



Insider



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The Plan! – an Update ...

You may recall from the first issue of the *Insider* that, at the beginning of the year, DrugSense took the opportunity to review old endeavors and envision fresh tasks for 2006. Toward that end, we composed the DrugSense Strategic Plan 2006.

Three quarters of the year have now passed, and we felt it was time to match the plan against our 2006 activities to analyze how well we have done.

The DrugSense Strategic Plan 2006 posed three strategic questions: 1.) How does DrugSense achieve financial stability? 2.) How do we sustain what we have? and 3.) How do we stay relevant to the reform of worldwide drug policy?

To answer each of these questions, we devised several Action Steps. What follows is an analysis of how well we have met each Action Step (in red) thus far.

- **How does DrugSense achieve financial stability?**

Major Grants: DrugSense staff member, Mary Jane Borden, analyzed more than 100 grantmakers and ordered them based on the likelihood that they would fund organizations like ours. Including our annual request to the Drug Policy Alliance, DrugSense has so far composed Letters of Intent or otherwise requested support from six different organizations, several of which have never funded drug policy.

DPC Billing Project: Staff members Matt Elrod and Deb Harper compiled the costs of our services and issued 'For Your Information' invoices to 37 clients for a total value of \$45,954. The next round of invoices is scheduled to be issued in January 2007.

Unfortunately, only a few organizations have stepped

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Do You Newshawk?

The MAP DrugNews Archive contains articles on all aspects of drug policy regardless of spin. To make this collection the professional research tool it has become, standards are applied. Articles must first be about drug policy, and not simply cover local arrests. The archive does not include press releases, blogs, unpublished articles, newsletters, or articles only about legal drugs. Selected online sources are included.

Even though the archive has become a powerful information tool for the reform of drug policies, perhaps its true power lies in the fact that it is almost completely assembled by volunteers. That's where Newshawks come in.

MAP's New Newshawk Form

The screenshot shows a web form titled 'MAP's New Newshawk Form'. At the top, there are three links: 'How to Newshawk', 'Newshawk FORM Help', and 'Media Links'. Below these links is a search box for 'Headline' with a 'Last' dropdown menu set to '1' and a 'Search Recent Submissions' button. Below the search box is a 'Days' dropdown menu. The main form area contains several input fields: 'Newshawk', 'Headline', 'Pubdate' (with a date picker set to 'Tue, 26 Sep 2006'), 'Author', 'Referenced', and 'Bookmark'.

MAP has just introduced a new Newshawk form. All you have to do is fill out this form and hit 'Submit'.

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DrugSense 2006 Strategic Plan:

MS Word document: http://www.drugsense.org/plan/DrugSense_Strategic_Plan_2006.doc

PDF File: http://www.drugsense.org/plan/DrugSense_Strategic_Plan_2006.pdf

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forward to contribute even though many continue to request services. New clients told up front about the cost appear to be more willing to contribute.

Quarterly Direct Mail Campaign: During First Quarter, we mailed about 2,000 'How-To' brochures to our own mailing list coupled with one rented from MPP. While this campaign garnered more than \$1,000 in donations, we didn't find it profitable enough to continue quarterly for the remainder of the year. Mailings in May and August were cancelled, but one will occur toward the end of the year.

Monthly E-mail Campaign: Nine e-mail pitches for funding have been sent to our 'everyone' list of e-mail addresses and posted to many of the e-mail discussion lists we manage.

Grow the Donor Database: Our donor database continues to expand with donors accrued from the First Quarter mailing and other efforts.

Key Supporters Initiatives: Because DrugSense's small budget could not absorb a presence at this year's NORML conference, no Key Supporters functions were held. Staff members Philippe Lucas and Steve Young did attend and speak on panels.

DrugSense Advisory Board: An Advisory Board conference call was held in June. Another one is planned after the election.

Quarterly DS Update: This is the *Update's* third issue.

- **How do we sustain what we have?**

Keep Everything Up and Running: Many people rely on our services for their day-to-day drug policy work. Like an electric utility, most don't notice us until they have a problem, which is infrequently. Since our own service providers guarantee that our 'uptime' at over 99.9% of the month, we gladly pass this reliability on to our customers.

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Staff Member Profile About Richard Lake, by Richard Lake

Born and raised in Chisholm, Minnesota on the Mesabi Iron Range, I attribute my activist leanings to the radical elements there, best illustrated by the movie 'North Country.' Born in 1940, I am now 66. At age four, I played with a boy named Bob Zimmerman, but I knew him best during his last years in high school. Today, he is better known as Bob Dylan.



Graduating with high honors from Bemidji State, I completed a year of grad work at Northern Michigan U. There, I helped start two opposing 'underground' student newspapers to scare the administration into changing various student policies. It worked!

