



**JEWFOLK MEDIA AND TC JEWFOLK
STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2017**

PREPARED BY JEWFOLK MEDIA

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PREPARED BY TABLE FORT CONSULTING

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Executive Summary

TC Jewfolk (and Jewfolk Media, Inc., TC Jewfolk's parent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization), must make a significant investment in marketing, community building, and content-creation if TCJ is to succeed in engaging, inspiring and connecting with a larger audience of Twin Cities Jews. TC Jewfolk needs critical investment from individuals, corporate and philanthropic partners at this exciting time in the organization's growth.

Jewfolk Media, Inc.'s board of directors is naming this crossroads in the organization's history a new "founder's period." TC Jewfolk needs renewed investments of energy and financial resources right now to ensure it continues to increase its impact on the local Jewish community and to establish itself as a national model for connecting with young Jews in their 20s, 30s, and 40s at a hyper-local level.

Strategic Opportunity

TC Jewfolk has grown from a volunteer-run social media platform in 2009 to a multi-channel blog and web presence that is gaining national attention for its innovative community-building presence among Twin Cities Jews. In the next 24-36 months, TC Jewfolk will grow its capacity to serve the Twin Cities Jewish community in the following ways:

Staffing up: Since its inception, TC Jewfolk has been a mostly volunteer-led organization. This lean operational model served the organization in its start-up phase but is no longer viable. Now is the time for TC Jewfolk to transition to its first-ever salaried executive director. The organization needs to more than double its operating budget over the next 12-18 months to fund this new paid position. It is also redesigning the current part-time editor/content manager position to a full-time editor position.

Consistent, quality content: One of the organization's key challenges is soliciting consistent, quality content from its pool of volunteer writers. TC Jewfolk is looking at ways to pay writers selectively and also recruit writers who already have their own audiences. To make this work, TCJ needs to raise money that's earmarked solely for content acquisition. TCJ is also strengthening its board and committee structure by creating a "writer recruitment" committee to develop content pipelines.

Improving TC Jewfolk's visibility and recognition: TC Jewfolk understands that it is not enough to publish consistent, quality content. It also needs to saturate the local market of potential readers who will engage with this content and share it with their friends. A strategic marketing committee will be implementing new tactics for partnerships, community-building, and digital marketing.

Current Position

TC Jewfolk is a vibrant independent online Jewish blog and community space for "Jews and people who love them." TC Jewfolk was founded in 2009 thanks to the passion and dedication of a handful of volunteer writers and community leaders who created something from nothing with very little money spent on technology, events, marketing, or staff resources. In its earliest incarnation, TC Jewfolk filled a void in Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota as the only independent central hub of information about events and volunteer opportunities at Jewish organizations and synagogues that would interest a young 20-something "post-Hillel" Jewish audience.

Four years later, TC Jewfolk is the inaugural project of the 501(c)3 nonprofit organization Jewfolk Media, Inc. It employs a part-time paid editor and has evolved from solely serving as a clearinghouse about Jewish events into online journalistic and literary hub featuring first-person stories and news pieces exploring the many dimensions of the Jewish experience. Each day (except Shabbat), TC Jewfolk publishes articles by dozens of volunteer writers.

Readers say that the articles on TC Jewfolk move them to tears and to action. The personal narratives published on the site give voice to the distinct experiences of Jews in the Minneapolis-St. Paul community. It's notable that TC Jewfolk draws an audience well beyond its own geographic backyard; roughly 60% of the site's visitors are located outside of Minnesota. And yet TC Jewfolk's most engaged readers are decidedly Minnesota-based.

TC Jewfolk functions as an amplifier for local Jewish organizations by highlighting their events and opportunities and connecting those organizations to the elusive demographic of young Jews in their 20s and early 30s who wouldn't otherwise know about or engage with their programming.

16,000 visitors log on to TC Jewfolk each month. There's virtually nothing like TC Jewfolk anywhere else in the country and the organization sees potential to market TC Jewfolk as a demonstration project for other communities to replicate in coming years. But for the purposes of this strategic plan, TC Jewfolk wants to focus on deepening its roots locally here in the Twin Cities.

TC Jewfolk is supported in part by Jewish Federation and family foundations but mostly by modest individual donations. The majority of financial resources go toward investing in the small staff that currently includes a volunteer founder/executive director and part-time editor.

Mission

TC Jewfolk is the Twin Cities' only independent Jewish news, events and culture online media hub devoted to engaging, informing, and connecting the Twin Cities' local Jewish community.

A non-profit entrepreneurial start-up, TC Jewfolk celebrates that there are “a thousand ways to be Jewish.” TC Jewfolk is committed to providing readers with wide-ranging entry points for engaging outwardly in Jewish life locally and reflecting inwardly on Jewish identity without being proscriptive about what it means to be Jewish today.

