced are useable in a quality perspective.

**#14: Implement Policies and Procedures.** Currently, most of the knowledge base on UCTV 16 operations is resident in staff memory and internal notes. Key knowledge can be lost in employee turnover. Disparate pockets of information on the processes of UCTV 16 need to be resolved in a centrally maintained knowledge base. Policies and procedures, provided in Appendix I, attempt to centralize and standardize the knowledge of operating UCTV 16. We recommend that UCTV 16 fully adopt these policies and procedures. In addition, we recommend that these documents are reviewed on an annual basis and updated as necessary.

### **Task G: Citizen Feedback**

During the development of this report a survey was placed on the UCTV 16 website to gather citizens' opinions on the channel's programming. This information was very valuable in that it provided insight from the perspective of the viewer. Feedback from these surveys has been included throughout this report and in our recommendations.

**#15: Survey Citizens Regularly.** We recommend that UCTV 16 seek citizen input on a regular basis. Feedback from citizens will allow UCTV 16 to produce more valuable information to the viewers. UCTV 16 can gather citizen feedback through an ongoing survey posted on the Union County and UCTV 16 website. Additionally, we also recommend a survey be mailed every six months to Union County citizens in an attempt to reach those who do not have access to the Internet. Another opportunity to reach citizens is to add the survey in with the water bill, or add a note to the water bill encouraging citizens to go to the website and take the survey. No matter the method of contact chosen, it is important to regularly gauge the interest and performance of UCTV 16 by its viewers.

# CONCLUSION

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Comprehensive local government communications systems are essential to fostering a sense of community connectedness but also to ensuring that residents fulfill their fiscal and civic responsibilities. As public meetings allow for greater citizen participation and as local governments provide diverse services and amenities to citizens, it becomes more difficult for the average citizen to keep pace with the to's, who's and through's of public service delivery and dispatch. Because governmental organizations play such a vital role in the lives of every individual, the way in which such entities communicate their mission, vision and service objectives is paramount.

Union County departments provide a vast array of services to its more than 120,000 residents, either directly or through other organizations on its behalf. The County also plays a functional role in the community through local area partnerships and regional governing bodies. It is therefore Union County's responsibility to manage the flow of information from its organizations to all citizens within the municipality, in order to promote governmental transparency and cultivate a well-informed citizenry.

Communication technologies are constantly changing and improving in today's society. The popularity of the Internet and social networking sites (particularly popular with younger segments of the population) has made way for inexpensive and real time information sharing and gathering capabilities for governmental organizations. This has driven citizen expectations to have a more accessible and transparent government. As well, it allows Union County the opportunity to engage a wider cross section of people through their website and other Internet based methods. The use of this technology can allow for better informed decision-making to take place throughout the community.

Though the Internet and social networking have become extremely popular, other segments of the population rely on more traditional forms of communication such as television and print media to obtain their information. As technology improves and other opportunities become popular, government still has the responsibility to continue providing quality information through these more traditional forms. Therefore, finding opportunities to inform and communicate with citizens that complement one another are key. An example of this concept is uploading programming designed for television broadcast to Internet sites such as YouTube. This ensures that more citizens are capable of receiving the same quality of information regarding government actions and services.

As previously mentioned, while television's popularity as an information source has waned, it remains an essential form of communication for many people. Thus, UCTV 16 is likely to continue to be an important component of communications, transparency, and accountability for Union County.

# APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Bibliography
- Appendix B: Survey Documents
- Appendix C: National Survey Data
- Appendix D: Union County Local Government Survey Data
- Appendix E: Union County Citizen Survey Data
- Appendix F: Programming Plan
- Appendix G: Sample Programming Schedule
- Appendix H: Standard Operating Procedures
- Appendix I: Policies & Procedures

## Appendix A - Bibliography

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# Appendix B - Surveys

## NATIONAL SURVEY DOCUMENT

Name of Jurisdictions: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Time of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

### *Jurisdiction Statistics:*

Size of jurisdiction in terms of population: \_\_\_\_\_

Median household income: \_\_\_\_\_

% Unemployed: \_\_\_\_\_

Racial make-up: \_\_\_\_\_

Others: \_\_\_\_\_

### *Background Information:*

When were you established? \_\_\_\_\_

How many staff positions did you start off with? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have an organizational chart you can provide us? \_\_\_\_\_

If not, how many employees do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

Can you share working titles and job descriptions with us? \_\_\_\_\_

Obstacles encountered: \_\_\_\_\_

### *Policies & Procedures:*

1. Do you have policies for:

Scripting?

Approving content?

Subcontracted services?

Procurement?

Advertising?

Others?

If so, would you be willing to share these with us?

2. Any statutory requirements pertaining to:
  - Equality and Fairness Law
  - Information Dissemination
  - Public Notice (i.e. print vs. television)
  - Others?
3. Do you have any certification policies for staff and/or equipment?
4. How often do you re-evaluate your policies and procedures?
  - a. What were some of your most recent policy changes?
  - b. What sparked the need for change?
5. Do you do any benchmarking?

***Program Schedule:***

1. What are the goals and priorities?
  - a. Who sets the goals and priorities?
2. Do you have a programming plan?
  - If yes:
    - a. How is the plan generated?
    - b. What timeframe does your plan cover?
    - c. How do you determine success?
    - d. Would you be willing to share this with us?
  - If no, go to question 3.
3. Concerning your current programming schedule,
  - Who is responsible?
  - What is the timeframe?
  - Do you have any special considerations when developing a program schedule, such as calendar, events, or holidays?
  - Do citizens have input on programming schedule?
  - What proportion of your programming is tailored for:
    - School-aged Children:
    - Senior Citizens:
    - Adults:
    - Other?
  - If other, please identify who?
  - Is your programming proportionally divided amongst competing audiences? Do you balance the needs of competing audiences?
4. What percent of your programming is,
  - Purchase programming?
  - In-house original programming?
  - Borrowed programming from other government jurisdictions/agencies?
  - Others?

5. Are there intergovernmental/interagency partnerships for programming?  
 Are they formal or informal?  
 Do you have any MOU/MOA's  
 If so, can you share them with us?
6. What languages do you broadcast in?  
 Do you have closed captioning?

***Operating Budget:***

1. When you initiated PEG, what was your original budget?  
 Personnel:  
 Non-personnel:  
 Capital:  
 Other:
2. Could you recommend an initial start-up budget for a new government access channel?
3. What is the prior, current, and next year budget?  
 Personnel:  
 Non-personnel:  
 Capital:  
 Other:

***Revenue Model:***

1. In your current fiscal year, what percentage of revenue do you generate from:  
 Local Government Support:  
 Advertising:  
 Donations:  
 Sponsorship:  
 Fund drives:  
 Grants:  
 Others:
2. Are you aware of any regional or national grants that government access channels can apply for?

***Viewership:***

1. How do you measure:  
 Number of viewers:  
 Satisfaction of viewers:  
 If they do measure,  
     What are your peak programming days and times?  
     What are the most popular programs?
2. What strategies do you use to increase viewership?

***Conclusion:***

Do you see the internet as complimenting, supporting, or replacing traditional government access broadcasting?

What didn't we ask that may be helpful?

# LOCAL DEPARTMENT HEAD SURVEY DOCUMENT

**Name of Department:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Department Head:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date and Time of Interview:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Interviewer:** \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Introduction:***

I am a Masters of Public Administration Graduate student at UNC Charlotte and we are providing consultation for the Union County Government Access Channel 16 at the request of Matthew Delk and Brett Vines. We would like to gather some information from you in order to assist in the development of a programming strategy and annual programming plan for UCTV 16.

## ***Background Information:***

Please provide a brief description of your Department:

Goals of the department:

Services provided:

## ***Prior Use of Channel 16:***

Are you familiar with UCTV 16?

How was it utilized?

How often?

Did you find it effective?

Is your department interested in providing content for the channel?

How often and are there specific times of the year that are preferred?

