



Connecticut Network
Your State. Your Government. Your Network.

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Happy 12th Anniversary, CT-N!

March 10, 1999

Twelve years ago today, at 4pm, The Connecticut Network went on the air for the first time with live coverage of the House of Representatives. With our control room still under construction, we were only able to create a four-hour block of coverage, which was then repeated six times to make up a full day of coverage. Of course, a four hour loop was sufficient at the time because back then CT-N was only available between 4pm and 8pm, Monday through Friday; a 24-hour channel was still years away. Although our initial capabilities were very limited, the vision for CT-N from day one was to be a full-time public service, a direct source for citizens to watch and better understand our state government in action...including all three branches and other events around the state that impact the development of public policy in Connecticut.

2000-2002

CT-N's gavel-to-gavel coverage of the Executive and Judicial branches began to take shape, with Connecticut becoming one of only four states at that time to allow coverage of Supreme Court oral arguments. In the Fall of 2002, CT-N first shed light on the electoral process, with a TV and web simulcast of the 2002 Republican and Democratic conventions and our first gubernatorial debate. CT-N's coverage of press conferences, Capitol News Briefings debuted in 2003, right around the same time that the "shared channel" arrangement was improved and CT-N accessibility grew to 24 hours a day in some areas of the state. In 2004, CT-N covered its first Congressional hearing on the Bureau of Indian Affairs recognition of Connecticut Indian Tribes, along with our first live congressional debate and a premier of CT-N's (limited) election night coverage.

2005

CT-N teamed up with C-SPAN to provide live coverage of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission hearing in Boston, where Connecticut made its case to save the New London sub base. In that same year, the General Assembly and the state's cable industry reached a landmark agreement to develop a state-wide standard for full-time carriage of CT-N on expanded cable statewide, making CT-N the first state public affairs network to be accessible to all its citizens.

2006-2008

With the understanding that not everyone has the time (or inclination) to watch long hours of hearings or sessions, CT-N launched Capitol Report in February 2006, providing citizens with a synopsis of the week's activities at the Capitol, all in less than an hour. And for anyone feeling nostalgic, all 226 episodes are still available on-line at <http://www.ctn.state.ct.us/ondemand.asp?dir=CR>.

Also in 2006, CT-N laid the groundwork to fully implement closed captioning for all programming in 2007, making our coverage more accessible to the more than 300,000 deaf and hard of hearing citizens in Connecticut. And through a strategic partnership with The Board of Education and Services for the Blind, CT-N currently employs two visually-impaired employees as part of our closed captioning team.

Throughout 2006 and 2007, CT-N worked closely with the Judicial Branch to change the rules for camera coverage in the Supreme Court, giving way to the current norm of three camera coverage of oral arguments instead of the previous single camera restriction, set on a static wide shot from the back of the room. CT-N also covered its first Superior Court proceeding, Sullivan v. MacDonald and Lawlor in 2006, the Michael Skakel hearings live in March 2007, and participated in the Hartford Superior Court District's pilot project covering, amongst other events, the Cipriani murder trial in 2008, providing a complete and unique view into our system of jurisprudence.

2010

Last year marked another milestone in CT-N's evolution with our first anchored coverage of the Democratic and Republican Conventions with Diane Smith and Kenn Venit, followed closely by our Primary Night coverage (even though Diane Smith broke her arm earlier that day) and our live Election Night coverage, which included live reports from around the state and complete coverage of the acceptance and concession speeches for major races. CT-N's anchored coverage continued on Opening Day of the legislative session with wall to wall coverage of House and Senate sessions, the inaugural parade, the swearing in ceremony of Governor Malloy, his address to the joint convention and reaction from the legislative leadership. That approach also provided CT-N with an effective day-long broadcast on Budget Day.

March 10, 2011

Today, CT-N provides more than 2000 hours of original programming per year and is accessible 24/7 state-wide on cable and AT&T U-Verse, on our multiple web streams, podcasts, on-demand archives and coming soon...streaming to your mobile device. CT-N has become a national model for the 30 states where similar networks do not yet exist or are on the drawing boards. And so, as we acknowledge the success of CT-N over the past twelve years, I'd just like to say thanks. Thank you to the members of our board of directors for your stewardship, thank you to the best staff anyone could ask for and thank you to the members and staff of the General Assembly for making it all possible.

Happy 12th Anniversary to CT-N !

Regards,



Paul Giguere
President & CEO, Connecticut Public Affairs Network, Inc.
President, National Association of Public Affairs Networks