Through online engagement and storytelling, the organization brings together a spectrum of authentic voices and innovative content to help Jews and those seeking to connect “Jewishly” forge vibrant personal and communal connections to local and global Jewish life. While the site reaches an international audience, TC Jewfolk's primary mission is to be a hub that connects readers locally in the Minneapolis and St. Paul area.

Vision

Jewfolk Media's vision is to be the most innovative independent Jewish media organization in the country.

TC Jewfolk wants to be recognized for its pioneering leadership in leveraging social media technology and community-based journalism by and for diverse Jewish voices to help Jews become more inspired, educated, and connected -- both to their local, national and international

Jewish communities and to their own individual sense of Jewish identity.

Our vision is to develop a sustainable and replicable model for this kind of journalism and online Jewish community building, supported by advertisers, foundations, and member donations.

Preferred Future

The “Go-To” Hub for Local Jews

TC Jewfolk is a starting point for feeling connected to other Jews and through a Jewish lens, to the larger community. It is a place to reflect upon what it means to be Jewish both individually and collectively. It is THE online destination for local Jewish content.

A Visible Platform

TC Jewfolk will saturate the Twin Cities Jewish readership market. TC Jewfolk will provide much-needed space for individual voices to be seen and heard, independent from and yet reflecting the diverse Jewish organizations and identities in our community. TC Jewfolk will be a national model for innovative community building around local Jewish life.

An Innovative Media Resource

TC Jewfolk will be THE source for what local Jews are thinking and talking about in the Twin Cities metro area. TC Jewfolk will transform the way individuals understand and construct Jewish life. TC Jewfolk will be THE event calendar and resource for the Twin Cities’ Jewish community. TC Jewfolk will respond to current trends and will be nimble at imagining and proactively shaping its preferred organizational future.

Organizational Culture & Values

TCJ builds simple, consistent feedback loops to know and respond to its readers, writers and community. The organization supports experimentation, openness and creative risk-taking. TC Jewfolk maintains an improvisational and inclusive mindset.

TC Jewfolk Cares Deeply About

The organization is committed to giving voice to a multitude of Jewish experiences and is not proscriptive about how its readers engage in Jewish life or define themselves “Jewishly.” TC Jewfolk expresses its core values by...

- Publishing Jewish stories, editorial features, event coverage and issue pieces that inspire reflection, understanding, and engagement.
- Acting as a gateway for online and offline connections.
- Highlighting local Jewish organizations, events, and people to strengthen individuals and their work.
- Creating a gateway for individuals to connect to the community (and themselves) “Jewishly.”
- Building understanding of Jewish culture in the larger community.
- Connecting Jews to Judaism by sharing not just the religious side of Judaism but also values and tools for feeling and being more alive and living a good life from a Jewish

perspective.

TC Jewfolk Key Messages and Value Propositions

- TCJ is THE hub for connecting Jewishly locally both online and off.
- TCJ is a home for “distinct voices of the Twin Cities Jewish community” reflecting 1000 Ways to be Jewish - in your own way, on your own terms, and in your own time.
- TC Jewfolk’s identity as an “independent” entity makes TCJ distinctive and innovative, it is independent from, yet connected to local Jewish organizations and identities. This makes it a vital gateway for connecting Twin Cities Jews and the people who love them.

TC Jewfolk’s Key Audiences

A. Twin Cities (Metro) Jews

B. Newcomers or locals looking to connect/reconnect with Jewish community

C. Individuals seeking to connect with the Jewish experience via thought pieces, profiles, and personal narratives

The voice of TCJ is young (20-49), but rather than target content for a particular age group, the organization is moving toward a psychographic of serving readers who are curious about Jewish life, religion, culture, and identity and want to explore those at different junctures of life transition: (e.g. graduating from college; moving to the Twin Cities as a transplant; getting married; having kids).

TCJ is interested in building Jewish community ties both formally and informally. Readers may be seeking connections for finding a synagogue, Jewish cultural events, and/or Jewish jobs. Or they may be looking simply to identify “Jewishly” and to find opportunities to reflect, learn, and read about Jewish experiences at different stages of life.

TCJ is a “first stop shop” for getting connected or reconnected to the Jewish community at any age. What makes TCJ distinctive is that no one in the local Jewish community is effectively reaching early 20s “post-Hillel” college graduates who aren’t yet married and don’t have kids. TCJ fills that gap.

Content

The strength of TCJ content strategy is that it taps into what local Jews are both THINKING about and DOING. *“People want to reflect; people want to connect.”* TCJ does both with two main content programs:

The Hub: 1000 Ways to be Jewish

The community HUB of TCJ connects people to in-person, hyper-local resources, events, opportunities, Jewish organizations, and people. It functions as a community bulletin board, calendar, and newsletter.