## ***Programming:***

What message would you like to distribute to Union County through UCTV 16?

Are there opportunities to increase exposure for underutilized services through the use of UCTV 16?

Would you or your department like to be featured on UCTV 16?

What would be the most effective way to communicate your department needs through the use of this channel?

Do you host any events that you would like advertised or featured on UCTV 16?

If so, what are they?

When are they held?

## ***Customer Related:***

How do you currently reach your customers?

Who is your target audience?

What are your most frequently asked questions by your customers?

Do you think your customers utilize UCTV 16?

If so, how is that determined?

If not, would you consider UCTV 16 a viable source to reach your customers?

## ***Resources:***

Who would be the point of contact for communication efforts?

Are you willing to volunteer staff time towards your department's programming on UCTV 16?

Do you have a part of your budget designated for information dissemination concerning your department?

If so, would you be willing to direct some of those funds to UCTV 16 for their services?

**Conclusion:**

Is there any other information or comments that you can offer to improve the effectiveness of UCTV 16?

# COUNTY COMMISSIONER SURVEY DOCUMENT

## ***Introduction:***

I am a Masters of Public Administration Graduate student at UNC Charlotte and we are providing consultation for the Union County Government Access Channel 16 at the request of Matthew Delk and Brett Vines. We would like to gather some information from you in order to assist in the development of a programming strategy and annual programming plan for UCTV 16.

## ***Prior Use of Channel 16:***

1. Are you familiar with UCTV 16?
2. How important is UCTV 16 as a communication tool for Union County public?
3. What current programming do you think is important?
4. What other programming do you think would be important?
5. Is the current programming schedule adequately meeting the Board of Commissioners' needs?
6. What do you think are the shortcomings of UCTV 16?
7. What do you think are the strengths of UCTV 16?
8. Do you believe that UCTV 16 is receiving adequate resources (financial, personnel, equipment) to meet the goals that you have for this communications medium?
9. Would you be will to consider funding for UCTV 16 to get the goals you indicated?
10. What questions would you liked asked of the citizen of Union County concerning UCTV 16?

## ***Conclusion:***

Are there any additional comments that you can provide to assist in our development of the project plan for UCTV 16?

**CITIZEN SURVEY DOCUMENT**

Where do you get information about the Union County government? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you watched the Union County government channel in the past 12 months? Yes No

If so, what program did you watch? \_\_\_\_\_

Did you enjoy the program? Yes No

What kinds of programs or information would you be interested in seeing on the Union County government channel?

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# Appendix C - National Survey Profiles

As a part of the Union County government access channel study, the project team researched National Association of Telecommunication Officers and Advisors (NATOA) top award winning government channel operators throughout the United States. We provide the following profiles of national survey participants.

## Allen City Television/ACTV - Allen, Texas

*Population:* 76,428  
*Award Category:* Children/Young Adults Operating Budget Under \$300,000 (2009)  
*Total Budget:* \$400,000  
*Number of Staff:* 3  
*Year Established:* 2000  
*Website:* <http://www.cityofallen.org>

### **Programming**

Weekly staff meetings serve as brainstorming sessions to generate ideas for the program schedule. An annual planning session is held to consider feedback from department heads as well as review citizen survey results in the strategic planning process. Although the station manager has final authority over the program schedule, each staff member is collectively responsible for a respective portion of the schedule. In terms of optimal programming times, children's shows are broadcast in the early morning and on weekends, while senior/elderly programs are shown during evening news hours. Sixty-five percent of programs are created in-house with another 35 percent coming from shared sources such as sister stations and five percent are purchased. There are few partnerships with other organizations or intergovernmental agencies and those are by informal arrangement.

### **Policies and Procedures**

The station has no written or formal policies governing areas such as scripting, content, and advertising; thus the station manager makes most decisions based on his professional experience as well as confers with general counsel on legal matters.

### **Viewership**

Every four years viewer satisfaction is assessed using a survey in telephone bills. The number of viewers is gauged more frequently using the number of website hits on the channel's section of the government website.

## KCCB Channel 8 - Broomfield, Colorado

*Population:* 53,311  
*Award Category:* Visual Arts Operating Budget Under \$300,000 (2009)  
*Total Budget:* \$210,000  
*Number of Staff:* 1  
*Year Established:* 2003  
*Website:* <http://www.broomfield.org>

### ***Programming***

The video production manager has worked diligently over the past five years on building a repertoire of core local programming content. Still in the developmental phase, the station's programming consists mainly of in-house production (80%) with the remainder disproportionately split between borrowed (15%) and purchased (5%) programs. A monthly program schedule is developed solely by the video production manager with little outside input.

### ***Policies and Procedures***

The station has policies applicable to such areas as content approval, advertising (although none is allowed), procurement and subcontracted services. Policies and procedures are reviewed bi-annually for any necessary changes.

### ***Viewership***

Anecdotal information is used to gauge the number of viewers as well as viewer satisfaction. A consistent mechanism for compiling viewer feedback does not exist; however, the station participated in a public service satisfaction survey administered through water bills four years prior.

## **City of Carlsbad TV Channel 24 – Carlsbad, California**

<i>Population:</i>	98,169
<i>Award Category:</i>	Public Affairs Operating Budget Under \$300,000 (2009)
<i>Total Budget:</i>	Not available
<i>Number of Staff:</i>	1
<i>Year Established:</i>	2000
<i>Website:</i>	<a href="http://www.carlsbadca.gov">http://www.carlsbadca.gov</a>

### ***Programming***

Government and elected officials established a programming philosophy defining the scope of programming for its government access channel. The programming categories by priority are: emergency, government meetings/hearings/events, city services/community benefits, and other government programming. The channel is viewed as one resource in the social media plan for the government communication department. A program schedule is developed on a weekly basis (but sometimes more frequently) and incorporates Internet media such as YouTube for live streaming of meetings. All of the programming is created in-house and the station uses very few 30-minute shows in consideration of the shift from traditional television to Internet broadcast modes.

### ***Policies and Procedures***

An ordinance was passed by the City Council to govern the program retention, reviewing, copying and technical standards of all programs broadcast on the government access channel. The ordinance dictated that recordings of all public meetings and locally produced programs be retained for one year after their original recording. The technical standards specifications cover both government produced programs as well as those submitted by local organizations and other government entities.

### ***Viewership***

The channel monitors the number of visits to its YouTube site as a partial indicator of its viewership. In an effort to increase viewership, the channel uses multiple platforms to publish and promote its programs such as Twitter, press releases, and the homepage of the city government's website.

## TVGwinnett Channel 23 – Gwinnett, Georgia

<i>Population:</i>	769,045
<i>Award Category:</i>	Community Awareness Operating Budget \$250,001 to \$500,000 (2008)
<i>Total Budget:</i>	\$550,000
<i>Number of Staff:</i>	2
<i>Year Established:</i>	1996
<i>Website:</i>	<a href="http://www.gwinnettcountry.com">http://www.gwinnettcountry.com</a>

### **Programming**

One staff person is responsible for developing a program schedule that is aired in a two-week rotation. There is a fixed plan concerning the live airing of municipal meetings and when they must be re-aired. When programs are first aired they are rebroadcast with greater frequency; however, the frequency decreases as the information becomes stale. The station attempts to develop a wide variety of programming to appeal to the needs of all citizens and place special emphasis on holidays or seasonal events such as the Martin Luther King Holiday. Programming mainly consists of in-house produced shows, but a small portion comes from the Armed Services and regional commissions.

### **Policies and Procedures**

The station has a host of written policies including those establishing a source of funding for the government channel. The funding policy specifies that the CATV franchise management process will provide reasonable funding for a PEG channel for the municipality. Other policies relate to technical standards, points of contact for production requests, coordination requirements and budget spending requirements.

### **Viewership**

Although the station has no method for counting the number of viewers, it is currently re-evaluating strategies. TVGwinnett has employed such methods as water bill inserts to promote and advertise its programs to the citizenry.

