

# Renegotiating radio work in the era of media convergence: Uncertainty, individualisation and the centrality of brands

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## Abstract

Commercial radio is seemingly resisting many of the challenges that online media platforms present for print and television. Despite encouraging listener numbers and consistent revenue, there is, however, widespread industry consensus that radio must change to account for an uncertain future. In a highly commercial context, such as New Zealand, radio stations are increasingly converged with complementary platforms as part of a larger integrated media offering. Aligning with a broad political economy critique of contemporary media work and similar investigations into changing radio practices elsewhere, this article examines the negotiation of new responsibilities within New Zealand radio's 'virtual duopoly'. To this end, the research presented here is drawn from an empirical study that conducted in-depth interviews with radio professionals across various levels of management, on-air, and online content production. The interviews reveal the workings commercial radio organisations as they develop strategies to meet new branding objectives by converging broadcast and online media practices. As this article will demonstrate, management tasked with implementing digital initiatives have an informal approach to developing these strategies, encountering limited resistance in the promotion of new tasks. Likewise, on-air staff have largely embraced the opportunity to extend their personal brand and engage with audiences online. A relaxed approach to implementing new practices is perpetuating industry uncertainty, demonstrating some potential to strain existing organisational relationships.

This article investigates the experiences of contemporary radio workers in the context of media change. It illustrates that, although radio represents relative stability amidst rapid technological advances, a perception of industry uncertainty is common amongst those managing the convergence of on-air and online practices. In response to uncertainty, radio personalities and designated support staff are actively integrating new tasks and responsibilities into their work routines. This process contributes to the re-imagining of conventional radio stations as visible, multi-platform, media brands. To a large extent, the new imperatives are driven by the demands of radio employers who are responding to intense competition for audience attention in a convergent media environment. However, new professional activities are not necessarily imposed upon radio workers – the tendency

to internalize the pressure to adapt in an evolving media environment is an equal driver behind new work practices. The latter tendency is partially described by Kuehn and Corrigan (2013) as the post-industrial workers' embrace of "neoliberalism's entrepreneurial ethos" (16). By examining the motivation and actualisation of industry change from a range of subjective, professional perspectives, this article provides much needed analysis of the ongoing negotiation between radio workers and their employers.

The renegotiation of radio work amidst the ascendancy of competing digital platforms speaks to the wider concerns of a political economy of communication on several levels. First, these processes are occurring within major media structures shaped by deregulatory policy environments and neoliberal market strategies. Second, the changing configurations of professional practices invoke questions regarding the influence of those in ownership and management and their exercise of power over employees tasked with content production and audience interaction. Third, the dual proliferation of web-based communication as professional *and* personal activity raises new concerns regarding the commodification of social life. As Winseck (2011) explains:

The fact, that all media industries are based on 'strange commodities' that have been force-fit into the commodity mould with extreme difficulty since the late nineteenth century is a significant cause of never-ending uncertainty (Babe, 1995; Boyle, 1996). This conundrum has been brought to a head because digitisation seems to excavate the 'social ecology of information' (lifeworld) from its natural setting and subject it to the processes of commodification to a greater extent than ever in the past (46).

Thus, the analysis in this article exists somewhere between an institutional critique of contemporary media structures and a nuanced critique of digital capitalism that shapes reconfigurations of media power. The intent by commercial radio organisations to overcome industry uncertainty and capitalise on the potential to grow radio brands across multiple platforms is the primary concern. However, breaking somewhat from the conventional approaches of a political economy of communication that may prioritise an assessment of organisational structure and media content, this study gives weight to the subjective experiences of radio workers who have been tasked with implementing new strategies and adopting new practices. It investigates the process by which roles and responsibilities are negotiated between those in management positions, and radio workers on the frontlines of content production and delivery. In so doing, this article seeks to determine if radio workers are at all displaced by structural changes and the priorities of their employers. Subsequently, it considers the extent to which experiences in the radio industries speak to wider social transformations of contemporary work, through the lens of worker exploitation and precarity.

## Investigating media work

Work and/or labour, as a subjective experience at the centre of contemporary communication industries, has been generally overlooked by political economy critiques of the cultural industries (Mosco, 2009, 2011; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011). Priority has instead been given to structures that inform production practices, content and reception. As Mosco (2009) observes, the investigation of production practices has been better served by the perspectives of organisational communication and sociology, through rich empirical studies of bureaucratic organisations and the administration of media work (Deuze, 2007). For Mosco, such literature challenges political economy to consider "the process of production foregrounding political and economic power, specifically the commodification of labour" (141). In mapping the study of cultural labour across various disciplines, Hesmondhalgh

and Baker (2011) similarly call for social analysis that utilises “empirically informed research” into labour in the cultural industries while “paying attention to questions of power, institutions, and subjectivity” (396). This article speaks to that objective.

Perhaps the most widely cited publication on this topic, Deuze’s *Media work* (2007) provides a foundational mapping of contemporary global media industries in which work experiences are often generated by the macro trends of individualisation and precarity. These experiences are seen to coincide with an ongoing convergence between “work, play and life” (42) that blurs the respective boundaries of each and fosters personal and professional uncertainty. Individualisation is emphasised in the promotion of an entrepreneurial work ethic that facilitates flexibility and adaptability for workers, while reducing organisational responsibility for stability and security (see also Deuze, 2014). However, for Deuze (2007) these trends are not inherently detrimental for media workers. He suggests that understanding professional experiences of ambiguity within the media industries enables a deeper understanding of contemporary social lives. Thus, while acknowledging the role that media institutions play in leveraging worker creativity for the sake of the “bottom-line”, Deuze indicates that the increased creativity and connectivity of media workers has the potential to facilitate their engagement in wider society: “We can make something of and in media, and media to some extent seem to put us into the driver’s seat when navigating the world around us” (Deuze, 2014: 122). Deuze generally maintains a critical perspective on the experiences of media workers subject to these conditions, but suggests that media workers in some industries, such as film and television, can value flexibility and mobility in their freelance positions when working in a stressful and chaotic environment.

