The background of the entire image is a blurred, close-up shot of green grass, likely a field of tall grass or reeds, with a soft, out-of-focus effect. The colors range from light green to a darker, muted green.

REVENUE & READERSHIP: RESCUING & REVIVING RURAL JOURNALISM

A Great Plains states analysis

The Essential Workers

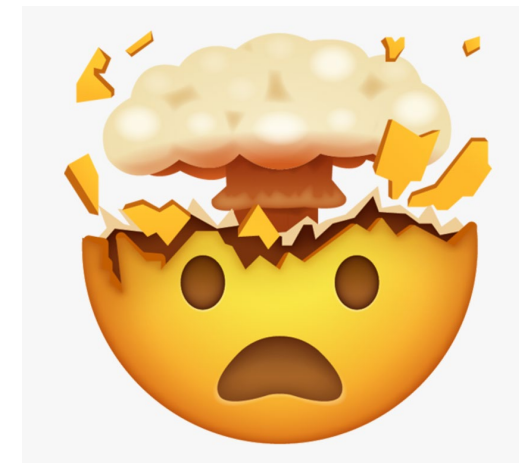
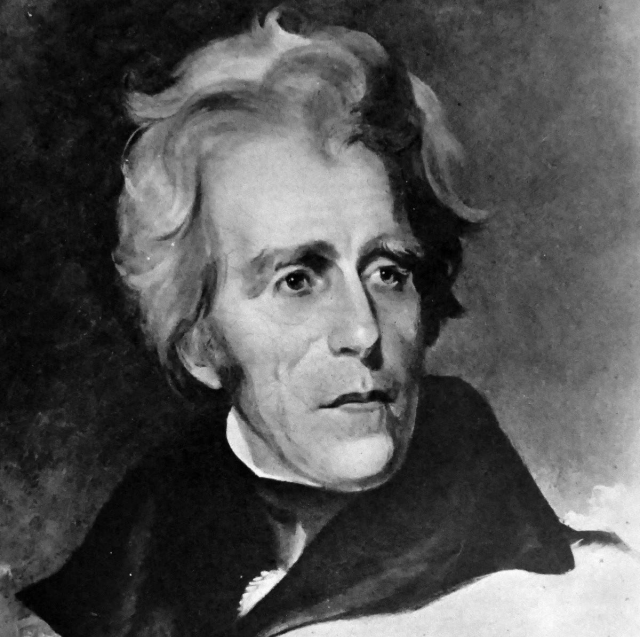
Last year, two journalism professors started an oral history project to document the work of local newsrooms in mid-America. They found the community in community journalism.



