



2025

Information Ecosystem Assessment

Kaua'i Community Radio asked YOU about our Information Landscape

Presented to

The Listening Post Collective and the
National Federation for Community
Broadcasters

Presented by

Kaua'i Community Radio - KKCR

ABOUT

Kaua'i Community Radio

KKCR is Kaua'i's independent, non-commercial, listener-supported community radio station. KKCR seeks to:

Stimulate, educate and entertain our audience.

Preserve, perpetuate and celebrate Hawaiian culture.

Reflect the diversity of the local and world community.

Disseminate factual emergency response and disaster preparedness information.

KKCR provides a forum for overlooked, suppressed, or under-represented voices and music.



Kaua'i Community Radio - KKCR - is Kaua'i's #1 non-commercial radio station and the island's only community radio station. KKCR was formed in the wake of Cat 5 Hurricane Iniki that devastated Kaua'i in 1992 and finally came to fruition with the first broadcast in 1997. In the 29 years since its induction, KKCR has evolved beyond its base goal of emergency information into a Hawaiian cultural hub and a source for island information.

From Hawaiian music of all genres and decades to sovereignty and ethical issues, KKCR dedicates 40% and more of its airwaves to cultural concerns. Part of our mission is to "celebrate, perpetuate and preserve Hawaiian culture" and elevate those voices that get overlooked. In our attention to Hawaiian culture we are the only station like us.

While the the bulk of the balance of KKCR's schedule is represented by a variety of music programming, we host two weekly public affairs programs, one talk show on Hawaiian sovereignty and from 10-12 special interest programs. These focus on life on Kaua'i and range from environmental stewardship to water safety, death issues to keeping pets healthy in the tropics, cooking to housing.

With this schedule, 97% of KKCR's content is produced in-house. All the music shows are curated by volunteer DJs and the special interest talk shows are produced by local content makers. We air Democracy Now on weekdays and New

Dimensions on Sundays for six weekly hours not produced by KKCR volunteers and staff.

Station Management

KKCR staff includes 3 full time staff, and one part time. The DJ and volunteer roster numbers between 65 and 80 at any given time.



Anni Caporuscio
Executive Director



Andrew Crawford
Program Director



Rodwin Pabello
Outreach + Underwriting



Dean Rogers
Operations Director

Purpose of the Survey

Why create an Information Ecosystem Assessment

1. From where do you get your local news and information?
2. From where would you LIKE to get your local news and information?
3. Are you happy with your source for local news and information?
4. How would you improve your receipt of local news and information?
5. Do you trust sources for local news and information?
6. In your opinion, what Kaua'i issues need more coverage?
7. Considering the sources for local news and information that you rely on, to what extent do you feel they provide you with



Volunteer DJs group picture from 2013

Mission

We undertook this project because Kaua'i's main source of local news is our County of Kaua'i Public Information Office. The PIO does an excellent job informing the news outlets, and every news outlet on the county level and statewide, print and digital, merely copies the PIO's press releases. There is no independent news source asking questions and creating followup stories on the news. There is a gap in reliable information sources.

We want to explore the idea of KKCR filling this gap. It brings up questions of staffing, infrastructure, skill sets, air-time and funding, but the first question to be answered is: how does Kaua'i's people receive its' news, and would KKCR add to that information landscape in a meaningful way? Do they even want us?



the information you need to stay informed?

8. To what extent do you feel like you belong on Kaua'i?
9. Do you feel like your experiences and opinions are acknowledged and considered in your local news coverage?
10. What actions could KKCR take to better foster a sense of belonging for you or others in your community?
11. Is there anything else you would like to tell the hard-working folks at KKCR?



Method

KKCR's Information Landscape Survey dropped in April 2025 with the intention of starting conversations on local news and information and garnering feedback.

The survey questions were agreed upon by the revived Programming Committee, which has conducted quarterly meetings since.

The survey featured on the homepage at kkcr.org.

Our initiative to "Take the Radio Out of the Station" proved a good fit to solicit for responses. We attended six art fairs with the paper survey with volunteers walking around with clipboards and butcher paper spread out, starting conversations. We co-hosted a business event in conjunction with a local business association and a statewide grassroots sustainable chamber of commerce. We attended a community pā'ina and co-hosted Community Media Day with Ho'ike, our community TV station. We gathered over one hundred responses.

It took three incarnations:

Online

An online Google form survey hosted on the homepage at kkcr.org. It was also distributed in newsletters and social media posts. It was shared by our community television station, Ho'ike in their communications, too, since they benefit from the results as well.

