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# Using Social Media at a Radio Station

Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences

Bachelor of Engineering

Media Engineering

Thesis

18.4.2017

Author Title	Susanna Karttunen Using Social Media at a Radio Station
Number of Pages Date	51 pages + 2 appendices 18.4.2017
Degree	Bachelor of Engineering
Degree Programme	Media Engineering
Instructor	Merja Bauters, Researching Lecturer
<p>The purpose of this thesis was to examine the relationship between social media and the radio and discuss the role of social media both as a radio station's publishing platform and listeners' contacting channel.</p> <p>The theory on the subject was compared to the social media use at a pop-up radio station, which the students of Metropolia set up at Arabia Street Festival in May 2016. A survey was conducted about the listeners' and the pop-up radio's reporters' experiences on the radio's social media use.</p> <p>The thesis discusses what the radio industry is like today, and explains what other contacting channels can be offered to listeners in addition to social media. The advantages and disadvantages of social media use at a radio station are discussed, and it is told how and why a radio station should create a social media strategy. The thesis explains how social media analytics can help a station, and different analytical techniques are introduced. The social media platforms Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, Periscope, and YouTube are shortly introduced, since they were used by the pop-up radio station.</p> <p>The information in the thesis can be used for planning and observing radio stations' social media use.</p>	
Keywords	social media, radio, cross media

Tekijä Otsikko Sivumäärä Aika	Susanna Karttunen Sosiaalisen median käyttö radioasemalla  51 sivua + 2 liitettä 18.4.2017
Tutkinto	Insinööri (AMK)
Koulutusohjelma	Mediatekniikka
Ohjaaja	Tutkijaopettaja Merja Bouters
<p>Insinööriyössä tutkittiin radion ja sosiaalisen median välistä suhdetta. Radio voi käyttää sosiaalista mediaa sekä julkaisualustana että kommunikointiväylänä kuuntelijoiden kanssa, ja molempiin näistä vaihtoehtoista perehdyttiin. Lisäksi tarkasteltiin sosiaalisen median käyttöä Metropolia Ammattikorkeakoulun opiskelijoiden pitämän pop-up-radion yhteydessä, joka lähetti ohjelmaa Helsingin Arabian katufestivaaleilla vuoden 2016 toukokuussa. Radion kuuntelijoiden ja tekijöiden kokemuksia sosiaalisen median käytöstä tutkittiin kyselylomakkeiden avulla.</p> <p>Sosiaalinen media auttaa radiota pysymään ajankohtaisena mediana nykypäivänä, jolloin monikanavajulkaiseminen ja vuorovaikutteisuus ovat tärkeitä arvoja. Sosiaalinen media lisää radioon visuaalisen puolen tuoden lisäarvoa kuunteluelämykseen, ja kuuntelijat voivat ylläpitää keskustelua siellä myös ilman radioaseman työntekijöitä. Lisäksi sosiaalista mediaa on helppo käyttää tavallisilla mobiililaitteilla ja tietokoneilla.</p> <p>Haittapuolina sosiaalisen median käytössä ovat esimerkiksi, että kuuntelijoiden ei ole aina mahdollista esiintyä sosiaalisessa mediassa täysin tuntemattomina, ja radioaseman laitteille asennetut sovellukset saattavat päästä käsiksi yhtiön salaiseen dataan. Tulisi myös muistaa, että kaikki kuuntelijat eivät halua olla vuorovaikutuksessa radioaseman kanssa. Radioasema ei voi myöskään aina kontrolloida, mitä siitä kirjoitetaan sosiaalisessa mediassa.</p> <p>Kuuntelijat voivat ottaa yhteyttä radioon sosiaalisen median lisäksi esimerkiksi soittamalla tai tekstiviestillä. Näitä kommunikointiväyliä tulisi tarjota varsinkin kuuntelijaryhmille, jotka eivät yleensä käytä sosiaalista mediaa. Radioaseman tulee myös selvittää tarkemmin, mitä sosiaalisen median palveluita sen kuuntelijat käyttävät, ja käyttää niitä julkaisualustoina ja kommunikointiin yleisön kanssa. Aseman tulisi luoda itselleen sosiaalisen median strategia, joka antaa yhteiset ohjesäännöt kaikille työntekijöille ja auttaa maksimoimaan menestyksen sosiaalisessa mediassa.</p> <p>Insinööriyöraporttiin koottua tietoa voi käyttää hyväksi radioasemien sosiaalisen median käyttöä suunniteltaessa ja arvioitaessa.</p>	
Avainsanat	sosiaalinen media, radio, monikanavajulkaisu