Charismatic Voices: Stories with Local Emphasis and Significance

This is the storytelling portion of TCJ that includes personal narratives featuring diverse Jewish

identities (Midwestern, suburban, Israel/intermarriage), quality writing, spotlights or profiles, and balanced news coverage. This section offers ways for readers to reflect inwardly on their Jewish identity individually and/or connect externally and interpersonally to the local Jewish community (events, jobs, etc.).

Bold Goals

TCJ will accomplish the following goals and strategies in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

TCJ fiscal year runs from January - December.

BOLD GOAL	Key Strategies	Timeline	Individual(s) Responsible	Measurable Outcomes
GOAL 1: Raise \$125,000 - \$150,000 to support HR, infrastructure and marketing.	1.1 Create development committee to support individual fundraising	April 2014	Board	Committee formed and holds quarterly meetings.
	1.2 Hire development consultant to help with grant writing	April 2014	Leora Itman	Increase # of proposals written from X to X
	1.3 Develop and test subscription model for website	May 2014	Bradley Machov	Raise X from subscriptions
	1.4 Price and research e-giving and website functionality	January 2015	Marketing Committee	
	1.5 Create "Founders Circle" fund for capacity building at \$1800/year over three years	April 2014	Leora Itman, Board Development Committee	Recruit X Founders for a total of X income for next three years
GOAL 2: Build TCJ Human Resource	2.1 Develop HR committee	April 2014	Board	ED, Editor & intern job descriptions

Capacity				are created
	2.2 Revamp current editorial position into Editor and Content Manager	Sept 2014	HR Committee	Role refined and focused.
	2.3 Hire Executive Director	Sept 2014	Board	Position hired,
	2.5 Pilot social media internship	June 2014	Marketing Committee	1 three month intern is hired & evaluated
GOAL 3: Improve content quality and consistency	3.1 Pilot paid content	Sept 2014	Bradley Machov	5-10 paid articles in 2014
	3.2 Develop Content committee & contributor pipelines	June 2014	Board/Content committee	Grow writer pool from X to X
	3.3 Build community partnerships for cross-posting content and recruiting writers	January 2015	Content committee	3 New partnerships are formed with literary/journalism orgs.
GOAL 4: Plant deep roots locally -- saturate the local market of Jews and the people who love them	4.1 Develop local marketing committee & in-depth community-building strategy	March 2014	Leora Itman & Bradley Machov	*preliminary marketing draft attached in appendices (Natan Next Fund grant proposal)
	4.2 Pilot crowd-sourcing multimedia content	June 2014	Marketing Committee & Bradley Machov	2 events are covered by writers or participants

	4.3 Plan marketing presence and calendar for local events each year	March 2014	Marketing Committee	Refine attached draft
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Long Term Goals

2016 and beyond

A National Model

- We will become a nationally-recognized model for innovative Jewish community building and media
- We will be recognized as a national model/pilot project for other Jewish communities to replicate

BOLD GOAL	Key Strategies
GOAL 5: Experiment with national partnerships and replication	5.1 Determine approach: consulting or replication
	5.2 Reach national and international audiences & partners
	5.3 Run TC Jewfolk articles/stories on other national platforms
	5.4 Invite national partners to guest post on TC Jewfolk

Appendix I: Marketing Plan from Proposal to Natan/ Birthright Next Grant for Social Entrepreneurs

The timeline for TC Jewfolk's marketing, community-building, and content-creating campaign is as follows:

March and April 2014: Develop language for volunteer subscription model to support TC Jewfolk. Subscribers will be asked to make a yearly contribution of \$12 or more in order to "join" the TC Jewfolk community. Language will focus more on community building, than on fundraising. Bradley Machov, TC Jewfolk's Editor and Community Manager, will work with IT support and the Jewfolk Media Board of Directors to design the language and develop the necessary code to host the donation site on TCJewfolk.com, and will examine similar subscription models for sites like the Twin Cities-based Minnpost.com to assess best practices for language and implementation.

In addition, develop plan for Facebook advertising, including goals, strategies, tactics, methods of evaluation, and begin to advertise using new strategies. As advertising is evaluated, adjust to ensure maximum effectiveness.

April 2014: Launch Community membership program on TC Jewfolk. Goal will be to add dozens of new "members" to the TC Jewfolk community each week.

May 2014: Post job description for three new bloggers for content-creation element of the campaign on TCJewfolk, craigslist, the University of Minnesota Job Board, and other sites. Evaluate writing skills, sample articles, select bloggers and train them in the use of the site, and in the most effective ways to write for TCJewfolk.com and bring in a large audience through their personal marketing efforts.

June 2014: Begin running weekly articles by the three new bloggers, and work with them to promote their writing on other websites and blogs that will be read by young Jews in their 20s and 30s in the Twin Cities. Promote through Facebook, TCJewfolk e-newsletter, Twitter, and other social media tools.