Paper

The online survey was duplicated onto paper and carried on clipboards to multiple functions where KKCR was "taking the radio out of the station" and engaging with the community.

Butcher Paper + Markers

A conversation starter, the questions were written and respondents wrote their responses, able to see the answers of their peers. This, by far, brought the most engagement, the most fun, and the opportunity to dig deeper with respondents.

About the County of Kaua'i and Ni'ihau

Information on demographics, civic engagement, information landscape, and more

Equity & Justice:

Life Expectancy: 82.4

Percent with Medical Debt: 3.8%

Percent of youth age 16-19 not working or enrolled in school: 7.1%

Health and Opportunity:

Unemployment Rate: 2.6%

Percent Uninsured: 4.9%

Percent with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 30.4%

Percent of Income Spent on Rent: 28.6%

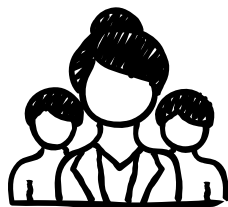
Civic Participation:

Voter Turnout: 64.8%

Social Associations per 10k: 8.7

Population - 2025

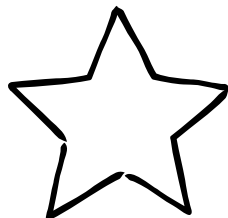
- **74,121 Residents in 24,750 Households**
- **32k-33k visitors average per day**



At 562sm, that's 192 people per square mile, connected by a two-lane road that does not entirely circumvent the island. Nearly every residence is within five miles of the shoreline.

The common perception is that Kaua'i is crowded. Traffic is among our biggest complaints.

Ethnic Makeup



- **29% Asian** (5.8-6% national average)
- **29% White** (1 of 6 states with non-majority) (57.5-58% national average)
- **20.5% 2-3 races (non-hispanic)** (~3% national average)
- **9.52% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander** (~1-2% national average)
- **.59% Black/African American** (12.1-13% national average)
- **10% Hispanic** (18.7-20% national average)