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## Abbreviations

AM	Amplitude Modulation is an analogue transmission technology used for sending radio program.
BYOD	Bring Your Own Device is a policy that permits employees to bring personally owned devices to their workplace and use these devices to access privileged company information and applications.
DJ	A disc jockey is another name for a radio presenter.
FM	Frequency Modulation is an analogue transmission technology used for sending radio program.
WLAN	A wireless local-area network

## 1 Introduction

The thesis discusses social media use at a radio station and considers social media both as a radio station's publishing platform and listeners' contacting channel. The topic was chosen due to its topicality and the personal interest to both radio and social media industries, both of which are doing well at the moment. The relationship between radio and social media has not been researched as much as its importance would assume. As a part of the thesis I participated in Metropolia's pop-up radio project, in which I assisted in planning of the social media use and observed how it was carried out. I examined the listeners' and the pop-up radio's reporters' experiences to find out if the theory on the subject applied in practice.

The thesis will discuss the ways radio can benefit from social media and how it can succeed better in social media with analytical techniques and tools. The thesis also asks if social media is the answer to everything or if there are situations where its use in the radio context is not recommended. The topic of the thesis sums up to the question: "Why and how should radio use social media?"

## 2 Radio

### 2.1 The Fundamentals of Radio

The term broadcasting can be defined as the simultaneous transmission of the same message to multiple recipients. This can mean, for instance, sending radio content from one point to multiple different receivers that are physically apart from each other. [1,108;2,459;3,27] Until the 1990s, radio still used mostly analogue broadcast technologies that transmit the sound in radio waves, which are a type of electromagnetic radiation. The two different analogue technologies, which are still used today, are the AM, abbreviation from Amplitude Modulation, technology that was invented in the 1920s, and the FM, abbreviation from Frequency Modulation, technology of the 1960s that provides a better sound quality.

Digital radio was created to give a clearer signal and thus a better sound quality. Digital transmission differs from analogue transmission as information is not being transformed in the form of an analogue sound signal but is in bits, meaning in zeros and ones. Nowadays many broadcast radio stations stream their signal online, which is called webcasting. Internet has made creating one's own radio station easier for everyone, and some webcasters are personal Internet stations that are run from bedrooms and basements. The recordings of the radio broadcast can be published online for later listening, and these podcasts are becoming increasingly popular [4.] [1,108,216,252;2,224.]

Radio stations can be funded non-commercially, for instance, by a government or an organization, or commercially by advertising. A station can also get part of its funds non-commercially and the rest from advertising. Since nowadays radio stations are also present in other mediums, social media included, the advertising revenue can be also collected on these platforms. [1,123,220;2,230]

### 2.2 Radio Industry Today

Radio has evolved from its early form of family-style entertainment that families used to listen to together at home into a mobile, personal companion. Today radio stations try to stand out from each other by choosing a format that attracts only a certain group of people, such as different age groups or the listeners of a certain music genre. Radio is also a natural part of the listeners' everyday life in social media [5.] [1,17;2,226,222]



Today's radio has got to compete with other sectors of media. With new types of media platforms and entertainment increasingly springing up, people mistakenly seem to have the impression that radio is dying. Yet, radio is doing statistically approximately as well as before. [6, 7]

In Finland, the usage of radio has not changed significantly during the years 1991-2016. The timely amount of listening has decreased, and a slightly smaller number of people listen to the radio every day. However, the number of people that radio reaches weekly has stayed almost the same during these years. These statistics vary globally but on average in the Western countries the listening figures have stayed rather stable over the past decade, although there has been a slight decrease. Despite of this, the radio advertising revenue has increased yearly and seems to keep increasing, both globally and in Finland. This has been explained with the increase of digital and Internet advertising. Due to radio's increased advertising revenue, radio industry's role in the media sector on this day should not be underestimated. [8,27;9;10;11]