Increasing individualisation, however, as McRobbie (2002) suggests, entails the removal of workers from the security and protection of long-standing social institutions: “people increasingly have to become their own micro-structures, they have to do the work of the structures by themselves” (518). As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002) explain, a trend towards individualisation increases the burden of navigating contemporary life without the previous guarantees of shared burden and responsibility: “Think, calculate, plan, adjust, negotiate, define, revoke (with everything constantly starting again from the beginning): these are the imperatives of the ‘precarious freedoms’ that are taking hold of life as modernity advances” (6). It is from a similar perspective that Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2011) propose that the individual responsibility and freedoms afforded to ‘creative workers’ do not automatically override traditional Marxist concerns with deskilling, alienation and routinisation in industrial labour processes. There is a risk that creative workers will become subject to the mental and emotional cost of ‘self-exploitation’ in contemporary media industries and their wider social sphere. In their analysis of digital free labour Kuehn and Corrigan (2013) similarly argue that contemporary media technologies are “introducing new opportunities for exploiting workers’ compensation needs even as corporations continue to report record profits” (12). Individualised and digitally mediated experiences of work (or in the case of free labour, work-like practices) are increasingly precarious with limited institutional security. The pressures of market and industry uncertainty are transferred on to those tasked with the regular production of media content.

To a large extent, investigations of digital labour in media industries have focused upon the appearance of free labour (Terranova, 2000; Jin, 2012). Elsewhere active users have been theorised as prosumers and produsers (Jenkins, 2006; Bruns, 2008) – as digital technologies effect the convergence of traditional producer and consumer roles. Free labour generates informational or cultural products without the compensation that would be expected in traditional media employment. The proliferation of such labour is problematic on a number of fronts. As Daubs (2016) explains in

the case of CNN's 2011 iReport initiative, renewed organisational efforts to harness user-generated content coincided with layoffs for approximately fifty paid staff. This might indicate a rapid transition from the material rewards of paid media work to the immaterial, socio-psychological benefits of participation and recognition in online communities. However, Daubs, 2016) states that "[t]he net result is an oversupply of workers that suppresses wages – or even eliminates the need for them entirely – and operates to the advantage of CNN, a capitalist institution" (Daubs, 2016). As Fuchs (2013) explains, the exploitation of digital labour intensifies when active audiences are "sold by internet platforms to advertising clients" who in "return present targeted ads to users" (20). As Kuehn and Corrigan (2013) explain with the concept of "hope labour", social media users may anticipate that their efforts in the production of content (such as blog posting, or product and service reviews) will lead to gainful employment within an established media organisation. To this end, hope labourers are doing the work without the promise of compensation, and ultimately "undermining the very labour market they aspire to enter by continually supplying it with individuals who are willing to work for nothing" (Kuehn and Corrigan, 2013: 20). For Kuehn and Corrigan this mode of practice is a direct contributor to the precarity of contemporary work.

As online activities that demand and perpetuate free labour expand, they also converge with the practices of professional media workers as they are tasked with following their audience online. This creates an awkward circumstance in which media workers are guaranteed material compensation while they are exposed to the wider imperatives of commercial online spaces. If digital platforms exploit informal, free, or immaterial labour, then the practices of professionals who operate in this space may obfuscate the distinctions between professional and personal activity. In this regard, the extent of labour precarity present in the contemporary media industries requires ongoing qualification. Deuze's (2007) analysis of the global film and television industries compares patterns of revenue and audience engagement with the experiences and expectations of disruption and change. He cites Blair's (2001) depiction of the film industry as one of "precarious stability", and highlights the complexity of work practices that depend on global financing, ongoing project success and worker mobility (cited in Deuze, 2007: 174). The persistence of some regular and permanent work stemming from industry trends such as film franchising is presented as an exception to industry uncertainty. There is some sense in this 'caveat' (whereby discussions of precarious labour should concern only those who are most subjected to the pressures of temporary, flexible work). An ongoing feature of Deuze's scholarship, though, is the consideration that uncertainty pervades the experience of creative labour under relative material certainty (Deuze, 2007: 174). As Wilson and Ebert (2013) suggest, in addition to the "industrial relations model of precarity", precariousness can be recognised as a "state of being": "it has an inevitably subjective and social element and may constitute itself differently for individuals and groups in different work situations" (attributed to Kallberg, 2009, 266).

Observations about these features of media work can be located in a recent body of research that addresses the increasing precarity experienced by contemporary journalists. Researchers have utilised the concept of 'autonomy' in order to, simultaneously, critique the emerging pressures in newsrooms as organisations grow digital strategies, and the agency of individual journalists within a changing media landscape. Concerns arising from this research include an apparent disregard for established news production practices (Cohen, 2015), the blurring of distinctions between professional and amateur journalists (Compton and Bendetti, 2010), and the proliferation of individual journalists engaging in the development of a personal brand (Brems, Temmerman, Graham and Broersma, 2017; Carah, 2011; Molyneux, Holton and Lewis, 2017). Personal branding is recognised as a key strategy for individualised success in the contemporary media industries. Here, Carah (2011) points out that

“[w]here their creative labour might have been invested in imagining new social and political formations, it is, instead, directed toward reinforcing and obscuring the political, social, and cultural structures of branding” (436). The nuanced and complex separation of contemporary media workers from institutional support while they continue to serve the interests of commercially driven structures remind us “that journalists are workers in a capitalist economy” (Gollmitzer, 2014: 838), while also being the commodity itself. As this article will demonstrate, control over the commodification of digital media work and personal branding perpetuates labour uncertainty in the contemporary media industries.

The changing shape of radio industries and the experiences of radio workers have been afforded far less attention than the fields of journalism, television and film. However, a small number of contributions from radio-studies scholars have identified salient trends concerning the negotiation of new work responsibilities. Set against the perception that journalists must “transform or die”, Usher’s (2012) observations about the NPR newsroom (United States public radio) indicate that managerial approaches to implementing convergence practices often generated resistant attitudes from journalists (Usher, 2012: 65). “Top-down” initiatives included the implementation of a seven-week training program “designed to turn each staff member into a multimedia storyteller” (Usher, 2012: 71). The central concern for journalists in the newsroom was that the prioritisation of, and re-training towards, digital content, detracted from their traditional focus – producing radio content. As Usher (2012) explains further, this type of organisational change has the potential to elicit “professional identity conflicts” amid tension between “professional autonomy and new content demands for [the journalists] daily work” (71). In this instance, the transition from a managerial system that directed new work practices to a team-led, exploratory approach, was critical to the wider acceptance of organisational change. In the context of a commercial music radio network in Sweden, Stiernsedt (2014) similarly observes the impact of new work practices upon radio DJs as they are illuminated as ‘personalities’ under a shifting business model that seeks to distinguish itself from competing music delivery services. Here, tales of resistance against strong organisational directives are less apparent and point to the wider observation that radio workers, like many journalists, are recognising the value of their personal brand. Alongside research from Rook and Odame (2013) that details the practice of blogging by Canadian radio announcers, these new work practices have the potential to afford radio workers greater mobility across radio organisations. However, Sellas and Bonini’s (2014) survey of social media managers in radio organisations in Italy and Spain, also emphasises that the pressures of developing and promoting brand identities has less visible impacts upon those workers:

Working as a producer for a radio programme before the era of social media meant going to the radio station, producing the recorded live programme, then going home, like a worker finishing a shift at a factory. Working as a producer in the era of social media means working constantly, even from home, confusing the boundaries between work and life (77).

