
Community Producers Guide:

About Access 7

Would you like to know about Access 7 and the kind of programming we do?

Access Communications Co-operative Ltd. is a 100% Saskatchewan community-owned non-profit co-operative. (That means that all our earnings are re-invested back into the communities we serve.) Our staff, our members, our board, our volunteers are your friends and neighbors. Our mission is to provide exceptional communications and entertainment services and unique opportunities for local expression, and to improve the quality of life in the communities we serve.

That's where our *Access7* community channels take the spotlight. Each *Access Communications* community has (or will have, as the system continues to grow) its very own unique *Access7* channel.

With equipment and training provided by *Access7*, and the help and guidance of *Access7* staff, ordinary people of all ages learn how to make use of television to find out about their communities, their neighbours and their interests, to exchange stories and talents, and to appreciate the cities, towns and surroundings that we all share.

Every year, hundreds of volunteers across the province devote their time to help create thousands of hours of first-run programming for their local *Access7* community channels. *Access* is honored to be able to provide a modern version of the old-time gathering place where communities can come together and connect about things that are important to them and their families.

Access 7 offers a wide range of community programming, which might include such areas as:

- Children's interests
- Local & Provincial Sports
- Community Events & Activities
- Instructional or Informative topics
- Arts, Culture & Entertainment

And it doesn't "just happen". It requires commitment by Community Producers who are willing to contribute, co-operate and collaborate so compelling and relevant community-based stories can be told. **Access7 doesn't broadcast corporate or promotional videos or paid promotional programs. Events or "news" will not be covered unless they are components of an approved show.*

How does an Access7 program get started?

It starts with an idea. With someone (or several someone's together) deciding, "There should be a TV show about" or perhaps, "We could make a TV show about"

We encourage people with ideas for community programming, whether they are interested individuals or people who represent local organizations, to contact:

Access Communications Cooperative Limited
2250 Park Street
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4N 7K7
(306) 565 5366
Email: access7@myaccess.coop

Assuming your idea fits Access7 you're ready to take the first steps in the production process by talking to an Access7 staff person.

*** It helps, for that first meeting, if you can bring along some information about your idea and about your organization, if you're representing one.**

Here are some of the things it's useful to know:

- Write down a brief explanation (a page or less) of what your idea is.
- Who would like to watch this show? (Probable target audience) Would people in other communities in other parts of the province like to watch this show?
- Why do you think it's important to do this on Access7?
- How do you think each program (or a typical program) would be put together? What kind of format do you think it could have?
- What costs would be involved? How much is it likely to cost (outside of Access7's staff and equipment)?
- Are there any potential sponsors for your program idea. Organizations or businesses who may be interested in funding your production and / or promotional plan?
- If you're representing an organization, tell us something about your organization.
- How many volunteers from your organization would likely be able to work on making the program?
- Are there other people in the community who might help with the program (providing expertise? Volunteering? Helping to promote the show?)
- Are there any deadlines involved in making your show? (Date of an event? Times when certain people will be available? Weather limitations etc.?) When do you think the show should be produced?
- What ideas do you (and your organization, if one is involved) have about ways in which your show could be promoted in the community and/or the province? Are there ways in which you can help ensure that the people who would enjoy seeing this program are going to know about it?

Once you've met with Access7 we need you to prepare a **written proposal** which will cover the points that have been talked about and agreed upon. A written proposal includes the major points outlined above and any new details or requirements that were discussed and agreed upon in the initial meeting.

Be as careful as you can to answer all the key points outlined above, and include all the information covered during your discussion. Keep a copy of your proposal for your own files.

Because it's easier for us to handle and transmit electronic documents, we prefer to have program proposals submitted by email to access7@myaccess.coop as **Adobe Acrobat.pdf files**. However, if this computer format is too difficult or impossible for you, please speak to your Access7 contact person, and we'll work out another option.

What's the approval process for possible Access7 program proposals?

All complete proposals are reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Manager, Community Programming. We need to see what ideas best meet our requirements, and can be handled by our available staff and resources. Depending on how many proposals we have to consider at one time, it may take up to four weeks to make a decision.

*At every step along the way, Access7 staff will be available to answer questions and provide guidance to Community Producers as they prepare their proposals. However, we can't assess a proposal's chances of success until it's been through the evaluation process

An Access7 evaluation is based on:

- Does your show idea reflect the community? Its members and various lifestyles?
- Available time in broadcast schedule
- Commitment level and availability of Community Producer(s)
- Availability of volunteers/community members for production
- Availability of staff and production resources

After the proposal is considered and reviewed, a decision is made to see if it meets the necessary requirements, and can be approved for production.

All applicants are notified by Access7 about the results of their proposals. Community Producers whose proposals have been selected will be contacted and invited to enter into a formal production agreement with Access7.

What's a "Community Production Agreement"?

It's a letter of agreement between the person and/or organization who submitted the successful application, and Access7/Access Communications Co-operative Ltd.

The conditions of these production agreements cover such things as what the Community Producer and Access7 each agree to provide and to carry out, when the program or programs will be produced and broadcast, and any financial or legal responsibilities and accountabilities. The conditions are agreed upon in discussion between Access7 Manager, Community Programming or designate and the Community Producer, or a representative of the organization which presented the successful proposal.

Once a program proposal is approved, what happens next?

- The project is assigned an Access7 producer
- The idea is developed and an approach to production created (what's the right format, what resources will be required, who needs to be part of the show, do we need additional resources, are there sponsorship opportunities, a promotional plan is developed
- A production schedule is developed to cover recording, editing and a broadcast date

What responsibilities does an Access7 Community Producer have?

These responsibilities will be specified in a production agreement but may include such things as providing expertise in the subject matter, provision of volunteers, a plan to help promote the program to viewers, among other things

What responsibilities does Access7 have?

These responsibilities will also be part of a production agreement but may include such things as helping the community producer develop a proposal, assist in shaping the presentation of the program, once approved, training volunteers to assist with production, providing adequate resources to facilitate production, assisting or leading the negotiation of sponsorship

So, do YOU have an idea that could grow into an Access7 program? Contact us, and see what happens!

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