Radio is still listened to, because it has been able to provide interesting content [7,17.] Another reason why radio, like other traditional media, still has an audience is that it gives a break from decision making; turning on the radio is easier than going online and trying to make decisions on what content to consume [12]. Radio's advantage is also that audio is a powerful medium. Audio is easy to digest, because listening requires less effort than reading text and it evokes mental images that video does not allow. [13,11] People like listening to something, whether it is music or radio, while they are driving, cooking, working or relaxing. Consuming content with our ears is natural for humans, and compared to video, listening to audio allows one to focus better on other activities they are doing simultaneously. [6;7,17]

In the past, the radio and music industries have almost fully occupied the industry of audio content. However, new types of audio content are rising and therefore more competition should be expected also in the industry of audio content. In order to keep up with the competition, radio has to keep adapting to changes happening in the media field and listen to its target audience's needs. A radio station should communicate with its listeners to figure out what they want and then make the needed improvements in those sectors. In addition to communicating with the listeners directly, today's radio stations can learn

more about their audience by examining data that is gathered about them. Data gathering is already known and will be an important tool for creating personalized content and learning more about the audience. Everything a user does digitally can be traced, and as services go digital, the more data about users is available. This “digital mark” can be transferred into data that gives information for creating better targeted and personalised content, innovating new solutions and redeveloping existing ones, optimizing social media strategies, and much more. [6;14,42,43,47;15]

### 2.3 Cross Media Use at a Radio Station

One of the trends a radio station should adapt to in order to stay current in today’s world is cross media publishing [16.] The term cross media means involving more than one form of public communication, such as radio, television, the Internet, and newspapers [17.] An example of a cross media use is when a radio station publishes content or interacts with its audience in social media. Transmedia storytelling, a term used in similar contexts, uses narrative to tie together the different channels and platforms. [18,166]

Five media professionals from around the world discussed today’s broadcasting industry at Yle Digital Summit organized in Helsinki in June 2016. The speakers included Ismo Silvo, the media director of Yleisradio, Ingrid Kopp, the co-founder of African Futures, a senior consultant in the Interactive Department at the Tribeca Film Institute, and the leader of the Interactive Media Impact Working Group, Adam Gee, an interactive media and TV producer at Channel 4, Christian Bennet, a global head of video and audio at The Guardian, and Alexandre Brachet, the CEO and founder of Upian.com. The main topics in the discussion were the importance of cross media, gathering data, and offering personalized content.

The collaboration between different sectors of media is important, and in addition to the content broadcast on the radio, radio stations also create and publish content on other platforms. The content can either be independent from each other or be related to and complement each other. When good content is produced at a radio station, it is also smart to use it on different platforms by modifying it to a suitable form for the specific platform. Using multiple platforms also gives the radio station more visibility. For instance, if a radio station is on social media, its posts can be seen even by people who have not heard about the radio station before. [12;19]

Silvo says that digital media offers new tools for engaging the audience and gives good possibilities for effective cross media use. He recalls that five to six years ago trans and cross media were still a bit of a mystery and there was confused enthusiasm towards them. Now the attitude is more focused and professional. For instance, there might be a specific person in charge of the station's social media or online content. Moreover, apart from the radio platform, other media platforms are a part of the job for many employees at a radio station. For instance, the job description of a radio DJ, also known as a radio presenter, is a lot more than just making the actual radio broadcast, and they may produce content on various different platforms during their work day from mobile applications to more traditional publishing channels such as television and newspapers. [16;20;21,23-24]

Often the aim within a big media company is to publish cross media content on their different platforms. Different corporations can also work in cooperation. For example, content related to the same project might be published in the same publishing house's radio station, television channel, social media pages, website, and magazine. For instance, a DJ might pick a topic of conversation from an article on their website and encourage their listeners to go online to read more about it. This way they could get more visitors to their website and they might even stay there longer than just for that one article. This goes the other way too: a user on the Internet might find themselves reading an article on the website and the article would encourage the reader to listen to a radio show. [21,23-24,22]