Economics

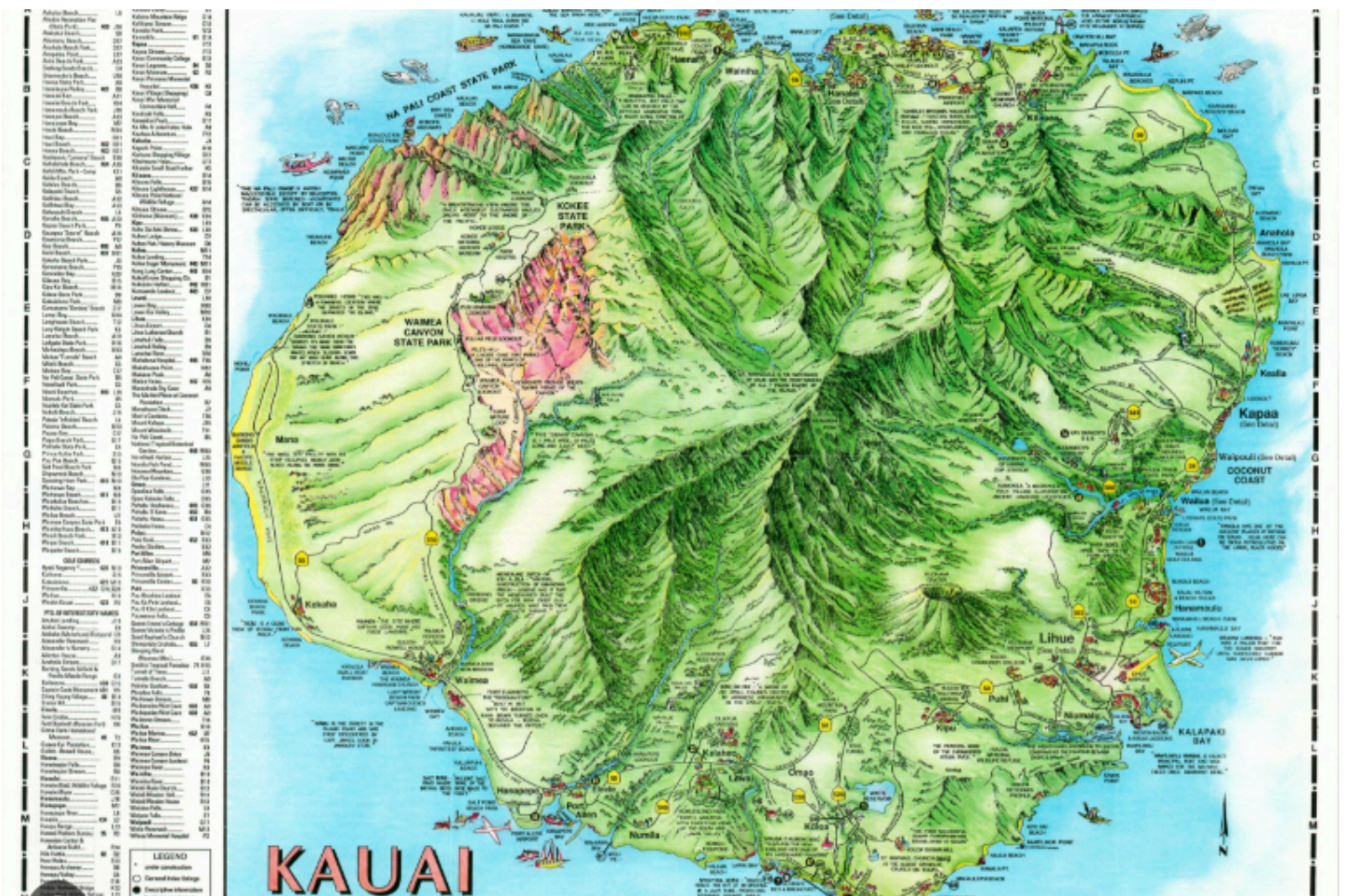
Volunteer Rate: 19.7%

Percent of AGI that are charitable contributions: 1.1%

Census Response Rate: 54.2%



- \$93,612 Median household income, 5.34% growth per year
- \$817,900 Median property value, 10.1% growth per year (2.7x national average)
- 67.3% Home ownership rate
- 8.8% Poverty rate (up 6% from previous year)
- 25.3% of population with severe housing problems
- 7 billionaires hold property on Kaua'i, 37 in state, 11% of non-government land



Kaua'i's Information Landscape

Kaua'i has one newspaper source, **The Garden Isle Newspaper**, that has been in publication since 1902, originally published in both English and Japanese. It was sold to off-island interests in 1996 and in 2013 reduced operations to two print publications per week, moving printing off island. Present day GI is printed twice weekly and hosts online news behind a paywall with one remaining reporter. They post headlines on social media.

Kaua'i Now is an exclusively online news source run by Pacific Media Group, the governing body of the KONG Radio group, the dominant commercial radio on Kaua'i. It has similar presence with Maui Now. Kaua'i Now has an app offering push notifications and social media presence. The news features a reprint of County press releases and local business advertising.

What's Happening On Kaua'i (WHOKaua'i) is a social media page that posts articles from statewide news sources and sparks discussion on current events, social trends, and native Hawaiian rights issues. With 42K followers and 21K posts, it is wildly popular. The page is hosted anonymously and will ban readers that don't follow rules. The hosts will post articles in their entirety that originate from behind paywalls, allowing for more access for everyone.

A nonprofit state-wide online news source, **Civil Beat**, had one dedicated Kaua'i reporter that was pulled to Maui to report on the wildfires of 2023. CB creates daily news and researched investigative reports. Civil Beat happened to conduct a news survey during the time KKCR conducted their survey and found that indeed, the outer islands want more representation in the news. They have hired a reporter from another nonprofit online source, The Overstory, to be the dedicated Kaua'i reporter and publish one story per week.

Ho'ike Community Media, formerly Ho'ike TV, is the public access community television station on Kaua'i. They attend County events, produce issue based shows and allow space for individual producers to create and air content. Ho'ike has a YouTube channel where all content can be viewed.

Kaua'i County Public Information Office (PIO) efficiently sends press releases to media agencies, consisting of county-led events and initiatives, daily information about various government divisions, an arrest log, traffic information, weather information and more. The PIO also curates what information is revealed to the various news sources, approving or disapproving of questions and interviews.



Hanalei Valley kalo fields. Kalo (taro) is a staple starch in Hawaii and a “canoe plant”, brought from Oceania to the islands by the original settlers.