July 2014: Develop branded "swag" for TC Jewfolk to hand out at TC Jewfolk events and events TC Jewfolk co-sponsors that are organized by partner Jewish community organizations.

July, August and September 2014: Plan first community-building event for TC Jewfolk's sustaining "members" to be held in October 2014. Meet with sponsors and in-kind contributors. Meet with young Jews to assess best plan for event to draw the widest crowd. Test credit card donation tool so individuals can sign up to be members at the door to the event if they haven't previously given. Book entertainment (if any). Order food. Publicize event in partnership with other community organizations, on TCJewfolk.com, and through advertising on Facebook.

September 2014: First internal evaluation of the writing by the three new bloggers using Facebook insights and Google Analytics. Discuss evaluation results with bloggers in order to improve quality content and increase engagement and readership.

October 2014: First community-building event for TC Jewfolk's sustaining members, and simultaneously kick off annual fundraising campaign, encouraging young people to give at a

meaningful amount for their pocketbooks, but also reaching out to older and more established donors for contributions.

November 2014: Evaluate TC Jewfolk's first community-building event. Follow up with attendees from community-building event to ensure continued engagement with TCJewfolk.com, and TC Jewfolk's Facebook community.

November 2014/December 2014: Hire Jewfolk Media Executive Director/Publisher.

January 2015: Second internal evaluation of the writing by the three new bloggers using Facebook insights and Google Analytics. Discuss evaluation results with bloggers in order to improve quality content and increase engagement and readership.

January, February and March 2015: Plan second community-building event for TC Jewfolk's sustaining "members" to be held in April 2014. Meet with sponsors and in-kind contributors. Meet with young Jews to assess best plan for event to draw the widest crowd. Test credit card donation tool so individuals can sign up to be members at the door to the event if they haven't previously given. Book entertainment (if any). Order food. Publicize event in partnership with other community organizations, on TCJewfolk.com, and through advertising on Facebook.

April 2015: Second community-building event for TC Jewfolk's sustaining members.

April 2015: Third evaluation of the writing by the three new bloggers using Facebook insights and Google Analytics. Discuss results with bloggers in order to increase engagement and readership.

May 2015: Evaluate TC Jewfolk's second community-building event. Follow up with attendees from community-building event to ensure continued engagement with TCJewfolk.com, and TC Jewfolk's Facebook community.

Appendix II: Development Plan (from Table Fort Consulting)

Capacity Building - Budget Growth

Current 2013	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
\$33,033 operating budget includes coverage for Editor/content manager salary at 25 hrs/week	\$91,798 Hire executive director by September 2014 Pilot paid content	\$154,500 Transition to FTE for Editor/content manager Maintain ED salary Marketing Budget <Paid content>	\$181,500 2 FTE + intern Marketing budget <Paid content>

Income	Current	Potential	Strategy
Individual Support	\$3,000 from crowd-funding and personal asks	\$1800 per year Founders Circle \$9K - \$18K per year	Executive Director (current & incoming) and Development Committee lead process around "Founder" campaign
Corporate Support	\$0	2 New partnerships: \$2K - \$5K each	Sponsorship and Community engagement
Foundation Support	\$30,000 Jewish Federation 1 Private Foundation	\$75 - \$150K 12 grant applications for new media, community-based journalism, innovative Jewish orgs.	Targeted grants strategy around content, marketing and capacity building opportunities

In-kind	\$0		Research equipment, services, printing, web hosting.
Membership/Subs cription and giving on website	\$0		Pilot in 2014

Appendix III: Strategic Visioning Methodology overview

Strategic Visioning and Planning Process

Jewfolk Media and TC Jewfolk engaged Table Fort Consulting to facilitate four two-hour strategic visioning sessions in early 2014. These sessions included participation from the staff, board and a newly formed strategic planning committee.

Prior to the four in-person strategic visioning sessions, Table Fort Consulting conducted an online stakeholder survey to determine direction for the visioning sessions and to test assumptions. The survey was distributed to 59 people. 21 respondents completed the survey. The summary and full results of that survey can be found in Appendix IV.

Table Fort Consulting facilitated two strategic visioning sessions in January 2014. These were attended by the strategic planning committee including: Carin Mrotz, Bradley Machov, Joanna Lowinger, Jenna Mitelman, Leora Itman, Rabbi Aaron Weininger, Melissa Ginzburg, Gaby Israel Grinberg, Mike Grinberg, Zach Sussman, Jenna Zark.

February visioning sessions were attended by the board of directors and a few special guests including: Ben Gerber, Shana Cohen, Sheree Curry, Sarah Routman, Lonny Goldsmith, Jeff Mandell, Carin Mrotz, Bradley Machov, Mike Grinberg, Leora Itman, and David Milavetz.