#### 2.4 Contact Methods for Listeners

Riina Linna, who works at the Technical Museum of Helsinki, says that listeners started interacting with radio stations very early on [23.] The used contact methods during the first years of broadcasting were mail and phone calls [24,16.] As years passed, new technical inventions such as text message, email, and web pages gave radio new contact methods to offer for their listeners. Although listeners have interacted with radio stations from the beginning of broadcasting, the interactivity has increased with the invention of social media. Social media has given both excellent tools for interaction and created a convention of being able to influence the media content one consumes. [6;18,45;19]

Radio stations offer different kinds of contacting options to their listeners. In addition to social media, the other common technical solutions used for communicating with listeners are phone calls, text messages, email, websites, and mobile applications. These solutions are discussed in this chapter for understanding better the advantages and disadvantages of using social media as a contact method. The format of the station and the target audience should have an influence on which contact methods a radio station offers for its listeners. For instance, if a station is mainly listened by people over 60 and many of them live in the countryside with poor Internet connection, the focus should be drawn to more traditional contact methods such as phone calls. Whereas for a hit music station targeted for teen agers, social media is a natural way for interaction.

A phone call is a very traditional contact method for the radio and it is still used today by radio stations, although there are some problems with it. At the same time, as other media technology seems to have been improving, phone call quality has not had significant improvements over the last few years [25.] Thus, phone calls often have the worst technical quality of all the content heard on the radio. This is problematic, as listeners do not like to listen to low quality content. If the broadcast lacks technical quality by, for instance, including a long technically weak phone interview, listeners might change channels even if they find the content interesting. Perhaps in the future radio will start to utilize more social media and messaging applications for receiving high quality audio calls via the Internet. [1,39,64]

Later in the thesis, it will be stated that radio station cannot control what people post about them in social media, but at least they can control which posts are read or commented on air. Compared to this, talking to callers live on air can be risky. For instance, a caller might chat about something pointless or be drunk. The flow of the programme might also suffer if, for example, many callers call in to request for the same song. Pre-recording the call or talking to the caller before putting the call live can sometimes prevent from these kinds of problems. The risk of using calls too much in the broadcast can be that regular callers get lots of attention from the radio station but the big majority of listeners do not interact with the station. That is why calling as a contact method should be used with caution and the station should consider, whether it really serves the relationship with their listeners, or if some other contact methods would suit better. In social media, the radio station staff can easier pick what kind of content they want to read on air. [1,64,99]

One of the problematic things with calling and texting as a contact method is that the caller might have to pay a standard networking charge for their network provider. This would be in the case where the caller does not have a monthly package for network communication or also if the radio station charges an extra fee for the text or call. In this case contacting the station will cost them money, while using social media with an unlimited Internet connection will not bring them extra charges.

Despite all the issues, phone calls can still be a suitable contact method for listeners. Calling is a rather easy and effortless way to contact the station. There is no need to type down a message, and if the number of the station is already saved to the listener's phone, the call can be made even faster. Also, especially for older listeners who are not used to using social media or listeners in areas with a poor Internet connection, the possibility to contact the station by calling is important.

Compared to social media, email is convenient for longer messages, since the message length is not limited in the same way as, for instance, in Twitter. An email offers privacy, since the message can only be seen by the sender and the station. Like other online services, using email is cost-free compared to calling or texting. [26]

Radio stations can also give their listeners the possibility to interact with them through the radio station's website or mobile application. The website might, for example, have forms for sending a message to the studio, or forums and chats where other listeners can see each others' messages, which fills the definition of social media.

