Radio Reincarnation In 21st Century

Aural media has a history of punctuating the daily routine of millions of Australians across different states, cities, and demographics since … At its core – radio presenters, communication professionals that prepare, and present information on a variety of topics, conduct interviews and introduce music, performances and special events on radios.

These communicators are important distributors of ‘social meaning,’ however Australian radio presenters are facing significant challenges of remaining relevant to audiences and advertisers, as the audio landscape has become saturated by on demand audio streaming services and podcasters. However, the ability of radio presenters to be ambidextrous in both the terrestrial and digital mediums and brand themselves and their content to unique, niche segments of the market is paramount to remaining employed in the increasingly precarious landscape.

Technology has redefined and diminished the value of the terrestrial signal and the voice behind it.

1. The functions of radio presenters in delivering news and introducing music has been effectively replaced by online news aggregators, social media feeds and streaming applications such as Spotify.
2. Further, the confinement of the radio medium to a regiment program that is live, scheduled and must appeal to the masses is dated. Digital natives have become accustomed to on-demand content, specific to their unique interests. The lack of choice and autonomy over content in the radio medium, is not palpable to the new consumer.
3. Moreover, advertisers are reconsidering their spend on Radio, shifting to new mediums such as podcasts and music streaming services. PwC precits the Australian podcasting market to grow exponentially with the form overall delivering higher rates of attention, brand recall and discretional spend.

These factors have been paramount to the increasing precarity of employment as a radio presenter.

However, the future is not so gloomy, for radio presenters that develop their skillsets into new and emerging medium and those able to triumph their unique voice and self-brand over other ammeter content creators.

1. Entrepreneurial skills are skills that include communication, teamwork and problem solving. Developing this skill base will allow radio professionals to work effectively in the Gig economy, navigating freelance work and acessing more opportunities.
2. Further, radio presenters must seek work in future focused clusters such as podcasting networks – the diverse skill set, will allow professional ‘flexiportation.’
3. Radio presenters must harness and triumph their unique voice by deriving self-branding principles. Individuals are seen to be tuning out to Radio in favour of presenters with more authenticity and a stronger drive and message. To be successful in the new environment, radio presenters need to have creative autonomy over their image and package themselves as a brand, valuable to a consumer. The branded self will derive

more attention acquiring greater monetary and social value which will enable longevity in a career in the media.

Overall, whilst the future of Radio presenters at first glance looks gloomy, there is prosperity for those willing to adapt to the challenges and redefine what it means to be radio presenter.