Key Findings

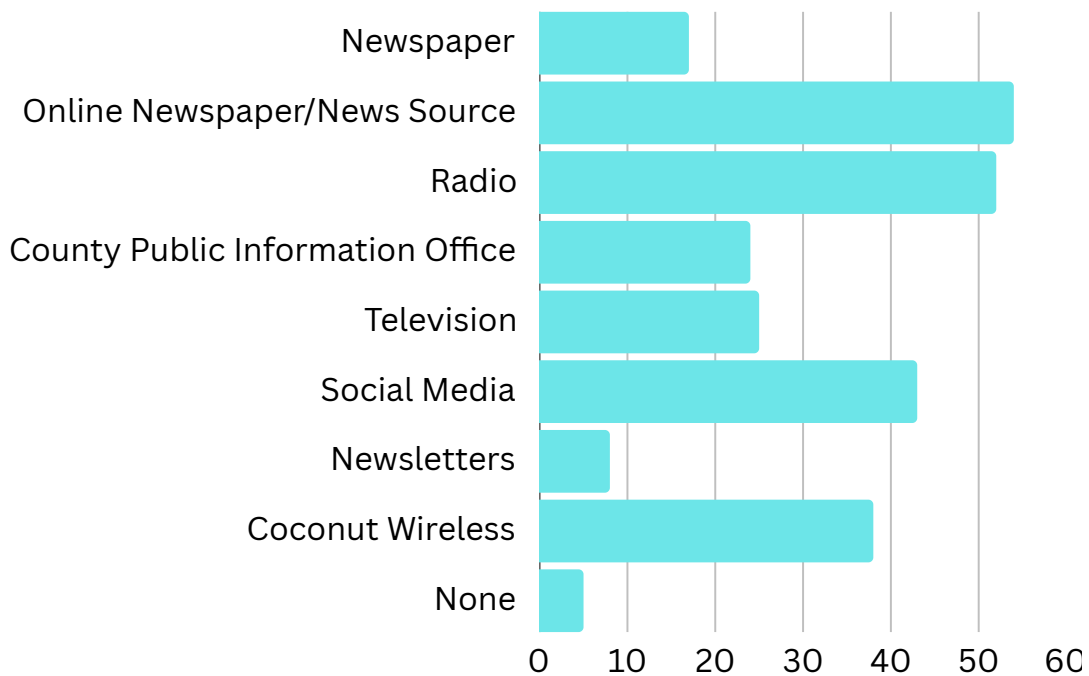
KKCR’s Information Landscape Survey

**107
Respondents**

People rely on multiple sources to receive their local news and information

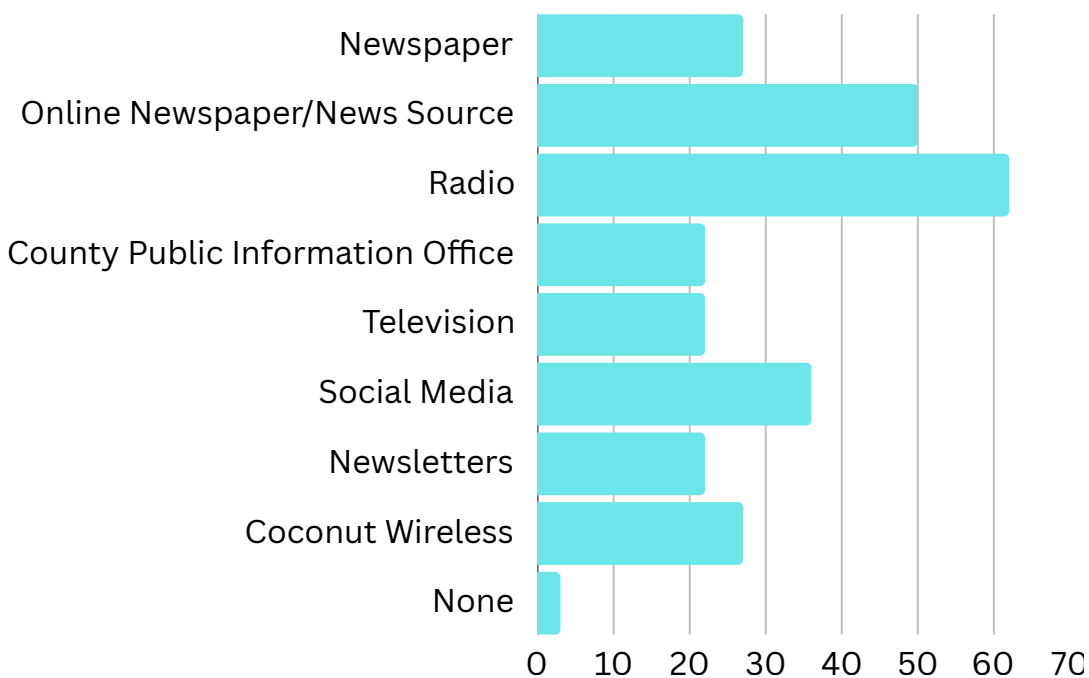
**From where do you get your local, Kaua’i-based news and information?
(Check all that apply)**

Addressing where people CURRENTLY receive information, the top three being Online News Source (54), Radio (52) and Social Media(43). “Coconut Wireless” is local colloquialism for “informal, word-of-mouth”.