My first involvement with drug policy was in 1972 as a county coordinator for the California Marijuana Initiative (CMI) while living in Vallejo, California. My Vallejo crew worked intensively on signature gathering for this last 'people power' initiative to make the California ballot without paid gatherers.

The largest single difference between 1972 and today is, without question, the internet. Back then, we nearly went broke just making statewide phone calls.

Jump ahead to 30 December 1996, a day which will live in infamy for me. I was stunned by the response of our government to the passage of Prop. 215. There, on all the TV news shows, was our drug czar blasting the initiative as Cheech and Chong medicine - and telling flat out lies about my friend from '72, Dr. Tod Mikuriya. This led to my seeking ways to do something from my computer which would have some impact outside of the 'net. Through Usenet groups, I found MAP, an email list then of folks working to get LTEs published from our side.

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Document Services and Functions. Staff member Jo-D Harrison has created a number of Web pages to instruct those who use MAP on how to best perform such functions as searching, submitting an article (Newshawking), and using our media database (aka. Media Contact on Demand). We have also structured our promotional campaigns around documentation with the theme of “How-To” use DrugSense services.

Refine Statistics. As you can see on page 4 of this newsletter, we have concluded that our most meaningful tracking statistics are Sites, Pages, and Visits. Sites may represent the clearest depiction of our success in that they measure the number of ‘unique visitors’, meaning individuals.

Policy Statements and Agreements. These documents in the process of being written.

Volunteer Recruitment and Training. In both February and September, we issued requests for Newshawks and Editors. September’s was by far the most successful, with three new editors completing training. We welcome Elaine, Jim, and Amy to our dedicated staff of volunteer editors.

Hire Interns. No interns have yet joined us. If you know of someone who may be interested in working with us on an unpaid internship basis, please contact Mary Jane Borden at mjborden@mapinc.org.

- **How do we stay relevant to drug policy reform?**

Field Survey. The survey has not yet been fielded.

Integrate Bot. Because the archive is lovingly built by volunteers, less populated or popular regions may remain uncovered by Newshawks. We know articles about drug policy exist in these locales, and we are now using the automated ‘Bot’ to capture them. Since we began testing it in November 2005, the Newsbot’s hawk button/form has been used 1,515 times to send articles to MAP for archiving.

Understand New Technologies. Both the DrugSense and MAP sites contain links to new media. The DrugSense Website houses a section where members can start their own blog about drug policy.

MAP Documentation

Index of Online Help Documents

[\(http://www.mapinc.org/help/\)](http://www.mapinc.org/help/)

How to Be a Newshawk

<http://www.mapinc.org/hawk.htm>

How to Use the Newshawk Form

http://www.mapinc.org/hawk/hawk_form_help.htm

Help with Searching

<http://www.mapinc.org/search/shelp.htm>

MAP Search Interactive HELP Bar

http://www.mapinc.org/search/map_search.htm#m_key

Power Search Interactive HELP Bar

http://www.mapinc.org/search/power_search.htm

Google Search Interactive HELP Bar

http://www.mapinc.org/search/google_bar.htm

Media Contact on Demand Tutorial

<http://www.mapinc.org/mcod/>

Media Contact on Demand Interactive Help

http://www.mapinc.org/mcod/source_screen.htm

MAP OnAir links to popular drug policy blogs, e-zines, and podcasts. Drug policy stories on MAP can be fed to appropriate devices via XML and RSS.

Support Special Projects. Some of our most exciting work this year involved our special projects. The Community Audits and Initiatives Project (CAIP) now includes information on upcoming ‘lowest priority’ ordinances in Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, and Santa Monica, California. A new a college section of CAIP contains initiatives that have reformed drug policy on college campuses.

Integrate the MAF Project. The Media Activism Facilitator (MAF) project is based on the DrugSense Five Year Plan, which nurtures media activism at the local level. A pilot project in 2005, this Action Step integrates it into the larger organization. In July, project leader Steve Heath organized the LTE Team. This group of 16 LTE writers secured forum space on Drug War Rant to train and strategize. In August, the team sent 182 LTEs, 13 of which were published. One of Heath’s September LTEs was printed in the venerable *Washington Post*.

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More MAP Stats

As noted in previous editions of the *Insider*, we track a number of statistics to measure our impact on the drug policy debate.

- **Sites:**

Each request made to a server comes from a unique 'site', which can be referenced by name or IP address. A close representation of individual users, almost 250,000 unique IP addresses visited the MAP site in September 2006. While lower than near record-setting figures exceeding 300,000 recorded earlier this year, the September statistic rose +25% higher than that for the same month in 2005.

- **Pages:**

An HTML document or anything that generates one defines a 'page'. MAP served 1,316,702 pages in September, approximating 5.3 pages per visitor (site). Ironically, more MAP pages are read in the summer than in the winter. Pages per site can drop as low as 4.2 in January, but rise to almost 8.0 in June.

