

# OurMedia.org - Media Giraffe Profile

## OurMedia.org

J.D. Lasica

"The fundamental need for people to communicate with each other has been lost in the world of big media", JD Lasica, one of the founders of the grassroots media site Ourmedia.org, told journalist Ron Miller for a June article in EContent, an online magazine. "I think it is something deeper in the culture driving this. People are finally getting their fill of mass-media conglomerate entertainment and information. They are seeing that there is an alternative, so people are turning to alternative news sites to get a lot of their information. They are entertaining themselves [for example,] creating music and videos. Once that light went on, people figured out we don't need to be passive recipients," Lasica said.

J.D. Lasica, as picked up by writer Kathryn Casa in a Sept. 23, 2005 profile of two Vermont community news websites. "

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## About

Ourmedia is a volunteer open media project, allowing the public to publish works of digital media and offering free storage, bandwidth and preservation. As Executive Director JD Lasica puts it, "We're here to help enable the personal media revolution."

Lasica, who co-founded Ourmedia in March 2005, viewed the site as a way to help bring citizens media to the next level. In only 10 months, the site has grown to include 80,000 members and is home to thousands of podcasters and videobloggers. The registered users have uploaded about 150,000 works: 60,000 videos, 60,000 podcasts and audio works, as well as photos and text works. The site has sought to encourage citizen media as it has grown from text blogs to encompass audio and video, it is a service, a way to help people share their media with a global audience, and bring creators into a community to discuss techniques, standards, and capabilities. Ourmedia plans to soon launch a learning center to teach the public how to create a podcast and how to videoblog.

The site has had over 200 people assisting the project in some way, from moderators to coders to educators helping to create the digital media learning center. While the volunteers have shown strong commitment to the project, this year the site will be stepping up to a full funding development effort, and will pursue a mix of ecommerce revenue, corporate sponsorships, advertising, individual contributions and foundation grants. Its servers are provided free of charge by the Internet Archive and Arizona State University.

Lasica is no stranger to citizen journalism, one of his three personal blogs, New Media Musings, was recently named one of the Top 100 Blogs by CNET. Lasica attended Rutgers University, where he majored in communications, and worked on the college daily. Moving through daily newspapers as a reporter, editor

and columnist, Lasica worked at papers in Passaic, N.J., and Sacramento, Calif., including 11 years at the *Sacramento Bee*. He was the first new media columnist for the American Journalism Review, and has been writing articles about grassroots media for the Online Journalism Review since 1998.

"We believe that only by taking the media into our own hands will the public become fully engaged in our democracy," Lasica said in a Media Giraffe Project interview. "Citizen media says that we're no longer passive receptacles of big media content, that we have a voice and we want to share our experiences, thoughts and passions with a larger community. Media takes a more meaningful shape when we interact and participate in its creation." -- END OF PROFILE --

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Below excerpted from "New Site Offers Free Video Hosting: Ourmedia Seeks to Encourage Sharing of Creative Works" (<http://msnbc.msn.com/id/7279780/>):

A new Web site backed by some of the Internet's leading thinkers promises to make it easier, and cheaper, for artists, scholars and other creative people to share their digital works.

Ourmedia.org seeks to become a central repository for such items.

"They are (now) all kind of scattered, a lot on people's computers (or) hidden away on the Web in faraway crevices," said J.D. Lasica, a veteran journalist who co-founded the project. "We thought it was important to gather a lot of this stuff under one roof."

## Links

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