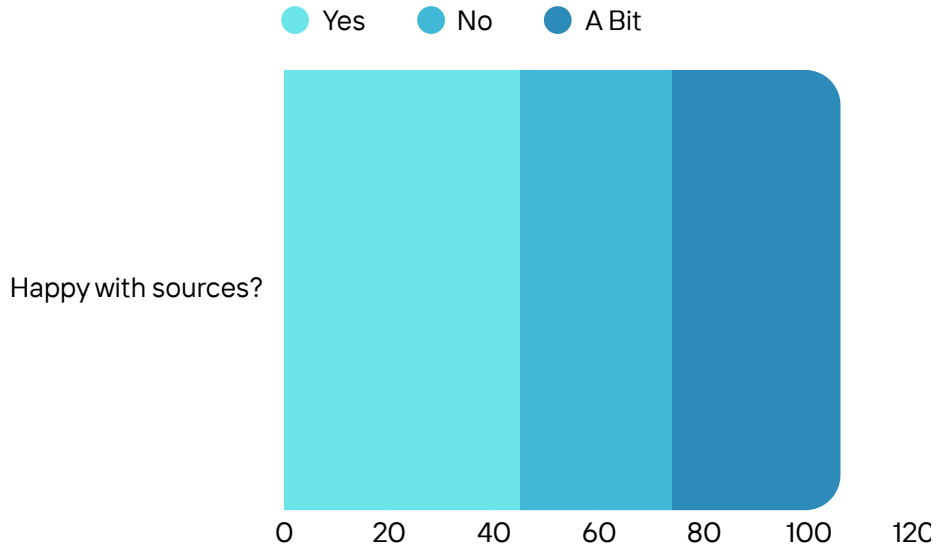
From where do you WANT to get your local, Kaua'i-based news and information? (Check all that apply)

Addressing where people WANT to receive information, the top three remain the same, but there are significant shifts. Radio (62) takes the lead and we understand that there could be bias from the surveyed because the radio station was doing the surveying. It also speaks to the importance of drive time news and talk shows. Online news sources still remain important, along with social media and people would like to see an increase in local newspaper coverage and newsletters for their local information.



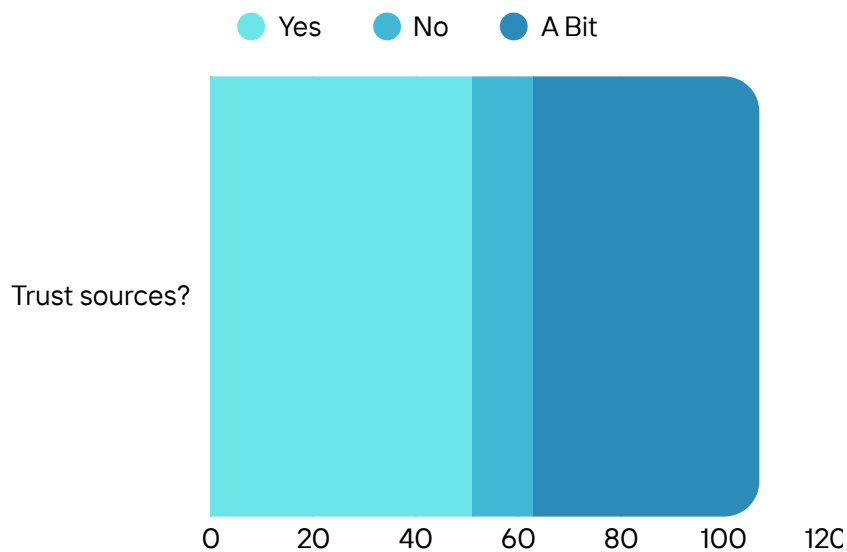
Are you happy with your news sources?

45 people indicated they are happy, and 61 are not, No (29) and A Bit at 32.