- **Visits:**

'New visits' to a page are calculated by counting a unique site as 'new' after a specified time passes between accessing it. 'New' MAP visits equaled 507,825 in September, almost 50% higher than last year's total.

Statistics for the DrugSense site fall considerably lower than those for MAP, but follow somewhat the same trends, although visitors view fewer pages.

DrugSense/MAP Usage Statistics

	Pages	Sites	Visits
MAP			
Sept 2006	1,316,702	247,732	507,825
June 2006	1,838,782	236,465	681,178
Mar 2006	2,007,973	307,016	719,884
Dec 2005	1,424,064	286,599	454,228
Sept 2005	1,107,309	198,900	343,398
DrugSense			
Sept 2006	173,680	84,156	83,582
June 2006	177,546	78,730	89,255
Mar 2006	209,409	100,033	105,970
Dec 2005	171,252	95,768	80,473
Sept 2005	208,843	107,926	87,357

The values above represent totals per month

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By the Spring of 1997, I was a volunteer editor at MAP, and when the tasks grew enough so that more than one editor was needed, I became Senior Editor.

Today my greatest joy in life is working with the MAP volunteers. The editors are just like family to me. My pet peeve is folks who seem to think that the U.S. press is not free - that it is simply a propaganda tool of the government or special interests. Every day I see proof on the editorial pages of newspapers, which is very much to the contrary.

I am a retired Army Warrant Officer, with tours at the Presidio of San Francisco, Ft. Polk, Korea, Fort Knox, Germany, and Pittsburgh. For seven years, I also worked as a Department of the Army civilian for the ROTC battalion at the University of Toledo.

I live with my wife, Anita, in a top floor apartment in a large old brick house with a view of Lake Michigan in Escanaba, Michigan, which is in the Upper Peninsula, or what folks call Yooperland, and often wish was a part of Canada. Al Capone once stayed in what is now my bedroom.

MAP at Major Conferences

Steve Heath travels with LEAP

MAP Media Activism Facilitator Steve Heath recently participated in two conferences, promoting the DrugSense mission and the Media Awareness Project.

In August, Heath traveled to Detroit, MI, as an unpaid volunteer for Law Enforcement Against Prohibition (LEAP) at the National Bar Association annual conference. At the LEAP exhibit booth, Heath delivered the DrugSense message to over 400 conference attendees – mostly attorneys and judiciary – showing them the flawed drug war both from a law enforcement perspective and also from the point of view of a grassroots citizen. Heath's former life experience as a recovered drug abuser (clean 11+ years now), along with over a decade working in drug treatment and recovery, helped conference attendees

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Do You Newshawk from Page 1

Volunteer Newshawks scour the print media – or their online counterparts – to find news articles about drug policy. They then forward them electronically to a central collection point for placement in the archive.

To ease submission, DrugSense staff member, Matt Elrod, created a new Newshawk form, which was introduced in September. This new form streamlines the submission process, making Newshawking as simple as making a few entries and hitting 'Submit'. Now everyone can say, Yes! I Newshawk!

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Analysis of Progress. Have we achieved every Action Step suggested in the plan? No. After all it's only September! But, even as a volunteer-based organization with an underpaid staff, we feel we have implemented our 2006 vision and are beginning to reap its results. Are we financially stable? Yes, but we could be better. Contributions help. Are we sustaining what we have? Absolutely, with an exceptional reliability rate. Are we still relevant to the reform of worldwide drug policy? New projects like Bot show our cutting edge, while the CAIP and MAF move media activism into the local community. Perhaps the best answer to our strategic questions is a question: What would reform look like without us?

MAP's New Newshawk Form

Fill out this form to easily submit articles
(<http://www.mapinc.org/newshawk/>)

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understand how the drug war impacts regular citizens. Most importantly, Heath shared ways that attendees could be part of the solution by making the media aware of smarter drug policies.

In September, Heath flew to Pittsburgh PA, where he again helped host a LEAP exhibit booth. This time he teamed with LEAP's Media Director Howard Wooldridge to deliver the drug policy reform message to the National Conference of Editorial Writers. Encouraged by the feedback they received from over 50 noted editorial and opinion writers, Wooldridge and Heath have been following up with each one since the conference. We are confident that building these relationships will lead to strong improvement in and increased numbers of opinion pieces that discuss alternative strategies to the status quo drug war.

SPECIAL NOTE:

A generous funder has agreed to match all donations dollar for dollar. Give your contribution twice the value. Donate today!

Donate Today!

Your tax deductible donation funds all of these DrugSense services and more. [Help change drug policy now!](#) Please fill out the form below, make your check or money order payable to **DrugSense** and mail to:

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Organization: _____

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E-mail: _____ **Phone:** _____

Comments: _____

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When the news breaks, MAP fixes it!

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