INTERNATIONAL RADIO CONGRESS

The present and future of audio

Barcelona 2024

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🔊 PRESENTATION
CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF RADIO

Jaume Serra i Saguer
Enric Marín i Otto
Co-directors of the International Radio Congress. Present and Future of Audio.
Barcelona 2024

The first broadcast of Radio Barcelona on 14 November 1924 marked the beginning of radio broadcasting in Catalonia and in Spain. The fact that this foundational event took place in Barcelona in the 1920s was no coincidence. In fact, radio was a collective project even before it was born—a project of innovation and modernity driven by civil society at a historically unique moment. Between the late 19th century and the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, Catalonia experienced intense social change that fostered a mass culture and communication scene closely connected to European and North American cultural and artistic currents. From Modernisme to Noucentisme, culminating in the adoption of the aesthetic and ideological frameworks of the interwar avant-garde movements. In the fields of journalism and mass culture, Barcelona served as a key link between the Iberian Peninsula and Europe—spanning photography, cinema, journalism, advertising, radio broadcasting, and even the first technical experiments in television.

By the early 1920s, the conditions for the arrival of radio broadcasting in Catalonia had already matured. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that, despite a context unfavorable to

freedom of expression under the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, Radio Barcelona began its now century-long journey with its historic broadcast from the Hotel Colón. Radio would not be able to fully realize its informative potential until the arrival of the Second Republic in April 1931—years of growth and consolidation before Spanish society entered the dark tunnel of the Franco dictatorship. The restrictions of Francoism did not prevent the growing popularity of radio as a medium, which with the return of democratic freedoms, once again demonstrated its full communicative power.

Over these hundred years, radio has shown an extraordinary ability to adapt to change. This could have inspired a celebration centered on a historical analysis of the first century of broadcasting. Such an approach might have taken the form of a strictly academic conference. However, the dialogue and collaboration between Cadena SER and the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) led to a different outcome: the conclusion that the best way to celebrate the first 100 years of radio was to reflect, both locally and internationally, on the present and future challenges facing the medium. This was the basic premise behind the design and organization of the **International Radio Congress. Present and Future of Audio. Barcelona 2024**, held on 15 and 16 November 2024 at CaixaForum Barcelona.

In the context of accelerated technological change, electronic communications have become an extraordinarily powerful lever for social transformation. The early years of the 21st century have provided ample evidence of the unprecedented scale of the ongoing social changes. These transformations affect all areas of communicative mediation. The gap between the media consumption habits of older generations and those of children and young people—especially regarding entertainment content and access devices, is perhaps the most tangible daily evidence of the speed of change. These transformations affect the entire production/distribution/consumption chain, and the shifts in communication ecosystems brought about by the digital revolution also impact a medium like radio, which has proven its strong adaptability to change.

Today, most content is available anytime, anywhere, on any device. The most illustrative objects of this reality are mobile devices such as tablets and, above all, smartphones. The arrival of mobile broadband networks has further reinforced their social prominence. Naturally, this transformation of the audiovisual ecosystem also changes the audience's consumption habits—radio audiences included. The audio industry is now facing the most significant transformation in its history.

The recognition of the era of change we are experiencing—with its uncertainties, the proliferation of disinformation, and the powerful emergence of Artificial Intelligence made us consider the necessity and opportunity of a collective, critical, open, well-documented and rigorous reflection. This was, precisely, the starting point of the Congress: to bring together the industry, professionals, and the academic world to carry out a joint analysis focused on the future of the medium.

In a project such as this, local and international networks of collaboration are crucial. As mentioned, the participation and commitment of three pillars were essential: the industrial sector, media professionals, and academia. The support and involvement of public administration was also key. This organizational diversity was clearly reflected in the composition of the Organizing Committee, as well as in the broad representation of a Scientific Committee composed of both local and international experts. The continuous work of the Executive Committee and the Technical Secretariat made the congress a reality. The relevance of the contributions and the proven quality of the discussions confirmed the success of the congress' approach.

The manifesto "The Free Voice of Free Societies", which concluded the congress, is a synthesis and result of the cross-cutting dialogues between all the participants during the meetings primarily held on 15 and 16 November 2024. Read aloud by students representing the future of audio and communication, it forms part of the legacy of a congress held not only to commemorate one hundred years of history but also to lay the foundations for envisioning a strengthened continuation of radio and audio into their second century of life.

🔊 INTRODUCTION

This publication compiles and presents the speeches made in the 21 sessions that took place over one and a half days, between 15 and 16 November 2024, at the International Radio Congress. Present and Future of Audio, co-organized by the Faculty of Communication Sciences of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and Cadena SER on the occasion of the centenary of Ràdio Barcelona, in addition to the inaugural session, the plenary lecture and the formal closing ceremony.

The volume combines both text and video. The text part corresponds, fundamentally, to the inaugural conference, to the presentations or summaries of the sessions prepared by the 19 people who acted as rapporteurs and the Manifesto for the future of radio Barcelona 2024. From these texts you can link to corresponding video sessions, which are available in the original language, with subtitles in Catalan, Spanish and English, the three official languages of the congress. In written format, there are also some sections that, being written expressly for this publication, do not have a video: the presentation, the challenges and this introduction.

The publication is organized in five blocks. The first includes the presentation of the Congress by the two co-directors, Enric Marín and Jaume Serra; the introduction to this volume, directed by the signatories, and the speeches of the inaugural session – Pilar Gil, vice-president of PRISA, Javier Lafuente, rector of the UAB, Carlos Núñez, executive president of PRISA Media and Salvador Illa, president of the Generalitat de Catalunya. And, as a summary of the contributions, the inaugural lecture by Iñaki Gabilondo, honorary president of the Congress.

The first block contains the information of seven sessions, that focus on the ecosystem of radio, dealing with different aspects: business models, broadcasting, advertising, rights-holding industry, radio journalism, radio and music and public radio.

The second block has eight sessions that will focus on the future and, more specifically, on the evolution from radio to audio. These focus on questions such as the expectations of podcasting, new multimedia formats, new narratives and language to reach young people, the future of proximity radio, audience measurement in a multi-diffu-

sion environment, the relationship between radio and technology, distribution between proprietary and audio platforms, and the future of audio in cars.

Artificial intelligence is the common theme of the three sessions included in block 3: audio and artificial intelligence; the dilemma between human and synthetic voice; and artificial intelligence tools to support society.

The Congress also provided a space for three presentations, brought together in block 4. These were the *Segon Llibre Blanc per la Ràdio Local a Catalunya* [Second White Paper for Local Radio in Catalonia], promoted by the Federació de Mitjans de Comunicació Locals de Catalunya (FMCLCat); the study *El pulso emocional de la Radio: 100 años multiplicando la Eficacia Publicitaria*, produced by IO Investigación and AERC Radio Value, and the 50th issue of the magazine published by the Consell de l'Audiovisual de Catalunya *Quaderns del CAC*, titled "Radio: Memory, Resilience and Transformation".

The last block, the fifth, consists of the closing address by the co-directors of the Congress, Enric Marín and Jaume Serra; the video of the intervention of Laia Bonet, Deputy Mayor for Urban Planning, Ecological Transition, Urban Services and Housing of the Barcelona City Council, the radio manifesto—read by Communication students Clàudia Arcarons of the UAB, Pol Batalla from Blanquerna-URL, Max Riberas from the URV and Lola Santiago from the UPF—and a text on conclusions and challenges, elaborated by the members of the Executive Committee Juan José Perona and Xavier Ribes.

The publication is completed with the Congress program, which presented in an appendix.

In the production of this volume, we have used artificial intelligence— specifically, Chat GPT and DeepL—as a support tool for the translation of texts (from Catalan into Spanish and/or English; and from Spanish into Catalan and/or English), which have then undergone a professional human review. Artificial intelligence has also been used – specifically, TurboScribe, developed by Whisper – for the transcriptions and subtitles in Catalan, Spanish and English of the videos, also with subsequent professional human review.

Both in the conference proceedings and in the introductory text included in this volume, we have made public our thanks to all the people, institutions and companies

that have taken part and made this conference celebrating the (first) hundred years of radio possible. We reiterate them here and would like to add our thanks to the people and institutions that have participated and have specifically made this volume possible, starting with the Faculty of Communication Sciences of the UAB, which financed it, and continuing with the Institute of Communication (InCom-UAB), which has taken on the publication, and the rapporteurs, who have written and revised the texts of the sessions (Estrella Barrio, UAB; Josep Maria Blanco, UAB; Montse Bonet, UAB; Jorge Clemente, UCM; Carmina Crusafon, UAB; Matilde Delgado, UAB; Mercè Díez, UAB; Adrien Faure, UB; Iliana Ferrer, UAB; Amparo Huertas, UAB; Patrícia Lázaro, UAB; Carles Llorens, UAB; Raúl Martínez, Uvic; Cristina Martorell, UAB; Marta Montagut; URV; Marta Narberhaus, UAB; Mònica Puntí, UdG; Sara Suárez, UOC; Jordi Serra, UdG).

And, of course, we would like to thank Cadena SER for their valuable human, technical and economic contribution to the realization of the Congress.

Maria Corominas Piulats (UAB)
Fernando Guerrero Rebollo (UAB)
Enric Marín i Otto (UAB)
Maria José Recoder Sellarés (UAB)
Jaume Serra i Saguer (Cadena SER)

🔊 INSTITUTIONAL OPENING

Institutional Opening led, in order of interventions, by Pilar Gil, Vice President of PRI-SA; Javier Lafuente, Honorable Rector of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB); Carlos Núñez, Executive Vice President of PRISA Media, and Salvador Illa, Most Honorable President of the Government of Catalonia.

🔊 INAUGURAL CONFERENCE.
IÑAKI GABILONDO

Molt bon dia, egun on, bos días, bonjour, good morning. Most Honorable President of the Generalitat, Illustrious Rector, friends...

We begin the first day of the new century at a time of great uncertainty, hoping that the meetings starting today may outline some paths, clues, and ways to illuminate what, for now, is quite muddled because everything is muddled. When trying to predict where things are heading, we are in a more difficult situation than ever before. I have grown tired of saying, whenever I was asked about the future of radio: "Tell me what society will be like and give me ten minutes. Ten minutes will be enough if you tell me what this new society is like." But is there anyone in the world today capable of imagining what the new society will be like? Where are we headed?

Just yesterday, Eudald Carbonell, one of the great co-directors of Atapuerca, said in *La Vanguardia* that we are probably bidding farewell to the *Homo* we have known and moving towards transhumanity. Placing that possibility at one extreme and, at the other, the possibility that life, as it has in the past, simply incorporates new developments while continuing to guide them, it is therefore impossible to know what radio will be like because it will surely adapt like a glove to whatever circumstances arise. Only right now, it is impossible to know what those circumstances will be like.

Throughout history, certainly in Spain, radio has naturally infiltrated every social need. After initially being a toy, it soon became a weapon of war. Then it became one of the

best companions in society's evolution during the early days of consumerism, with advertising enlivening the dark seasons of dictatorship and post-war periods. Later, it became a crucial ally in the transition process through news reporting.

Radio, like a glove, will undoubtedly adapt to reality; we just don't know what that reality will be. But we have confidence: I am certain that radio will adapt as it always has. Over the years, we have learned many things that can serve us well. Radio is a means of communication, information, and expression.

For the first time in a long time, these three elements stand together before society. For a long time, this tripod has been incomplete. This is almost the history of radio: being an incomplete tripod.

You may recall, as a recent example, when news broadcasting was finally authorized in October 1977. Radio surged forward enthusiastically, making up for the information it had been deprived of for so many years, but in doing so, completely forgot about itself as a means of expression. Before it could broadcast news, radio had developed greatly as a medium of expression, reaching astonishingly high levels that younger generations may not know or even imagine. It constructed entire universes through voices, music, sound effects, perspectives, and distances, achieving extraordinary quality.

When we enthusiastically embraced news, we cleared away that past as if it were something that

held us back—what we now might call "old radio." We enjoy playing the game of "old radio vs. new radio," as radio has often felt the need to shed its past, believing it should only exist at the cutting edge of innovation, disregarding what came before.

Now, the elements of radio communication, radio news, and radio expression stand together. Today, we call radio expression "podcast," and that's fine. This phenomenon arises from its historical roots some may not recognize, but this promising format, the podcast, has existed for ninety years. I encourage exploration of these origins because they can be incredibly enlightening.

Some past productions, like "Pasos" by Antonio Calderón, are monuments to radio creativity that even the most devoted podcast enthusiasts today would applaud. I mention this so that, as we look to the future, we recognize our values and avoid the mistake of dismissing them in favor of mere emancipatory movements, necessary as they may be, are part of the same familial adventure.

Some might remember when radio programming featured everything in one broadcast: "Hora 25," a radio drama, and "Los 40 Principales" all in the same schedule. Over time, different segments emancipated themselves: music branched out into separate programs, then into distinct networks, then into independent entities. But they all originated from the same family.

I believe podcasts are currently exploration modules launched by the mothership. They are emerging, bringing hopeful news. Let's celebrate them, support them, and grant them full freedom. But let's not forget that they originate from the mothership and represent just one aspect of radio.

Today, as we debate "old radio" versus "new radio," I see "old radio" being defined as radio communication—the direct, broadcast, companionable medium. But please, let's not fall into that absurdity. Radio communication is what fundamentally defines radio. It communicates in real-time, at the rhythm of human life, accompanying individuals without demanding exclusive attention.

How can we consider "old radio" to be what is essential to radio? Why do we insist on these constant distinctions? I sided with Ortega when he said: "Between one and the other, I choose both." I welcome all new developments from the mothership, wherever

they may lead. Who knows where they will go? Why must we determine their destination? We are still in an embryonic phase.

For those who believed radio was aging and doomed because only podcasts had a future, my dear friend Gorka Zumeta says: "Young people don't like radio, they like audio." We shall see what happens tomorrow, as we have seen many things before.

I remember when AM was radio, and FM was music—until Antena 3, led by Manuel Martín Ferrand, demonstrated that FM could also carry talk programs. That shattered previous conventions, just as many other transformations have occurred over the years, ultimately proving radio's resilience.

Radio remains vital in communication, responding to emergencies, offering companionship, and adapting seamlessly. It has demonstrated its essential role time and again, as seen during the recent DANA in Valencia. Its immediacy, warmth, and ability to provide instant, direct communication keep it alive and thriving.