## CityTV Lakewood Channel 31 – Lakewood, California

<i>Population:</i>	87,157
<i>Award Category:</i>	Public Education Operating Budget \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 (2009)
<i>Total Budget:</i>	\$500,000
<i>Number of Staff:</i>	5
<i>Year Established:</i>	1984
<i>Website:</i>	<a href="http://www.lakewoodcity.org/">http://www.lakewoodcity.org/</a>

### **Programming**

Ninety-five percent of CityTV's programming is produced in-house with a focus on shows that appeal to both working-aged adults and some for school-aged children. A part-time producer has responsibility for creating the programming schedule on a monthly basis.

### **Policies and Procedures**

The station has no formal, written policies and procedures governing its practices.

### **Viewership**

Strategies used to increase viewership and viewer satisfaction include giveaways and broadcasting popular youth sports programs.

## LA CityView 35 – Los Angeles, California

<i>Population:</i>	3,749,058
<i>Award Category:</i>	Profile of a City/County Dept. Operating Budget Over \$400K (2008)
<i>Total Budget:</i>	\$400,000
<i>Number of Staff:</i>	20
<i>Year Established:</i>	1987

### **Programming**

The strategic programming process is conducted on a quarterly basis during a council meeting. A regular monthly programming schedule is developed by program managers in one month intervals. Programs are targeted towards specific audiences in the following proportions: school-aged children (20%), seniors (20%), and working adults (60%). Unlike most of the government channels interviewed, a greater percentage of programming is borrowed from other outlets. LA CityView only produces 40% of its programs in-house while 60% is borrowed or shared. Due to the high Latino population, the station broadcasts in both English and Spanish, but also provides Chinese subtitles and closed captioning.

### **Policies and Procedures**

LA CityView has strict policies for both scripting and content approval as defined by the Mayor and City Council. The City administers a test for all staff members who will operate equipment at the station. In response to recent citizen feedback, the station initiated a policy to establish satellite sites for Council meetings.

### **Viewership**

Viewer satisfaction is measured via citizens calling into hotlines operating during live Council meetings. In an effort to increase viewership, the station broadcasts programs especially designed for children.

## VOP TV Channel 6 – Oak Park, Illinois

<i>Population:</i>	51,475
<i>Award Category:</i>	Public Safety Operating Budget Under \$200K (2009)
<i>Total Budget:</i>	Not available
<i>Number of Staff:</i>	3
<i>Year Established:</i>	1990
<i>Website:</i>	<a href="http://www.oak-park.us">http://www.oak-park.us</a>

### **Programming**

The station manager develops the programming schedule every Monday night and builds it around the planned village board meetings as well as work sessions. Special holiday programs are produced based on the village version of the community newsletter. Although citizens do not have direct participation in the program development, there is a telecommunications commission with appointed volunteers. The role of this commission is to oversee the franchise renewal process and to address citizen complaints about the government channel. The station develops special segments on recycling, hand washing, bullying, and other topics of interest. VOP TV also runs programs in time blocks, i.e., blocks might resemble 10:00 pm – 1:00 am for Bulletin Board and 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm for Arts. The bulk of the schedule consists of original, in-house programs (80%) with the remainder coming from shared sources.

### **Policies and Procedures**

While the station uses only generic guidelines to govern its actions, the station manager serves as the final authority for all decisions. Most of their policy issues arise bi-annually during election periods when they have to defend their rules and regulations.

### **Viewership**

VOP TV uses community public service surveys to assess viewer satisfaction. Through this process they have found that some of their most popular shows are those explaining how to handle run-ins with the police, live council meetings and restaurant sanitation information. The station makes a continuous effort to increase viewership that includes utilizing YouTube (on which they have 53 videos.) It also limits program segments to 10 minutes for ease of uploading and viewing on YouTube.

### **COR-TV Channel 14/73 – Roseville, California**

<i>Population:</i>	115,452
<i>Award Category:</i>	Profile of a City/County Dept. Operating Budget \$200K to \$400K (2008)
<i>Total Budget:</i>	\$390,000
<i>Number of Staff:</i>	1
<i>Year Established:</i>	1997
<i>Website:</i>	<a href="http://www.roseville.ca.us/">http://www.roseville.ca.us/</a>

### **Programming**

COR-TV's programming philosophy is to make shows entertaining and show issues of importance to the City. It broadcasts public meetings and other events for outreach purposes. One popular show involves interviews with City Council members. The station has a standard weekly schedule that the station manager creates, due to a lack of additional staff. The program development process revolves around the public government meetings which is the station's primary reason for operation. Eighty percent of programs are developed in-house and the rest come from sources such as PBS and NASA. Citizens are welcomed to provide input on programming but their input is not actively sought.

### **Policies and Procedures**

In an effort to generate additional revenue, the City developed an advertising policy to allow the station to broadcast appropriate advertisements on the government channel. No other formal, written policies exist for COR-TV, thus the station manager relies on his professional broadcasting experience to guide him in the decision making process.

### **Viewership**

The station is included in the City's public service satisfaction survey which is conducted on an infrequent basis. Therefore, most of the data about number of viewers and viewer satisfaction is derived anecdotally or from Council members sharing conversations they have had with constituents who comment on government channel content. In order to increase viewership, the station has considered placing advertisements on transit vehicles and departmental newsletters.

### **City TV Channel 24/99 – San Diego, California**

<i>Population:</i>	1,251,184
<i>Award Category:</i>	Magazine Format Series Operating Budget Over \$400K (2008)
<i>Total Budget:</i>	\$400,000
<i>Number of Staff:</i>	3
<i>Year Established:</i>	1997
<i>Website:</i>	<a href="http://www.sandiego.gov/citytv/">http://www.sandiego.gov/citytv/</a>

### ***Programming***

The station manager is responsible for developing a regular program schedule that helps achieve the City's municipal programming goal to create greater awareness of local government and facilitate the community's participation in local decision making. The programming plan coincides with the government's legislative calendar. All of the programs are produced in-house and are provided in closed captioning.

### ***Policies and Procedures***

The City Council developed a plethora of policies and procedures to address the many issues that confront government access channels. The approved policies include the following:

- Programming formats
- Content restrictions
- Omissions and errors
- Complaint procedures
- Interdepartmental production services
- Intergovernmental production services
- Use of city programming and equipment
- Program sponsorship
- Production personnel policies
- Technical standards
- Program playback log
- Retention of videotaped programs and events
- Videotape duplication guidelines
- Copyright issues
- Use of municipal channel during emergencies

### ***Viewership***

City TV uses an online application called Granicus to count the number of visitors to its section of the City's website and viewers of live City Council meetings; however, it is unable to gauge the number of viewers tuning into its channel of the more than 380,000 cable television subscribers.

# Appendix D - Union County Local Government Survey Data

## **Survey Administration**

Public officials were questioned regarding their past use of the channel and any specific programming ideas they may have. They were also questioned as to their current methods of customer outreach, and how these methods may incorporate UCTV 16 currently or in the future. Finally, public officials were asked about the availability of resources that could be dedicated to furthering a departmental agenda publicized through use of the channel.

## **Public Official Content and Programming Suggestions**

The following information is based on interviews of Union County public officials and Union County Commissioners conducted both in person and by telephone.

### *Cooperative Extension*

- Bulletin board listing upcoming programs.
- Gardening programming.
- Nutrition and food safety programming.
- Livestock production and management programming.
- Farm City Week Celebration (Agriculture and community connection and youth livestock show), 3<sup>rd</sup> week in September.
- Union County Farm Showing Festival (Antique Tractor and Power mainly), May 15 and 16.
- Piedmont Herb Festival, January 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Bee keeping class coverage.
- Equine class coverage.

### *Fire Marshal*

- Seasonally specific fire prevention tips: Winter – heating unit safety, Spring and Summer – Grill and cooking safety, Fall – Back to school (Stop drop and roll, have an escape plan for family during fire emergency, etc.)
- Fire prevention month (October) programming covering basic fire prevention measures.
- Bulletin board concerning applications for burn permits, inspection requests, etc.