Revisiting the call from Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2011) to develop empirically informed research that considers the political economy of labour within the wider media industries, this article contributes to international understandings about the contemporary experiences of radio work.

## **The study**

The research findings presented here are drawn from a larger research project considering radio industry responses to the processes of media convergence [1]. Primary data collection involved 31

in-depth interviews with radio professionals working in, or closely with, the three largest radio networks in the New Zealand industry. Discussion of this material will demonstrate that the current New Zealand radio industry is a product of extensive, nationwide, neoliberal reform initiated in 1989. This reform programme has permitted, and perhaps even encouraged, intensive commercialisation and industry consolidation for nearly 30 years. Thus, the New Zealand radio industry case speaks directly to the primary concerns of a critical political economy understanding of media industries. The interview data presented in this article arises from 22 participants (12 are directly cited) involved in the commercial sectors of New Zealand radio. The interviews were conducted from mid-2013 to mid-2014 amidst several industry initiatives to develop digital aspects of radio programming and branding. A third organisation, Radio New Zealand, the major public service broadcaster, was included in the original study but excluded from this article so as to permit a manageable data set for discussion. The two commercial organisations that are represented in this article do, however, account for the vast majority of total radio listening in New Zealand. Furthermore, they generally mirror one another in both structure and practice.

The range of research interviewees covered different levels of responsibility within each organization. I was thus able to ascertain variances in the experiences, attitudes and impressions of technological change across various roles. Industry participants represent senior levels of management, on-air announcers and producers, journalists, sales and marketing agents, and online content managers and producers [2]. These interviewees were typically secured through requests that specified the categories of work responsibility accorded to administrative assistants in each organisation (occasionally managerial staff played a role in establishing contact with more junior staff). A guarantee that interview data would only be presented anonymously was also obtained to encourage honest and frank discussion from the research participants. Generally, targeted interviewees were willing to participate in the research process and speak freely about their experiences of the industry, although there was some minor frustration that the research interviews were distractions from their regular work tasks. This perhaps explains the unsuccessful requests for interviews with the CEO of each commercial organisation, although ultimately that did not delimit the range of industry experiences recorded. Collectively, the interviewees' narrative details a buoyant radio industry that has avoided financial crisis, maintained its audience, and initiated a response to the burgeoning challenge posed by digital media platforms and evolving audience behaviours. However, beyond the collective position of strength represented by the industry, individual accounts of contemporary radio work highlight varying experiences of uncertainty as new technologies, structures and practices are integrated into work routines.

## **The contemporary radio industry in New Zealand**

The extent to which radio workers are experiencing uncertainty in their profession can be identified in their own personal reflections on professional practice and the state of the industry. The New Zealand radio sector exhibits dual tendencies towards stability and flux, complicating any predictions regarding its future shape and form. At a technological level, radio in New Zealand is still predominantly broadcast via analogue FM spectrum, the dominant platform of the past 30 years, whereas culturally similar radio markets in the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, and Australia, have progressively implemented digital broadcasting systems (Anderson, 2012, 2014; O'Neill, 2010; Stoller, 2012). The integration of video content and social media as features of convergent media practices, has become a key consideration for both employers and employees of

commercial radio organisations without digital broadcasting infrastructure. Irrespective of technological standard, recent international scholarship describes the radio medium as relevant and “resilient” (Oliveira et al., 2014), capable of “reinventing” itself (Lindgren and Phillips, 2014; Shaw, 2010) and of adapting to the changing expectations of contemporary audiences. Lindgren and Phillips (2014), in outlining the audience “response” to contemporary radio, cite listener reporting from the US, UK, and Australia pointing to high numbers in each context, and projected growth overall (5). In a table provided by Winseck (2011: 10), to illustrate the sustained performance of global network media amidst economic crisis, radio has demonstrated greater revenue growth from 1998-2010 than both television and newspapers (the figures are - +93%, +73%, and +4.3% respectively).

At an organisational and policy level, the recent history of radio in New Zealand is similarly characterised by industry stability – albeit, as a direct consequence of deregulatory policy directives that coincided with sweeping neoliberal restructuring across most public sectors. In 1989, broadcasting deregulation positioned the New Zealand radio spectrum as a “tradable property” (Radio Spectrum Management, 2005: 2) with minimal controls on the size and origin of ownership. Consequently, new broadcast stations proliferated, and by the mid-2000s New Zealand reportedly had more broadcast radio frequencies operating per capita than any other country in the world (Shanahan and Duignan, 2005). The rapid expansion of radio frequencies offered a superficial increase in radio diversity, and a hyper-competitive market that stretched advertising revenue to its limits. This soon gave way to “monopoly capitalism” (Garnham, 1990) as commercial networks emerged from unrestrained acquisition. In *Rich media, poor democracy*, McChesney (1999) acknowledged the dual processes of privatisation and conglomeration that were taking place in the New Zealand media sector, and referred to the sale of all publicly-owned commercial radio stations. At the same time, McChesney reported on the formation of a new party on the political left and cited its media director’s, intent to “raise issues of media monopoly and battle for a reversal of privatisations” (317). However, a significant challenge never eventuated. From 1999 to 2012, over three terms each of both centre-left and centre-right governments, the New Zealand radio industry became dominated by a “virtual duopoly” that accounted for approximately 85% of all broadcast radio activity (Mollgaard, 2012: 61). The two major commercial broadcasters, MediaWorks and NZME [3], currently operate nine and eight national radio networks respectively. They employ highly-targeted niche formatting that positions most networks as competitors with a rival network. For example, NZME’s commercial talk network *Newstalk ZB* is in direct competition with MediaWorks’ *Radio Live* – both stations prioritise news and talkback content and target similar audience demographics. Likewise, MediaWorks’ *Mai FM* and NZME’s *Flava* utilise an ‘urban’ music format to target similar youth audiences. Overall, each broadcast organisation has a formatting strategy in place for most commercially viable audience demographics. Any separation between the two networks reflects subtle consumer preferences, rather than radically alternate content provision. Thus, the apparent duopoly in New Zealand exhibits regular commercial competition, but there is significant cooperation on matters of policy and industry governance.