Just yesterday, the Ondas award was given to a production created by Carlos Alsina on his radio network, during its regular broadcast—an exceptionally creative piece, centered on the fantasy surrounding the assassination of John F. Kennedy. This production could have also belonged to another category within our radio family. There it was, just like the awards granted to Radio Nacional de España for those live radio theater productions.

Everything is happening at once. Let us receive it all with joy, excitement, and satisfaction. Let us observe it carefully. Let us hope it follows its path. And why should we care where it ends up? Why should we care? Why should we care if, in the end, we do not even know what kind of technological toys we will use to make radio in thirty years? Or which companies will financially sustain those radio stations? We do not even know if it will still be called radio.

But this activity to which we have dedicated our lives and which we deeply love is in extraordinary health. And each new development that emerges is further proof of its extraordinary vitality. That said, while we navigate these times of confusion, let us once again reflect on what defines and strengthens us.

Sailors used to say that when navigation instruments failed on ships, they had to rely on the stars. Those never fail. The stable elements, the constants, and what remains—everything that does not have to change becomes a stable reference, and there are a few worth mentioning. First, its vocation for transversality. Radio has a transversal soul.

By its very nature, radio spreads across spaces in a transversal way. In these times of extreme and radical polarization, this idea may seem difficult to embrace. But let us remember that, by vocation, we have the ability to be transversal. And as societies move forward, let us not forget that we hold in our hands a tool that, whenever possible, must be steered away from the territories of confrontation. Because our calling is different—compatible with our ideology, compatible with our position within the political framework, but with a soul of transversality. We are the last ones who should fall into polarization. And when a radio station becomes radically trapped in polarization, it is shipwrecking as a radio entity. Because its very essence is an instinct for transversality—just as it is, of course, an instinct for freedom.

The media are both the parents and children of democracy. Without us, there is no democracy, and without democracy, there is no us. We have known this throughout the forty years in which information was amputated from us. We are, therefore, natural allies of democracy. And in the adventures that society is currently experiencing—with so much uncertainty, so much anguish, so many threats, so many actively propelled enemies against our democracy—we must be found indisputably on the side of defending democracy.

And thirdly, in this era where fake news has exploded—leaving us disoriented, self-conscious, provoking great uncertainty and insecurity—we must recognize that we also have a role to play. But in the meantime, let me close the previous chapter. In the game of radio communication, information, and expression, everything happens simultaneously: fresh content, frozen content that one can consume whenever they choose, and highly elaborate content developed from that raw material. That is the offering that society presents.

But, as I was saying, when fake news exploded, we once again found ourselves at a crossroads. I have said this so many times that I am almost embarrassed to say it again. In fact, at one point, I thought the phrase was mine. Now, I'm not sure. Maybe I heard it somewhere because everyone says it now: in floods, the first thing to run scarce is

drinking water. It has become a cliché, but it is a truth that should guide us. In floods, the first thing to run scarce is drinking water. If we had any doubts, we have just confirmed them in Valencia.

In the floods of information—when signals come from all over the world, in all directions, with all kinds of intentions, the first thing to run scarce is reliable information. And how do we identify reliable information in this universe filled with unreliable or malicious content?

Because fake news is not just an undesirable side effect of the new realities of globalization and the speed at which everything spreads with a single click. No, there are fake news industries. Right now, fake news is also being deliberately deployed like poison, directed by corporate organizations.

And what do we do in such a situation? I want to share with you, dear friends, something somewhat unfortunate but necessary: fake news is here to stay. Just as the internet arrived, and with it, everything that came along is here to stay. On the internet, we can find the poetry of Teresa de Jesús and instructions on how to build a machine gun in our kitchen. Everything is there, and everything will always be there.

The challenge of our lives now will be making choices. To choose is to discard. Learning to live in this context is the new demand of our society and our profession. Fake news is here to stay. Efforts will be made to fight. Political authorities will fight it, law enforcement authorities will fight it, major organizations will fight it. Journalism organizations will also emerge, trying to defend themselves however they can, through increasingly sophisticated verification mechanisms. Many advances are already being made in this regard. And when all is said and done, fake news will still exist. Just as crime will always exist in our society, and we will always fight against it. We must accept that we will live in a society where crime exists. We must accept that we will live in a society where fake news exists.

And how should we combat it? By doing our work extraordinarily well. By making our work so clear, so transparent, it stands out like a wellspring of drinking water.

In the future, this is the only thing I am absolutely certain will happen. In the vast landscape of communication, there will be flags marking places that say, "Here, we

serve drinking water," because each media outlet will have earned that distinction through extraordinarily serious work.

We must fight against fake news by improving our work every day. Just as the best way to fight political populism is to make our democracy more serious, deeper, and cleaner.

To do our best, to carve out a space for ourselves, we must improve our work every day—because that is the highest goal we can aspire to. There will be millions of signals, today and always, some good, some bad, and some mediocre. Our job is to establish ourselves as sources of drinking water, increasingly recognized by our audience, by our track record, by our work, and by our ever-growing commitment to transparency and independence. Transparency and independence will be demanded of us if we want to be recognized as sources of drinking water.

So, my friends, I wish you all the best in these sessions. We have high expectations for your work. We are confident that you will illuminate many paths across the vast landscape I have seen in the program—one that spans all areas, from language to industry, to advertising, to the presence of artificial intelligence, and beyond. All of this will confront us with realities we cannot even imagine today.

I mean, if Stephen Hawking was afraid of artificial intelligence, why wouldn't I be? And if Eudald Carbonell talks about these issues, then we are clearly headed for a world of colossal transformations.

Yet, I am certain that even in a world of colossal transformations, human beings will remain, as always, with their feet firmly rooted in the ground, and their eyes fixed in the sky, dreaming of a better future.

To achieve this, we must be more demanding of ourselves every day—not subtract, but add—and make our work stronger, cleaner, more transparent, and of the highest quality so that we may be recognized as sources of drinking water. For now, radio is playing its role very well in this space.

The doomsayers who predicted its demise—well, I don't know… I discovered television when I was in university. I grew up with radio. Since I was a child, I have been hearing funeral chants in the name of the radio. When television arrived, I won't even

tell you what was said. When the morning television arrived, I wouldn't even tell you what was predicted would happen to morning radio. And the radio trembled because, as it turned out, the morning hours were when it concentrated the highest percentage of its advertising revenue.

We all know that with the arrival of morning television, morning radio didn't lose anything. On the contrary, it made an extraordinary leap forward. As I said, I have witnessed many moments when radio was declared dead. I have seen times when the press looked down on us. When news broadcasting began, we were somewhat seen as the third course in the universe of newspapers, where the great luminaries of journalism resided.

The world of thought and intellectualism dismissed us. They saw radio as something warm, meant for families, for housewives. Yet, gradually, they too joined radio. We achieved the credibility that had been denied to us. We earned the respect of the major media outlets that once looked at us with disdain. We gained the respect of the ruling classes, who had never paid much attention to radio simply because they lacked information about it.

We have gone through many stages, and we have overcome them well because we have always had the fundamental element at hand. We work with what never dies —with the human being, with their voice, with their communication—warm, direct. The most direct and the warmest of all forms of communication.

I wish you the best of luck in these sessions, and all I can do is wish the radio a happy new century.

🔊 BLOCK 1. **RADIO**

1.1. *Sustainability of Current Broadcast Business Models. Future Scenarios*

Speaker: Francesc Robert-Agell (PhD in Communication. Associate Professor and Researcher at the Universitat Internacional de Catalunya. Director of Atresmedia Radio stations in Catalonia and Secretary of the Catalan Radio Association)

Chair: Belén Monclús (UAB)

Panel members: Xavier de Pol (General Director of the Media Division at Grupo Godó); Ramón Osorio (General Director of Onda Cero); Ignacio Soto (General Director of Cadena SER); Javier Visiers (CEO of Ábside Media)

Rapporteur: Montse Bonet (UAB)

Francesc Robert-Agell explains that the traditional radio business model in a digital context presents some interesting paradoxes, such as the fact that digital transformation enhances listening or that, despite some predictions, advertising is expected to grow in 2024 beyond market levels.

For the speaker, some of the challenges facing the radio business model include: adapting to an aging population, increasing engagement with younger generations, multiculturalism, digital transformation, new competitors (especially GAFAM – Google, Amazon, Facebook, Apple, and Microsoft), the industry's own structure (is there a shift from radio to audio?), audience measurement, and the monetization of the digital model.

Robert-Agell concludes that the current stage of radio's life cycle should be addressed from a non-deterministic perspective, with the involvement of all stakeholders (mediamorphosis).

During the roundtable discussion, Xavier de Pol states that we are in an uncertain environment where changes are happening faster than ever. In this context, he asserts that radio's survival depends on live broadcasting, which differentiates it from other media. He believes that when radio moves away from this model, it faces more challenges. Regarding young audiences, he sees a general decline in the consumption of traditional media.

Ramón Osorio argues that what truly matters is the production of audio content, regardless of how it reaches the listener. According to him, radio's constant challenge is to convince media agencies and advertisers that it remains a highly effective advertising platform.

Ignacio Soto considers the current situation to be complex: although the medium has adapted well with multi-broadcasting models, its growth has been slight. He emphasizes the ongoing effort to demonstrate radio's efficiency and effectiveness as an advertising medium. The more digital radio becomes, the more digital advertising it attracts. However, digital advertising and its regulation remain opaque. He values radio as the most credible medium in Europe and stresses the need to maintain this reputation, especially in today's climate of misinformation.

Regarding younger audiences, he notes that population aging is a general trend, not just an issue for radio audiences—an idea shared by Javier Visiers. Young people consume audio content through platforms like Instagram and TikTok and also listen to radio via podcasts, but the source of this content is still traditional radio. The panelists agree that the most consumed podcasts are repurposed broadcasts of radio programs.

Javier Visiers highlights the importance of fostering dialogue between academia and the industry. He believes the radio industry remains strong but does not generate enough advertising revenue to match its audience reach.

For him, the key lies in maintaining close relationships with both listeners and advertisers. He asserts that brand credibility fosters trust among both audiences and advertisers. In general, he advocates for greater efficiency, incorporating new professional profiles, and retraining traditional ones.

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Regarding distribution, he believes radio must focus on generating value.

On audience measurement, De Pol and Osorio find the current system functional, while Soto argues for modernization. He highlights that Spain is the first country in the world to implement hybrid audience measurement.

The key future challenges discussed in the session are:

1. Designing strategies to address existing challenges and position radio for the best possible future scenario.
2. Maintaining and strengthening the credibility of the medium.
3. Demonstrating that radio is an excellent and highly effective advertising platform. The ultimate goal is to secure a larger share of the advertising market.

CONFERENCE

ROUNDTABLE

1.2. What Will Happen to Broadcast Transmission? Does DAB Have a Future in Spain?

Speakers: Jacqueline Bierhorst (President of WorldDAB); Antonio Fernández-Paniagua (Deputy Director General for Spectrum Planning and Management)

Chair: José Luis Ruiz (Official College of Telecommunications Engineers)

Panel members: Nuria Domínguez (Technical Director of Atresmedia Radio and board member of AERC); Cristina León Pastor (Head of Audiovisual Business at Axión); Augusto Molina (Technical Director of Cadena SER); Jaume Pujol (Global Head of Regulation at Cellnex Telecom, Chair of Policy at Broadcast Networks Europe, and Vice President of the Catalan Audiovisual Cluster); Javier Sánchez (Head of Strategy at RTVE Innovation Centre)

Rapporteur: Montse Bonet (UAB)

Jacqueline Bierhorst believes that DAB+ has the potential to revitalize radio. However, this requires bringing all stakeholders together and securing a strong regulatory framework to enable confident investment.

She explains that, to date, over 129 million DAB+ receivers have been sold, and 96% of European cars now come with DAB+ as standard.

The benefits of DAB+, according to Bierhorst, include: It is free to access; it supports local culture, it is reliable (especially in emergencies), it offers better audio quality (particularly in areas with FM saturation), and itcan triple the audience reach due to its wider coverage.

Antonio Fernández-Paniagua also stresses the need for a National Plan that involves all stakeholders. He provides a detailed overview of the DAB rollout in Spain to date.

Roundtable Discussion

Nuria Domínguez asserts that it is crucial not to lose existing assets, particularly in terms of licenses and coverage. She highlights the importance of maintaining local opt-outs, as they represent a significant portion of advertising revenue—an opinion shared by Augusto Molina. She also warns that many pirate stations are currently occupying spectrum space, not only on FM but increasingly on DAB as well.

Cristina León argues that traditional radio remains the audience's preferred choice and will continue to do so for some time, despite the rise of IP-based alternatives. Broadcast technology, she explains, is highly efficient, with no delays, low latency, and a strong local content offering. It has proven to be a robust technology, as recently demonstrated in the case of the flooding in Valencia. However, she acknowledges an undeniable shift towards new consumption habits that impact on traditional media. She believes the challenge is not just to survive in this digital ecosystem but to embrace a hybrid broadcast and broadband model and reinvent radio. In this regard, 5G Broadcast and DAB+ could offer viable hybrid solutions for radio.

Augusto Molina focuses on the additional distribution costs associated with DAB. He argues that the extra costs of switching on DAB should be subsidized, both for broadcasters and audiences. While he recognizes the advantages of the DAB system, he in-

sists that FM cannot be switched off in favor of DAB, as most people do not own DAB receivers at home, and these devices remain expensive.

Jaume Pujol emphasizes that radio possesses intrinsic values—such as credibility—that are best upheld through broadcast transmission, as no other network can currently guarantee them. He highlights three key points:

a) Quality of service: consistently ensured, regardless of audience size.
b) Resilience and sovereignty: broadcast networks have been designed for public service goals and are robust and reliable.
c) Accountability: built on a responsible ecosystem where content producers retain control, with no reliance on algorithms.

Regarding DAB+, Pujol argues that belief in the technology must come first—before discussions and agreements—if real progress is to be made. He also stresses the importance of findability, ensuring that radio services remain easily discoverable.

Javier Sánchez believes this is an opportune moment to debate and reflect on the future of radio. He highlights that RNE has public service obligations, which means it must not be dependent on gatekeepers that could remove radio channels by simply blocking IP addresses. While he acknowledges that radio may eventually transition to an IP-based world, he insists that this transition must happen under better conditions than the current ones. He also emphasizes the need to secure radio's place in vehicles.

Sánchez concludes by announcing the imminent creation of a working group to develop specific proposals for the government, kick-starting discussions on the future of radio and DAB in Spain.