Ingrid Kopp says that in order for a broadcaster to keep up and deliver in the digital age, it should come up with new innovative ways of doing things. New digital media platforms allow the radio to be innovative and create new programme concepts. For instance, in 2014, an Australian radio station created a show named the Shazam Top 20, which the station called "the world's first mobile powered radio show". The show was in the format of a traditional top 20 countdown but with a modern twist: the listeners were able to move songs further up the chart by using Shazam mobile application. When a song was playing on the radio, a listener could move it up the chart by recognizing it with the application. Shazam was used as "a second screen" and live content and advertising was published in the application during the show's broadcast. [12;27]

When deciding which contact methods to offer and how to further work with them, one should take into an account the user experience of all of those who will use the chosen services, both the employees at the radio station and the listeners, and empathize their needs. A challenge might emerge, if the service designer is personally too similar to the person they are creating the service for. For instance, if the radio station's employees in charge of choosing the contacting channels are too similar to the target audience of the station, they might assume the listeners use as much social media as them. That is why a proper examination of the listener base's needs and habits is important. [28]

### **3 Using Social Media at a Radio Station**

Social media differs from the traditional media, for instance, in a way that users are not just receivers but can share content, comment on it, interact with each other, create content themselves, and so forth. Some other common characteristics of social media services are that they are often cost-free and easy to use. A few of the most popular social media services that radio stations often use are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and Snapchat. Social media is most commonly used among teenagers and young adults, while older adults use it much less, although their social media use is also increasing. [29;30]

Defining whether a service is a social media service is not always obvious. Sometimes a service may have some characteristics of social media, but not enough to make it fall into the social media category. For instance, WhatsApp, which some radio stations use to communicate with their listeners, is sometimes defined as a social media service. WhatsApp defines itself as a cross platform messaging application, whose functionality extends into voice and video calls and media sharing. WhatsApp is used to communicate only with a selected number of people such as in email, which is not a social media platform. [31]

A radio station can either use the already existing social media services, such as Facebook, or build their own social media service. A self-built and maintained service gives a better chance for innovating new solutions, keeping company's data more secure and

gives the station more freedom to do what they want with the service. Building and maintaining an own service costs money, and in the beginning the service does not have any users. That is why using existing applications is more cost-effective, easier and financially less risky. In order to narrow down the subject, this thesis focuses on the existing applications that are not owned by radio stations.

Chapter 3 will discuss what advantages and disadvantages come with radio's social media use, how to succeed in social media, how to create a social media strategy and what social media analytics are. Finally, some of the most popular social media services important to radio stations are shortly introduced.

### 3.1 Why Should Radio Stations Use Social Media?

Nowadays people have their mobile devices on almost all the time and there is a massive competition of people's attention online. If radio listeners are online while listening to the radio, it can be either a bad or a good thing for the station; listeners can either be distracted from the radio to other content on the web, or they can use their device for something that is related to the radio programme they are listening to at that moment. It is the job of the radio station to make sure that a listener has the possibility of using their time online doing something that does not draw their attention away from the radio, but instead makes the listening experience even more fulfilling. [32]

The majority of the time people spend online is done on social media. Social media is becoming more popular and broadly used, moreover, it has gained a significant role in today's world. Social media presence is important for a radio station, since it is the place where people in today's world spend their time. By utilizing this platform, the station can get more visibility and a bigger audience. One example of a radio station's social media success is Virgin Radio Lebanon that has got massive global success through its Facebook page. Of all the radio stations in the world, it has the biggest audience in Facebook with more than 14 million followers. Although the station is based in Lebanon, only 212 518 of the followers actually live in Lebanon. Without social media presence the station would not be as well-known. [14,35;33;34]

Being present in social media gives the station more visibility. This can happen for example on Twitter, if the radio station appears in the list of trending topics, or on Facebook,

if an update becomes popular and shows up on many people's newsfeed. Social media offers a good platform for paid advertising as well. Companies can for example target their campaign so that their advertisement will show only on specific kind of people's newsfeeds or front page. For instance, if the station's target group are 40-year-old women who live in big cities, they can choose their advertisement to be shown only for these people. [36]

Listeners can use social media for asking additional information, socializing with other listeners, and most importantly, they want to be heard. Today's media consumers expect they can influence the media content they consume. Kopp says that it is essential that the audience gets to share their stories, and social media is an excellent platform for that [12.] Social media can be used for radio's purposes in numerous different ways, and new types of radio content can be built around the idea of integrating social media as a part of the show. [32;35]

Social media, like other online content, has a good capability to tie together content published on different media platforms and is, thus, an important part of cross-media communication. As stated in the chapter 2.3, a radio station can, for instance, post on social media something about their radio content or direct them to their website. [35]

Using most social media sites and applications is free, although there might be the possibility for companies to pay money to get more visibility or additional features. Using social media does not require advanced technical skills from a radio station as they do not have to maintain the service, which also saves money.

