

Governance of Social Media Using the Principles of Community Radio

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Abstract : Regulating Canadian Facebook Groups, of a size and type, when they reach a threshold of audio video content. Consider the evolution of the Streaming Act, Parl GC Bill C-11 (44-1) and the regulations that will certainly follow. The Canadian Heritage Minister's office stipulates, "the Broadcasting Act only applies to audio and audiovisual content, not written journalism." Governance— After 10 years, a community radio station for Gabriola Island, BC - Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission ("CRTC") was approved but never started - became a Facebook Group "Community Bulletin Board - Life on Gabriola" referred to as CBBlog. After CBBlog started and began to gather real traction, a member of the Group cloned the membership and ran their competing Facebook group under the banner of "free speech". Here we see an inflection point [change of cultural stewardship] with two different mathematical results [engagement and membership growth]. Canada's telecommunication history of "portability" and "interoperability" made that Facebook Group CBBlog the better option, over broadcast FM radio for a community pandemic information sharing service for Gabriola Island, BC. A culture of ignorance flourishes in social media. Often people do not understand their own experience, or the experience of others because they do not have the concepts needed for understanding. It is thus important they are not denied concepts required for their full understanding. For example, Legislators need to know something about gay culture before they can make any decisions about it. Community Media policies and CRTC regulations are known and regulators can use that history to forge forward with regulations for internet platforms of a size and content type that reach a threshold of audio / video content. Mostly volunteer run media services, provide order of magnitude lower costs over commercial media. (Treating) Facebook Groups as new media.? Cathy Edwards, executive director of the Canadian Association of Community Television Users and Stations ("CACTUS"), calls it new media in that the distribution platform is not the issue. What does make community groups community media? Cathy responded, "... it's bylaws, articles of incorporation that state they are community media, they have accessibility, commitments to skills training, any member of the community can be a member, and there is accountability to a board of directors". Eligibility for funding through CACTUS requires these same commitments. It is risky for a community to invest into a platform as ownership has not been litigated. Is a FaceBook Group an asset of a not for profit society? The memo, from law student, Jared Hubbard summarizes, "Rights and interests in a Facebook group could, in theory, be transferred as property... This theory is currently unconfirmed by Canadian courts. "

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