CONFERENCE

ROUNDTABLE

1.3. *Radio, A Cultural Industry with Rights in Continuous Innovation*

Speaker: José Manuel Gómez (Director of Intellectual Property and Rights Business at PRISA Media)

Chair: Jorge Pedemonte (UAB)

Panel members: Alexander Cuntz (Director at WIPO); Miguel Langle (Director of Regulatory Affairs and Institutional Rela-

tions at Atresmedia); Carmen Páez (Undersecretary at the Ministry of Culture); Manuela Villa (Director-General for Cultural Affairs at the Presidency of the Government)

Rapporteur: Adrien Faure (UB)

The speaker emphasizes that radio is more than just a means of communication; it is a cultural and creative industry that merges culture, communication, and technology. He underlines its role as an inclusive agent that not only distributes content but also creates it. Additionally, he highlights the importance of sound archives as part of cultural heritage—a legacy spanning the past, present, and future. In this context, he stresses the key role of artists in radio's history, from their connection with the medium to their contribution in shaping it into a mass cultural industry. Radio has been a

pillar in areas such as music, sports, and education, consolidating itself as a space for freedom of expression and audience participation.

The discussion also addresses the need to advance the legislative framework to recognize radio as a rights-holder, particularly in modern formats such as podcasts and catch-up radio. Although UNESCO and other international organizations have acknowledged its impact, radio has received less visibility than other cultural sectors. This underscores the urgency of strengthening its position as an active player in the information society and as an economic and cultural driver.

In conclusion, the speaker argues that radio is much more than a medium of communication; it is a cultural agent, a content creator, and a driver of innovation that requires greater legislative and social recognition. Furthermore, progress must be made in developing a regulatory framework that fosters its growth and protects its rights in the digital era.

The roundtable defines radio as a cultural industry with both an economic and social dimension. Economically, it plays a key role as both a consumer and a creator of works protected by intellectual property rights. Socially, it is an essential element for democracy and identity-building.

One of the central topics is the impact of digitalization. While it has reduced production costs and increased competition, it has also transformed audience expectations, with listeners now demanding content that is accessible anytime anywhere. This shift has created challenges in managing intellectual property rights, particularly in a landscape where technology evolves faster than the legal framework.

Another key point raised is the need for greater awareness within the sector itself so that radio professionals fully understand its cultural value. Additionally, the discussion highlights the importance of innovating in platform design to attract new audiences. Finally, participants stress the need to address these issues from an international perspective, as many rights are not harmonized across EU countries, making it difficult to ensure the legal certainty that the industry requires.

In conclusion, participants agree that radio should be recognized, both socially and legislatively, as a key cultural industry. Its role as a content creator and its impact on

society demand legislation that provides legal certainty and responds to the challenges posed by new formats and technologies. Furthermore, innovation in consumption platforms is identified as a crucial strategy for reaching and retaining new audiences.

Both the speaker and the roundtable participants identify several key challenges. One of these is the need to establish a legislative framework that recognizes concepts such as private copying and regulates formats like podcasts and catch-up radio. The importance of positioning radio as a leading player in the information society and cultural trade is also underlined. Another critical challenge is harmonizing intellectual property rights at the European level and adapting radio to technological advancements in a sustainable manner.

To tackle these challenges, participants propose the creation of think tanks involving both public and private entities, enabling a multi-perspective approach to the sector's needs. Additionally, they suggest promoting creative legislation that reinforces radio's role and ensures the protection of its rights. Finally, they emphasize the importance of launching educational campaigns to highlight radio as a cultural industry and developing innovative, accessible platforms that diversify and expand its audience.

CONFERENCE

ROUNDTABLE

1.4. *The Effectiveness of Radio Advertising*

Speaker: Fred Jacobs (President and founder of Jacobs Media)

Chair: Teresa Piñeiro (Universidade da Coruña)

Panel members: Albert Batlle (Director of Media, Danone); Marta Coll (Senior Advisor at Dentsu); Jose Luis Moro (Creative Director and Founding Partner at Pingüino Torreblanca); Ricardo Vives (Vives Radio)

Rapporteur: Jordi Serra Simon (UdG)

The speaker emphasizes that content strategies should focus on being where the audience is ("fish where the fish are"). It is essential to create content and materials in places where the audience is most likely to engage with our brand. He believes that

media outlets require a new content distribution model and should consider both radio content and other types of productions or experiences.

To develop a project, he proposes 17 key questions or principles:

1. Is there a 'gap' in the market for your proposal? (Are you the first? Do you have a distinctive and relevant element?)

2. Are you confident that you can monetize the content?

3. Is your content evergreen, or does it expire quickly?

4. Can the content be generated sustainably? Do you encourage user-generated content?

5. Do you have a community that supports your content?

6. Does your content encourage a habit or routine? (e.g., Wordle changes daily.)

7. Do you have the necessary tools and resources to carry out your project?

8. Will there be a product owner responsible for overseeing the project?

9. Do you have human resources with the necessary skills?

10. Who is your content aimed at? Is your brand relevant to them now?

11. Do you own your content (i.e., do you have customer data), or is it leased? (e.g., you have user profiles, but they belong to a platform like Twitter (now X).)

12. Does it allow for brand extensions?

13. Can the audience be digitalised? (e.g., sending newsletters to their email.)

14. Are there social media strategies behind the project?

15. Are there AI strategies behind the project?

16. Have you conducted research on the content?

17. Is there a marketing strategy for the content? Is there a budget allocated for dissemination?

According to the speaker, any content creation and distribution project should be based on these 17 principles.

During the round table discussion, Albert Batlle asserted that radio is a medium that provides credibility and relevance. He highlighted the power and trustworthiness of advertising mentions. He also noted that radio is currently a relatively unsaturated medium, which benefits advertisers.

Marta Coll pointed out that television consumption has decreased in favor of streaming platforms. She compared linear TV and radio listening times (180 vs 173 minutes, respectively) and stressed that audio facilitates reaching new audiences (e.g., via Spotify). She sees radio as a survivor and believes it will continue to be so. However, she noted that radio has mistakenly suffered from a "little brother" complex compared to other media and needs to reclaim its role. She argued that radio must improve audience measurement, expand its reach to new demographics, and promote personalization.

Jose Luis Moro stated that audio is and will continue to be a powerful tool. He emphasized that this is a great time for podcasts, as quality results can be achieved with minimal resources. Brands, he said, are eager to communicate and share their purpose.

Ricardo Vives pointed out that radio has become more effective than TV and the internet in certain areas. He explained that junior employees in agencies typically handle radio advertising, whereas he believes that senior talent should be involved in both creative and planning aspects of radio advertising.

As for challenges, Albert Batlle stressed the need for highly skilled audio creatives in advertising agencies. Media agencies, he argued, should have audio planners who are well versed in radio language, and specialists in audio. If we want to enhance investment in the medium, improving audience measurement is crucial to better ROI control.

Regarding challenges, Marta Coll mentioned that investing in radio advertising often involves an element of "faith". Thus, improving measurement systems is essential. She also highlighted the potential of AI to create new narratives and opportunities for personalized advertisements.

Jose Luis Moro believes AI will streamline and enhance human creativity, allowing routine tasks to be delegated. He argued that radio should not be neglected, recalling how radio advertising was once an entertainment spectacle—an approach that should be preserved.

For Ricardo Vives, the main difficulties facing radio include understanding its audience, increasing its share of media investment (currently at 8%), and the willingness to create better campaigns for the medium.

To address these challenges, the following strategies were proposed:

• Improving the measurement of radio advertising campaigns.
• Encouraging creativity in radio advertising and ensuring that creative and media agencies allocate talent to this area.
• Increasing advertising investment in the radio sector.
• Leveraging AI where appropriate to enhance the personalization of creative content.

CONFERENCE

ROUNDTABLE

1.5. *Responsibility of Radio Journalism in the Face of Disinformation*

Speaker: Miguel Macías (editor and reporter at NPR, Seville), with contributions from Theo Balcomb (audio journalist and podcast producer), Brooke Gladstone (American journalist, author, and media analyst), and Ángel Martínez (presenter of *Morning Edition* and *Up First*).

Chair: Nereida Carrillo (UAB and President of *Learn to Check*)

Panel members: Ramón Iglesias (Content Director at Cadena SER); Marta Martínez (Senior Producer at Latino USA); Joan Maria Morros (Dean of the Catalan College of Journalists); Guillermo Rodríguez (Director of News and Digital Content at Cadena SER)

Rapporteur: Pere Franch (URL)

Miguel Macías explains that NPR is the United States' public radio, but in reality is only public in name. It is largely funded by listeners and foundations, with only 5% of its funding coming from the state. Despite this, it is often criticized for being "too left-wing." It is labelled as such because it adheres to the moral principles of journalism.

NPR faces two major threats: lack of funding and the political environment. During this second Donald Trump administration, things are expected to get worse.

Macías predicts that, in the future, reality will become a fragmented concept—there will be reality number one, reality number two, reality number three... "I want to stick with reality number one," he says.

In his view, journalism should stop trying to understand Trump voters. What would it mean to understand them? To broaden the limits of our values? That is not something we should do.

He also argues that disinformation exists within traditional media too. As an example, he cites *The New York Times*, which referred to "antisemitic" violence in Amsterdam following the Ajax-Maccabi Tel Aviv match on 7 November.

Theo Balcomb explains that, after Donald Trump's election, *The New York Times* launched a large number of long-format podcasts. She was asked to produce more on a variety of topics, but she questioned, "Who will be the journalist?" and decided to focus on just one report per day. She believes that, in an oversaturated media environment, producing one in-depth piece per day was a successful approach.

Brooke Gladstone argues that not all information should be given the same weight. If the audience is not clearly informed about which pieces of news are verified and which are biased, and if all perspectives are presented neutrally as though they have equal value, then the public is being misled.

Ángel Martínez maintains that they do not alter their principles to gain more listeners; instead, they stay true to their values. They do not sacrifice their ethics for the sake of the audience.

Panel discussion:

Ramón Iglesias poses the question: what should radio do in this era of *fake news*? His answer: be the radio, continue doing what it has always done—providing truthful and well-sourced information. He believes that the challenge is not just for radio but for society as a whole: teaching people how and where to find reliable news, and how to distinguish between "good" and "bad" information.

He stresses that radio journalism must be financially sustainable. He highlights that radio is an inexpensive medium that has lowered advertising rates, but warns of a potential risk: becoming too dependent on a small number of advertisers, which could threaten the independence of media companies.

Marta Martínez points out that influencers and YouTubers had a significant impact on the outcome of the U.S. elections. In her opinion, they played a crucial role in shaping the Latino vote. The only way to counter this, she says, is to expose and denounce their influence.

Joan Maria Morros asserts that we must not hesitate to clearly state that social media does not provide reliable news and that influencers are not journalists. He insists that only established media outlets and journalists who adhere to ethical standards can provide accurate information. He believes that we must take a strong stance in promoting media literacy and actively fight against *fake news* and influencers, as they pose a threat to society.

He explains that the Catalan College of Journalists offers media literacy courses In schools—an initiative that could be expanded to other social groups.

Guillermo Rodríguez emphasizes the need to attract young people to traditional media. The key, he says, is to uphold journalistic ethics while also reaching out to parents first. He argues that mainstream media do not spread disinformation; disinformation only occurs when there is a deliberate intent to deceive. However, he acknowledges that even serious journalists can sometimes make mistakes and, when they do, they must correct them.

All four panelists agree that journalists must engage in self-criticism. If trust in the media is declining, it is partly due to journalists themselves, as some segments of the audience feel unrepresented by traditional media.

The panel concludes that:

- The best way to combat *fake news* is to continue producing high-quality radio journalism that is well-researched, verified, and conducted by professionals who follow ethical standards. It is noted that good journalism requires well-paid journalists who have sufficient time to do their job properly.
- Media literacy must be promoted in schools and colleges to help young people distinguish between reliable news sources and disinformation. This initiative could also be extended to other sectors of society. Educating young people—and society as a whole—on how to differentiate *fake news* from fact-checked, verified journalism is one of the key challenges.
- Young people must be made aware that they will not find reliable, fact-checked information on social media or from influencers.

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1.6. *Radio and Music, New Consumption Models and Roles*

Speaker: Juan Ignacio Gallego (Associate Professor and Researcher, Department of Communication, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid)

Chair: Armand Balsebre (UAB)

Round Table Participants: Didier Auzy (Program Director, Flaix FM and Ràdio Flaixbac); Jaume Baró (Station Director, Kiss Media); Sergio Figueiras (Strategy Director, LOS40); Gaël Sanquer (Managing Director of Musical Media in NRJ Group)

Chair: Cristina Martorell (UAB)

Juan Ignacio Gallego explains that major platforms (Amazon, Apple, and Google) have taken a keen interest in the audio sector, including devices, smart speakers, software, music services, and podcast-specialized services.

He highlights that music is often an accompaniment to other activities (commuting, household chores, work, etc.) and that, in the mix of music consumption, radio com-

petes with other channels and platforms, such as streaming services, social media, and video platforms.

He notes that connected devices (such as smart TVs) give platforms far more visibility, with direct access from the main menu, whereas traditional media require users to search for, install, and open a specific app.

Gallego identifies several challenges facing radio, including an ageing audience and the difficulty of balancing content between adults and younger listeners, competition in the music consumption mix (music videos, streaming, short videos, etc.), and the lack of visibility of radio stations on the interfaces of connected devices.

He explains that, although radio has traditionally played a key role in discovering new music, this role has declined over the past eight years in favor of friends and family or streaming music services.

During the panel discussion, it is emphasized that radio is a content-generating medium, but it is losing young audiences. Nowadays, young music enthusiasts create YouTube channels, which reduces radio's traditional role as a music curator.

It is also pointed out that radio must coexist with new platforms. This is not necessarily a negative development—technology also presents opportunities, such as enabling listeners to tune into a station from places where FM signals do not reach.

It is noted that people are listening to less and less music overall (in the 1960s, people listened to entire albums, later individual songs, and now only around 20 seconds of a track). Songs are getting shorter—many do not even reach two minutes. The music industry once determined song lengths based on vinyl record capacities. Will platforms now dictate song duration?

The discussion highlights that the business model has changed, and record labels are investing less in radio. It is now more challenging to attract major artists to radio stations for song promotion. Record labels' strategies have shifted, prioritizing clicks and views on YouTube. However, radio still plays a crucial role in increasing these clicks—labels still need radio to bring songs to the general public. An artist may be well-known on streaming platforms, but to gain widespread recognition, they need exposure on radio (as well as television).