### *Health Department*

- Flu vaccination clinic coverage.
- Bulletin board information relating to different seasonal health risks (cold and flu, insects, etc.)

### *Library Services*

- Department wants to create or help create their own specific programming featuring various services they offer.
- Coverage of Internet availability from the Library.
- Family literacy program coverage (family education for parents and kids).
- Coverage of illiteracy prevention programs for adults through pre-schoolers.
- Information services coverage. Access to research databases (NC Live).
- Coverage of available local history and genealogy information.
- Spanish services coverage (translators and newspapers).
- Coverage of intensive services for job seekers.
- Coverage of small art gallery – professional and local artists work displayed.

### *Parks and Recreation*

- Coverage of new facility openings.
- Bulletin boards displaying facility hours, locations, and rules.

### *Public Works*

- Programming or bulletin boards covering water conservation and water restrictions.
- Programming covering recycling programs.
- Coverage of Earth Day activities (Public Works co-hosts this event).

### *Register of Deeds*

- Programming covering what the department can do and how to go about obtaining records and documents needed before coming to department.
- Spring is a good time for programming considering the increase in real estate transactions.
- Department would like to see a video covering what they do and an interview with department personnel.
- Bulletin board cited as a good way to disseminate information.

### *Sheriff*

- The department has used UCTV 16 several times: program about project lifesaver, animal shelter information, and volunteer opportunities. The department found UCTV 16 effective and got a good deal of feedback from citizens.
- Holidays are good times for programming.
- Program covering firearm safety.
- Would like to offer programming that lets Union County citizens know that the department is here to serve them and wants them to feel safe at all times.
- There are several programs that the department would like to have covered due to underexposure: Calling elderly to ensure they are alright, ability to check homes for safety and lock issues, and ability to start and assist with a community watch program.
- Several events are hosted annually that would be good to cover: Car show, barbeque, gospel singing on New Year's Eve, National Night Out.

### *Social Services*

- Programming covering adoption services.
- Christmas Bureau coverage – donations.
- Coverage of commodity program providing food to needy families.
- Coverage of Volunteer Appreciation celebration.
- Coverage of the department's program integrity division that locates people defrauding the system.

### *Veteran's Affairs*

- Programming covering Veteran's Day and the Annual Flag Day celebration and the airport.
- January and February would be a good time for programming – pension period.
- Would like to deliver information regarding benefits for veterans and changes in laws that affect those benefits.
- Veteran's Affairs is currently on a budget freeze, so some programming may be difficult to produce.

### *Voting and Elections*

- Coverage of early voting.
- Programming or bulletin boards related to registration deadlines and voting locations.

## **General Feedback from Department Officials Regarding UCTV 16**

- Sheriff's Department, Library Services, Fire Marshal's Office, Health Department, and Voting and Elections all cited prior use of UCTV 16.
- Viewership is tough to measure or impossible, this leaves results in uncertainty as to whether the target audience is being reached.
- Adding timestamps to Commissioner meetings was specifically mentioned as a possible improvement.
- In the majority of cases public officials cited "everyone in Union County" as their target audience (Veteran's Affairs has a more specific audience), highlighting the diverse population that UCTV 16 must serve.
- All departments consider themselves service-oriented organizations holding customer service in the highest regard.
- Some departments have experienced a communication breakdown (no connection to UCTV 16.)
- Bulletin boards are the preferred communication method for several departments and would help communicate needs and prevent citizen confusion.
- Publicizing events is a popular and well-received idea throughout the various departments.
- Both Commissioners feel that UCTV is an important communication tool for the citizens of Union County for distributing Governmental information

## Resource Availability

- Cooperative Extension and Register of Deeds are willing to consider directing some money to UCTV 16. Sheriff's department would possibly be willing pending review.
- Library Services, Veteran's Affairs, Register of Deeds, Cooperative Extension, Voting and Elections, Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Health, Social Services and Sheriff are all willing to donate staff time to program development. The Fire Marshal's Office stated that they cannot currently volunteer staff, but may be able to in the future.
- Library Services is willing to donate money and time toward creating their own programming.
- Both Commissioners said they would consider directing money to UCTV 16.

## County Commissioner Content and Programming Suggestions

- Provide information to the public firsthand concerning pertinent issues.
- Information concerning the ongoing issues in the County (e.g. the ongoing Supreme Court case involving S.C and N.C concerning the water system.)
- Provide information from volunteer agencies concerning their needs and services offered.
- Information from the state and federal representatives concerning the impact of bills on the citizens of the County.
- Information from public officials concerning what their departments do to enable the citizens to understand what it takes to run the government.

## Services Available from Union County Governmental Departments

**Cooperative Extension** (Department Head Richard Melton) - Provides agriculture and food safety services including instructional programs for those in the agriculture community as well as those interested in nutrition and gardening.

**Fire Marshal** (Department Head Neal Speer) - Provides fire and safety inspections, code enforcement, plans review, fire investigation, and coordination of local fire departments.

**Health Department** (Department Head Philip Tarte) - Strives to increase the health and wellness of all County residents, focuses heavily on disease prevention and networks with the state of North Carolina in collecting and sending vital statistics to state government officials.

**Library Services** (Department Head Marti Smith) - Provides free materials and information, computers for internet access, and a wide array of educational and developmental programs for youth and adults.

**Parks and Recreation** (Department Head Wanda Smith) - Oversees the management and administration of county parks and recreational facilities, sets campground and parks and recreation rules and camping reservation policies.

**Public Works** (Department Head Ed Goscicki) - Provides water systems and waste management systems while ensuring that both are up to date with State requirements.

**Register of Deeds** (Department Head Crystal Crump) - Oversees recording of land transactions, real estate transactions, and register and maintain vital records.

**Sheriff** (Department Head Eddie Cathey) - Provide law enforcement and crime investigation, manages jails, deals with courts and paperwork, manages animal shelter.

**Social Services** (Gloria Haney) - Provides aid to citizens in two main categories: public aid and assistance (Medicaid, food and nutrition services, and food stamps) and protective services (for vulnerable adults who may have physical and mental ailments and children who are neglected, abused or have failed to thrive, and volunteer income tax assistance).

**Veteran's Affairs** (Department Head Michelle Marcano) - Provides transportation and family services for veterans.

**Voting and Elections** (John Whitley) - Handles all voter registration, preparation and implementation, candidate filings, recruitment of precinct workers, preparation of census maps, and implementation of election laws.

# Appendix E - Union County Citizen Survey Administration & Results

In the case of the face-to-face, self-administered, and telephone surveys, the survey subjects were chosen as randomly as possible. Face-to-face surveys were conducted at a Union County Wal-Mart. An interviewer asked subjects if they would be willing to participate in the survey, asked them the questions, and recorded their responses. Self-administered surveys were conducted at the Union County Government Building and at the Monroe Union EMS base. Several EMS workers agreed ahead of time to take the surveys, and the surveys were brought to the base to be filled out.

Citizens and government employees at the Government Building were asked if they would fill out the survey at the check-in desk, and filled out the surveys themselves. Telephone surveys were conducted by choosing phone numbers of Union County residents at random from a phone book. These residents were called, and if they agreed to participate, were read the survey questions and their answers were recorded by the interviewer. A web-based survey was added to the UCTV 16 website and citizens were allowed to enter their responses online.

The results of these surveys were then tallied and calculated, the following results were obtained:

## 1.) Where do you get information about Union County government?

Newspaper	32%
Various (Combination of newspaper, internet, television, etc.)	24%
Union County website	17%
Television	14%
Local news	8%
Internet sources other than Union County website	3%
Television	2%
Work	2%
Telephone	2%
Coworkers	2%

## 2 a.) Have you watched the Union County government channel in the past 12 months?

Yes	53%
No	44%
No cable access	3%

2 b.) If so, what program did you watch?