This brief, but critical history shows that New Zealand radio is ultimately subject to the sheer dominance of two major media corporations. Furthermore, the composition of the national industry has remained largely unchanged since the early 2000s. In my view, this has perpetuated relative industry stability. At present, 86.7% of the potential radio audience (New Zealanders aged 10+) listen on a weekly basis (GfK, 2017: para. 3), and despite minor fluctuations, commercial revenue has proven consistent compared to the fluctuating downward trends exhibited by the newspaper and television sectors. In the past five years, total radio revenue has declined less than a percentage point

and remained steady at approximately 11% of the total advertising spend in New Zealand. Furthermore, the dollar value of revenue has actually increased from NZ\$248m in 2012 to \$275m in 2016 (Advertising Standards Authority, 2014, 2015, 2016). By comparison, the newspaper industry's share of advertising spend fell nearly 7% over the same period to 18.6% of total spend, and total revenue fell from \$578m to \$478m. Likewise, the television industry lost almost 6% of its advertising share (22.6% in 2016) and \$34m in revenue (\$580m in 2016). Exacerbating this trend, digital variations for each media platform were not included in reporting statistics as recently as 2012. Any losses in 2016 are thus inclusive of attempted gains through digital and/or online advertising streams (Advertising Standards Authority, 2014, 2015, 2016).

Comparing the performance or resilience of radio against the print and television industries in New Zealand is both illuminating and problematic. Although the recent history of radio in New Zealand points to the growing dominance of a virtual duopoly, this process has not occurred in isolation. The print and television sectors in New Zealand have been similarly dominated by conglomerate media ownership. Furthermore, New Zealand's deregulatory policies removed any restriction on cross-media ownership: MediaWorks is a major operator in both radio and television and NZME has major holdings in radio and print. While the sustained performance of radio in New Zealand may assure the industry of stability, this will not advantage the larger corporate structure if print and television are performing poorly. For example, in 2017 MediaWorks reported a one-year operating loss of just under \$15 million NZD, attributed mostly to a \$16.7 million revenue decline for its television operation (\$130.1 million). By comparison, radio revenue only declined \$400,000 and sat higher overall (\$156.9 million) than earnings from television (Newshub, 2017; see also Myllylahti, 2017). Both MediaWorks and NZME are characterised by intensive financialisation and rationalisation. Following a brief period of financial receivership in 2013, MediaWorks became 100 per cent owned by American hedge fund Oaktree Capital in 2015. Likewise, eight financial institutions own 96.58 per cent of NZME shares and the organisation has aggressively pursued a complete merger with its largest print rival, Fairfax media (Myllylahti, 2017), [4]. Thus, the economic realities of convergence, in which major media corporations are better recognised as complex financial institutions, seemingly overwhelms progressive developments in media technology, form, and practice. Specific instances of convergence strategies (some of which are detailed in the following section) are as much a consequence of organisational restructuring as of technological possibilities.

However, for some radio industry insiders, technology is a marker of the medium's resilience. Radio has been able to fend off successive challenges from television broadcasting, and the digital distribution of recorded music:

There is a lot of hysteria – I guess I am using that word a bit too broadly, but particularly from print and magazines, they use it as a whipping tool for radio; 'radio is dead, yet again.' Everybody's going to stop listening to the radio and use these 'things', the fact of the matter is, there's always a percentage of people who are going to use these new tools, but what is the mass market doing? (Interviewee 1)

The self-reporting of commercial industry resilience is to be expected in the context of a clear strategic goal: to retain advertiser confidence. But, at the same time, it belies the culture of hype and progress that surrounds newer, digital platforms. The latter has certainly permeated the perspectives of some radio workers in New Zealand.

In general, interview participants provided inconsistent personal assessments of the state of contemporary radio in New Zealand. Staff within the same organisation, effectively sitting across a



desk from one another, represented both the concern that radio was a “dying medium” and dismay that such a drastic outcome could be suggested (See also McEwan, 2017). There was little evidence in the interviews that material corrections, such as job losses or budget constraints, were occurring at an increased rate. But, staff were consistent in the belief that their industry needed to adopt greater urgency and either allay immediate threats or capitalise on an exciting opportunity. The prospect of industry change was clearly articulated by a former music announcer who had recently shifted into a content management role:

I think there is a real tipping point now, because everything is so multimedia we have to figure out where to next. Because, terrestrial radio is not going anywhere in a hurry, but there is a flashing yellow light maybe. It is not red, it is not orange, it is just yellow. But if you sit here and do nothing... especially as a young station, we have got to be the “reinvent yourself over and over again” radio station, and so part of that probably means moving beyond radio. (Interviewee 2)

The statement ‘beyond radio’, alludes to relative ambiguity about the central strategy that radio organisations should adopt in a converging media environment – the only constant is that radio announcers, and the organisations they work within, should do more. Given industry stability, the motivation to expand radio activities is grounded in a *perception* of external threats and the need to prepare for an uncertain future. It is in this context that radio workers are experiencing uncertainty at a direct, personal level.

## Reimagining radio as a multi-platform brand

Notwithstanding consistent success with broadcast radio advertising, commercial radio operators set about implementing a number of changes to their organisational structures, largely in response to the changing expectations of advertising clients. Significantly, at the centre of these changes is a new discourse that speaks directly to the logic of media convergence. One employee interviewed was now working under the banner of “branded content” (Interviewee 3), having been previously located in sponsorship and promotions. They explained that a new label contributed to a process of shedding the limitations of the former industry settings. It represented the willingness of the radio organisation to work with clients across a range of integrated platforms: “We are not just radio anymore” (Interviewee 3). The assertion is that while radio as both a medium and business continues to succeed, the organisations that have specialised in radio are now diversifying their practices across multiple media platforms.

Mid-way through 2014, one of the largest commercial radio stations in New Zealand, *The Edge*, announced that it was launching a free-to-air music television channel. Deregulation of media ownership policy in New Zealand had already permitted the cross-ownership of broadcast radio and television networks, but this was the first instance in which channels on both platforms would share the same branded identity and employ the same cast of presenters. Upon announcing *The Edge TV*, Leon Wratt, the programme director for *The Edge* radio station (at the time), described the new television offering as “radio with pictures on steroids” (MediaWorks, 2014) [5]. Wratt continued to explain that a television broadcast had been an aspiration of *The Edge* radio station for a number of years, and that the programming content was intended to reflect the radio format.

