About the Project

Trends show interest in music is increasing, even though hours spent with traditional linear radio are on the decline. As new devices offer users an experiential journey, enabling a rich and engaging exploration, the issue of the lack of metrics for online radio becomes paramount.

The ‘Radio Connected’ project was carried out to help this; to audit existing standards, business processes and technologies in order to inform future development of internet radio. The broad objective of the project was to ‘join the dots’ between all aspects of creating and distributing radio, including repurposing, for existing and emerging technologies.

The building blocks were already assembled, so the research project was about using them appropriately to benefit the whole value chain: programme maker, producer, rights management, search & discovery and, of course, listeners.

Benefits of Funding

By being part of the Creative Industries KTN, the project partners found out about the funding call. Funding ensured several key areas were researched and stakeholders across the value chain were consulted.

Firstly, an audit was carried out of metadata schemas employed by radio broadcasters around the world including a review of viable feed formats. Secondly, a blueprint for a content management process, building on best practice, was documented.

And thirdly, a study was made of music fingerprinting technologies to enhance music metadata; a key building block for search and discovery, rights management and licensing. Funding did not stretch to the issue of metrics, but it is hoped that this can be tackled by a further, dedicated project in the future.

Results

The successful audit of metadata schemas was then developed in a subsequent, shorter TSB-supported project, which led to the creation of ‘RadioDeck’ - a simple user interface with which content creators can upload programmes.

Along with the fingerprinting work, the best practice content management process was developed into an online application tool to enable radio stations to self-license. This project, funded by Digital Licensing Framework TSB procurement, will help overcome the commoditisation of hosting solutions for internet radio.

Fast Facts

Sectors: TV & Radio
Funding Source: Technology Strategy Board ‘Collaboration Across Digital Industries’ Mainstream
Total Project Value: £161,000
Duration: April 2011 - September 2012
Market Impact: A share of the total UK online audio market, which had revenues of £25-£30m in 2011 (Source: IAB)

“Radio Connected wouldn’t have happened without Technology Strategy Board funding, as not one of the organisations individually would have had the time or resources to carry out the research. This collaboration has led to a number of spin-off projects with tangible benefits for each party.”

Daniel Nathan, Chairman totallyradio

The potential impact on the UK online radio market through these projects could be considerable. ‘Radio Connected’ has enabled the creation of an initial ‘stepping stone’ that would otherwise not have happened.

Even after the formal completion of the project, the collaboration continues to work with relevant organisations to ensure that the research and development of an appropriate metadata system for online radio content can be adopted more widely across the industry, ultimately benefiting everyone in the value chain.