Social media offers real time communication, which is extremely important for live radio. Hosts receive comments and feedback about their show in real time and can comment on them live on air. The radio station Suomirock's DJ Rea Haverinen tells that she sees listener's social media comments or updates immediately, since she keeps the social media pages open on her laptop's browser at all times. She answers to the messages as soon as she can. [22]

Listeners do not necessarily have to use social media simultaneously while listening to the radio. Some listeners might not listen to the station daily, but they might see the station's social media posts every day. The interaction within a community consisting of



the listeners and makers of a radio programme can continue even when listeners are not listening to the radio or the presenters are not at work. Many DJ's, including Rea Haverinen, update their own public social media pages or the pages of the station even on their free time. Haverinen tells she gladly updates social media pages related to the radio station outside the office hours. [22;32;35]

Social media allows listeners to communicate with each other and keep up the conversation without necessarily any assistance from the presenters. This is beneficial compared to situations where listeners contact a station using other contact methods. For instance, when using email, a listener sends an email to the radio station, and a presenter needs to read it out loud on air so that other listeners can hear it. Then the listeners, who want to comment on that email, have to send in their own emails, for instance, that the presenter might read on air. Social media allows the listeners to communicate on their own and the presenter is not necessary needed as the middleman. Social media makes the conversation faster and allows more people to join in. [32]

In 2010 NRP, National Public Radio, which is a non-profit membership media organization in the United States, made a study which examined the impact social media has on radio listeners. The study found that those listeners who follow the radio station on social media, unlike those who don't, look more forward to the show, hold a more positive opinion toward the radio station, feel a closer connection to its hosts and more like a part of the radio station community. [37]

In order to keep listeners from switching to another channel or turning off their radio, it is important for DJ's to promote their upcoming content on their show and make listeners excited about it [1,222,227;38,176.] This has traditionally been done on air, but nowadays it is possible to do it also in social media, like shown in figure 1.

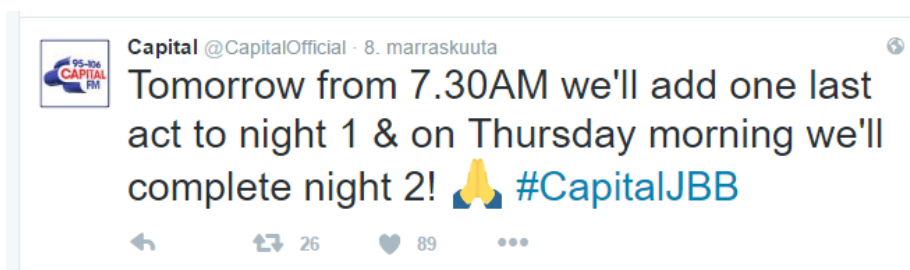


Figure 1: Promoting upcoming content on Twitter [39]

Figure 1 gives an example of a radio station's post on Twitter. The purpose of this post is to get more listeners for the following day's morning show. A social media update can be used for informing or reminding those who are not listening to the radio at that moment and therefore get more people to turn on their radios.