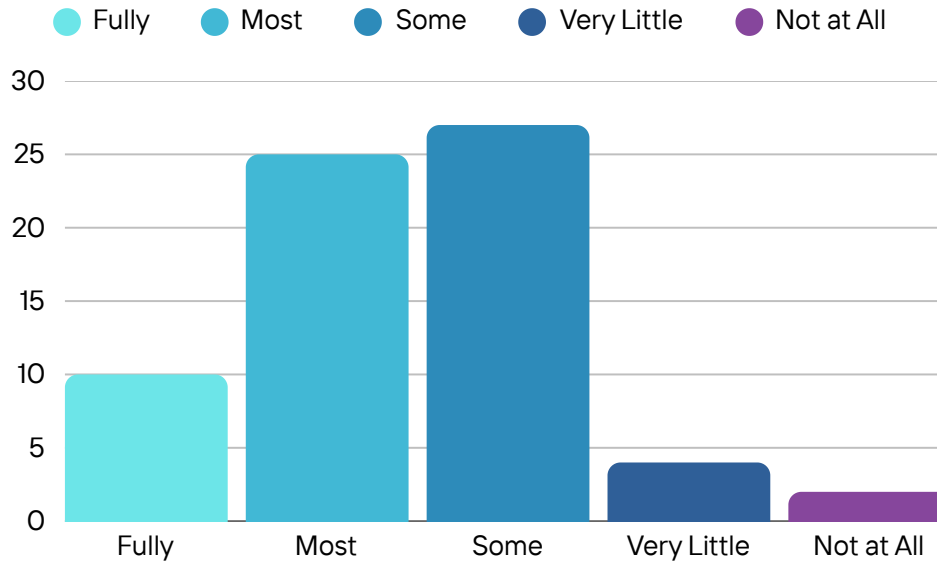


Do you trust your sources for local news?

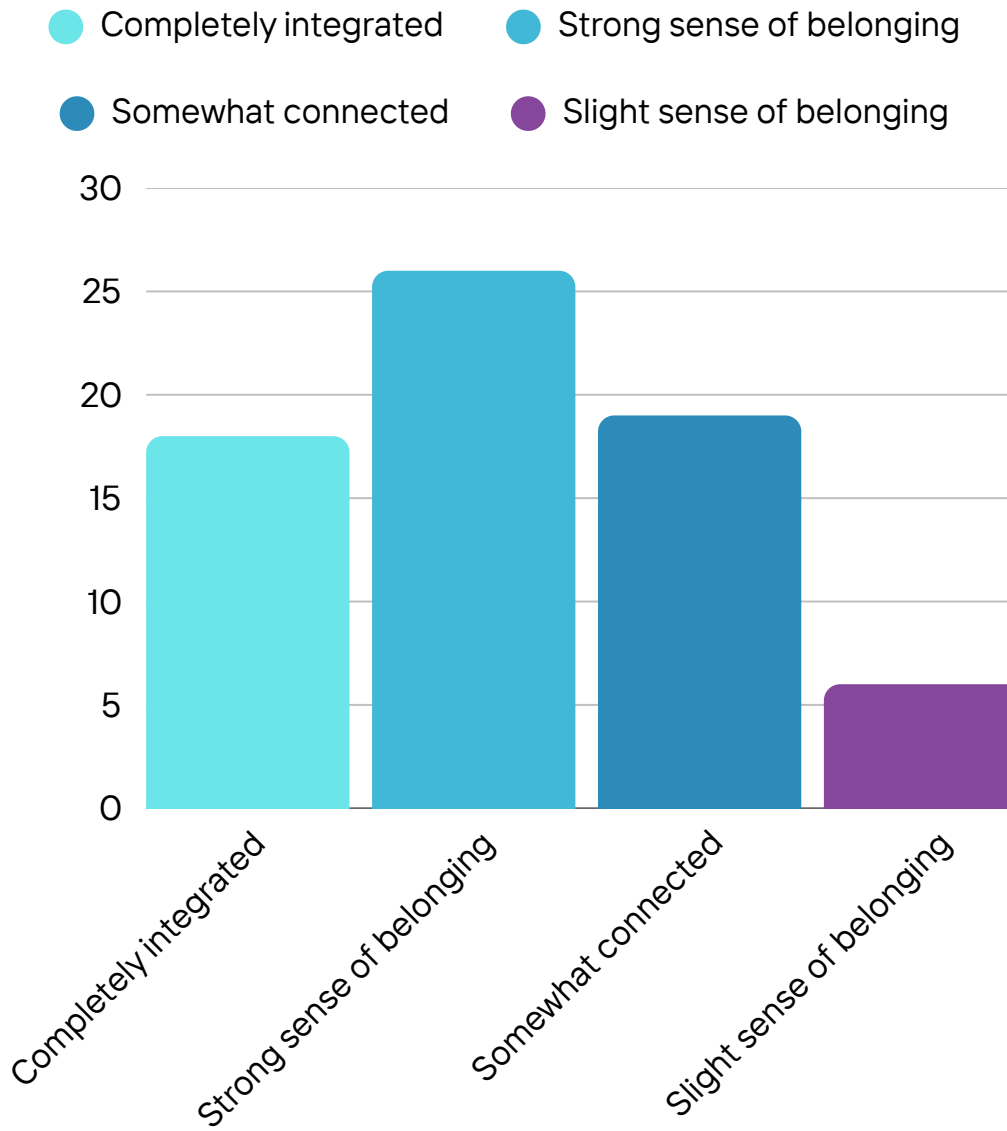
51 say Yes, 12 No, and 44 A Bit. That's 48% that trust local news sources.