After the final in-person visioning session, Table Fort conducted an online talent assessment survey to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the current board and staff. This data will inform the work of the human resources committee and future board recruitment efforts. The survey results from the talent assessment can be found in Appendix V.

Appendix IV: Stakeholder Survey Results

Summary of TC Jewfolk Strategic Visioning Questionnaire Responses

Overview: In January 2014, Table Fort distributed a strategic visioning questionnaire to 59 of TC Jewfolk’s core constituents including board members, writers, funders, and readers. 21 people responded (~35% response rate). Below is a summary of key findings for each of the core questions we posed.

1. What drew you to get involved with TC Jewfolk?

Summary: People got involved because it was an opportunity to write (in a low commitment

way) and to share their writing with a bigger audience. Some writers were already writing on their own personal blogs. TCJ gave them a bigger platform.

People saw it as something new and different in the following ways:

- the content was different
- the site offers breadth of opinion
- people could contribute their skills (writing, organizational) toward creating/developing something new that they thought was important
- emphasis on youth

Others like the “hub” aspect of TCJ - that it offers a way to find out about happenings in the local TC Jewish community.

Responses

- As a new Jew in town, I appreciated it as a way to connect with others. I also don't have the time to have my own site and I like to write and express myself. Plus it's just cool.
- I graduated college wanting to write, preferably for a living at some point. My dad told me about TC Jewfolk and how they were looking for writers.
- It's become a significant media platform for the local Jewish community, and its content is somewhat different than what is elsewhere available. I have written the occasional piece for TJ Jewfolk, usually in connection with an activity related to my own organization, Rimon: The Minnesota Jewish Arts Council.
- I had been doing a little blogging on my own and Leora contacted me to write, at the time I wasn't able to do so but it made me pay attention to TC Jewfolk. I was very involved in the marriage amendment fight and contributed an article to TC Jewfolk. From there I began writing more and became a regular contributor.
- I liked the breadth of opinion on TC Jewfolk, and that its articles don't seem to be hyperbole like I find at some other sites.
- I saw it as the first-ever innovative media platform for the Jewish community in the Twin Cities.
- Initially, I noticed all my Jewish friends on Facebook were liking this page I had never heard of before, TC Jewfolk. After doing a little digging and looking into I noticed it sounded like a great resource to find fun and interesting Jewish related things.
- The idea, the concept and the passion of Leora to bring a new way for young adults to connect to the local community.
- Synagogue and overall interest. I was involved with the Chicago version.
- Looking for writing opportunities that were low commitment.
- If it wasn't for my friends Leora and Emily of TC Jewfolk, I wouldn't have met my husband!
- I like writing and I'm a Jewish educator. In many ways it's a fairly obvious fit. Beyond that, though, it was part of my job to be engaged with TC Jewfolk while I was working at Mount Zion.
- When Leora called and asked me to write for the online magazine, I thought it was a special opportunity; I had been thinking about writing a book about Jewish rituals and welcomed the opportunity to create columns that might (or might not) later be published as a book.
- Two things. One, it was something new and smart, and I get excited about communities doing things they haven't done before in smart ways. Two, I immediately sensed that it

would be a good way for my organization to reach different parts of the community than we have been with traditional media, and I wanted to get in early.

- The opportunity to write reviews and see shows, read books for free. The opportunity to help a new organization and share my experience working with boards from the ED pt of view.
- New and different platform for communication largely directed at young adult population in Twin Cities.
- My mom started writing for TCJ and encouraged me to do the same.
- I loved having a voice in our local Jewish community (both as a writer and a reader).

2. What keeps you involved with the organization?

Summary:

- Contributors/readers value the opportunity to write and read about things that matter to them.
- TC Jewfolk fills a need in the local Twin Cities community no one else is filling in the following ways:
 - Clearinghouse for finding out what's going on
 - Engaging young people in the broader community
 - Forum for Jewish youth "of every persuasion to find common ground"
 - Means of connecting with people I wouldn't ordinarily connect with
- TC Jewfolk offers local perspective and relevance
- Some respondents cited strong relationships with TC Jewfolk's founder and editor as a reason for ongoing involvement.

Responses

- I enjoy the fact that I can write about my favorite topic, food, while incorporating my personal background as a Jewish Mom. I also really enjoy working with Bradley, he has been a great addition and asset to TC Jewfolk.
- I stay involved with TCJ because the topics explored are often relevant to myself or family.
- I think focusing in on your small community is the most influential way of making change. I like being able to share ideas and learn from others perspectives.
- I'm here in the TC to stay and I want to keep the community thriving and growing. I also envision far more for Jewfolk Media.
- I'd like to see it thrive and play a role in the community's life. I'd also like to see it become a reliable source of information and commentary on the arts.
- It is the ongoing work to connect and serve as the central address for hip and cool things in the TC Jewish world
- I'm paid solid money to stay involved :)
- Opportunity to write. Strong relationship with Leora and Brad.
- The idea that this website/idea can connect, create ways and engage young adults in the larger community.
- Great organization; awesome content. I believe in the mission and I want to be more involved with the Jewish community in Minneapolis.
- I'm interested in the possibilities.
- The Twin Cities Jewish community seems small and fragile and in need of support; it seems to me that TC Jewfolk provides a forum where young Jewish people of every persuasion can find common ground, pride in their Jewish identities and a gateway to

thinking about Jewish life that they can not find elsewhere, especially in the Midwest where Jews are truly a minority.