To some extent, the launch of a broadcast television channel simply exemplifies media convergence trends. Andrew Szusterman, the Group Programme Director for *The Edge’s* parent company MediaWorks Radio, stated that the addition of a television channel was part of a larger

expansion strategy for the radio station: “The Edge will live on radio, television, web, tablet, mobile and social media – everywhere our audience wants to be” (MediaWorks, 2014). However, this was not an exercise in multimedia or multi-platform content distribution that sought to spread content as far as possible via simulcasting. *The Edge’s* television offering would be largely separate, utilising its own suite of studios, unique programming and an independent music playlist. Thus, convergence in this instance is not fundamentally driven by a technological solution or imperative – it is the establishment of broadcast television activities *in addition to* existing broadcast radio. This case exemplifies the political economy critique of convergence processes: “The central dynamic of convergence is economic not technological” (Murdock and Golding, 2002: 13).

Incorporation of television by radio may not work in every context. The Edge is a youth-targeted, popular-music, radio station that now also operates a music television channel, a conventional site for youth media audiences. However, beyond the imperative of reaching the widest possible audience, the rationale for extending a radio station’s content and employees to broadcast television also derives from the specific characteristics of the commercial radio organisations that have dominated deregulated media systems. As a former CEO for one of New Zealand’s commercial networks explains, unrestricted ownership has had a lasting impact on the strategies employed by commercial operators:

It became a multi-branding strategy, and more akin to other companies where we would run multi-brands from a central office. In our market, breweries do that, some of the drink companies do that... so it was that sort of area as opposed to the traditional radio companies because there was simply no precedents anywhere to rely on. (Interviewee 4)

The comparison between radio stations and consumer beverages lends itself to the concerns of critical political economists that media convergence serves commercial objectives rather than technology-driven improvements in audience participation and access. This insight also explains the broad thinking of the commercial radio industry in New Zealand. Radio stations are represented as branded products, and the operators as multi-brand providers. In an era of media convergence, radio brands have transcended the specifications of the medium and now function as important ‘media brands’ across a range of platforms. The Program Director stated that the launch of *The Edge TV* would “consolidate *The Edge’s* position as New Zealand’s biggest music entertainment brand” (MediaWorks, 2014: para. 3).

As radio stations move across and between the conventions of technology, form and practice, their re-classification as brands becomes more prominent in the discourse of industry participants. Locating successful brand identities is an essential task for commercial organisations. The former CEO of one major radio network also believes that the reconfiguration of radio stations as brands resulted from the introduction of automation systems that distributed network radio transmissions from a central hub to regional markets. These automated systems retain the opportunity to inject local advertising while centralising broadcast content: “That changed the game entirely, because it meant you could run multi-brands in very small markets, and that has led to the growth of network listening... to the detriment if you like, of the local brands” (Interviewee 4). This overall trend has continued to progress from semi-local network brands that would produce regional programming in prime timeslots to niche-targeted genre-specific brands that are national in scope. The largest commercial network brands are broadcast in up to 25 regional markets (*The Edge* is broadcast in 24)

for a national population of less than 5 million people. In the largest regional market (Auckland), the two major commercial operators broadcast a combined total of 18 radio brands.

Beyond single-brand level initiatives such as the launch of *The Edge TV*, branding strategy departed from medium specificity altogether. This trend was central to the 2014 launch of NZME, the rival network to MediaWorks. NZME re-positioned individual radio stations and print media products as content brands under the shared categories of news, sport, and entertainment. Unlike the former initiative, which saw a single brand expand on to a new platform with a somewhat discrete product, the NZME strategy encompasses multiple brands for commercial clients based on simple content categorisation. The distinction between these types of convergences is subtle, and at various stages the material outcome can be similar, but it must be reiterated that the intensification of brand identity at an organisational level is the central feature of a commercial rationale that pervades convergence processes. As indicated, most interviewees associated these processes with the changing expectations of advertising clients and audiences alike. However, it would be logical to assume that the organisational convergence of steady-performing radio holdings with financially challenged television (MediaWorks) and print (NZME.) operations potentially obfuscates, medium specific decline.

At a worker level, the development of a central branding strategy has coincided with the growing status of radio employees that specialise in the commercial operation of the radio organisation (sales, promotion, and marketing). Among research participants in this area it was confirmed that the transition towards understanding radio as a branded product had intensified. This was a response to the range of new competing platforms and the changing expectations of commercial advertising clients. In particular, a mid-level manager for one of the commercial organisations explained that roles in marketing were not prominent when they began working in the radio industry a decade ago, but had become a key part of such commercial organisations in recent years. They noted that radio brands are in the unusual position of being both a traditional marketing vehicle and a branded product that requires its own marketing to compete on new platforms: “We are a brand, and we actually need to establish what we stand for, and this is who we are, this is who we want to listen in, and then actually market that” (Interviewee 5). The reimagining of once-stations as flexible and mobile media brands has necessitated new work configurations within radio organisations. In the context of society-wide trends towards labour individualisation and precarity, these sites of organisational transformation can offer critical insight into the renegotiation of contemporary work.

## **Negotiating new roles and responsibilities**

Alongside a general increase in staff tasked with marketing and promotion, a new feature was the growth of specialist staff responsible for the production and organisation of each radio brand’s online presence. Online editors are almost entirely responsible for managing the content of the station website, which includes re-purposed audio content, supplementary text-based content, still images, and, increasingly, original video content. The brand website has also emerged as a focal point of audience interaction, meaning that the management of promotional and branded activity must be coordinated with social media engagement on behalf of the radio brand (this is often undertaken by individual announcers). Workers responsible for the network websites and online content had taken on the further responsibility of helping existing radio staff adapt to new platforms and new practices for the collective benefit of individual radio brands. Despite being employed by a separate organisational department named “Interactive”, online editors working for music brands at one

commercial network were physically located at the site of each radio operation so they could respond quickly to content ideas and work actively with the on-air announcers. The act of physically converging the online team with the on-air announcers was deemed necessary for the successful integration of the two platforms:

There is no emailing around, it is just talking to people in the room and running into on-air studios and asking them questions and getting info from them, getting photos off their phones, just little things... It is integral to be parked alongside the content creators themselves. (Interviewee 6)

There was a sense that working across two departments simultaneously had been challenging at times for the online editors. One explained that the specific goals of the radio brand and the Interactive department can vary and that the online editor is in the unique position of responding to both sets of priorities. Staff dedicated to the radio operation also recognised the need to consider content and promotion for the website. This illustrates the pervasiveness and complexity of the increasing brand rationale within converged media structures. MediaWorks and NZME are themselves organisational brands that appeal to advertising clients, while individual radio brands sit within the wider organisation and target specific demographics through music and talk formatting. However, the individual personalities that produce and deliver most on-air content are at the same time discrete brands that seek to attract and sustain a loyal audience-base via performance. Referring broadly to the performative and celebrity qualities of contemporary journalism, Atkinson (2011) emphasises the “parasocial interaction” that occurs between television news anchors and their audiences. A personality-led, parasocial relationship will in turn, legitimise the organisation as a successful advertising platform by delivering audiences as commodities. The online editors observed in this study were key organisational proponents of digital media convergences and were subsequently tasked with traversing organisational and individual brand identities simultaneously.

