Marquette University Board for Student Media

Report: Student Media Budget Shortfall

As it has in the past and will continue to do, the university provided a subsidy for student media which, when coupled with advertising revenue, funds student media, including the Tribune. This year's subsidy was $150,000.00, but the low ad revenues have led to substantial spending beyond revenue, which would create a large deficit in the student media budget.

The largest single budget expense after student payroll is the Tribune printing bill. Thus, the first and most obvious option was to cut the number of Tribune pages to bring them more in line with the volume of advertising. Each page printed without sufficient advertising to cover its cost increases the deficit.

A standard in the industry is to use the advertising volume in each issue to determine the number of pages. Historically the Tribune needed sufficient advertising to cover the cost of each 2-page increment beyond its 8-page base.

The ratio of advertising volume to the size of the Tribune remains one of a variety of alternatives, perhaps in combination, that the Board will consider in its effort to balance the budget.

However, rumors abound that the Board is cutting the Tribune's size (in some postings it is the whole budget) in half. To clarify, most of the reports are misleading because they ignore the basic facts: advertising revenues have fallen far short of this year's target, and the student media budget is headed for a major deficit unless immediate steps are taken to cut expenses and generate additional advertising revenue.

The student media budget is completely separate from that of the College of Communication. The recent gift of $8.3 million to the College was earmarked for specific fellowships and initiatives and projects specified by the donor.

As the Board continues to work on balancing the budget, it will continue to explore options with students. Suggestions are welcome. Please use the feedback form to share your input.

Dr. William Thorn
Chairman, University Board for Student Media