- Writing and being on the board. I'm trying to be a decent board member and stay actively involved in growing TC Jewfolk, because I think it really fills a need in our community like nothing else that exists. And I love writing for TC Jewfolk because I get so much feedback (both good and bad) and end up in so many interesting conversations with people with whom I might not otherwise connect, and I just love that. Also, Leora and Bradley are just amazing, and they continue to find new ways to make this interesting.
- I believe in what TC Jewfolk is trying to do! I believe I am able to contribute valuable ideas.
- Admittedly, I haven't written much recently, and have taken some pretty big hiatuses in between articles. But it's kind of the only centralized space for cross-organization/non-organization life in the Twin Cities. Plus, I like the free cookbooks that I get for reviewing them :) Bradley's editor emails keep me in the loop so it stays at least a LITTLE front of mind.
- Not sure I'd say I'm involved. Admire its founder and active leaders; Has the potential to have an impact and fill a need. Also has the potential to lose its focus and its way. This strategic process is critical and hopefully there will be determined focus and discipline to stay on course (and it'd be a wonderful model for organization's like mine to follow!).
- The opportunity to share, write, be published, and the free tickets to review plays is always a plus.
- I have been less involved. There are less articles to read and now that I'm a paid freelance writer, I don't have the time (or motivation) to write for free.

3. Describe how TC Jewfolk's work is relevant and distinctive

Summary:

- TCJ is a hub – a one-stop shop that centralizes local info about the TC Jewish community. No one else is doing this.
 - The content is diverse, high quality and independent.
 - (maybe too diverse? some cited how content is all over the place)
 - TCJ offers a vehicle for finding and creating community and exploring Jewish life locally on your own terms.

Responses

- Clearly it's addressing a younger audience. Its content is all over the place which is more or less appealing, depending on the reader's needs. My own goal for TC Jewfolk is to see it cultivate a cohort of writers intelligently discussing the arts.
- I especially like how TC Jewfolk focuses on Minnesota topics and a wider variety of Jewish and Israeli topics. There are articles about Israel, Minnesota, and the Jewish world in general. I also like the combination of secular and Jewish topics.
- Quality articles!!!! I have been very impressed with the quality and thoughtfulness of the work of TC Jewfolk.
- Relevant - in today's world, it's the best way to engage people on a continuous basis. It's intent is to be a hub - which we need to focus on. It's distinctive because there is nothing like it in the TC and only a few others similar sites around the country.
- It is specific to the Twin Cities area in ways that I think would be helpful to people who

- live there and want to know what's going on in the local Jewish community.
- Sometimes I am unsure what it is besides a site for Jewish content. Clearly they do fun things in the city, but I am not sure if the desire is to enhance readership or grow into something different.
- TCJ does a nice job of centralizing local information. We live in a community where the Jewish communities are divided by area code or Federation. TCJ serves as a one-stop shop to find everything I need to know about events or goings on in the metro area.
- The website and organization creates a way, passive or active, for people to engage in the J-community at the level they are comfortable. From all aspects of what's going on, it allows people to find a way to continue and expand their connection to J-life in the Twin Cities.
- The lives of our generation are very fractured, especially the Jewish community's. American Jews are fortunate to live in an age where virtually every possibility is open to us in terms of professions and social lives. That can make it particularly difficult to maintain a uniquely Jewish community. I think what makes us unique, at least in the TC community, is that we're the only thing actively trying to engage Jews online, which is where our generation spends most of its time. We're trying to create a uniquely Jewish online community--which I think ideally transfers into more familiarity and comfort in face-to-face interactions.
- It provides relevant, timely and interesting information on all things Jewish to the Jew folk in the Twin Cities.
- I'm not sure . . . but I do know there isn't anything else like it in the TC.
- I think TC Jewfolk gives young Jewish people (and people of any age) the ability to mend the link that was broken during the Holocaust between Jewish people and their own heritage; the ability to find a community of like-minded people; identify with rituals that the wider culture knows nothing about; and allow themselves to be curious and adventurous about Jewish life.
- So, a few things about the Twin Cities Jewish community. It's kind of cliquey, it can be hard to find people like you if you're not from here. And it's busy for how small it is - our community is much smaller than, say, the Jewish community in Chicago, but I think that's an opportunity to have a bigger impact. And TCJ is a centralized, accessible space for our community. It gives a voice to so many different experiences and is also just a valuable tool for connecting people to events and programs and opportunities.
- I believe it is a non-threatening and independent way for people to access what they want from the Jewish community without having to deal with the things they don't want - often that means affiliating with an organization, especially one that is going to ask you for money.
- What is good about the work is that it is relevant. The articles are interesting for the demographic, and I, like assume others, think of it as a one-stop shop for my "Jewish news". Facebook posts about articles have actually gotten me to the site more often lately than going directly to the site.
- It is theoretically free from geographic boundaries (the Mississippi doesn't bother it) and private organizational goals and needs. You don't need to be a member to use it or participate. It has the ability to bring together Jews from different synagogues (or not), different denominations/sects, geography, etc. I suppose it's doing it by being online and not catering explicitly to any one demographic or goal.
- Not as relevant as it could be. Too much focus on west metro. Too much focus on young/visible/prominent/higher-income Jews. Shout outs feel not inclusive, like TCJ is more a clique, and one has to be young, well off and/or from an established Jewish family to be noticed.
- Connecting with young adult population to around Jewishness. Not sure of actual