Online editors attached to an individual radio operation viewed themselves as members of a specific brand team and were willing to help with activities such as content and promotion not directly linked to their primary Interactive or Digital responsibilities. One of the editors – an exception to the rule – fulfilled a minor on-air role from which they derived personal satisfaction, and the benefit of further insight when communicating between the two groups of people. This occurred “[n]ot only at an employer to employee level but also on a co-worker level, because they can see that you understand how things work... I can see both sides of the problem” (Interviewee 6). The particular challenges that online content managers faced when negotiating new practices were never framed as insurmountable. As the on-air and online priorities of each radio brand seemingly converge, utilising radio announcers as a primary source of content is framed as essential to the success of the brand.

Radio announcers are the most visibly affected category of workers within radio organisations. This is largely to be expected as they [6] are the main point of engagement between a radio outlet and its audience. Changes in the radio form can be understood by investigating the roles of announcers at the centre of the operation. In practical terms, the organisational embrace of media convergence can lead to the modification of, or an increase in, regular tasks. It can also potentially displace workers that are struggling to accept or resist qualitatively new practices. As a former announcer, turned content manager explained:

My job prescription changed because I actually had to be thinking about what can we put on the website that we can then get people engaged with, and social media you know, do you tweet, do you Facebook, do you Instagram? What other things do you do

to interact with your listeners? And how do you portray what we are trying to do? What is appropriate and what is not? (Interviewee 2)

In accordance with perceptions of industry instability, concern regarding the utilisation of social media, or alternative web platforms, was highest amongst frontline staff involved in the regular production of radio content.

One music announcer that had worked at several music brands over thirteen years recognised a new set of pressures associated with representing a brand and establishing a visual identity. As she explained, one of the biggest challenges in working across several different radio brands throughout her radio career was adjusting to different music formats and genres, and being able to represent them on-air (Interviewee 7). While the conventions of commercial radio announcing may be fairly consistent, she had recently been directed by management to front a regular video news segment for the brand website. There was a sense that this new responsibility departed from her expectations of the role and required quite minor but notable adjustments to her work routine (such as ensuring she had makeup ready for the days they were filming). The announcer had also been required to attend promotional events and associate with clients, and had even been surprised by a management directive to dress in appropriate attire that represented the brand:

They said they'd give me a hundred bucks to go buy a leather jacket. I said do not worry about it I have got my own. You cannot buy a leather jacket for a hundred bucks... I guess it makes sense, it is on brand, but that is so much more than just sitting behind a mic, being anonymous and talking about music. (Interviewee 7)

This radio announcer's experiences perhaps came closest to an experience of labour precarity; she had experienced employment insecurity throughout her broadcasting career. Although her experiences were more severe than other participants, the lack of subsequent "job security" was an increasingly common experience (as supported by Interviewee 2 previously). Standing (2011) argues that management directives towards functional flexibility resulting in a disruption of personal routine is equally important in considerations of precarity. He (2011) cites a particularly extreme case in which thirty employees of France Telecom committed suicide from 2008-2010. Despite secure employment, Standing (2011) explains that the introduction of a new system by management that necessitated abrupt job and workplace changes was identified as the primary cause of the suicides: "[j]ob insecurity mattered" (18).

Despite the likelihood of personal disruption, tales of resistance to new workplace activities in the radio organisation were rare, and mostly presented as anecdotes about anonymous colleagues. Instead, most of the research participants reflected positively on the opportunities that digital media technologies had added to their roles and commented on the growth of their organisation overall. It was commonly suggested that the embrace of new technologies and practices was simply part of the current job. A general acceptance of new platforms and new responsibilities as "opportunities" influenced the way that changing work practices were negotiated between announcers and management. One commercial talk manager described the process of developing new practices for announcers as "organic", driven simultaneously by observing audience behaviour and by determining what worked best for the brand's content (Interviewee 8). They stated that some announcers appreciated Twitter as a social media platform that works with their radio program, while others might reject it and opt to use Facebook instead. An "organic" approach to implementing new work practices is at odds somewhat with Stiernsedt's (2014) observations of MTG in Sweden. In that setting, the professional and personal development of radio personalities was at the centre of interactions between

managers/programme directors and on-air staff. He cites one DJ's experience of a program director organising seminars, pilates, personal mentors, and visits to a psychic medium (302). The direct attention given to DJs is framed within the wider organisational strategy of developing on-air personalities as the primary component of radio content. Stiernsedt (2014) describes further the intensive characterisation of personalities that takes place as part of a "production format". He says that the managerial directives, "the relationships on-air—the "roles" assigned to each DJ at MTG radio as well as the individual DJs' preferred reactions and attitudes on subject matters—are planned and written down" (303).

In contrast, the talk manager in New Zealand suggested that the integration of new tasks and responsibilities involving social media was largely negotiated and announcer-led. A manager for the rival commercial talk radio network presented a similar case. The use of social media platforms in tandem with on-air practices was an absolute requirement for incoming announcers, but there was greater leniency for established announcers who might not recognise the value of social media to their program. Thus, negotiating new practices with established staff required an "incentivised" approach, rather than clear directives or enforcement. Furthermore, the talk manager was insistent that the new requirements of convergent practices did not override the value of on-air, broadcast talent:

To be honest, if I wanted to, I could hire someone to do [social media] for them, so it is a decision I make as well. I could have somebody sitting there driving to work with them each day, and going home with them at night and living in their back pocket, so I think it is a joint responsibility, it is not just theirs. (Interviewee 9)

It was a clear expectation that most staff ought to engage with web platforms where possible, but no protocols were presented, and managers accepted that individual announcers might pick and choose which social media platforms they engaged with. The simple integration of these responsibilities into work routines had not generated a major site of resistance for brand content managers, and this was largely attributed to the integration of social media platforms beyond professional practice: "it's not really something where you have to have a stick, because it's a world they live in anyway" (Interviewee 9).