Radio stations have had to specialize to compete with digital alternatives. To do so, they rely on tools such as consultants, who analyze market trends to suggest which music styles might work best for a station, or *callouts*, a type of telephone post-test where around 100 listeners are asked their opinion on a station's programming. Nevertheless, the final decision lies with the radio programmer.

As conclusions:

- The connection between artist, curator, and audience can only happen on radio. It is not enough to simply play songs, as platforms do—artists must be able to express themselves, audiences need to get to know them, and they must promote their concerts.
- Record labels still rely on radio, as do audiences and artists. However, at the same time, they no longer collaborate as they once did and seem less interested in promoting music via radio.
- The human factor is what differentiates radio from platforms and algorithms—it is the station's soul. It is essential to explore the roles this human element can play in the face of artificial intelligence. Perhaps the future of radio lies in offering that "magic" that platforms cannot replicate.

Two main challenges are identified:

- Radio audiences are becoming increasingly senior, and it is difficult to strike a balance between attracting younger listeners and catering to the existing audience.
- The primary challenge is not FM versus online broadcasting—it is the content itself. There is a need for new talent to create fresh and engaging content; otherwise, every station ends up playing the same music.

Among the strategies implemented to address these challenges, it is suggested that platforms can be used as an additional point of contact with audiences, seeing them as allies rather than competitors. While they may take some listeners away from radio, they also provide an opportunity for radio brands to maintain a presence and act as music curators through these platforms.

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ROUNDTABLE

1.7. *Public Radio Worldwide: Traditional Models and Alternatives*

Speaker: Edita Kudláčová (Head of Radio at the European Broadcasting Union)

Chair: Rosa Franquet (UAB)

Panel members: Jordi Borda (Director of Catalunya Ràdio); Cristina Bravo (News Director at RNE); Núria de José (CEO of La Xarxa)

Rapporteur: Matilde Delgado (UAB)

The speaker focuses on radio in Europe. She states that radio is a flexible medium with a great capacity to adapt to change. She presents audience data from European broadcasters, showing that 82% of adults and 73% of young people listen to the radio.

She argues, based on data, that radio (both public and private) is the most trusted medium among audiences. She highlights its crucial role in emergencies and in serving older audiences and those with limited access to online media. According to her, this unique relationship with listeners is one of radio's greatest strengths.

Regarding distribution, she believes that radio must be present wherever its audiences are. This means designing and producing content for various distribution formats and consumption devices. However, she warns that it must be done properly, ensuring easy access.

The speaker suggests that one key issue in the transformation of broadcasting organizations is the need for continuous renegotiation with platforms and social networks, which need content but should not be allowed to appropriate it.

She emphasizes the need for collaboration between public and private radio companies across Europe and presents the European Broadcasting Union's *Connected Playbook* initiative as an example.

She also refers to the use of AI in podcasting and radio in general, stating that it is a technology we must learn to coexist with—not fear, but utilize. She asserts that radio, as the most trusted medium, is well positioned to present AI applications in a way that does not cause concern.

Finally, she lists some of the challenges facing European public radio, such as funding, attracting younger audiences, expanding distribution, and increasing its global reach.

One of the key topics discussed in the panel was the role of public radio in tackling misinformation. In this regard, it was highlighted that one of the most effective ways to combat misinformation and continuously verify facts is to maintain proximity to local communities.

Cristina Bravo from RNE emphasized the importance of regional news centers in ensuring accuracy. Similarly, Núria de José spoke about the local impact of misinformation, explaining how it can affect individuals and discourage people from taking on political responsibilities. Jordi Borda argued that professionalism and trust are essen-

tial to counter misinformation. Media literacy was also identified as a crucial factor in this context.

Regarding public radio and social media, podcasting was identified as a recurring theme in content distribution. La Xarxa, for example, has created a three-minute podcast summarizing the latest news, which is sent directly to subscribers' mobile phones. This format works well for local radio, as local news does not become outdated as quickly as national or international news.

At Catalunya Ràdio, podcasting is seen as an integral part of radio, helping to foster community engagement. Overall, the panel members agreed that podcasts are not a threat to traditional radio but rather an additional tool that enhances its reach.

The panelists also expressed optimism about the use of AI in production processes. In local radio, where teams are smaller, AI could be a valuable tool to streamline workflows and free up resources for content creation. However, they stressed that AI-generated voices can never replace the human element. In any AI-related project, there must always be a human team overseeing its design and implementation.

Cristina Bravo shared a specific example in which AI was used to provide continuous election coverage to towns with fewer than 1,000 inhabitants—something that would have been practically impossible using only human journalists. However, she noted that we are still in the learning phase regarding how to integrate AI into production processes and what legal and ethical considerations need to be addressed.

In conclusion, radio can combat disinformation by strengthening its local presence, building trust through professional journalism, and promoting media literacy.

Podcasting is not a threat to radio but rather a complementary distribution method that enhances content reach and fosters community building.

Regarding concerns about AI, the panel was optimistic. While we are still learning, AI can be a valuable tool that helps free up resources for value-added content creation. However, AI cannot replace the human touch in broadcasting, and human oversight will always be necessary in its development and implementation.

In short, future challenges identified in the session are:

- Funding
- Reaching audiences, especially younger listeners, where they are
- Maintaining control over content in the era of platforms and social media
- AI

In terms of the strategies to be applied to respond to the challenges posed, the following are mentioned:

- Adapting to new distribution formats while maintaining ongoing negotiations with platforms and social networks to retain control over content
- Approaching AI with a focus on opportunities rather than just threats and risks
- Strengthening audience trust in radio through professionalism and accuracy
- Developing user-friendly applications that facilitate easy access to content
- Encouraging collaborative efforts at a European level

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ROUNDTABLE

🔊 BLOCK 2. **FROM RADIO TO AUDIO**

2.1. *The Future of the Audio Industry and Podcast Expectations*

BSpeaker: Eric Nuzum (Co-founder of Magnificent Noise)

Chair: Luis Miguel Pedrero (Universidad Francisco de Vitoria)

Panel members: María Jesús Espinosa (General Director of PRISA Audio); Alberto Fernández (Director of RTVE Play); Albert Murillo (Podcast Area of Catalunya Ràdio); Andoni Orrantia (Director of Transformation, Strategy, and New Business Development at Ábside Media/Cadena COPE); Marta Perrotta (Associate Professor / Director of the university radio / Rector's Delegate for Institutional Communication and Promotion at the Università Roma Tre)

Rapporteur: Marta Montagut (URV)

Eric Nuzum believes that podcasts represent the latest stage in the evolution of radio, a versatile medium that undergoes profound changes every twenty years, and that podcasting is not a disruptive force for radio but rather an opportunity. Radio must take time to reflect and ask itself, "What is our opportunity right now?"

According to Nuzum, the introduction of video in the podcasting world is daunting, as it is a new and significant change. Change is often uncomfortable, but in podcasting, video is merely a tool to increase creators' visibility, a complementary element to audio, which remains the core business.

Nuzum highlights that podcasts reach a diverse audience and provide a platform for new voices, as well as a new way to engage with listeners. This is why celebrities and politicians are beginning to consider this format important.

Regarding financing, he warns that relying on a single revenue stream can lead to instability. However, having people pay for content is a solid solution, and sponsorships that align with podcast content provide financial stability. Subscriptions generate a smaller income. Nuzum argues that podcasts are excellent at connecting people, businesses, and creators interested in a particular topic, and they encourage advertisers to find more natural ways of promoting products.

The speaker concludes that podcasts are not the end of radio but rather another phase in its evolution—an opportunity to rethink and adapt to new forms of expression and new creators emerging from the podcasting world. He predicts that 2025 will be a great year for podcasts because, following the boom of 2022-2023, content is now better tailored to building communities and attracting targeted funding.

At the round table, Marta Perrotta predicts that radio will increasingly focus on video, with studios transforming into TV-like sets for live broadcasts, a shift that has already taken place in Italy. Podcasts, she argues, are born with video as a natural complement.

Albert Murillo states that, from the perspective of public radio, while video podcasts are not dismissed, audio remains central and should be accessible to the entire population. He also stresses the importance of promoting the Catalan language.

Andoni Orrantia believes that audio, due to its nature, can embrace dynamism and self-growth, emulating industries perceived as having a strong future. He outlines the three D's for success: Digital: expanding digital content to reach new markets and audiences; Data: the significance of detailed audience analytics; and Distribution: improving content reach.

Alberto Fernández poses the question: What criteria determine whether RTV Play formats remain digital-only or are included in linear programming? His response: content that serves as a daily companion fits better in linear programming, whereas content chosen by users shifts to platform-based consumption, aligning with the attention economy. He concludes that video podcasting blends both approaches, offering conversational, companionable content at a lower cost while also reaching new communities and voices. However, he warns against the risk of creator precariousness.

María Jesús Espinosa cautions against over-reliance on platforms and the dictatorship of algorithms (e.g., Spotify for Creators), which dictate content formats. She emphasizes the importance of "audio diversity" and advocates for an independent audio industry, separate from platform control.

In summary, key conclusions from the panel discussion were as follows

- Podcasts are not a threat to radio but an opportunity to diversify products, revenue streams, and explore new formats and voices.
- The integration of video into podcasts happens organically, with audio remaining the priority and video serving as a brand-building tool.
- Digital transformation, audience analytics, and effective distribution are crucial factors that can support radio companies integrating podcasts as a revenue-generating product.

Future challenges outlined in the session:

- The full adaptation of radio to new audio consumption trends, along with technological and programming changes that integrate traditional audio with podcasts.
- Encouraging audio diversity by fostering an independent audio industry.
- Developing specialized listener/viewer communities.

And as proposed strategies to address these challenges:

- Implementing a dual strategy for content creation and distribution, balancing online and library-based approaches to attract new audiences, voices, and creators, while designing a funding system aligned with audience segmentation.
- Recognizing valuable podcast content and its creators, using established audio platforms as cost-effective promotional tools, but without undermining professionals working conditions.
- Providing grants and development plans to support an independent audio industry.
- Market analysis and investment in products that serve as a meeting point between creators and industry stakeholders.
- Establishing experimental audio and video platforms, ensuring that audio retains its evocative and companionable qualities.

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2.2. New Multimedia Formats. The Role of Social Media

Speaker: Emili Prado (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona)

Chair: Manuel Fernández Sande (Universidad Complutense de Madrid)

Panel members: Cristina Delgado (YouTube), Miriam Hernanz (Prisa); Anna Punsí (True Crime Factory); and Eugenio Viñas (PRISA Audio)

Rapporteur: Carles Llorens (UAB)

The speaker highlights that broadcasting has always recognized the importance of audience participation. From the very beginning, interactive experiences have been common, whether in content—such as *War of the Worlds* by Orson Welles—or in structure and ownership, as seen with free radio stations. However, the digital revolution and the rise of the internet have fundamentally shifted this dynamic: content no longer travels towards the listener; instead, the consumer actively seeks it out. In this context, social media plays a key role in radio, not only by providing new ways for audiences to express their views but, more importantly, by creating active communities around specific content.

Emili Prado argues that a structured and strategic plan is essential to ensure that social media benefits radio in both directions: creating narrative communities and fos-

tering active engagement with the audience. However, the central, yet unresolved, issue remains how to monetize these platforms.

During the roundtable discussion, Anna Punsí and Eugenio Viñas emphasize the importance of high-quality content and sound in the evolving audio sector.

Eugenio Viñas points out that the primary function of social media is to help build communities, expand the reach of radio content, enable more flexible storytelling, introduce new (and especially female) creators, and facilitate experimentation.

Miriam Hernanz stresses that, beyond content quality, it is crucial to define a distribution strategy. She also notes that, since platforms now shape formats and aggregate audiences, radio stations must prioritize flexibility.

Cristina Delgado praises the performance of Spanish radio stations, which are making excellent use of their platforms by uploading large amounts of content, thereby expanding their audience and increasing revenue. As an example, she highlights that 53% of the listening time for PRISA Group's audio content on YouTube comes from non-music radio content, generating 45% of the group's total advertising revenue. Outside of this specific case, the primary use of social media remains visibility and community-building, as a direct monetization model has yet to emerge. It is considered a long-term investment, where a social media connection today might translate into a paid subscription a decade later.

In conclusion, two key ideas emerge: the need to focus on high-quality content and the central role of social media in expanding reach and fostering community engagement. From a business perspective, the session highlights the biggest future challenge for radio: monetizing social media use. One proposed strategy to address this is exploring alternative revenue streams, such as live events or product hybridization.

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ROUNDTABLE

2.3. *New Narratives and Languages to Reach Young Audiences*

Speaker: Martin Spinelli (MS) (University of Sussex).

Chair: Sílvia Espinosa (SE) (Universitat de Girona).

Panel members: Oriol de Balanzó (*La Competència* program, RAC1); Albert Bermúdez (*Què t'hi jugues* program, Cadena SER); Juliana Canet (*Que no surti d'aquí* program, Catalunya Ràdio); Sira Fernández (director of Antenna and Programs of Cadena SER)

Rapporteur: Raúl Martínez Corcuera (Uvic-UCC)

Martin Spinelli considers participation and integration as key strategies in the search for new languages to reach young people. Their involvement, as the target group, the co-creation of content, and collaborative production foster a strong connection with the project.

In his presentation, he discusses various examples of programs where young people participate extensively by asking questions, contributing ideas, and conducting interviews. However, in these cases, the actual production is handled by mentors or program teams, resulting in low integration of young people.

Spinelli introduces *The Rez*, a project he has been involved in (https://jointherez.com/crumblies/#about). It is a transmedia project for children aged 7-10 that includes a science-fiction podcast, comics, and a game-based website. The project addresses adolescent mental health with friendly approaches to the use and consumption of social media.

Participation in this project is encouraged through workshops with students from diverse ethnic backgrounds and economically disadvantaged areas. In these sessions, they develop creative proposals with support from writers and comic creators. Young participants are invited to propose new stories that reflect their concerns (ranging from transitioning to secondary school to bullying), opening the door to new narratives and ideas.

They have integrated a real AI (Ailin), which students can use to discuss comics and engage in conversations about kindness and healthy relationships. The students have embraced the game, taking on roles as characters. Everything is open source.

A key point Spinelli highlights is the importance of cultural differences and the relevance of context. He insists that one cannot apply the same approach in all situations and that adaptation to different realities and needs is crucial.