penetration and impact (it's still a young entity and just getting going and building momentum, which it has done, take time and energy).

- Is it more than a communications platform/forum? Is it a more direct provider of programming? Is it an "institution"? How does it/will it interact with existing institutions (facing challenges in connecting with this cohort)? All good questions.
- To me, the "unique and innovative" approach was that it was real experiences and true opinions being shared to a wide audience without pressure to relate or speak to any particular demographic. (This could apply to all need/problems that are addressed)
- I think it's commendable that TC Jewfolk is willing to present different viewpoints.

4. In 5 years, I want TC Jewfolk to be known as...

Summary:

- Vision for TCJ to become THE inclusive local online hub/place/destination for Jewish news, events, arts, opinion and culture and for it to serve people (especially youth) in the TC and also potentially have influence beyond its own immediate Midwestern backyard.
 - Realizing this vision requires public recognition, credibility and VISIBILITY.
- Vision for TCJ to be a demonstration project that gets replicated outside of the TC.

Responses

- the place to go to see how to run a successful local Jewish website.
- the place to go for news about the local J-community for young adults.
- To find a way to expand the impact of our community, by engaging them and providing ways for people to get involved.
- the place for TC Jews to know what's going on in their community (be THE calendar, THE place for engaging stories, be a destination), as well as a legit arts organization in the TC community.
- the place for Midwest Jews that love to schmooze, to get all their news.
- the go-to resource for secular and religious Jewish current news.
- The communication hub for all Jews and those who love them in the Twin Cities.
- part of a larger organization of other Jewfolk entities.
- a hub for Jewish information around the Twin Cities.
- A go to source for the Jewish community to explore critical and complex issues. Also, a respected writing page for the entire Twin Cities community.
- The premier website for all things Jewish in the mid-west...not just the Twin Cities.
- I don't have a good answer for this one.
- ...the link between Jews and their own culture that the Twin Cities has always needed.
- A model for similar sites in other cities!
- The place to connect to the Jewish community and find other Jews of like minds.
- One stop shop for Jewish news and information (job postings, etc.), both locally and internationally.
- A place online all young Jews in the Twin Cities feel represented and welcome
- REALLY inclusive of ALL Twin Cities Jews, including those who are marginalized, unemployed, behind-the-scenes workers and volunteers, and not just the young movers and shakers. (They already get enough press.)
- Not sure. What are the possibilities?
- THE go-to source for local Jewish information with compelling articles. I would hate to

see it become just a big platform for pushing everyone's events and fundraising, which would little more than the community calendar you can find via Federation.

5. What are the biggest challenges and opportunities TC Jewfolk needs to address?

Summary:

- TCJ has limited visibility and reach and needs to establish its relevance.
- Some respondents are concerned that TCJ will pursue premature growth and/or suffer from mission creep.
- TCJ needs consistent/quality content. Some respondents connect paying writers/editors with achieving this. Also the need for more dialogue on the site
- Questions about who it's trying to serve and who it should be trying to serve more/better. Some of the feedback says that TCJ should do a better job of engaging its core audience of young people. Others say it should expand to attract/offer coverage to other groups including...
 - youth (not clear on who counts as 'youth')
 - people who don't have kids
 - people who are orthodox/conservative
 - retirees
 - local audience (TC) or broader regional/national audience
 - people outside of the West Metro