EUDORA



times



1833





99 cents

>>>>>>>>>

200 years



STRATEGIES

PUBLISHER SURVEYS

132

EXPERIMENT PRE-INTERVIEWS

5

READER SURVEYS

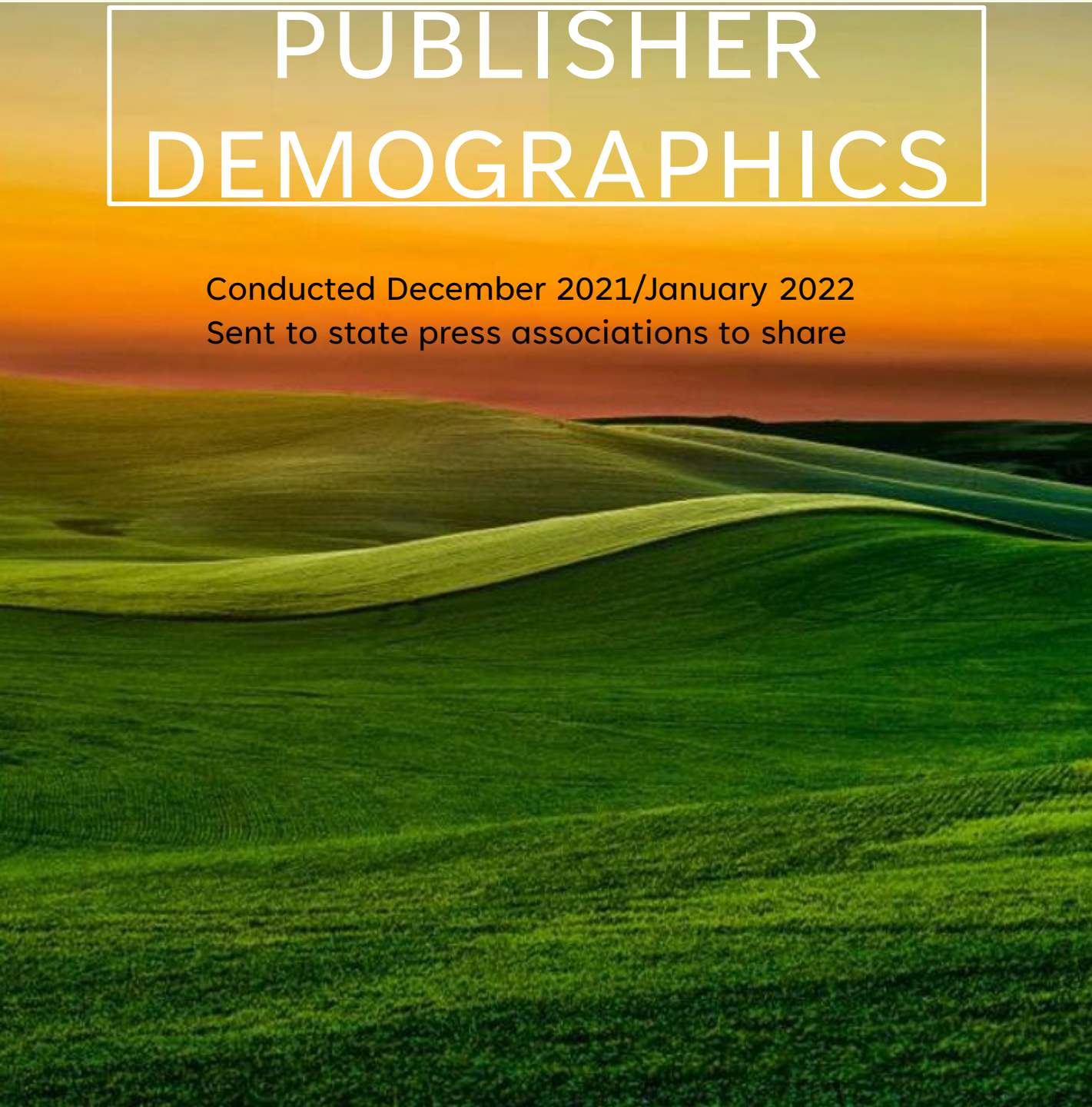
414

EXPERIMENTS

2

PUBLISHER FOCUS GROUPS

22



PUBLISHER DEMOGRAPHICS

Conducted December 2021/January 2022
Sent to state press associations to share

GENDER

Men: 64

Women: 65

AGE

Under 40: 23

41-60: 60

61+: 48

POPULATION SIZE

Under 1000: 66

1001-3: 85

3001-5: 27

5001-7: 11

7001-10: 9

<10K: 22

What revenue
streams are
you open to?



PUBLISHER SURVEYS:
SELECTING THE OLD

x

Advertising

x

Print
subscriptions

x

Legal notices



PUBLISHER SURVEYS:
LEAST POPULAR

X

Memberships

X

E-newsletters

X

Large Donors
Gov't Support



READER
SURVEYS

103: North Dakota

100: South Dakota

108: Nebraska

103: Kansas

*Conducted January/February 2022
with Coda Ventures*

Rural areas only, representative

Select one

☐ Excellent


☐ Good

☐ Average

☐ Poor

☐ Very poor

PITCH DECK



HOW LIKELY WOULD
YOU BE WILLING TO
HELP FINANCIALLY
SUPPORT YOUR
LOCAL NEWSPAPER
THROUGH THESE
AREAS?