Public meetings	42%
Not sure	26%
School program	5%
Bulletin board	11%
Documentary	11%
Community news	5%

3.) Did you enjoy the program?

Yes	76%
No	21%
Not sure	3%

4.) What kinds of programs or information would you be interested in seeing on the Union County Government channel?

Community news	25%
Public services information	18%
Recreation and entertainment information	17%
Social services information	14%
Public education information	13%
Seasonal information	8%
Youth and children's programming	4%
Travel and tourism information	1%

## Appendix F - Programming Plan

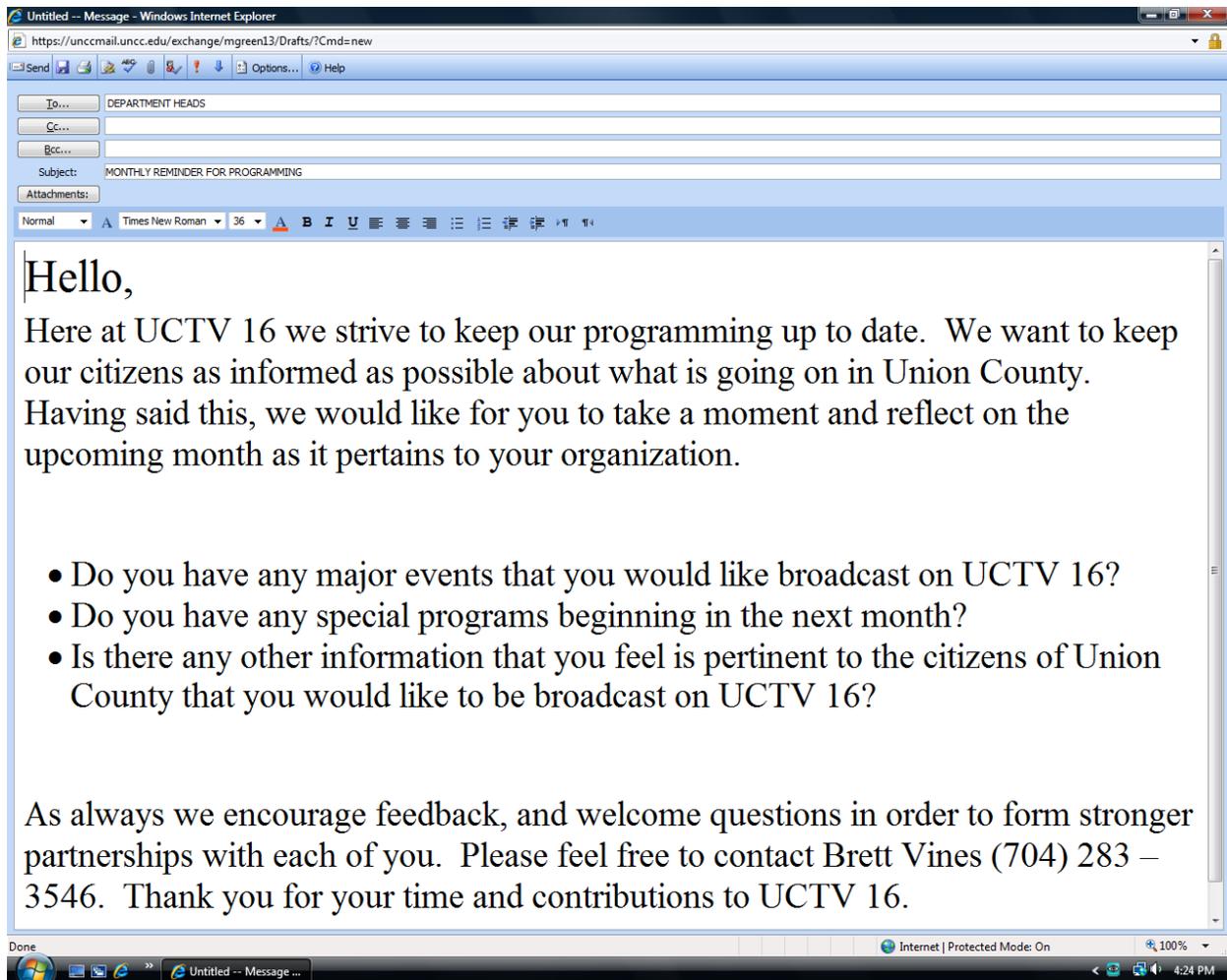
Based on information gathered from the local government and citizen surveys, we believe that open communication between Union County public officials, elected officials, and representatives of the individual towns with UCTV 16 is the cornerstone of the programming plan. Because public officials are intimately familiar with their agency's operation, communication with these officials is of the utmost importance. These officials can provide UCTV 16 with first hand information that can be applied to programming or electronic bulletin boards. This information will allow Union County to be more accessible and understandable to citizens, as well as allow citizens to work with these agencies in a more efficient manner.

We recommend developing a communication process with each agency that could provide relevant content for the channel. This communication process can take a variety of forms, to include email, face-to-face, and telephone contact.

Below is a list of identified points of contact for select County departments:

- Cooperative Extension (Richard Melton)
- Fire Marshal (Neal Speer)
- Health Department (Philip Tarte)
- Library (Marti Smith)
- Parks and Recreation (Wanda Smith)
- Public Works (Ed Goscicki)
- Register of Deeds (Crystal Crump)
- Sheriff (Lieutenant Thompson or Sergeant Ingini)
- Social Services (Gloria Haney)
- Veteran's Affairs (Michelle Marcano)
- Voting and Elections (John Whitley)

Regular communication (bi-monthly, monthly, or weekly) between UCTV 16 and the key governmental players should request the details of major upcoming events, relevant information to be disseminated, and ideas regarding the best way to communicate this information. This method allows those government agencies that will provide the majority of aired content to decide what information is most important and beneficial for the citizens of Union County to receive. UCTV 16 administration can then decide what will or will not be aired, and take the steps necessary to broadcast the information. In our opinion, the most expedient method for communicating with the above points of contact is email. A generic e-mail to facilitate this communication is presented on the following page.



The following is an example of the steps necessary to relay information from government to citizens:

- Initiate communication with public officials.
- Review their responses to decide what can and should be aired on UCTV 16.
- Determine the most effective and efficient way to communicate this information, giving some consideration to the ideas of the official.
- Notify the official of the decision to record a program or place the information on an electronic bulletin board (this option likely will simply require requesting the information from the official.)
- In the case of program recording, discuss the relevant issues such as program length, required scripting, program location, and the most convenient time to record the program.
- Once the program is recorded UCTV 16 staff can conduct necessary editing, review the program, and broadcast it to citizens.

While public officials will provide the majority of programming ideas and content (as it is their responsibility to inform the public of their actions), some consideration should also be given to the desires and opinions of Union County citizens when developing programming. This can be accomplished through regular citizen surveys.

Our team gathered programming and electronic bulletin board ideas from a variety of Union County public officials and citizen feedback, as well as from a web search of event calendars from towns within the County. This information was used to produce a sample programming schedule arranged strategically by time of year (e.g., taking consideration for seasons, holidays, etc.). This programming schedule can be found in Appendix G.