## **Managing personal(ity) brands**

Online editors within commercial radio organisations identified themselves as champions for their respective radio brands. They also believed it was in a radio announcer's best interests to produce content for the website and interact with new media outlets (including social media). This was a means to promote the announcer's individual programs and to build their own audience. It was suggested that staff would exploit new media platforms once they were made aware of the benefits them. The general suggestion is that expanding media activity on to online or social media platforms has the potential to develop an announcer's audience according to the conventions of a quantitative ratings system. There was an assumption that announcers would take some ownership of their program, timeslot, and branded identity within the radio station, but the potential for an announcer to develop their own mobility within *and* outside of the organisation was also implied. Sellas and Bonini (2014) observed a similar pattern in public and commercial radio stations in Italy and Spain. They described social media managers as "brand masters", while emphasising that "the radio personalities, speak primarily for themselves, they communicate both the values of the radio brand and those of their personal brand" (78).

Alongside the development of radio brands (in place of stations and networks), the concept of a personal brand underlines a broader commercial strategy that is prevalent in digital media environments. One commercial talk radio announcer who had initially resisted contributing to online media platforms when working as a television journalist reflected on their change of understanding concerning the benefits of such platforms:

Initially I pushed back, and I said I am not going to Twitter, it is bullshit and for idiots and I pushed back on blogs. I am a television reporter, why should I write for the website? Looking back now I see how ignorant that was, and I am only talking five or six years ago... I did not understand the need for it, the value of it, the future of it, the power of it, the complementary nature of it, the reach of it... just based on ignorance and fear. But it is good to acknowledge it. (Interviewee 10)

An online editor directly involved with the same talk announcer noted how they were particularly enthusiastic about contributing to the brand website. The editor suggested that those personalities or announcers who had arrived from other media sectors such as television had already experienced a greater cultural transition and were ready to engage with other platforms once they arrived in radio. For the talk radio announcer, Twitter was now an important complementary tool that kept the discussion of a news topic or issue alive outside of the allotted broadcast time slot. The general manager of the rival commercial talk network also believed that social media helped the network's announcers to present content beyond the on-air radio program in the wider media sphere. This was often a way to test content ideas, before they went to air, for audience interest, and to develop positions on major talking points. The general manager stated that new technologies provided an opportunity for the announcer to extend their personal brand "24/7" (Interviewee 9).

One commercial talk announcer recognised that the growing requirement to produce written content for the brand website and social media effectively doubled their overall content output, compared to the spoken on-air content they were producing. As was the case with the talk announcer at the rival network, this announcer had initially been hesitant to engage with what they considered to be a competing medium: "Why would I want to actually drive them off my existing media on to what I consider to be another media?" (Interviewee 7). Over time, however, the Internet was accepted as an inevitable component of their practice and they had adjusted to it by leveraging their own standing as a media personality:

It does give the audience a much fuller picture of who you are as a person, and they can then form a greater emotional bond with you, and the greater the emotional bond the more likely they are to stay loyal, and for your popularity – which is what it's all about in the end – to continue, to grow or at least stay where it should be. (Interviewee 7)

Rook and Odame's (2013) survey and analysis of online blogging by radio announcers in Canada made a similar observation. Their study found that the primary motivation for commercial announcers to blog was to direct traffic back to the radio station website. This increased visibility for the radio station and the monetary value of advertising on the site. But they also found that blogging benefits the announcer's marketability and functioned as a "living business-card for future employment opportunities by positioning one as an expert, professional and leader in the industry" (Rook and Odame, 2013: 49). This is somewhat consistent with the notion of "hope labour" advanced by Kuehn and Corrigan (2013), although in the Canadian case, such an outlook was aspirational for those already embedded in stable employment.

As was the case with other kinds of interviewees, the talk announcer now appreciated the advantages of contributing online as well as on-air. On the radio, one was only able to hold the listener's attention for two minutes, whereas online attention could be held for 2,000 words: "It gives you the chance to give more detail whereas radio gives more emotion" (Interviewee 11). Doubling the content output had also increased the announcer's workload. Yet, the announcer's manager had suggested contributing to online platforms was not necessarily increasing the demands of the job. They argued that newer automated production systems had an offset effect, lessening the manually intensive tasks of loading audio carts and operating the station hardware [7]. The announcer nonetheless identified the shift from a form of physical labour to a more intensive mental labour associated with the development of extra content for which there was no direct compensation. Conversely, the Internet had become a tool for this and other announcers to assert their value to management as a usable commodity. The talk announcer had observed that those employees who had resisted new media platforms had fallen backwards, while those who had demonstrated ambition and initiative were "recompensed appropriately because of their new level of fame" (Interviewee 11).

One online editor that had worked across a number of commercial music radio brands observed a generally positive response from the radio announcers to new online initiatives. But the editor was also struggling to ensure that individual announcers prioritised the organisation's web platforms alongside developing their personal brand identity:

Our announcers are really good at pushing our website but they also like to push their brand, so they're wanting to use stuff like Soundcloud and YouTube. I don't think they view the website content as being able to go viral, whereas on Soundcloud and YouTube the ability for it to be viewed and played within social media is a really important tool for the announcers. (Interviewee 12)

Countering the idea that some radio staff had been hesitant to engage with new media platforms, the radio announcers at this particular music brand had embraced social media – sometimes at the expense of the organisation's web properties. As the online editor further explained, the use of social media had been overwhelmingly successful for the music brand and generated significant brand recognition. One particular piece of video content, which parodied a popular music video (with the breakfast announcer in place of the original artist), received close to a million views on YouTube in the first month and over two and a half million total views within a year of being online. But the online editor stressed that the use of social media generated significantly less revenue for the organisation than a branded website that hosted the content within the organisation. It was not clear from the interviews just how much this revenue differed, but the expectation is that complete control of the brand website provides greater opportunities for advertising and promotion. Even though the announcers may be sharing online content via sanctioned social media channels, the commercial value of the brand's own website sits much closer to the value of branded on-air content.

A second online editor for the same music brand maintained that the website was a more useful property for the goals of the organisation, namely, representing brand identity, archiving the content on-air, and even generating original content that could be incorporated into online broadcasts (Interviewee 6). However, he agreed that the announcers often preferred to use Facebook because it delivered instant feedback and generated discussion among their followers. The website was perceived to be cumbersome and less accessible to workers and users alike. Both online editors for this particular music brand argued that the radio personalities they worked with struggled to understand some of the technical limitations of the brand website: "You film a video and everyone



expects it to be online then. Whereas in reality it takes human hours to create the video, edit it, and put it through servers” (Interviewee 12). As one of the online editors explained, Facebook had billions of dollars in development behind them, a fact overlooked by his colleagues. Overall, the idea that on-air staff are embracing digital platforms yet expect too much from the online component of their radio brand offers an intriguing contrast to these staff accounts that suggest resistance to, or displacement by, technological change.