Spinelli emphasizes the participation and integration of children and young people in the creation and co-creation of audiovisual productions, where it is key to adapt to a familiar and accessible language. Moreover, this strategy fosters engagement and strengthens connections with media products.

In his final recommendations, Spinelli highlights:

- The challenging need for funding.
- The importance of replicable formats.
- The necessity of *intra-network* promotion.

In line with the session's focus, *New Narratives and Languages to Reach Young Audiences*, the key ideas center on reaching this demographic. All participants at the talk agree that radio has already invented everything. Therefore, adaptation and the search for new narratives and communication styles suited to modern realities are essential for reaching wider audiences.

Juliana Canet states that reaching young audiences is a concern for both media outlets and brands. In the *Que no surti d'aquí* program, they focus extensively on social media communication to connect with this demographic. Their goal is to act as a bridge, transforming *reel* viewers into radio listeners. Content must be specifically designed for young people, with productions tailored to their interests. She believes that topics are universal and, as an example, mentions the program *Crims*, explaining that it appeals to all audiences because the secret is simply telling a good story.

Another key point raised in the discussion is the importance of young people feeling represented and being treated as adults. Their participation must be valued, meaning young voices and diverse perspectives should be included.

Oriol de Balanzó argues that strong communicators are essential people who convey authenticity and freshness in both style and content. Additionally, selecting engaging topics is crucial because although themes are cyclical, the way information is interpreted evolves. It is necessary to find and train talented individuals.

For her part, Sira Fernández believes that new formulas do not need to be invented; instead, the focus should be on quality. Radio must find compelling topics and authentic voices that break traditional formats to attract younger audiences, as seen with David Broncano's *La vida moderna.*

Albert Bermúdez emphasizes the value of quality content. He believes that having skilled communicators who speak with authenticity is crucial. Young audiences can enjoy a wide range of topics, but they need to be presented honestly and personally, blending informal and serious tones as needed.

Other insights from the session highlight, for example, the need for young people to be exposed to and listen to the radio during adolescence. Otherwise, they are unlikely to become radio listeners later in life. Additionally, the discussion acknowledges ra-

dio's historical ability to adapt—now with its presence across multiple platforms (radio, apps, social media) and its availability for consumption anytime, anywhere. Bermúdez points out that radio has successfully adapted, mentioning how "people think I work on TikTok." Ultimately, the consensus is that radio appears in multiple formats, and testing what works best is essential.

The keys strategies are:

- Engage with young people where they are—currently on social media—using a language and formats that involve them.
- High production quality is non-negotiable.
- Content is universal and must be adapted to modern realities.

It is crucial to find and train communicators who convey authenticity, honesty, and a personal approach.

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2.4. *The Future of Local Radio: Models and Technological Constraints*

PSpeaker: Philippe Chapot (co-founder of RedTech International)

Chair: Josep M. Martí (SER Catalunya)

Panel members: Joan Català (Head of the Management Office at Xarxa Audiovisual Local); Miquel Curanta (Director of the Barcelona Music Lab Foundation and Director of Ràdio Capital de l'Empordà); Miquel Miralles (CAC Councillor); Alba Tosquella (Strategic Communication Consultant)

Rapporteur: Mercè Díez (UAB)

Philippe Chapot presents key proposals to make a difference in local radio:

* Take risks.
* Stand out. Do not compare yourself to others.
* Do not rely on audience ratings. Consider other indicators such as the number of phone calls received or how many people attend an external event.
* If you want to bet on the future, avoid presenters under 25 years old.

- Attract young people with podcasts. Young people today do not want to create radio programs, they want to create podcasts. They should be encouraged to experience the thrill of live broadcasting. Podcasters and radio broadcasters belong to the same family.
- Avoid boredom.
- Tell stories, not just news.
- Do not try to imitate large stations with more resources. Report on local events, but focus on what happens afterwards, as that is what the audience wants to know.
- Do not seek the "perfect radio voice." That is an outdated approach. What matters is that the audience enjoys listening to it.
- Look for diverse talents. Local radio should create talent, not just retain it.
- Local radio is a business and should be managed as such. Do not rely on subsidies. Consider alternative sources of funding.
- Have a mobile-friendly website.
- Obtain data directly from listeners.
- Radio frequency should remain the backbone: it is free, anonymous, and reaches everyone at the same time with no additional cost. The transition to DAB+ is necessary.
- Local radio is about hyper-proximity. It is not meant to be recorded but to be immediate.

During the panel discussion:

Miquel Miralles highlighted the richness of the Catalan local radio landscape, even surpassing that of France, and emphasized that radio in Catalonia is predominantly in Catalan, leading in public, music, and general radio.

Joan Català expressed optimism about the future of radio and explained the support provided by Xarxa Audiovisual Local (XAL) to local radio and television, with €29 million allocated by the Diputació de Barcelona (regional council); 204 affiliated media outlets, including 151 radio stations; 50 news pieces exchanged daily and high network reach at reduced costs (stations in Girona or Tarragona can run their own programming without going through Barcelona) thanks to optic fiber networks. He highlighted the *info podcast*, a daily service available on around fifty stations, which delivers a short news summary via social media (WhatsApp, Telegram, etc.), fostering community engagement.

Alba Tosquella believes we are currently experiencing a period of uncertainty (fragmented audiences, monetization challenges, etc.). She presented preliminary findings from a study conducted for XAL to help local radio stations navigate this transition. She emphasized that both public and private broadcasters play a vital role in proximity services and in fostering new talent.

The focus should be on content, digital transformation, committed teams, and public support—not just financial, but also in recognizing the sector's importance.

Miquel Curanta argued that the key challenge is to create content that effectively reaches audiences connected to specific territories (local, regional, or wider districts).

He called for private local radio to be recognized as a viable advertising platform, as it also serves the public interest. Public administrations should view it as an ally. He urged proper funding for public radio while leaving advertising revenue for private stations. Private local radio's main competition is large national broadcasters, not public local stations. Currently, private local radio cannot survive solely on traditional advertising spots, so they must diversify revenue streams (events, workshops, content production, etc.).

On technology:

Digitization has been an ongoing process for decades (computerization, website development, artificial intelligence). Technology has become so affordable and accessible that local radio can now be highly innovative.

Curanta sees DAB as outdated compared to *streaming* and urges against mandating its adoption for local stations, as it would increase costs. Miralles responded that the Consell Audiovisual de Catalunya (CAC) neither wants to nor can impose DAB.

Philippe Chapot explained that in France, €38 million per year is allocated to non-profit radio stations (excluding those that derive more than 20% of their funding from advertising). He stated that DAB is ten times cheaper than FM in terms of energy

costs. On the DAB-*streaming* debate, he noted that in the event of a catastrophe (such as an earthquake), IP-based broadcasting would not be the solution. However, Curanta argued that many applications can now be virtualized, and energy consumption can be reduced through cloud-based technologies.

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2.5. *Audience Measurement in a Multicast Environment*

Speakers: José Andrés Gabardo (Technical Director, AIMC) and Luis Pistoni Durán (Commercial Director, ODEC)

Chair: María Pilar Martínez-Costa (Universidad de Navarra)

Panel members: Arnaud Annebicque (General Director, MetricLine Department, Médiamétrie); Jordi Català (Head of Audience Analysis and Exploitation, 3Cat); Fernando Fernández Pablo (Research and Audience Manager, Prisa Media)

Rapporteur: Josep Maria Blanco (UAB)

José Andrés Gabardo presents the launch of the new live and automatic streaming measurement system, which will begin on December 10, 2024. This system will allow the integration of declarative and census-based measurements. Continuous consumption information will be available by days and hours, extending data collection to summer periods, thereby improving measurement quality.

Luis Pistoni Durán highlights that this is an industry-led radio project. For approximately two years, radio broadcasters have requested a new measurement method from the Asociación para la Investigación de Medios de Comunicación (AIMC). ODEC won the bid and developed the system, which will debut on December 10, 2024. The system involves receiving files, processing logs, standardizing records (cleaning and reconciling Ips, time, and other parameters), and then humanizing the data by cross-referencing it with EGM data. This process transforms sound fragments into sessions and, ultimately, into audience figures. The system manages millions of records using two tools: Stream, which provides session data, and Stream 2, which identifies individual listeners. Additionally, two further developed products are available: GEO-EGM, which provides radio consumption data at a regional or local level, and MARKET & MEDIA, which offers insights into behaviors, brands, and products.

During the roundtable discussion, participants acknowledge that the new system set to launch in December will provide rich data to enhance understanding of listeners —who make diverse decisions and take different paths to consume radio content. It will also enable better comprehension of audience behavior across different geographic regions. This can help shape content distribution strategies more swiftly, as continuous monitoring will generate alerts that media outlets can use to make programming decisions. Furthermore, it will offer clearer insights into actual consumption data and audience leadership standings.

Declarative tools remain useful and reliable, continuously improving over time. Many countries in Europe and the Americas, as well as African and Asian nations like China, fully trust these systems. Additional data collection methods are being explored through electronic devices such as wristbands, which are used in France, the Netherlands, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, and the United States to gather cross-media consumption data. However, there remains significant uncertainty regarding radio consumption via mobile devices. It is emphasized that, when discussing radio, it is crucial to distinguish between platforms offering audio content to consumers and those specifically targeting listeners.

The emergence of new platforms and technologies is changing how time is distributed for listening to audio products. The key is to determine the time and manner in which radio content is consumed, regardless of where users are located.

In conclusion, hybrid methodologies are here to stay, and new streaming audience measurement tools validate declarative qualitative methodologies by complementing them. Radio is not at risk; rather, it is adapting to modern times through measurement tools that provide deeper insights into audience behavior.

A particularly relevant point is the humanization of data. The integration of census-based data with declarative data will enable radio broadcasters to determine which content to offer in the coming years to increasingly diverse audiences.

The next challenges involve measuring podcast audiences and ensuring maximum transparency in handling data from radio streaming.

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2.6. *Relationship Between Radio Stations and Tech Companies*

Speaker: Alfonso Ospina (Caracol Radio, Colombia, Grupo Prisa).

Chair: Raúl Terol (UPV)

Panel members: Jesús Gómez (Spotify); Daniel Karlsson (Triton Digital); Jorge Montero (Ábside Media)

Rapporteur: Marta Narberhaus (UAB)

Alfonso Ospina, emphasizes the human aspect of radio and the need to explore better ways for tech companies and radio broadcasters to complement each other, working together and making concessions for the benefit of society. In this relationship, it is evident that radio can coexist with tech companies—radio can lower content production costs, while tech companies can expand their distribution power through radio stations.

UNESCO highlights the power of local radio, which can sustain itself by expanding its horizons and adapting to new circumstances. Radio is not doomed to community-based or hyperlocal content; it should also explore other ways to attract audiences, such as creating and recreating great stories.

The evolution of net advertising investment in radio shows a 37% decline since its peak in 2014 in Colombia (from $677 billion in 2014 to $430 billion in 2023).

The constant decline in gross advertising investment in radio between 2014 and 2023 averages 3% annually, while the economy's constant GDP growth over the same period is 2.8% annually. This suggests that the relationship between radio stations and tech companies should be one based on sustainable business figures.

This is not a matter of competition or sharing content for free, but rather collaboration in which both parties' benefit (through advertising, audiences, and market share).

Most people have already transitioned to the digital environment, making collaborative models between tech platforms and radio stations efficient in terms of reach and sustainability. However, there is still work to be done. For instance, media professionals need training to maximize the potential of existing digital platforms. Additionally, Artificial Intelligence (AI) offers vast opportunities for improving radio and audio production.

Technology and Journalism in the 21st Century

Technology is now directly linked to journalism. SEO acts as a curator, something journalists have always done. Therefore, excellent reporters with SEO skills are needed who can curate data and prevent misinformation.

The path forward for radio and tech companies is collaboration—agreeing on shared objectives. For example, joint content production could be an option: digital platforms can provide resources to co-produce content, particularly on topics related to inclusion, diversity, and human rights.

The Role of Public Policies in the Media Ecosystem

In this scenario, public policies are crucial and should focus on:

- Transparency and fairness in public revenue distribution.
- Protection of original content.
- Tax incentives for collaboration.

Adapting to Digital Consumption Trends

Radio stations have successfully adapted to technological changes, reaching audiences where they are. For example, in Spain, 20% of radio consumption is via streaming, while in the Netherlands, it is 40%. Broadcasters understand that they must be available where listeners want to consume their content.

Thus, while broadcasters focus on providing high-quality audio content in the digital ecosystem and understanding distribution systems, tech companies offer valuable resources. However, maintaining balance in this relationship is crucial to ensure fair access to content for users, which requires a regulatory framework allowing free and unrestricted access.

A journalist's profile today must include fluency in different digital languages, adapting to each platform. Reporters must work with both content and digital systems. When producing branded content, 90% of the investment should go into talent.

Current Relationships Between Tech Companies and Radio Stations

So, what is the current relationship between tech companies and radio?

Spotify has partnerships that include:

- Technological support (tools, audience insights, distribution, interaction).
- Editorial support (helping content find its audience on Spotify).

Additionally, there is a need to capture revenue streams currently dominated by Amazon, Google, and Meta. Users seek high-quality content, and advertisers look for high-quality audiences.

Regulation plays a key role here—radio has built trust with audiences in a way that Meta, for example, has not. Editorial oversight and regulations provide guarantees, making brand safety appealing to advertisers.

Radio and Young Audiences: The Role of Tech Companies

Traditional radio has an aging audience, while collaborations with tech companies help bring younger audiences into the fold. This is evident in the podcast format, which creates engaged communities that interact beyond the program itself.

It has been proven that digital platforms expand radio audiences, making collaboration essential. However, the key challenge in this collaboration remains to ensure that it is based on healthy business figures for both parties.

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2.7. Distribution Between Proprietary Platforms and Audio Platforms

Speaker: Laurence Harrison (Radioplayer)

Panel members: Ana Alonso (SER Podcast); Cristina Villà (3cat)

Chair: Carmen Peñafiel (UPV/EHU)

Rapporteur: Marta Narberhaus (UAB)

Laurence Harrison presents Radioplayer, a broadcasters' platform, through the daily life of an AI-generated user named Sonia. Radioplayer is a platform owned by broadcasters for broadcasters—a collaboration between public service and broadcasters to control information distribution.

They have worked extensively on design to complement individual strategies and applications while increasing revenue. Harrison highlighted the importance of UX and design, ensuring consistency and familiarity across different devices (smart speakers, automotive apps, TV, web apps, smartphones).