# Appendix G - Sample Programming Schedule

Union County Television | Spring 2010

Programming Schedule											
Themes and Holidays											
January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Federal and State Tax Season begins	Federal and State Tax Season	Federal and State Tax Season	Federal and State Tax Season 15th	Water Conservation	Water Conservation	Water Conservation	Water Conservation	Leaf Collection and Yard Debris	Leaf Collection and Yard Debris	Leaf Collection and Yard Debris	New Years Eve
Financial Aid for Student	Financial Aid for Student	Financial Aid for Student	Financial Aid for Student	Mother's Day	Father's Day	Fireworks Safety	Community Watch Programming		Fire Prevention	Elections	Winter Break
Inclement Weather	African American History Month	Planting and Soil Conservation	Planting and Soil Conservation	Memorial Day	Firearm Safety	4th of July	Back to School				Holiday Events
Inclement Weather	Inclement Weather	St. Patrick's Day	Spring Break	Parks and Recreation Events	Parks and Recreation Events	Parks and Recreation Events	Parks and Recreation Events	Parks and Recreation Events		Inclement Weather	Inclement Weather
President's Day	Valentine's Day	Primary Elections	Yard Debris	Yard Debris	Yard Debris	Yard Debris	Yard Debris	Yard Debris	Yard Debris	Yard Debris	Flu Season
Flu Season	Flu Season			Yard Debris	Flag Day			Yard Debris		Flu Season	Flu Season
	Sheriff's Programming									Thanksgiving Holiday	
Local Tax Season Ends	County Budget Review Season	County Budget Review Season	County Budget Review Season	County Budget Review Season	County Budget Review Season	Start of the new fiscal year	Local Tax Season begins	Local Tax Season	Local Tax Season	Local Tax Season	Local Tax Season
Events											
January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
- Pension Paper Work Assistance	- Pension Paper Work Assistance	- Pension Paper Work Assistance	- Pension Paper Work Assistance	- Union County Farm Showing Festival		- 4th of July Parade and Fireworks		- Farm City Week Celebration			
- Herb Festival		- Real Estate Information	- Bee Keeping and Equine Classes	- Spring Fest		- Car and BBQ Event					
		- Easter Basket Making	- Movie Night in the Park	- Day in the Park!		- National Night Out					
			- Stallings Easter Egg Hunt	- Rusty Pistons Tractor							
			- Service Day	- Aw Shucks Corn Maze							
				- Beach, Blues, and BBQ Festival							
				- BBQ Cook-Off							

## Exhibit 1. Program Descriptions

4th of July Parade and Fireworks	Both the Town of Waxhaw and Unionville have 4th of July parades. Waxhaw also has a fireworks show later on that evening.
African American History Month:	February is African American History Month. Programming on special events, segments on highlighted individuals and other
Aw Shucks Corn Maze:	The City of Marshville hosts this event.
Back to School:	The County Library has many programs to help kids and parents prepare for the school year. Consult with the Library for a list of events and resources.
BBQ Cook-Off	The City of Monroe hosts this event.
Beach, Blues, and BBQ Festival	The City of Monroe hosts this event.
Bee Keeping and Equine Classes:	The Cooperative Extension Department holds classes on Bee Keeping and Equine. Consult with this department for more
Car and BBQ Event:	The Sherriff's Department hosts a Car and BBQ event in July.
Day in the Park!:	The City of Marshville hosts this event.
Easter Basket Making:	The Department of Social Services has Easter basket making sessions and then distributes them to needy children.
Elections:	Programming on where and when to vote will help increase voter turnout for primary and general elections.
Farm City Week Celebration:	The Cooperative Extension Department celebrate Farm City for an entire week.
Financial Aid:	Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) forms can be filled out beginning on January 1st. Consult with local Community
Fire Prevention:	Work with the Fire Departments to produce programming on fire prevention. Winter months are times when most fires occur.
Firearm Safety	The Sherriff's Department conducts programs to educate citizens on firearm safety.
Flag Day:	Veterans Services holds a ceremony for flag day on June 14th. This ceremony could be recorded and/or information on where and
Flu Season:	Programming on where to go for flu shots, the proper way to wash hands, how the flu can be spread, etc. Consult with Public Health Department to gather information.
Herb Festival:	The Cooperative Extension Department hosts an Herb Festival on January 4th and 5th.
Holiday Events:	Information on any public holiday events that may be taking place during the month of December.
Inclement Weather:	Informational programming on what to do during inclement weather. Possible information could be on where to seek shelter, who to call, and emergency supplies to keep in the home.
Labor Day:	
Leaf Collection:	Provide information on where to put and how to get rid of leaves that citizens have collected. Because each jurisdiction is different, you may want to direct them to specific websites.
Martin Luther King Jr. Day:	MLK Day is the third Monday in January, most schools and employers are closed. Information on special events and ceremonies should be displayed. Contact the Union County School Administration and the PIO for details.
Memorial Day:	Information on Memorial Day events and celebrations.
Movie Night in the Park:	The City of Stallings holds a Movie Night in the Park.
National Night Out	Wingate hosts a National Night Out.
New Years Eve	Information on drinking and driving, options to avoid driving, and how to report a drunk driver.
Planting and Soil Conservation:	Spring months are popular times for planting in North Carolina. Information on soil conservation, how to take care of plants, and
Real Estate Information:	The Register of Deeds holds information sessions on Real Estate information in the month of March.
Rusty Pistons Tractor:	The City of Marshville hosts this event.
Service Day	The City of Stallings holds Service Day during the last weekend in April. Citizens are encouraged to volunteer this weekend.
Sherriff's Programming:	The Sherriff's Department has many different programs on the services they offer throughout the year. Programming on their services will help to inform citizens on what these are.
Spring Break:	Schools will be out of session for Spring Break one week in April. This may have multiple effects on traffic and parents schedules. Provide important dates and other useful information for parents.
Spring Fest:	The Town of Waxhaw hosts a Spring Festival.
St. Patrick's Day:	Event coverage and information on any special events and parades should be made available.
Stallings Easter Egg Hunt:	The City of Stallings conducts an Easter Egg Hunt for children the Saturday of Easter.
Tax Season:	Local tax season is from August to January. Federal and State tax season is from January to April 15th. The Department of Social Services provides VITA to help citizens when filing. Call DSS for more information.
Thanksgiving:	Public Health and Fire can produce content on how to properly cook turkeys in order to prevent injury, fire, and sickness.
Union County Farm Showing Festival:	Cooperative Extension hosts the Union County Farm Showing Festival.
Water Conservation:	It is important for citizens to conserve water throughout the Summer months. Information on how to conserve and what not to do during these months is helpful. It is also good to provide information on storm water services and how to report a polluted creek.
Yard Debris:	Provide information on where to put and how to get rid of yard debris that citizens have collected. Because each jurisdiction is different, you may want to direct them to specific websites.

# Appendix H - Standard Operating Procedures

## **Policies and Procedures**

Review all Policies and Procedures on a semi-annual basis making updates to these documents as needed to ensure compliance with applicable government access channel regulations and mandates.

## **UCTV 16 Staff**

Due to the constant changes and technological advancements in the field of television, staff members should be adequately trained and knowledgeable of these changes in order to operate equipment in the most cost effective and efficient manner. This may require attending applicable educational courses or conferences. Professional development opportunities should be utilized on a routine basis. Periodically research public information best practices and educate staff on these as needed.

## **Equipment**

Equipment will be upgraded and purchased on an as needed basis, as the budget allows. Equipment should be serviced as needed. The Public Information Officer should ensure that equipment is inventoried on a monthly basis.

## **Public Information Dissemination**

The Public Information Officer should ensure that there is an on-going communications process to gain citizen programming recommendations and feedback.

## **Departmental Coordination**

The Public Information Officer shall contact department directors on a monthly basis to obtain any departmental requirements for public broadcast on UCTV 16.

## **Annual Review and Performance Reports**

A semi-annual progress report shall be submitted to the County Manager and Board of Commissioners on the performance of UCTV 16. In addition, an annual progress report shall be made available to the citizens of Union County.

Conduct quarterly County focus groups to discuss Union County Board of Commissioners' related focus areas to ensure broadcasts are in alignment with their visions and the desires of the citizens. UCTV 16 shall meet semi-annually with the County Manager and other executive staff to establish a plan for success and future enhancement of the station.

***This SOP should be reviewed annually at a minimum.***

# Appendix I - Policies & Procedures

## **NAME AND CHANNEL DESIGNATION**

Union County's Government Channel, "The Government Channel", is currently operating as UCTV on Time Warner's Channel 16.