Responses

- Challenge--really broad spectrum of talent and experience among its writers.
Opportunity--a lot of interest from the public in seeing it succeed.
- Challenges...
 1. money to hire people, to enter new areas, etc.
 2. getting people interested and involved
 3. a limited reach in the TC
 4. expanding without ignoring the core focus
 5. coming up with new content and ventures
- Challenges....
 - expand reach of website
 - how to go from passive engagement/reading the website to actively participating in the community
 - continuing to show the larger community the value of supporting this organization
- Continuing to seek out diverse voices in the Jewish community.
- Defining itself again now that it's grown. Where does it play a role in the community?
- Visibility. Not many Jews in the TC know about the site
- We're still young and in many ways unestablished. Most people know us and support

what we're doing, but we seem to be an afterthought in many ways for a lot of organizations. I still have to hustle to get people to submit events to our calendar, submit jobs, find articles. Some of that (most of that) comes with the territory and will always be the case; but every now and then I'm completely, incomprehensibly surprised by questions people ask or connections people don't make, that seem blatantly obvious to me.

- Do you want to focus only on the Twin Cities area, or do you want to appeal to people throughout the country and beyond?
- We need to attract a younger readership, especially teens who may be interested in visiting Israel. At this point, TC Jewfolk needs to be looking into monetizing. As a writer, I am often asked to do more for TC Jewfolk than I am for the other publications where I get paid. I don't send photos or upload my articles to Wordpress for the other publications yet get paid well there.
- It would be nice to see the demographic of TC Jewfolk expanded. Primarily, TCJ serves the 20 something community - I think branching areas and topics out to young families and retirees would be a wonderful addition. The trick is getting them to know it and use it as a place for them as well.
- Having more information/topics/articles that would appeal to more conservative/orthodox Jews.
- I think it would be . . . at least nice . . . if there was a way to encourage more dialogue on the site. I think it needs to stay relevant for people who do not have children.
- TC Jewfolk is, I know, still struggling to find its footing with fundraising and support. The Jewish community in the Twin Cities is small and probably feeling a lot of tugging from all sorts of Jewish institutions. TC Jewfolk needs to establish its relevance as a cultural institution that is helping young Jews in particular to maintain their identities and raise children Jewishly.
- Getting more, more regular, and better content - content that will bring people back to TC Jewfolk for more. Getting staff so that we can build relationships with all of the community organizations, funders, advertisers.
- Of course, money to pay the editor and writer, and other staff as needs are determined. In light of the need for money, how to stay independent without giving up the autonomy to other 'agencies' and thus being confused with being aligned with those agencies.
- I rarely get my news from websites (and I don't get it from TV or newspapers either). I get my news from my iPhone apps. I'll look at Huffington Post a couple times a day. CNN, Onion, local TV channel app. Even websites I like a lot I often won't check even once a week. So if I think that's the biggest challenge, assuming other people are like me, than the biggest opportunity is creating an app. I have no idea what that would involve, but it would dramatically increase my interaction time.
- WAY TOO MUCH from the west side. I get it -- there are more Jews there! But holy cow, come on. It also feels like some organizations are over-represented while others are not represented at all. I completely understand that this might be by the organization's choice (as in, to not participate at all or as fully as others), but it has started to feel like the Rabbi Fine show. It might be nice to limit his exposure until there are more in similar position participating? It's a hard balance, I'm sure.
- Focus on east metro more. Focus on under-represented, under-appreciated Jewish achievements and ongoing work. Focus on people who work quietly behind the scenes to make TC Jewish community happen (arts, culture, rituals, music, literature, tzedakah, inreach, outreach, etc.). Already see lots of focus on theatre, music. Want to see more focus on local fine art, literature, and Judaica.

- 1. Exploring possibilities in the context of its mission and funding requirements and while at the same time providing high quality and staying focused and disciplined (and financially sound!).
- 2. "Feeding the beast" year in and year is a challenge. Premature expansion and/or mission creep can be deadly.
- 3. Work with, not compete with synagogues and communal organizations. Explore how new paradigms of collaboration that is additive and achieve impact otherwise unattainable.
- Getting money to pay a bigger staff. The social media presence needs a full-time person to manage it . . . and not just an intern that changes semester to semester. That money would also go to freelance writers who will then heed deadlines and come up with exciting articles that will bring in readers.

6. Is there anything else we haven't asked about TC Jewfolk that you'd like to add?

Responses

- In all honesty, the name is a big problem for TC Jewfolk. There has not been one person I have mentioned the publication to that has not had a negative reaction to the name. I always find myself apologizing for it. I wonder if others have a similar experience.
- On an honest level, perhaps starting to pay writers if there are the finances. I know I would definitely write more if I were able to be compensated.
- Love, love, love Leora and Emily!
- I would like to contribute to the website re: weddings!
- Feels too much like a mutual admiration society of lawyers, doctors, synagogue presidents, and other high-visibility machers. Cover more "regular Joes" (Yosefs?).
- I'm a big fan.