Their core idea and main goal is *"Keeping radio strong in connected cars,"* meaning maintaining a strong presence for radio in connected vehicles. Their upcoming projects include developing AI-driven recommendations to enhance personalized experiences and increasing collaborations with car manufacturers.

With Radioplayer, radio stations can track audience data via the platform and integrate it into their own data systems. What matters to them is that broadcasters maintain control. Their mission is to innovate, grow their audience, and provide monetization opportunities.

Given this scenario, the future of radio is not about resisting change by following 20th-century parameters, but rather about adapting to new times, consumption habits, and technological possibilities. For example, radio stations compete for audience attention, making it crucial to attract new listeners. In this regard, young people represent a great opportunity for audio and radio, particularly in on-demand audio consumption. They consume content in a way that is no longer just *liquid* but *gaseous*. There is a diversification of consumption habits and a hybridization of formats.

For example, podcasts could help prevent the aging of radio audiences. In a world where everyone can become a broadcaster, trusted curators are more necessary than ever. Moreover, listeners want to feel like they are part of the message. This explains the growing trend toward experimental events that integrate audiences into programming, making them feel like part of a community.

Distributing content across multiple platforms is generating all possible touchpoints with audiences. In other words, "consume it wherever you want but consume it", and ensure that we can measure these new audiences.

With every technological innovation, there are always doomsday predictions... but audio offers a unique advantage: it allows people to use their hands and eyes for other tasks (such as driving), making radio more powerful and relevant than ever.

Radio stations are not only focused on creating the content they broadcast but also on developing strategies to promote it. At 3Cat, for instance, audiences are accustomed to self-referential consumption. However, in today's world of asynchronous consumption, there are no transitional promotions and, therefore, no promotion at all.

There is a strong effort to produce and promote content across as many platforms as possible while generating content for social media. From the very beginning, promotional strategy is considered an integral part of content creation.

PRISA, for example, produces a lot of complementary content to support both traditional broadcasts and digital podcasts. Platforms are not just competitors; they are crucial allies. Social media and the sheer volume of content enable cross-promotion.

However, caution is needed when dealing with niche markets—it is essential to broaden reach and avoid overly conservative categorization. Being ambitious opens the door to feedback and mutual reinforcement.

That said, a key question remains: *How can audience measurement be used to generate more audience?* That is the holy grail of cross-media strategies. Another critical issue is algorithmic bias, which must be addressed responsibly and ethically.

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2.8. Connected Cars: The Future of Audio in Automobiles

Speaker: Justine Gheeraert (Head of Strategic Partnerships at Radio France)

Chair: Madalena Oliveira (Universidade do Minho)

Panel members: Ricardo Berdichesky (Executive Director of PRISA Media Chile); George Cernat (Senior Director for Auto-motive Connected Media at Xperi); Jean François Labal (Marketing & Partnership Head – Digital Customer Experience at Renault); Daniel Rico (Senior Manager – Modern Application Services Channels at NTT Data)

Rapporteur: Estrella Barrio (UAB)

The car is the space where the highest consumption of radio takes place. It is the place where radio is tuned in most frequently. In fact, radio's peak listening time coincides with commuting to and from work. However, new technologies are also impacting on this sector because connected vehicles function like smartphones, leading radio to lose its traditional dominance in this space and share its spotlight with other formats such as music, podcasts, audiobooks, and new interfaces. This forces radio to act quickly in this evolving market—radio no longer has a monopoly.

In the future, cars will be even more connected. Everything currently available on a smartphone will soon be accessible in the car. We are witnessing the rise of new technologies (*car mode, mirroring, dashboard, voice assistant, hybrid radio*) that enhance connectivity in a setting where visual attention is crucial, making audio the main protagonist. This scenario presents an opportunity for radio.

The future of radio in automobiles depends on adapting to new technologies by collaborating with other key players in the ecosystem, such as car manufacturers and companies providing applications to car manufacturers, including Radioplayer, Google, Amazon, and Radioland, among others. Connectivity is emerging as a key factor in the future of radio in automobiles, and car manufacturers are working to improve the user experience, turning vehicles into smartphones on wheels.

The utopian vision of fully autonomous vehicles is not imminent, meaning that audio will continue to be the most important medium in cars. However, for this to happen, the following steps must be taken:

- Strengthening the power of radio, which produces a vast amount of diverse content, by leveraging new technologies.
- Eliminating barriers so that any radio station—national, local, public, or private—can be integrated into in-car listening devices.
- Enhancing access to information about radio fragmentation. Thanks to new technologies, it is possible to analyze listener distribution, radio market share by geographic region, and audience usage data.

Entertainment plays a significant role in consumers' decisions when purchasing a vehicle, making it an essential factor for car manufacturers. Renault, for instance, has already integrated entertainment into its strategy, shifting from selling a product to selling a service where information and entertainment experiences are key. Today, Renault offers experiences that include music, streaming platforms, podcasts, audiobooks, and radio (with Radioplayer and Radio France as key partners). They are also exploring gaming and experiences with Prime Video.

Radio holds a unique position in the entertainment sector, offering easily consumable content. However, radio must adapt to the new era with innovative ways of delivering content that enhance the user experience, such as;

- **Online services.** These eliminate FM's geographical restrictions, allowing listeners to tune in to any radio station from anywhere. Online services also offer temporal advantages, enabling on-demand listening to past programs.
- **Improving signal quality** through technological advancements.
- **Providing premium services.**
- **Personalizing the listening experience** by analyzing user interaction data. This personalization is crucial for advertisers who finance radio, as it enables targeted advertising.

The future of radio in vehicles lies in greater personalization, increased interactivity, and enhanced connectivity.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) could significantly impact on the future of radio. One example is content personalization—helping users receive the content that interests them the most. AI can determine a user's preferences at any given moment and provide them with relevant content based on personal tastes and daily routines.

To adapt to future transformations, radio must produce relevant content for its audience and utilize all available digital marketing and data analysis tools to better understand its listeners. These two factors will be critical for radio advertising.

For radio to maintain its role as a leading medium for user connectivity, it must personalize its services, encourage user interaction, integrate itself into the social media ecosystem, and evaluate its content based on quality rather than monetization alone.

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🔊 BLOCK 3. **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

3.1. *Audio and Artificial Intelligence. Challenges and opportunities*

Speaker: Ana Ormaechea (Chief Digital Officer of Radio at PRISA Media).

Chair: Xavier Ribes (UAB)

Panel members: Mapi García (Head of Media Clients at Google Cloud); Carles Miró (Head of Audiences and Digital Operations at RAC1 and RAC105); Pere Vila (Director of Technological Strategy at RTVE)

Rapporteur: Mònica Puntí (UdG)

Ana Ormaechea argues that Artificial Intelligence (AI) has a general impact on all areas of society, much like the introduction of computers did. According to the conclusions of the AIJF Project by Open Society (AI in Journalism Futures), AI is currently at a stage where media outlets use it to improve the efficiency of their objectives and products. In the next 3-5 years, we will be in a transition phase with new products, processes, and structures. In 15 years, there will be a completely new ecosystem.

How does AI impact on radio and audio? Through distribution and voice.

Before AI, audio and radio were closed boxes because their content could not be easily distributed. Only content created around the audio itself was shared. AI opens this box, as radio becomes digital audio and data, allowing for distribution. With digital audio, content could already be shared on the web and apps to reach users. Now, with data, audio can be tagged and transcribed with high quality and at reduced costs. This data allows content to be indexed in search engines, searched within, made more accessible, recommended, profiled for measurement, archived as an audio memory, and segmented. With this change, radio reaches the same level as other media. Today, all media produce audio, video, and text.

Regarding voice, AI enables voice cloning and synthetic voice generation, which can contribute to misinformation. According to Ormaechea, "this voice creation is now almost imperceptible to the human ear, and its use is fully democratized."

AI presents both opportunities and challenges for audio.

Opportunities include:

- Text-to-speech content (accessibility).
- Automated news bulletins (service).
- Voice integration into products (apps, smart speakers).
- Voice interaction and conversational agents or VoiceBots.

Challenges include:

- Intellectual property concerns.
- Increased competition in audio content and products.
- The rise of misinformation.

Brands have earned users' trust and credibility, but the ecosystem has expanded. Now, companies not only need to produce good audio but also ensure content verification and prevent misinformation.

During the roundtable discussion, it is stated that AI has made significant progress with generative AI. The example of Gemini illustrates this well, as it functions as both a conversational assistant and a service. Unlike other models, it is multimodal, meaning it can process and generate audio, text, images, and videos. Additionally, it can handle large amounts of content, provide summaries, and perform transcriptions. Gemini complies with regulations and has a privacy layer designed for businesses. Although it can clone voices, it can only do so with written authorization—without it, voice cloning is not possible. Despite the lack of regulations, all AI-generated content carries a watermark for identification, including audio.

The discussion emphasizes that human interaction remains crucial and that journalists should not feel threatened by AI. However, training is essential, ensuring that everyone is involved in both teaching and learning. This relates to the changes occurring in journalistic work. In a short time, journalists have seen their responsibilities increase—radio hosts, for example, now also create content for websites and social media. AI can assist with tools that make journalists' work easier.

For instance, RTVE, even before ChatGPT emerged, AI was used in 2018 to add metadata to archives, supplementing information with metainformation to facilitate searches. Verification tools were employed, and social media was monitored. AI also generated reports on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by automatically analyzing programs to identify when these topics were mentioned. Additionally, AI was used to create localized content. The audience ombudsman at RTVE receives numerous emails and uses AI to anonymize letters, create operational summaries, and generate reports. AI does not replace the ombudsman—it assists them.

AI will follow the same path as computers: once absent from newsrooms, they have now become essential. Serious professionals are expected to use AI responsibly. Implementing AI in business comes with both challenges and opportunities.

Challenges include:

- How to effectively introduce AI into companies.
- Overcoming fears about training professionals in these new tools.

Opportunities lie in:

- Encouraging creativity and boldness in exploring AI's potential.
- Improving analytics and audience insights.
- Optimizing processes and tasks.

Integrating AI is challenging, but the potential benefits in terms of efficiency, creativity, and competitiveness are immense. The key is to train professionals to maximize the use of these tools.

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3.2. *The Dilemma Between Human Voice and Synthetic Voice*

Speaker: Antoni Esteve (President of Lavínia).

Chair: Emma Rodero (Director of Media Psychology Lab)

Panel members: Nieves Abalos (Co-founder and Production Manager at Monoceros Labs); Pablo Gómez (Head of production at AudioStack); Olalla Novoa (Head of Voice and Smart Speakers at Prisa Media Radios); Juliana Rueda (Founder of Miutbooks and developer of EARS)

Rapporteur: Patrícia Lázaro (UAB)

The human voice and synthetic voice should be considered from a complementary perspective. The lack of knowledge about the potential of AI (Artificial Intelligence) leads to very defensive positions, even among communication professionals. However, we must be aware that behind AI and its resources (such as generating or cloning artificial voice), there is human intelligence. AI by itself is neither good nor bad; it depends on how it is used. However, ethical and regulatory criteria will need to be taken into account. In this regard, Antoni Esteve believes that very drastic measures

are being taken towards AI, when it is still unknown how negative or positive it will become.

The defense of the human voice is made by considering its expressive and emotional potential. The sound variability that, however, the synthetic voice will surpass (if it hasn't already). Therefore, it should not be seen as a comparison opposition, but as a complementary element.

It is essential to understand that radio and audio consumption has changed. Radio is no longer listened to in the same way as before because people now have various interfaces that allow personalized and different uses of content. These interfaces, which connect listeners with AI and the creation of synthetic voices, open up great creative possibilities, offering new forms of consumption that did not exist before.

One of the aspects that the panelists value positively regarding the incorporation of synthetic voice is that it significantly facilitates sound production, especially because it makes projects viable that, if they only relied on human voices, might not be considered for execution due to the difficulty of production. Furthermore, this is accessible to everyone, as there are tools that clone any voice from short samples (15 seconds).

Also valued positively is that it will allow human announcers to use their synthetic voice in the projects that best suit them. As long as the human announcer's right to control their synthetic voice is respected, because this is one of the main concerns of voiceover professionals: being replaced, and as a result, losing their business volume.

This possibility of incorporating synthetic voice more normally will allow the expansion of voice catalogs in various uses or applications, such as in the case of audiobooks.

There is a need for communication professionals to learn to work with synthetic voice, to incorporate it into their work routines, and to see it as a complementary tool rather than an enemy. This fear is understandable because technology and synthetic voices have evolved a lot and increasingly imitate human voices and emotions, which causes a lot of anxiety. Oral language is what makes us human, telling stories is our essence of humanity, and seeing machines doing the same (and doing it well) triggers rejections. Therefore, it is necessary to develop regulations that allow for the ethical and

honest use of synthetic voice, especially to avoid violating the rights of professional voiceover artists who may have their voices cloned and lose control over its use.

The panelists agree that the human voice has certain attributes that will make it impossible to be completely replaced. It has expressive and emotional variability, and interpretive abilities that are difficult to reproduce in synthetic voice. The human voice is that of a professional who provides trust and is integrated into the personal story and sonic experience of each listener. For that reason, it is necessary to learn to appreciate when a synthetic voice can be useful and when a human voice is indispensable.

The challenges consist of normalizing the presence and use of synthetic voices, understanding that they will not replace or take the place of human voices. But at the same time, it is very important for listeners to be able to discern whether the voice is human or synthetic, and in this sense, the need for standardized and identifiable audio marks.

And regarding Spain, it is valued that synthetic voices need to be developed in Spanish (or other official languages like Catalan, Basque, or Galician), respecting the great diversity of dialects, and also their quality, without losing standards.

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3.3. *AI for Good: Tools to Support Society*

Speaker: Olle Zachrison (Swedish Radio)

Chair: Alberto Quian (USC)

Panel members: Carlos Baraibar (Catalunya Radio); Montserrat Domínguez (Cadena SER); Xavier Ribes (UAB)

Rapporteur: Iliana Ferrer (UAB)

Olle Zachrison, representing the Swedish public broadcaster Sveriges Radio, argues that the main goal of implementing Artificial Intelligence (AI) in this station is to enhance the development of journalism, providing audiences with better user experiences and increasing internal newsroom productivity.

Sveriges Radio uses AI in the following areas:

Public Service Algorithm for News Curation: AI is used to create a news playlist that includes approximately 360 news clips daily. The selection of clips is guided by public service values, prioritizing information explained from the scene, the voices of those

affected, new perspectives on events, original analyses for contextualization, and sound-driven narratives.