## **PURPOSE OF CHANNEL**

The purpose of Union County's Government Channel (UCTV) is to enhance public understanding of County government and local issues affecting County government by providing information about Union County Government and its services, policies, and programs.

## **MISSION AND VISION OF CHANNEL**

Union County would like to become the model for quality government programming by creating interesting, relevant and timely programming on UCTV. The County will strive to provide programming that is fair, accurate, balanced and without regard to partisanship or ideology. It is not the County's intention to create any sort of public forum on UCTV but merely to provide information concerning County government issues.

## **OBJECTIVES OF CHANNEL**

Objectives of the Government Channel (UCTV) shall include the following:

1. To make public proceedings and events more accessible to County residents by providing coverage of County meetings and other boards and commissions via cable television.
2. To increase community awareness of County services.
3. To promote special events in the community sponsored by the County, its Governmental Entities and/or Approved Agencies.
4. To provide more extensive information on selected County topics and activities not fully covered by existing communications media.
5. To supplement public safety and disaster preparedness activities/information pertaining to Union County and its incorporated municipalities.
6. To document and archive County events and activities.

## **COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

UCTV will be operated in a manner to comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, rules, and regulations.

## **DEFINITIONS**

The following definitions will apply throughout these policies and may, as appropriate, be deemed to refer collectively or to any part thereof:

**"Approved Agency"** – South Piedmont Community College and Carolinas Medical Center-Union.

**“County Government”** – Union County Board of Commissioners and Administration and all County departments and offices. Also included specifically are the NC Cooperative Extension – Union County Center, and Soil & Water Conservation District.

**“Emergency Programming”** – Programming submitted only by the Union County Emergency Management Office which addresses any actual or threatened enemy attack, sabotage or extraordinary fire, flood, storm, epidemic, chemical spill or other impending or actual calamity endangering or threatening to endanger health, life or property.

**“Governmental Entities”** – The governing boards of the municipalities within Union County, the Union County Board of Education, NC State Government, US Federal Government.

### **TYPES OF PROGRAMMING**

Only programming which is consistent with these policies and which is submitted by County Government, Governmental Entities or Approved Agencies, as those terms are defined herein, will be broadcast on UCTV. Union County will not air any program submitted by an individual or agency not considered to be County Government, a Governmental Entity or an Approved Agency, as those terms are defined herein.

The Channel Administrator is responsible for determining if programming is consistent with the policies, as they may be amended.

The County will be airing both character-generated programming as well as videotaped programming. The character-generated programming will be information messages displayed in typewritten form which will run continuously when no other video programming is scheduled. Videotaped programming may include both taped broadcast of meetings and pre-produced video programming.

### **GENERAL CATEGORIES OF PROGRAMMING**

The aforementioned types of programming must fall within one or more of the following general categories of programming:

- a. Announcements or programs concerning emergencies and other timely issues that affect public safety and health in the community;
- b. Public proceedings and meetings involving the elected and appointed officials within Union County;
- c. Programs and meetings that help explain County policies and programs;
- d. Programs and meetings which inform the public of the facilities, services and programs offered to the citizens of Union County;

- e. Public meetings or programs of other governments including federal, state, regional and local governments that affect County Government or the residents of Union County.
- f. Programs that highlight the cultural and historic resources of Union County;
- g. Public service announcements (one minute or less in length) if submitted by County Government only.

## **PROGRAMMING RESTRICTIONS**

Consistent with the purpose of UCTV, the following programming restrictions apply:

- a. Political Use - Except as specifically provided in this subparagraph, the County will not air any programming on UCTV which has as its purpose the assistance of a campaign for election of any person to any office or the promotion or opposition to any ballot position. From the time of their announced candidacy until after the election, announced candidates to any elected office shall not be permitted to make personal statements on UCTV, except as participants of formal public meetings in the discharge of their regular and routine duties. Factual information concerning information on any ballot issue affecting County Government services may be allowed. Character-generated election results may also be aired.
- b. Defamatory, Indecent or Obscene Content - Programs containing slanderous, lewd, obscene or violent material will not be aired. The County recognizes that programs with artistic or social merit may contain content or language considered objectionable to some viewers. However, community standards of good taste will be adhered to at all times. The Channel Administrator shall make the initial determination which is appealable in accordance with the complaint and appeals process outlined in these policies.
- c. Copyright Restrictions - Programs containing copyrighted materials will not be broadcast without proper copyright authorization. Approved Agencies submitting programming will be responsible for obtaining all necessary copyright clearance and shall indemnify and hold UCTV, Union County and its officers, employees and agents harmless in any case of copyright infringement.
- d. Commercialism or Endorsements - Programs which promote, endorse, or advertise any nonprofit agency, private business, commercial service or product, profit-making activity, political candidate or partisan cause will not be aired, except for promotional announcements for County-sponsored or sanctioned events. All programming shall be consistent with County policies pertaining to commercialism.
- e. Promotion of Religion - Programming which directly promotes religious beliefs or religious philosophies shall not be broadcast.

- f. Lotteries - Programs pertaining, directly or indirectly, to lotteries or any other device, scheme, plan, promotion, contest, or other program involving prize or chance will not be aired.
- g. Solicitation - Programs which solicit donations of any kind will not be broadcast.
- h. Misleading - Programs which contain outdated or misleading information will not be broadcast. Most programs will be considered up-to-date for six (6) months from video production.
- i. Position Advocacy - Requests for access to UCTV for the purpose of advocating a personal viewpoint shall generally be denied, unless part of a County Government programming strategy to solicit personal viewpoints with equal time provided to all.
- j. Unacceptable Quality - Programs which do not meet acceptable broadcast standards for video and audio quality will not be aired. The Channel Administrator shall determine which programs meet acceptable broadcast standards.

#### **DISCRETION TO ALLOW OR DISALLOW PROGRAMMING**

Notwithstanding anything in these policies to the contrary, Union County, acting by and through the County Manager, reserves the absolute right to prohibit the broadcast of any particular video program or message on UCTV, whether submitted by County Government, any other Governmental Entity, an Approved Agency, or anyone else. Union County will not air any program submitted by an individual or agency not considered to be County Government, a Governmental Entity or an Approved Agency, as those terms are defined herein. Furthermore, Union County, acting by and through the County Manager, also reserves the right to authorize and approve programming that is not in strict compliance with the types of programming listed in herein as long as such programming is of significant interest to the citizens of Union County and is consistent with the guidelines and restrictions defined herein and the purpose and objectives of the channel as stipulated.

#### **TECHNICAL STANDARDS**

A copy of all programming must be submitted to the Channel Administrator in VHS format for a full review for conformity with these policies. The broadcast copy of approved programming must be submitted in a format consistent with the current technical requirements. Video and audio quality of all programs must meet acceptable broadcast standards as determined by the Channel Administrator. Contact the Channel Administrator for specific technical requirements.

## **TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES**

The Channel Administrator shall use best efforts to keep any videotapes that are delivered to him or her in the same condition as they were in when delivered; however, Union County shall not be responsible for inadvertent erasure or damage to such tapes. The submitter should keep an archive copy of the videotape so that a duplicate tape can be made and broadcast in the event that the original tape is unable to be aired due to technical difficulties related to the tape.

## **REQUESTS FOR PROGRAMMING**

County Government, other Governmental Entities, and Approved Agencies, by and through their respective heads, may submit a formal request for programming when they feel it appropriate for broadcast on the County Government Channel. Requests should be made to the Channel Administrator in writing on a designated form provided by the Channel Administrator. The Channel Administrator may waive such requirement for Emergency Programming submitted by the Union County Emergency Management Office. In order to allow for proper program scheduling and publicity, requests must be submitted prior to the requested broadcast date in accordance with the following deadlines:

- Emergency Programming – as soon as possible
- Meetings – 2 weeks in advance (other arrangements may be made for regularly scheduled and broadcast meetings)
- Message Programming – 2 weeks in advance
- Video Programming – 4 weeks in advance

The programming must be in conformity with these policies and approved by the Channel Administrator prior to scheduling and broadcast. Any programming that does not meet the requirements as submitted may be subject to editing as outlined in these policies in order to receive approval for broadcast.