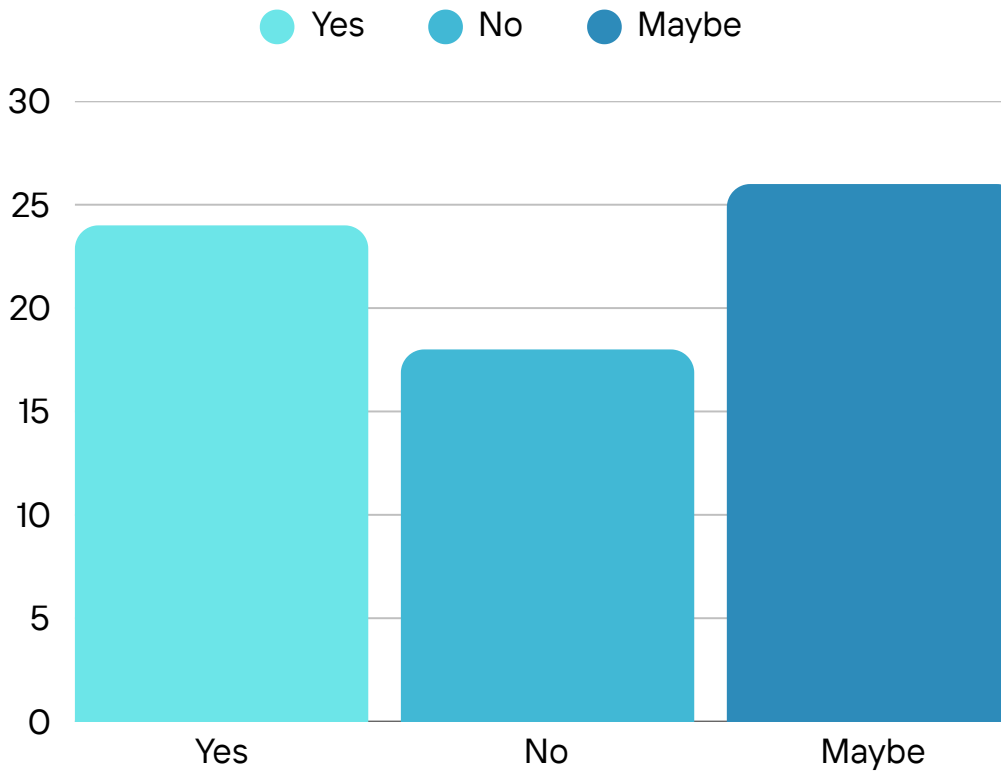
Considering the sources for local news and information that you rely on, to what extent do you feel they provide you with the information you need to stay informed?



To what extent do you feel you belong on Kaua'i?



Do you feel like your experiences and opinions are acknowledged and considered in your local news coverage?



What actions could KKCR take to better foster a sense of belonging for you or others in your community?

<p>Provide more opportunities for us to engage, such as forums, town halls, or listening sessions</p> <p>14</p>	<p>Offer content in multiple languages</p> <p>2</p> <p>“I love hearing old Hawaiian voices from Ni’ihau”</p>	<p>Produce more stories that reflect the experiences and concerns of people like me</p> <p>16</p>
<p>Make it easier to access news and information, like offering digital, print, and audio options</p> <p>21</p>	<p>Make your journalistic decisions transparent when producing stories</p> <p>16</p>	<p>Other: “More regular news coverage, especially news bulletins in significant news developments such as highway accidents, etc.”</p>

In your opinion, what Kaua’i issues need more coverage?