READER SURVEYS: TOP VERY & SOMEWHAT LIKELY
A DISCONNECT WITH PUBLISHERS

X

Events

X

Print
subscriptions

X

E-newsletters

X

Memberships



READER SURVEYS: LEAST LIKELY TO SUPPORT

X

Digital
subscriptions

X

Commercial
printing

X

Marketing/graphics



OTHER NOTABLE TRENDS

40%

Very Likely or
Likely to Donate

64%

Very Likely, Likely or
Undecided on
Taxpayer Support



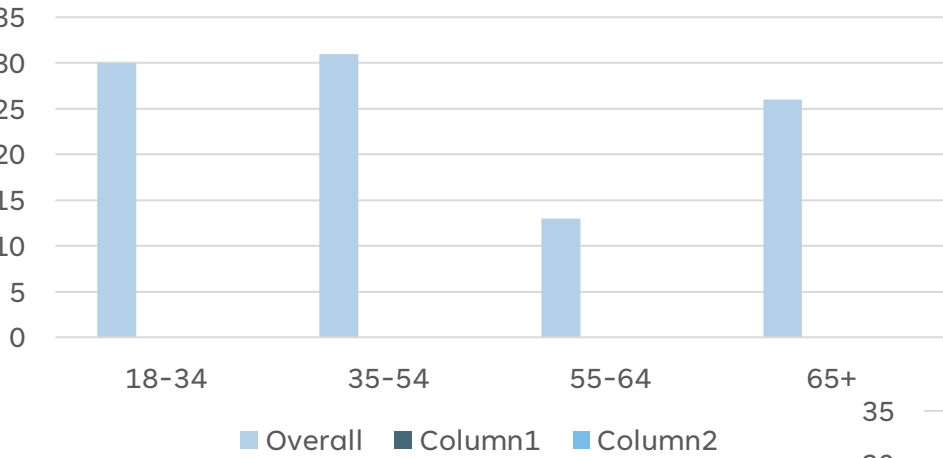
IF YOU KNEW YOUR NEWSPAPER WAS STRUGGLING TO STAY OPEN, WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO PROVIDE MORE FINANCIAL SUPPORT?

Metrics			
	GENDER	YES	%
Women	213	73	34%
Men	202	96	47.5%

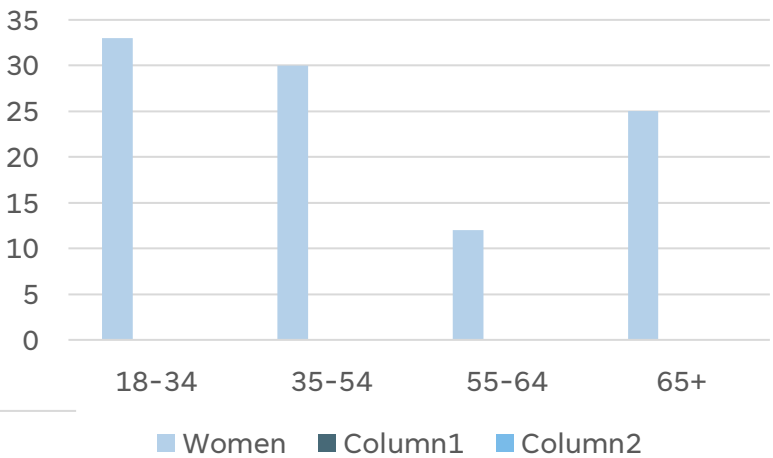
IF YOU KNEW YOUR NEWSPAPER WAS STRUGGLING TO STAY OPEN, WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO PROVIDE MORE FINANCIAL SUPPORT?