Accessible Journalism for People with Disabilities: With AI, newsrooms can provide transcripts for audio/video clips, generate image descriptions (suggesting content based on detected elements), and speed up clip delivery, as AI can propose headlines based on transcripts. These actions enhance accessibility for people with disabilities. All AI-generated content is reviewed by human editors to ensure quality.

Training Language Models for Minority Languages: Sveriges Radio collaborates with universities to train language models in minority languages, such as Sámi, contributing to their preservation and accessibility.

Multilingual Access: AI allows audiences to choose their preferred language for consuming news content. Additionally, this tool transcribes and translates podcasts, even cloning the voices of those involved.

International Content Exchange: Through the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), public media share content translated using AI with synthetic voices. AI-generated transcriptions are reviewed in English before dissemination to ensure accuracy.

There is a clear distinction between journalism and AI-generated content. AI can be a powerful tool to support professional work and public media when guided by clear ethical and journalistic values. From this perspective, AI implementation in Swedish public media has demonstrated that technology can strengthen journalistic storytelling, expand accessibility, and preserve minority languages, showcasing its great potential to create a positive impact on society.

However, public trust in information is essential for credibility. Initiatives such as fact-checking projects and collaborative work in public service media highlight the importance of developing technological tools that promote reliable journalism, as well as fostering media literacy among journalists to ensure responsible AI use.

The panelists emphasize the opportunities offered by technological tools and how the AI-driven digital revolution can improve journalistic work—provided that these tools are well understood, and newsroom teams receive proper training. The need to

work with multidisciplinary teams of journalists and computer scientists to create hybrid newsrooms is also defended.

Nevertheless, they warn that technological tools evolve so rapidly that many become obsolete in a short time, requiring constant adaptability from professionals. The need to protect media-produced information from large tech companies is also emphasized. They propose establishing journalist associations to prevent platforms from using content for free, following the example of *The New York Times*.

Journalism cannot be reduced to automatic news writing, highlighting the need for AI training not only for newsroom teams but also for students and society in general. It is also pointed out that, although academia is often seen as slow to respond to these changes, there are already academic programs and initiatives from universities (such as the Radio Observatory) researching AI applications in generative use, analysis, and editorial assistance.

Despite AI advancements, it is reaffirmed that journalism, based on independence, critical analysis, and storytelling, remains irreplaceable. Strong criticism is directed at some media outlets' dependency on digital platforms such as X (formerly Twitter), which have adjusted their algorithms to align with far-right agenda trends, creating a distorted view of reality. This type of technological control poses challenges for maintaining the editorial independence of media organizations.

Finally, AI implementation requires support from public administrations, academia, and tech companies to integrate these tools into media outlets. Collaboration between industry and academia is key to advancing the ethical and efficient use of these technologies.

CONFERENCE

ROUNDTABLE

🔊 BLOCK 4. **PRESENTATIONS**

4.1. *Presentation of the Second White Paper on Local Radio in Catalonia (FMCLCat, [Federació de Mitjans Locals de Catalunya])*

Speakers: Armand Balsebre (UAB) and Lau Delgado (Director of the Audiovisual Market of Catalonia)

Chair: Gemma Peris (President of the FM-CLCat)

Rapporteur: Carmina Crusafon Baqués (UAB)

On the preparation and structure of the White Paper:

During this session, the first data from the Second White Paper on Local Radio (a study analyzing the current state of the sector) are presented. The first edition was published in 2006, and nearly 20 years later, this new study identifies both the unique characteristics of Catalan radio and the future challenges it faces.

The White Paper is divided into two parts:

1. Quantitative study: Based on responses to a survey sent to 227 local radio stations in Catalonia, of which 155 participated.
2. Qualitative study: Derived from a debate session involving 70 managers of municipal radio stations. During this session, current and future challenges for local radio were analyzed and discussed.

Quantitative study

Armand Balsebre, professor at UAB, presents the results of the quantitative study, providing a snapshot of local radio in Catalonia. He highlights the following key characteristics:

- It is generally publicly owned and municipally operated, funded entirely or mostly by the municipal budget.
- Advertising accounts for no more than 26% of revenue.
- It has a strong presence in the province of Barcelona and in towns with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants.
- It broadcasts simultaneously on FM and the internet and has a presence on social media.
- Typically, the station is managed by a man with a degree in Journalism/Communication, under the authority of the Municipal Communication/Media Department, and without a Board of Directors.
- In terms of staffing, it has between one and three contracted employees but more than ten volunteers.
- There has been no increase in staff over the past fifteen years, despite an increase in tasks.
- The majority are affiliated with La Xarxa or FMCLCat.
- It combines locally produced content with content from other local stations or networks.
- It offers more than three hours of live programming daily, as well as more than three hours of music programming via playlists.
- Both local news and sports coverage last less than an hour.
- It operates with a single, integrated newsroom.
- It is open to social, cultural, and educational organizations in the municipality or region.

- It lacks audience profile data.
- Its main future challenge is financial stability.

Qualitative study

Regarding the qualitative study, Lau Delgado explains how the session was organized with the participation of 70 municipal radio professionals. They were divided into four working groups:

1. Content Generation
- Opportunities: Encouraging citizen participation and proximity, creating content tailored to local needs, and leveraging Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- Threats: Challenges in innovating formats and managing participation, as well as risks of politicization and the loss of the essence of sound.

2. Content Distribution and Dissemination
- Opportunities: Audio visualization and digitalization, which open up ways to increase and monitor audiences, and the use of automated technologies, which improve accessibility and multilingualism.
- Threats: A lack of data complicates strategic planning, while increasing competition and technological requirements put pressure on available resources.

3. Content Impact and Commercialization
- Opportunities: Listener loyalty, particularly in smaller areas, as well as radio's role in social cohesion and its ability to attract younger audiences through multiplatform production.
- Threats: Balancing governance and credibility is a challenge, and adapting to fully hybrid content models can be complex.

4. Centrality of Activity
- Opportunities: Radio's educational and pedagogical potential, its role in community building, the creation of a unique sound archive, and its function as a multi-purpose resource center.
- Threats: A lack of financial and human resources, the diversity of operational models, and the absence of horizontal debate spaces hinder sector development.

As general conclusions:

- Local radio is perceived as a highly adaptable tool with strong interaction with the community.
- It is valued as a reliable and truthful communication service.
- There is a clear vision of radio as a resource center for the public.
- Resource shortages and precarious working conditions remain long-standing challenges that continue to impact on the sector.

4.2. 100 Years Are Nothing... The Power of Radio: A Medium That Evolves, Conquers, and Converts

Speakers: Luis Fernando Ruiz (Director of Communication and Marketing, AERC Radiovalue); Tello Villarrubia (Market Growth Director at IO Investigación)

Chair-Rapporteur: Jorge Clemente (Faculty of Information Sciences, Universidad Complutense de Madrid)

The session focuses on the presentation of the study *The Emotional Pulse of Radio: 100 Years Multiplying Advertising Effectiveness*, conducted by IO Investigación and AERC Radio Value. In the first part of the session, Luis Fernando Ruiz highlights the excellent moment that radio is experiencing: 32 million listeners and a 75% penetration rate, with a record-breaking 19 million listeners for generalist radio. The speaker also emphasizes that radio maintains a presence throughout the day, with an increase in listening time, even in the highly competitive world of music radio. He also points out that radio has undergone an exemplary digital transformation, with 34% of access occurring via the internet and 42% among listeners aged 20 to 34.

In the second part, Tello Villarrubia presents the study itself and explains that, through new technologies such as Automatic Content Recognition (ACR) and emotional DNA, not only is the effectiveness of radio advertising demonstrated, but it also becomes possible to make advertising campaigns more effective by leveraging the radio medium. The speaker confirms that greater immersion in radio leads to better recall: a radio share of over 20% in the media mix results in stronger and more effective recall. Furthermore, as a performance tool, he argues that 25% of people who hear advertising on the radio end up visiting the brand's website. This means that brands investing in radio improve their audience recall and brand awareness.

4.3. Quaderns del CAC: *50th edition is dedicated to radio*

Ponentes: Amparo Huertas Bailén & Sara Suárez Gonzalo (Directors of *Quaderns del CAC*)

The issue 50 of *Quaderns del CAC* is dedicated to radio to commemorate its centenary in Catalonia. To talk about radio is to talk about a medium capable of adapting to multiple changes (political, social, economic, technological, etc.), as it is reflected in the wide thematic range of the articles collected.

The first article, "Radio in 2030: A study on the crucial variables in the future of the sector in Catalonia" (Francesc Robert-Agell and Santiago Justel-Vázquez, Universitat Internacional de Catalunya), looks ahead. Following an empirical work with key players, this research identifies the critical aspects of the most immediate future. Without falling into pessimism, the authors talk about the opportunities and threats of digital transformation and warn of the tendency towards forming conglomerates, the result of the concentration of audience and advertising into certain groups and chains, and the growing weight of legislative and regulatory intervention.

In this look towards the future, it is essential to reflect on the role of women. Silvia Espinosa Mirabet, Monica Puntí Brun and Jordi Serra Simón (Universitat de Girona), in the article "Women on the radio 100 years on", present a study on the evolution of the presence of women as professionals and executives on Catalan generalist radio. The research highlights very positive trends, but there are still milestones to be reached. For example, prime time programming is in male hands with one exception (Radio 4 with Gemma Nierga and her Cafè d'idees).

From a historical point of view, this monograph includes two highly significant contributions, especially because of their potential to help us understand the present. First, the journalist with a PhD in Audiovisual Communication and Advertising from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona Marc Vidal i Juanola analyzes the history of Catalunya Ràdio. In "Catalunya Ràdio: Genesis, crisis and reorientation of the Generalitat's first radio project (1982-1984)", Vidal i Juanola talks about it very aptly in terms of an adventure. His conclusion is clear: this station established a successful model, but the road was tough. Secondly, José Ignacio Wert-Moreno (PhD in Social Communication from Universidad San Pablo CEU) and José María Legorburu Hortelano (Universidad de San Pablo CEU) published the text "Presence and influence of Grupo Godó on Spanish national radio (1982-2022)". They define two stages with disparate trends. The first (1982-1994), as a major shareholder in Antena 3 Radio, and the second (1994-2022), as a minority partner in the services company Unión Radio, later called PRISA Radio. The creation of Unión Radio meant the dismantling of Antena 3 Radio.

"Comparative analysis of music content legislation on radio and digital platforms: what is the future for quotas in the new scenario?", by Carlos Llorens Maluquer (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona), looks at the legislative-regulatory field. Based on a documentary and comparative analysis of several countries (France, Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia), where platforms such as Spotify and Apple Music are reviewed, the text noted how to avoid leaving excessive power in the hands of these new intermediaries.

Community communication is also present with three proposals. The article "Half a century of independent radio stations in Catalonia. The sustainability of the sector in the present day", by Núria Reguero Jiménez (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona) and Eloi Camps Durban (Universitat Pompeu Fabra), examines the current situation of Catalonia's independent radio stations. The work concludes that the social dimension is basic for the sustainability of a sector characterized by fragility. Raul Anthony Olmedo Neri (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México) reviews the situation of community

radio stations in Latin America. The text, "Ten theses to (re)think Latin American community radio stations in the 21st century", concludes that, in an adverse socio-political context, these initiatives represent counter-hegemonic projects that contribute to democratizing the information. And, finally, Nelia Rodriguez Del Bianco (Universidade de Brasilia), Elton Bruno Pinheiro (Universidade de Brasilia) and Debora Cristina Lopez (Universidade Federal de Ouro Preto) focus their attention on university radio stations in Brazil. The article, "Positioning of Brazilian university radio stations towards the public: tensions between the public, institutional and educational dimensions", talks about the challenges this commitment entails, highlighting the challenge of integrating university stations into the country's institutional mechanisms.

Finally, podcasts, this new way of creating and consuming radio narratives, has also been treated by several articles. Maria Fitó-Carreras, Montserrat Vidal-Mestre and Alfonso Freire-Sánchez (Universitat Internacional de Catalunya and Universitat Abat Oliva CEU), in "The perception of linear radio among communication students from Generation Z", analyses the penetration of the medium among people who are studying communication at university. The sample sees radio as a medium removed from their interests but given their high follow-up of podcasts, everything points to this problem being reversible. "The evolution of the dramatic genre on RNE. From radio drama to binaural sound fiction in the age of podcasting", by Paloma López-Villafranca (Universidad de Málaga), presents the study of five representative cases. The results mean that audio fiction is a booming genre, thanks in great measure to the potential of the podcast, despite the need for more investment in human and financial resources. And, finally, Ángela Ruiz Martínez (Universidad de Sevilla) explains to us how this new form could be considered the evolution of radio reports in her article "The narrative non-fiction podcast in Spain and its evolution over time".

The main objective of this monograph was not to talk about the past, but to help understand the present and look firmly towards the future. We believe that we have achieved it.

🔊 BLOCK 5. **CLOSING**

5.1. *Multiple Challenges for the Most Chameleonic Medium*

Xavier Ribes and Juan José Perona
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

This proceedings book compiles the contributions of participants in the various panels and discussions of the International Radio Congress. The preceding pages show that the debates provided time to analyze the past, examine our present, and also look towards the future of the medium. Thanks to technology, the book goes beyond textual content by offering the full sessions in audiovisual format, allowing the reader (now also a viewer) to virtually experience (or relive) the lectures and discussions that took place during the Congress and hear first-hand from the protagonists. As mentioned, experts, professionals, and academics addressed, among other significant issues, the challenges that radio, now a century old, must face in its immediate future as it embarks on a new century of history. All of this was explored through key themes such as audience and content, technology and distribution, business and funding models, artificial intelligence, audience measurement, and the legal and regulatory framework.

Throughout its history, radio has successfully adapted to the changes brought about by technological evolution and the emergence of new media and communication channels. However, in recent years, one of its greatest challenges has been reaching younger audiences. Both professionals and media analysts recognize that its survival largely depends on overcoming this hurdle. While the solution seems clear—since everyone agrees on the need to explore new languages and narratives and engage with this audience via social media—finding the right strategies to implement it remains difficult. As expected, the Congress served as a platform to once again emphasize the need for young people to coexist with and listen to the radio from adolescence, while also striking a balance between attracting young audiences and continuing to provide quality content for existing listeners. Aware that radio must maintain its credibility, some of the proposed future strategies to address this challenge included developing content promotion strategies across multiple platforms, training communicators who engage authentically and honestly with young audiences, and, in the realm of music

radio, seeking out talent that can offer fresh and appealing content to avoid, as was highlighted, the issue of the same music being played everywhere. In the context of the digital soundscape, it is more crucial than ever to take advantage of a technological environment that enables the "individualization" of sound and allows listening through multiple devices, at any time and from any location.

