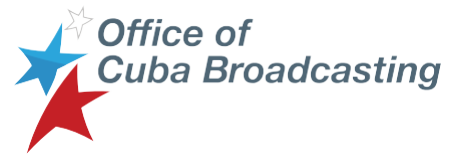


UNITED STATES
BROADCASTING
BOARD OF
GOVERNORS



Office of Cuba Broadcasting Modernization

In 1983, Congress established the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (OCB), operated by the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM), with a mission to promote freedom and democracy through objective news and current affairs programming to the people of Cuba. As Cuba continues to be the most repressive and media-restrictive country in the Western Hemisphere, OCB's mission and its significance to U.S. foreign policy and national security remain vital. Thirty-five years since its first broadcast, OCB (Radio and TV Martí) is also reimagining its approach to meet the current needs and demands of a competitive marketplace.

Historically, OCB's operations primarily provided interactive programming through satellite television and short and medium wave radio broadcasts. As computer access and the internet became more accessible, OCB began to distribute flash drives and deliver content through emails, DVDs, and SMS to individuals seeking out non-government controlled information. With the rise of 3G mobile connectivity, expansion of internet access and opening of digital platforms in Cuba, and with the benefit of recently rebuilt editorial processes and proposition statement, OCB's transformation will allow the network to maximize its public service media mission.

Shifting Toward a Digital-First Strategy

Key to this transformation is connecting with a younger generation of Cubans who will define the country's future. OCB's modernization places emphasis on producing high-quality, meaningful content that appeals directly to Cuba's emerging opinion leaders. This strategy includes:

- using popular social media platforms and messaging applications to connect individuals on the island;
- creating original content that challenges state propaganda through investigative journalism; and
- employing the power of short-form video and web reports to attract younger audiences.

This digital-first approach includes reconstituting a network of reporters on the island to provide first-hand, real-time reports.

At the same time, radio and television also remain important means for distribution, and will continue to be supported. These investments will be balanced to reflect the fact that Cuba's modern media environment is increasingly dominated by digital storytelling. This balanced approach will result in greater impact in connecting with new audiences and informing them of the democratic values espoused in a free press.

Even in the most information-denied environments, USAGM journalists – supported by our internet freedom and circumvention technologies – reach across internet firewalls on digital and social platforms to connect with their audiences. USAGM and OCB are excited about the prospect of modernizing the Martí, adopting a similar approach to that employed in Russia, China, North Korea, and Iran.

This approach requires new skillsets working across multimedia platforms. This is why OCB has already begun to restructure its workforce to ensure a team of qualified journalists, producers, editors committed to the OCB mission can provide these digital skills to the network. The network has recently added senior-level hires with decades of experience to ensure this modernization is both effective and upholds the highest standards of journalistic ethics and integrity.

Improving Journalistic Standards

In 2018, two unfortunate incidents led USAGM and OCB to evaluate journalistic standards at the network. An independent expert panel charged with reviewing and assessing OCB programming, editorial oversight and production systems, found shortcomings and deficiencies in OCB's adherence to high journalistic standards and best practices. As a result, USAGM and OCB have implemented real-time program monitoring, rebuilt the entire editorial process to ensure transparency and accountability, and recruited a team of industry-leading professionals to lead OCB's modernization.

The Mission Ahead

As a public service media organization, OCB is obligated to utilize its taxpayer-funded resources to produce independent journalism in the most effective manner and in line with its legislative mandate. That is why modernizing OCB and implementing its digitally-focused programming are consistently a top priority for USAGM. Together, USAGM and OCB are deeply committed to ensuring that the Martí's broadcast and digital platforms successfully reach Cuban people with compelling, fact-based, and comprehensive news and analysis that provide hope for a free and democratic Cuba.