Metrics

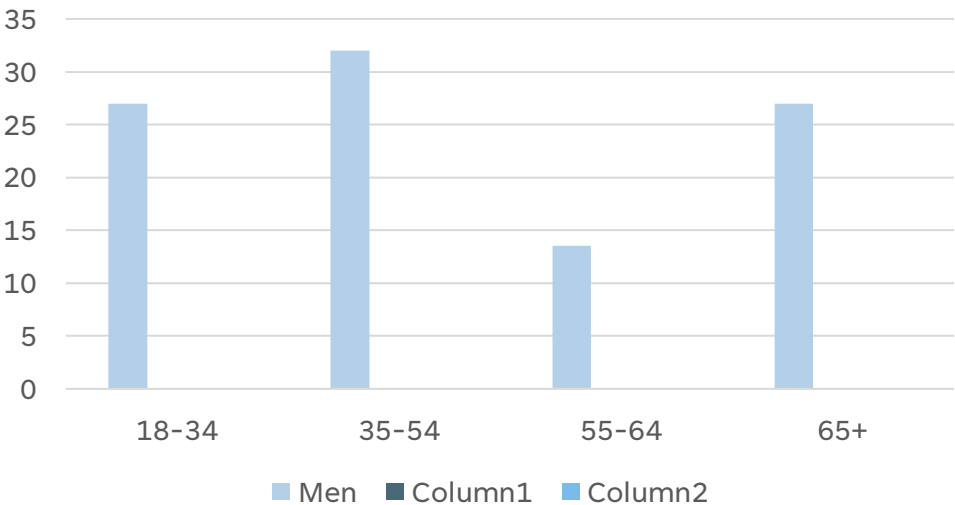
Overall By Age



Women



Men



MOST LIKELY TO SUPPORT

DADS

Men ages 35-54

NOT
BOOMERS

Worst support
from 55+

WHY
NOT
WOMEN?

Unclear why women
across all ages were
less likely to provide
more support



READER CONTENT PRIORITIES

1. Obits/births/marriages 57%
2. Features 54%
3. Things to Do (tied) 53%
3. Crime (tied) 53%
4. Business 43%
5. Ads 40%
6. Weather 39%
7. Sports 38%
8. Local govt 38%
9. Education 34%
10. Senior citizens 28%
11. Opinion 27%
12. Religion 18%

NEBRASKA READER COMMENTS

20XX

Occasional meet and greets with the employees. Easier to partner with people rather than a business/Try to be more interactive with community/Having reporters that care and are willing to attend local events

If they had more news about this community/By expanding its content from what it's been for 300yrs/More interesting content/Cover more local stories, not the same content every issue/i would like more to read. it has gotten quite scant

Have an option to send in opinions or suggestions for stories.

PITCH DECK

21

NEBRASKA DATA

<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/05/10/its-more-common-for-white-older-more-educated-americans-to-have-spoken-with-local-journalists/>

68% did not know anyone at the local newspaper (2019 Pew: 21% Americans have spoken to a local journalist)

18.5% would offer financial support beyond a subscription + 41% unsure

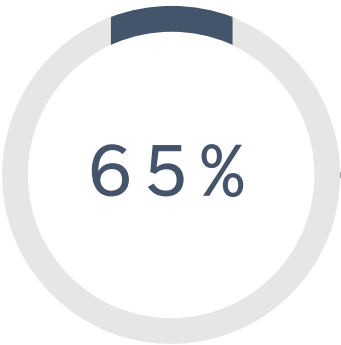
Knew struggling/help? 38% yes; 37% unsure; 25% no

29.5% of those who knew a local journalist would pay beyond a subscription vs. 13.5% who don't know one

NEBRASKA FUNDING OPTIONS

How likely would you be willing to help financially support your local newspaper through these areas?