## Conclusion

First-hand accounts of work experiences within the New Zealand radio industry align closely with the major concerns and observations noted elsewhere. Workers in the New Zealand industry are confronted by the need to adapt and expand their practice, organisation, and medium in order to meet the imperatives of convergent media environments. For radio announcers – front-line workers that are the voice (and increasingly face) of radio content – changing work practices are simultaneously motivated by the perceived challenges of emerging technologies, competing platforms, and mobile audiences. However, the key driver behind manifest change in the industry derives from the imperatives of radio management as they seek to reinvent radio stations as flexible multi-platform brands that can utilise the commercial possibilities facilitated by media convergence. To a large extent, radio workers tasked with the production of content are simply internalising this process rather than reacting to any material challenges to their sustained employment. Announcer commitment to the development of organisational and personal brands advances, simultaneously, the growth of marketing and promotion positions in radio organisations (alongside the emergence of online editors that self-identify as ‘brand champions’) (see also Sellas and Bonini, 2014).

Whether the reconfiguration of established radio organisations and practices generates labour concerns in line with experiences of precarity cannot be easily determined from the interview data utilised in this study. Certainly, the interviewees presented here conveyed relative confidence in their immediate employment prospects. However, the research undertaken required participants to accurately reflect the current state of the industry in which they worked. Future research that collects and analyses material data regarding workers’ statistics, employment contracts, and remuneration could provide a deeper assessment of worker precarity. This study predominantly sought participants working in the industry at the time of data collection – this was a fundamental consideration in the sample design. Engagement with radio workers that may have been recently displaced by an employer or unable to secure a role in the industry is also an important research area.

The empirical evidence collected so far suggests that in the commercial sector of the New Zealand radio industry change has been met with relative acceptance across various organisational levels. Reports of resistance to organisational change by individual workers were self-presented as minor challenges that had already been resolved or could be. Yet, as the commodification of individual radio labour intensifies through the development of individual brands, the concerns raised by online editors present an ongoing challenge for radio management. The monetisation of media content through online channels is still plagued with ambiguity, and the uncertain consequences of announcers investing in their personal brand at the expense of the organisation presents a site for future tension between management and front-line staff (Stiernsedt, 2014, reached a similar conclusion). Continued observations of this development are necessary in order to assess whether radio workers can leverage the strength of their personal brands to maintain and/or advance gainful employment. The exercise of control over one’s personal brand may hint at greater autonomy for radio announcers in the era of

media convergence. There is, as yet, little evidence to suggest that the digital responsibilities placed on radio announcers guarantee the rewards of greater labour power or job security: “The do-it-yourself biography is always a ‘risk biography’, indeed a ‘tightrope biography’, a state of permanent (partly overt, partly concealed) endangerment” (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002: 3). Furthermore, in step with political economy critiques regarding contemporary digital capitalism it is important to recognise that the ongoing transformation of media labour into individualised branding exercises continues to serve the interests of major commercial institutions, such as social media networks. The exploitation of radio workers by their primary employers may in fact be giving way to processes of self-exploitation which are comparable to notions of free-labour. Commercial radio workers that are engaged in the production of content and promotion of identity online, therefore occupy a precarious space between the reasonable expectation of material compensation for their overall output and the undefined limits of self-exploitation that accompany the experiences of digital labour. Further examination of these experiences will advance our contemporary understanding of how capital works to exploit labour in an era of media convergence.

## Author Bio

Rufus McEwan is a lecturer in media communication and radio studies at the Auckland University of Technology. His current and previous research analyses the impact of new media technologies on radio, networks and organisations. His recently completed PhD study considered role of convergence in the New Zealand radio industry. Rufus has recently published in *The Radio Journal*, and the *Media Studies Journal of Aotearoa New Zealand*. He previously worked for six years in New Zealand radio as both a technical producer and an announcer for talk and music stations.

## Notes

- [1] This study was conducted for the purposes of attaining a PhD qualification, and ran from 2012-2015.
- [2] It was agreed with participants that interviewees would not be named to encourage open and honest responses to questions. A reference list of the included interviews has been provided as an appendix to this article, detailing a corresponding identifier for each interviewee as well as a brief summary of their experience in the industry.
- [3] As an acronym, NZME stands for New Zealand Media and Entertainment, however, the primary public branding places emphasis on the shortened name and its pronunciation as N-Z-ME, drawing parallels with similar contemporary branding including YouTube, MySpace and the iPhone.
- [4] The proposed merger between NZME. and Fairfax was finally declined by New Zealand’s Commerce Commission in May 2017, due to the perceived threat of an effective monopoly of print and digital news sources in New Zealand. At the time this article was written, both organisations were still awaiting the results of their High Court appeal against the Commerce Commission’s decision.
- [5] This is an extension of common phrasing for early iterations of television programming. One of New Zealand’s early music television programs (1976-90) was formally titled *Radio with Pictures* (“Kiwi music shows”, 2014).

- [6] The term radio ‘announcer’ has been utilised because this was the most common reference used by the participants themselves. Elsewhere, radio announcers may be referred to as DJs or presenters, and in line with trends presented in this discussion they are also referred to as ‘personalities’.
- [7] The manager offered this perspective as a former ‘cart boy’, tasked with maintaining and organising the analogue tapes once used during the operation of a radio station.

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## Appendix: Interview Reference Table

Interviewee 1:	Group General Manager for Content, 30 years in industry
Interviewee 2:	Content Director (Music), 11 years in industry
Interviewee 3:	Branded Content Manager (Music), 7 years in industry
Interviewee 4:	Former CEO, 34 years in industry
Interviewee 5:	Group Marketing Manager, 11 years in industry
Interviewee 6:	Online Editor (Music), 6 years in industry
Interviewee 7:	Announcer (Music), 13 years in industry

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- Interviewee 8: General Manager (Talk), 27 years in industry  
Interviewee 9: General Manager (Talk), 20 years in industry  
Interviewee 10: Announcer (Talk), 1 year in industry (extensive TV career)  
Interviewee 11: Announcer (Talk), 34 years in industry  
Interviewee 12: Online Editor (Music), 3 years in industry