## **PROGRAM EDITING**

With the exception of videotaped meetings of the Board of Commissioners and other Governmental Entities, all programming is subject to editing. Such editing is not intended to alter the factual content or overall intent of the material being broadcast. It shall be the general policy that Union County will not edit any programming that is copyrighted to someone other than Union County. In that instance the submitter will be given an opportunity to secure copyright approval to edit and edit the videotape at the Channel Administrator's direction but at the submitter's expense, and resubmit the edited tape for review and possible broadcast. Character-generated information may be edited to provide for clarity and maximum utilization of pages available. The Channel Administrator has the operational responsibility for the message editing. Such message editing duties may be delegated in the Channel Administrator's discretion.

## **PROGRAMMING ACQUISITION AND EXCHANGE**

Liaison and exchange with other local governments involved in programming/telecasting shall be established and maintained. Cooperative arrangements and agreements with local educational programmers, broadcasters, cable companies and other production groups may be established for efficient operations and communications in the community.

## **PROGRAM SCHEDULING**

Union County will endeavor to provide some form of programming broadcast 24 hours a day. When video programming is not broadcast, the message programming will run. Schedules of programs to be aired on UCTV will be developed and kept by the Channel Administrator. Every effort will be made to schedule video programming in an equitable and non-discriminatory manner; allowing, when appropriate, the County to broadcast a single program for multiple airings at various times. When possible, tapes of regularly scheduled meetings will be scheduled as promptly as possible in order to ensure timely airing of the meetings. Scheduling, however, will be in the discretion of the Channel Administrator taking into consideration any limitations imposed by Time Warner Cable. Such schedule does not guarantee the actual airing of such programs since emergency programming, technical difficulties, acts of God or other events beyond the control of the Channel Administrator, Time Warner or Union County, may prohibit the airing of programs as scheduled. The County shall not be responsible or liable for such failures.

## **VIDEOTAPE OWNERSHIP AND COPYRIGHT**

All programming produced by County Government shall be considered the property of Union County and shall be copyrighted as such. Union County makes no representation as to the ownership or copyright of any other programming broadcast on UCTV. It is the responsibility of the submitter to ensure that the proper copyright authorization is obtained to allow the broadcast as requested and Union County and UCTV shall be held harmless for any failure to obtain such authorizations.

## **RETENTION OF VIDEO PROGRAMMING**

Except to the extent required by law, it shall not be the responsibility of Union County to retain any video programming that is broadcast, or submitted for broadcast, on UCTV. The submitter and/or sponsor are responsible for retaining a copy of the video programming and for complying with applicable laws regarding records retention. The submitter and/or sponsor are also responsible for retrieving any videotapes left in the Channel Administrator's possession within 15 days of the end of the broadcast. All videotapes shall be the property of Union County, and the Channel Administrator has the authority to destroy videotapes after it is determined that their administrative value has ended. Notwithstanding the foregoing, it is recognized that certain videotapes may be kept on file by the Channel Administrator and reused in future broadcasts if proper permission is secured.

## **DUPLICATION OF VIDEO PROGRAMMING**

Videotape duplication services are not offered by the County; however, the County will endeavor to locate a vendor for that service. Citizens wishing to obtain a copy of any video programming should contact the Channel Administrator for information concerning the vendor and the duplication services available, if any. A duplication charge may be required to be paid in advance to the vendor performing the duplication service.

Citizens wishing to obtain a copy of any video programming not kept by the Channel Administrator must contact the submitter of the program. That contact information can be obtained through the Channel Administrator. It shall be the responsibility of the submitter to determine if duplication of a videotape will result in copyright infringement. The County shall not be responsible for ensuring that such duplication is not a violation of copyright laws.

## **CHANNEL ADMINISTRATOR AND ASSIGNED STAFF**

The Channel Administrator shall be designated by and shall report to the County Manager. The Channel Administrator has the responsibility of the general management of UCTV and shall perform all duties so assigned. The Channel Administrator shall perform his or her duties in a fair and impartial manner and shall endeavor to ensure that the approved programming is in conformity with these policies as they may from time to time be amended. Additional County staff may be assigned duties related to the operations of UCTV or the County may contract for such services; however, all persons working on UCTV must possess an appropriate background in video and broadcasting for the duties assigned.

## **PRODUCTION PERSONNEL POLICIES**

UCTV facilities and equipment shall be utilized only by qualified and proficient personnel. All equipment users are subject to approval by the Channel Administrator.

County staff, interns, contract or free-lance personnel shall maintain themselves in accordance with the conduct guidelines of the Communications Department of Union County and all County administrative regulations.

The following abuse of privileges shall be included as grounds for disciplinary action including the withholding of equipment usage privileges or other actions as outlined by Union County.

- Damage, abuse or mishandling of video production equipment.
- Unauthorized use of video production equipment and facilities, particularly if used for private or commercial purposes.
- Use of video production equipment or facilities while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

## **USE OF COUNTY-OWNED EQUIPMENT**

County-owned equipment shall be restricted to authorized activities and its use shall be restricted to authorized staff of the County or trained personnel under the direction of the Channel Administrator. The loaning or use of the equipment for personal or outside use shall not be permitted. Authorized activities are limited to the production of County Government video programming, the taping of official meetings of the Union County Board of Commissioners and such other uses deemed appropriate by the County Manager.

## **COMPLAINT PROCEDURE AND APPEAL**

Complaints regarding UCTV programming decisions shall be submitted in writing to the Channel Administrator on a timely basis not to exceed 30 days from the incident complained of and shall be acted upon in writing by the Channel Administrator in a timely fashion not to exceed 30 days. If any person disagrees with the Channel Administrator's decision regarding a complaint, he or she may appeal in writing to the County Manager within 30 days of the Channel Administrator's decision for a final determination. The County Manager has sole discretion in making such final determinations. The following addresses must be used in following the complaint and appeal procedure set out above:

Union County Manager  
500 North Main Street  
Monroe, NC 28110

UCTV Channel Administrator  
500 North Main Street  
Monroe, NC 28110

## **FUNDING**

It is acknowledged that establishing a reliable funding mechanism will enable UCTV to become the model for quality government programming by creating interesting, relevant and timely programming. The budget for UCTV shall be submitted on an annual basis by the County Manager and shall be subject to the normal County budget review process. Funding is in the discretion of the Union County Board of Commissioners.

## **PROGRAM SPONSORSHIP**

Union County will accept sponsorship of programming which meets the desired purpose and objectives of UCTV. Any program sponsored (in full or in part) by a commercial, civic or private entity may carry a brief sponsorship statement at the beginning, end or beginning and end which states the following:

*“This program is made possible through a grant from \_\_\_\_\_”*

Video footage during sponsorship acknowledgment may include a logo, name, and address of a sponsor.

Acknowledgment (including in-program recognition) is permitted for entities providing or sponsoring segments of programs produced by UCTV.

## **INDEMNIFICATION**

Union County, its officers, employees and agents, are not responsible for any loss, injury, damage, penalty, claims, costs (including attorneys' fees and expenses), actions, suits or proceedings of any kind, related to the operation of UCTV and shall specifically (but not by way of limitation) be indemnified and held harmless from any negligent or intentional act or omission of Time Warner, its officers, employees or agents, the Approved Agencies, their officers, employees and agents, or any other third party, arising out of the operation of UCTV, including but not limited to the following:

- a. accuracy/inaccuracy of any information broadcast over UCTV that was submitted by outside sources; (e.g. Approved Agencies and other Governmental Entities as those terms are herein defined)
- b. broadcast of incorrect information or programming over UCTV;
- c. failure to broadcast programming as scheduled;
- d. inadvertent erasures or damage to videotapes;
- e. destruction of videotapes not timely retrieved;
- f. failure to obtain proper copyright authorization.