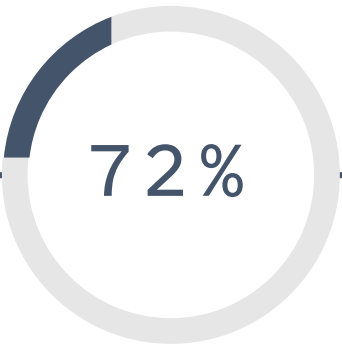
Very Likely, Somewhat Likely, Undecided



TAXPAYER SUPPORT

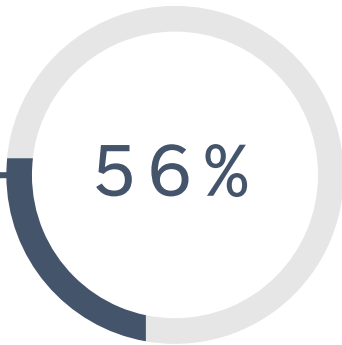
36% very
likely/somewhat
likely

city/county/state/federal
money to help newspapers



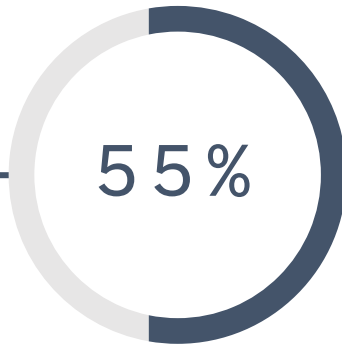
PRINT
SUBSCRIPTION

54% very
likely/somewhat
likely



ADS/CLASSIFIEDS

38% very
likely/somewhat
likely



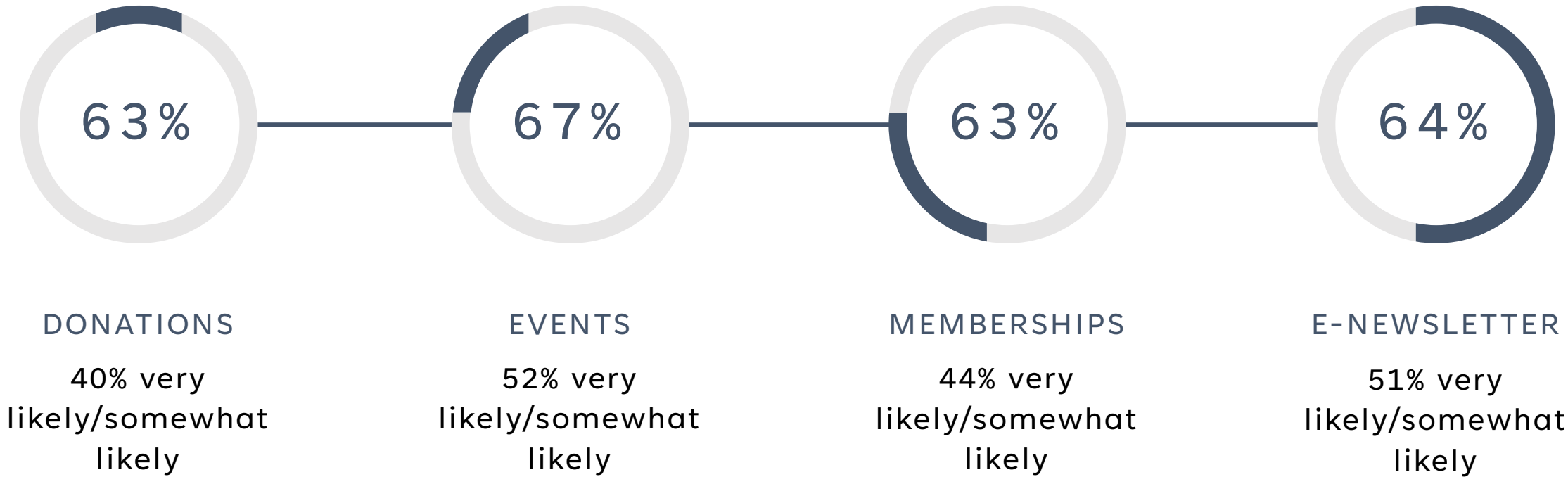
DIGITAL
SUBSCRIPTION

30% very
likely/somewhat
likely

NEBRASKA FUNDING OPTIONS

How likely would you be willing to help financially support your local newspaper through these areas?

Very Likely, Somewhat Likely, Undecided



WHAT DOES DATA AS WHOLE TELL US?



DIGITAL
SUBSCRIPTIONS



EVENTS



DONATIONS



MEMBERSHIPS

FOCUS GROUPS

COMMON THEMES



NO DONATIONS

Weakness

Not business

Too many
others asking
for \$



EDUCATION

Uncertainty
how other
models work

Current model
works fine

Risk aversion



TIME

Feeling like
this would
take more
time

There's no
time/no
resources

MEET THE TEAM





KANSAS PUBLISHING VENTURES

HARVEY COUNTY NOW

Population: 20,000

Circulation: 4,000

THE CLARION

Population: 7 tiny towns

Circulation: 1,100

HILLSBORO FREE PRESS

Population: 2,800

Circulation: 5,500

THE MODEL

MEMBERSHIPS

Press Club concept

E-NEWSLETTER

Working with Forum
Communications

EVENTS

Different strategies



GETTING STARTED

Weekly
meetings

Stakeholder
connections

Publicity
Palooza

WHAT'S NEXT

National
discussion