In the field of technology and distribution, speakers emphasized the essential and continuous technological adaptation required by the coexistence of multiple broadcasting systems such as FM, DAB+, and streaming. Advancing towards DAB+, a system with potential but associated with additional costs for both broadcasters and audiences, seems to require a national plan to coordinate its adoption. Meanwhile, the industry is also exploring other innovative hybrid models such as 5G broadcast to optimize distribution and reach.

Another unavoidable challenge is ensuring radio's presence in cars and its adaptation to connected vehicles. Collaboration with car manufacturers and app developers is essential, as is guaranteeing connectivity. Radio must also continue to tackle distribution across multiple platforms, from traditional airwaves to apps, social media, and smart speakers, responding to increasingly fragmented and ubiquitous consumption habits.

However, in this new digital ecosystem, radio cannot lose control over its content. Ongoing renegotiation with platforms is necessary to ensure both a relevant presence and access to generated consumption data. Furthermore, enhancing the visibility of stations across the interfaces of various connected devices is crucial to making it easier for listeners to access audio content. Linked to all of this is the concept of "findability" in radio services: users must be able to discover the diverse radio offering within an immense sea of digital options.

Another major concern is the need for radio to find alternative sources of funding by developing systems tailored to audience segmentation while also reducing reliance on subsidies and ensuring budgetary stability. This is particularly important in the public sector, whereas in the private radio sector, the best approach is to demonstrate the effectiveness and efficiency of radio as an advertising medium. To achieve this, and as has been emphasized for years, it is necessary to convince agencies and media planners of the immense potential of sound to convey both the tangible benefits of a

product and the intangible qualities that define a particular organization. In this regard, the radio of the future must firmly embrace creativity as the only means to experiment with new formats that move away from the realism of traditional advertising discourse, which dominates most advertisements, instead stimulating imagination and creating more immersive and experiential messages.

Another set of challenges relates to Artificial Intelligence (AI). The effective integration of AI into radio companies requires a sound strategic plan and a deep understanding of its potential. This will only be possible if professionals are trained in the use of AI tools, overcoming any initial resistance and fostering a culture of innovation. The acceptance and adoption of AI in the sector is a process that has already begun, though it will take time and resources before it becomes widespread.

AI also raises concerns regarding privacy and regulation, particularly in data management and voice cloning. Establishing ethical and legal boundaries is essential. In this regard, ensuring the responsible use of AI tools is a priority that some media outlets are already addressing. Again, training is the key factor in maximizing its potential while minimizing possible risks.

AI also presents opportunities for journalism, both in enhancing user experience and improving newsroom productivity. Additionally, it can serve as a powerful tool for developing fact-checking systems to combat disinformation, a growing problem of concern to professionals. Another issue raised by experts is that radio must determine when to use synthetic voices and when human voices are indispensable for adding value to a communication product. The ultimate goal is to normalize the presence and use of synthetic voices without diminishing the value and authenticity of human voices.

Other challenges revolve around audience measurement. Traditional systems require significant modernization to capture new consumption habits. It is essential to obtain data on podcast consumption, a growing format that is still not systematically accounted for in all markets.

Moreover, ensuring maximum transparency in handling streaming data is crucial to guaranteeing the reliability and comparability of figures. A better understanding of listener behavior across different geographical areas would allow radio to tailor its content and strategies to each territory's unique characteristics. More precise meas-

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urement would also enhance advertising ROI control, justifying investment and attracting new advertisers.

There is a need for systems capable of measuring audiences that navigate different media and platforms, fostering audience loyalty in a cross-media environment. The radio industry must also address the persistent issue of the lack of audience data for local radio, which limits its ability to compete effectively and serve its communities.

Specifically, regarding local radio, the Congress not only highlighted the lack of knowledge about its audience but also brought to the forefront a whole set of challenges it must face to ensure its continuity after two major crises this century—the 2008 financial crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic. In Catalonia, for example, there are currently over 230 local stations, the vast majority publicly owned—also known as municipal radios—which demonstrates that it is a vibrant and active phenomenon, albeit one facing significant challenges. The most notable among these is achieving budgetary stability and, as much as possible, reducing public stations' economic dependence on local councils. This should also be accompanied by an administrative and management model that guarantees good governance and enhances credibility among citizens. Similarly, there is a need to advance towards a radio ecosystem that harmonizes the coexistence of different types of local radio, including municipal stations, those affiliated with major networks, private stations, and third-sector stations.

In addition to the aforementioned challenges, in the field of local radio, the difficulty faced by small radio stations in modernizing their facilities and equipment, the need to create content that can be broadcast through different platforms and networks, and the shortage of staff that many of them suffer from, also emerge strongly. Their future necessarily depends on overcoming these difficulties and, to this end, it is necessary for local governments to be aware of the role that local radio stations, especially public ones, play as dynamic agents of the economic, social, educational, sporting and political fabric of small communities. As was openly stated at the Congress, municipal radio stations can be an essential weapon against disinformation, as well as a formidable instrument of proximity, training and media education.

Finally, the radio of the future requires progress in a legislative framework that recognizes it as a holder of rights and also as a first-rate cultural industry. Furthermore, the development and consolidation of podcasting and what some scholars see as the

'transition from radio to audio' requires, among other things, the regulation of hitherto non-existent concepts and the establishment of rules to ensure free and open access to digital content.

Although the challenges are as numerous as they are important, there is no doubt that radio's chameleon-like character will be its best ally in facing them. It has done so at the most critical moments that have marked its existence and will continue to do so in the immediate and distant future. As we begin the journey towards its second centenary, and as the journalist Josep Cuní stated in a special article written by the historian and scholar of the medium Armand Balsebre on the occasion of its 75th anniversary, radio will continue to be the soundtrack of many lives.

5.2. *Institutional Closing*

Institutional closing by Laia Bonet, Deputy Mayor for Urban Planning, Ecological Transition, Housing and Urban Services of Barcelona City Council

CLOSING BY THE CO-CHAIRS

CLOSING BY LAIA BONET

5.3. *Institutional Manifesto*

One Hundred Years after the First Broadcast by Radio Barcelona

A FREE VOICE IN A FREE SOCIETY

Reading of the Manifesto by:

Pol Batalla. Blanquerna - Universitat Ramon Llull

Max Riberas. Universitat Rovira i Virgili

Lola Santiago. Universitat Pompeu Fabra

Clàudia Arcarons. Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Radio was the first means of social communication to be able to reach every home using soundwaves. Radio heralded a new period of cutting-edge technology, characterized by local electronic communications with universal access.

Very quickly, radio became a powerful medium for information, cultural dissemination and entertainment; a device for local communication and companionship that has contributed to social integration and has helped to combat undesired loneliness.

Over the hundred years that have elapsed since the first Radio Barcelona broadcast, radio as a medium has demonstrated an extraordinary capacity to adapt to change. Today, however, we are living in times of accelerated technological transformations in the field of communications, which require critical reflection on the present and future of radio and audio. That is why we declare:

1. Universal and free radio, whether public or private, is a fundamental tool for strengthening democracy. Radio must play an important role in the defense of democratic values such as ideological plurality, linguistic and cultural diversity and social cohesion. Rigorous and responsible communication is a natural partner of democracy.

2. Radio is the best means communicator of information in real time. Faced with the dangers of misinformation, it has the opportunity to be faithful to the values that have led to it being a lasting and trustworthy media outlet thanks to its high credibility. More than ever, it is essential to demand excellent radio output, with rigor, transparency and independence.

3. In an increasingly fragmented and deregulated communication system, it is urgent to promote media education from the early stages of training so that young people can distinguish between reliable channels and those that misinform. This media literacy should be extendable to society as a whole.

4. As it has traditionally done, radio needs to deploy all its capabilities to reach young audiences. Innovation in consumer networks and platforms offers the opportunity to reach new audiences and capture them as radio listeners.

5. Local radio is a tool for regional cohesion and has the capacity to create communities like no other. We need to create the conditions that allow it to function, regardless of the size of the audiences and the markets it is aimed at.

6. As a key cultural industry and creator of content, radio requires legislation that offers legal guarantees, protects intellectual property rights and responds to the challenges of new formats and new technologies. Radio is an extraordinary promoter and disseminator of culture and music. It is culture in the most genuine sense of the word, and this is how it should be perceived at all levels of government, whose task is to reinforce the role of radio in promoting talent and creativity.

7. Radio is, and will continue to be, a unique medium for advertising thanks to the creative capacity of sound. Paradoxically, it still does not carry the weight in the advertising industry that it should, given its capacity for social penetration

and communicative effectiveness. We appeal to the companies purchasing advertising space to contribute to ensuring democratic sustainability through their advertising investment decisions.

8. Interactive digital communication technologies have multiplied the capacity for radio distribution and listeners. We call on regulatory bodies to prevent the consolidation of technological oligopolies that could exclude radio from emerging distribution systems, and as a result break the direct relationship it has with its listeners.

9. As Iñaki Gabilondo described it at this conference, radio has historically functioned as a "mothership". It has been the same case with music when it went from being content of conventional radio content to having its own channel. Today, with podcasts, audio producers have multiplied their ability to develop innovative formats that enrich the radio industry and reach new audiences.

10. Radio is facing a great challenge with the emergence of artificial intelligence. It is essential that the potential of this technology, which is opening a new era in the field of content generation and distribution, is harnessed. This challenge will become a great opportunity if it is tackled with sufficient knowledge, innovative capacity, ethics and social responsibility.

In its century of history, radio in Catalonia and Spain has faced social and technological changes and has adapted to them. The conference concludes with the conviction that it will continue to do so in the coming decades.

Barcelona, 16 November 2024

◀)) APPENDICES

Appendix I. Organizing Committee

Gobierno de España – Ministerio de Cultura

Generalitat de Catalunya

Ajuntament de Barcelona

Diputació de Barcelona

AERC RadioValue (Asociación Española de Radio Comercial)

ACR (Associació Catalana de Ràdio)

ATIC (Asociación de Universidades con Titulaciones en Información y Comunicación)

Clúster Audiovisual de Catalunya

Colegio Oficial de Ingenieros de Telecomunicación

Col·legi de Periodistes de Catalunya

Consell Audiovisual de Catalunya (CAC)

Coordinadora d'Estudis Universitaris de Comunicació de Catalunya

3cat

Federació de Mitjans de Comunicació Locals de Catalunya (FMCLCat)

Federación Latinoamericana de Facultades de Comunicación Social (FELAFACS)

Institut Estudis Catalans (IEC)

La Xarxa – Comunicació local

OMPI Organización Mundial de la Propiedad Intelectual

Radio Nacional de España (RNE)

Supported by

Gobierno de España – Ministerio de Cultura

Generalitat de Catalunya

AEQ

Axion

Cellnex

Dalet

DTS/Aim

Fundación "la Caixa"

MusicMaster

ODEC

Triton

Appendix II. Executive Committee

Bàrbara Aspas Moya – *Coordination of Cadena SER Centenary*

Anna Bosch Benabarre – *Administration of the Center. Faculty of Communication Sciences – UAB*

Maria Corominas Piulats – *Department of Media, Communication and Culture – UAB*

Fernando Guerrero Rebollo – *Administration of the Center. Faculty of Communication Sciences – UAB*

Enric Marín Otto – *Co-Chair of the Conference – UAB*

Ricardo Olivar Sanz – *PRISA Media*

Juan José Perona Páez – *Department of Advertising, Public Relations and Audiovisual Communication – UAB*

Maria José Recoder Sellarés – *Department of Journalism and Communication Sciences – UAB*

Francesc Xavier Ribes Guàrdia – *Department of Audiovisual Communication and Advertising – UAB*

Jaume Serra i Saguer – *Co-Chair of the Conference – Cadena SER*

Appendix III. Scientific Committee

Rosa Franquet Calvet, *Chair of the Scientific Committee*
Armand Balsebre Torroja, *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona*
Tiziano Bonini, *Università di Siena, Italy*
Manuel Chaparro Escudero, *Universidad de Málaga*
Carmina Crusafon Baqués, *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona*
María de la Peña Pérez Alaejos, *Universidad de Salamanca*
Mercè Diez Jiménez , *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona*
Sílvia Espinosa Mirabet, *Universitat de Girona*
Adrien Faure Carvallo, *Universitat de Barcelona*
Manuel Fernández Sande, *Universidad Complutense de Madrid*
Pere Franch Puig, *Universitat Ramon Llull*
Aurora García González, *Universidade de Vigo*
Nazan Haydari, *Istanbul Bilgi University, Turkey*
Juan Francisco Jiménez Jacinto, *Universitat Abad Oliba*
Patrícia Lázaro Pernias, *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona*
Asier Leoz Aizpuru, *Universidad de Deusto*
Nereida López Vidales, *Universidad de Valladolid*
Josep Maria Martí Martí, *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona*
Daniel Martín Peña, *Universidad de Extremadura*
María Pilar Martínez Costa, *Universidad de Navarra*
Andrea Medrado, *University of Westminster, UK*
Belén Monclús Blanco, *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona*
Marta Montagut Calvo, *Universitat Rovira i Virgili*
Madalena Oliveira, *Universidade do Minho, Portugal*
Miguel Ángel Ortiz Sobrino, *Universidad Complutense de Madrid*
Luis Miguel Pedreño, *Universidad Nebrija*
Luis Miguel Pedrero Esteban, *Universidad Francisco de Vitoria*
Carmen Peñafiel Saiz, *Universidad del País Vasco*
Teresa Piñeiro Otero, *Universidade da Coruña*
Emili Prado Pico, *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona*
Emma Rodero Antón, *Universitat Pompeu Fabra*
Nelia Rodriguez del Bianco, *Universidade de Brasilia, Brasil*
Jordi Sànchez Navarro, *Universitat Oberta de Catalunya*
Consuelo Sánchez Serrano, *Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca*
Salvatore Scifo , *Bournemouth University, UK*
Toni Sellas, *Universitat de Vic*

Pedro Sigaud Sellos, *Universitat Internacional de Catalunya*
Xosé Soengas Pérez, *Universidade de Santiago de Compostela*
Raúl Terol Bolinches, *Universitat Politècnica de Valencia*
Mariona Visa Barbosa, *Universitat de Lleida*