<i>neighborhood news coverage of each area, not just central.</i>	<i>business news - that is not available</i>	<i>more in depth profiles of local people and organizations making a difference.</i>	<i>traditional local news and weather</i>
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waste management, endangered species and habitat, local elections!!

immigration, water, nearshore resources, returning diaspora Hawaiians, immigrants entitled attitudes

youth sports

infrastructure upgrades BEFORE issuing another permit, why new Hanalei overlook is never open, Anthrax issue addressed!

businesses that are owned from off island (rental cars, air bnbs, hotels) need capped and/or eliminated as to the scope of their operations.

there should be greater access to freshwater fishing areas. Even privately owned lakes should have public access.

always interested in cultural and local issues that affect and support our community.

schools, infrastructure challenges, development planning, police commission, military activities, corporate relationships

living on Kauai housing jobs health safety issues

supportive farming info, Kaua'i history, how to access resources on Kaua'i, septic sewer information relating to south side, health and wellness

all of Kaua'i issues KKCR seems to only focus on Kaua'i northshore issues

balancing the needs of both locals and visitors

development plans, business opportunities, community grassroots activities, traffic, roadworks, pretty much everything

homeless, trash, water, ecological info

short local news segment when you do the local entertainment at 730 and 230

decisions made by County Council for the most part/traffic problems/weather problems

Military operations on the island, now and future land use decision making.

visitors and resort news

more transparency how local government is dealing with homeless encampments and making sure current laws, ordinances and regulations are enforced.

over tourism, sustainability of the island, recycling & landfill management, investigative journalism of local government and businesses

education, lack of outlets and resources for mental health, addiction and homeless needs

emergency preparedness thru improved community organization

housing takes too long to build, bridges

dating sites

For this project we spoke with Kaua'i residents who have at one time been involved with local news. Some takeaways:

"Businesses no longer purchase newspaper advertising, which caused papers to go under. It's ironic that the internet gave us so much information but then took local news from us."

"KKCR is 'the only game in town' but it needs to spend time rebuilding trust."

"Hawaii in general and Kaua'i specifically would benefit from some real journalism, and the nonprofit model suits it well."

"I have always wished Civil Beat would invest more in neighbor islands, but I get it: small potatoes. My dream would be to get an actual printing press back on Kaua'i."



The Hanakāpī'ai Trail, headed to the un-navigable Nā Pali Coast. Kaua'i has one road that does not quite circumvent the island.

Takeaway Narrative and Next Steps

Starting the conversation about local news and how people access it has brought unpredicted results that will ultimately bring more Kaua'i local content, and more Kaua'i based content off island.

During the time of our Information Landscape Survey, Civil Beat, the nonprofit statewide news source available online and via app, also conducted a survey with many of the same types of questions, asking how folks wanted to receive their news. Civil Beat was and still is, at the time of this report, expanding their focus to increase coverage of outer island news. They have hired a new journalist who is loosely connected with KKCR and we have discussed adding a weekly spot in which Civil Beat journalists will talk on air with our public affairs hosts about what they are reporting on and what is a developing story. This increases Civil Beat's presence on our airwaves, as we currently air a statewide news roundup (two and a half minutes) each weekday morning. CB is based on O'ahu, the most populated island by far and seat of government.

To talk more, we reached out to Hawaii Public Radio (HPR) to learn about news and information. Our small radio station has a great deal to learn from our state's NPR station and we got the opportunity to tour their facilities and see just how many people work in each department to keep their content vibrant and relevant. Notably, the size of their newsroom, which produces prerecorded segments, a daily hour called The Conversation, and a newsletter distributed at the end of the workday summing up the day's news, was a sobering moment. We felt naive about pursuing a newsroom, having seen the amount of people it takes. But HPR, like Civil Beat, sees the gap in statewide coverage to neighbor islands to O'ahu and is pursuing ideas to fill it. We discussed content sharing, since KKCR has something that HPR wants: the connection to Kaua'i and what's going on.

Developing relationships with CB and HPR taught us that having a news room or a news department would be out of reach for KKCR without a shift in funding and staffing and adding on to the station building to house the new operation. But as a start, our small station can cooperate with these newsrooms to amplify their message to our wide listenership. If we don't yet have the capacity for a news department, we can meet the needs of our community by amplifying the voices that are already accomplishing what our listeners are asking for. Our resources and success in engaging the community will provide feedback and needs assessments for our partners.

Station staff, through the survey period, has found that what is most unique and untouched in the media landscape is Kaua'i specific information, be it parade coverage, a meeting about a housing development, what our political candidates care about, what our Hawaiian community needs for sovereignty to thrive, where the current flooding is happening, etc. For our public affairs and news programs to air content that isn't about Kaua'i and for Kaua'i and made by Kaua'i doesn't make sense when we are "the only game in town". Our news programming will reflect this commitment.

Another commitment we've made is to focus less on the problems in our community - we know what they are because they have persisted - and more on the solutions we can talk about and build together and how a community radio station can facilitate those conversations.

Training. Partnerships. Focus. Keep listening. It is both our honor and our kuleana to inform Kaua'i.



Butch Kekahu, one of KKCR's founding visionaries and namesake of our governing body.

Respectfully submitted by the station staff at KKCR

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