Social media is easily accessible for both listeners and radio station staff. Many radio listeners already have accounts for the popular social media sites, so taking part in a conversation does not require the effort of signing up to a new service. Social media applications do not need special radio studio equipment to be run with and can be used with normal smart phones and tablets, which is why radio stations can use a policy called Bring Your Own Device, shortened as BYOD. The policy permits employees to bring personally owned devices to their workplace and use these devices to access privileged company information and applications. This can mean that a radio station employee updates the station's social media page with his or her own smartphone. Haverinen tells that during the broadcast in studio she uses social media on the company's laptop or tablet and with her own personal smartphone. Furthermore, on her free time she sometimes updates the radio station's social media channels with her own personal smartphone. [22;40]

Social media is also a good place for a radio station to get to know their target audience. Users' accounts have information, for example, on their age, gender, where they live, and their interests. This is valuable information when they are trying to think how to target their content better. Social media can also be used as a platform for personalized content, for instance, by creating own pages for the different radio DJ's or programmes. This way the listeners can pick what kind of content provided by the radio station they want to consume more. In the radio it's harder to service everyone's individual needs at the same time. [16;32]

### 3.2 The Downsides of Radio Using Social Media

Although social media offers many possibilities, in practice sometimes certain kind of radio content can be at its best without integrating social media content to be a part of the show. Kopp says that the key is to balance between traditional and new. Although it might seem that the new digital tools are the answer to everything, the traditional way may still give the best results. It should be remembered that there is a big number of

radio listeners who do not want to interact with the show but just listen to it. A DJ constantly encouraging listeners for social media interaction may start to irritate some listeners, especially if they have a strong habit of never contacting a radio station themselves. [12;32]

Bennet has noticed that it is important for an audience to get the chance of being truly anonymous. For example, people might not want to comment on radio station posts on Facebook since they would have to use their real name and, also, the comment would possibly appear in their friends' Facebook news feed. Some listeners do not want to even send a private message to the station since the station staff will see their name. When they contact the radio station some other way, they might easier stay anonymous. [41]

A radio station can control which social media comments are read on air, but all comments are still visible on social media, since everyone's messages get published. The inability of censoring the content can be a bad thing for a radio station, since critical comments can hurt the station's reputation and change people's opinions on them, which can affect the popularity of the station. On some social media platforms it is possible to delete the content that listeners have posted, but this kind of censoring might hurt the station's reputation, as well. [1,127]

Compared to text messages and calling, social media does not directly bring the station revenue. When listeners call or text the station, the station can set a fee for it, if they want to. Contacting them online will not bring profits, at least directly from the listeners. There are ways of making money with social media, for example, with cooperating with advertisers. Social media can also bring the radio new listeners and success as stated in the previous chapter. [7]

Because social media sites have many users, who are not just the listeners of the station, confusion and mix-ups can happen. It is important that listeners know the right hashtags to use and spell them the right way. Without them their update will not be shown in the right place and to the right people. For instance, a radio station could have a photo competition on Instagram and ask the listeners to use a specific hashtag when posting their photo. If they misspell it, no-one at the radio station will probably see the update. More-

over, there are often fake profiles for stations and presenters or accounts that just happen to have the same name, so sometimes listeners may accidentally start following the wrong account.

Not everyone is on social media or even wants to use it at all [42.] If a listener has not used the social media platform that the station uses, contacting the station takes more effort, since signing up to a social media service and learning curve will take some time, although social media services are generally easy to use.

When downloading an application, it often requires permissions to access some of the device's data such as contacts and photo gallery. The application developers often explain this by the fact that the application needs the information to work and the access rights are not used for data gathering purposes. However, only the assumption that popular social media applications gather data from devices for other purposes is an alarming news especially for companies using them, since it is possible that the sensitive information of the company may leak, if a certain application is used on a device. [14,43;43]

### 3.3 What Kind of Content Should Radio Post?

Social media updates should provide value and understanding towards the user's needs. The consumer should enjoy the social media experience and find the published content interesting. A radio station should share interesting and useful content and attract in an open and authentic way. According to Christian Bennet, it is important for a radio station to produce content designed specifically for social media. [18,46,53;41]

Social media sites are big global communities with millions of users. Radio stations should take an advantage of this by using hashtags, tagging, and retweeting, although especially hashtags should not be used too much either. When posting about their guests, tagging the artist to the update is important, since this way the post might be seen by the fans of this artist, who do not follow the radio station. Depending on the artist's page's settings, the radio station's post might appear on the artist's timeline and their fans' newsfeed. This can possibly bring more likes, more visitors on the station's website and more listeners. According to a Twitter related study conducted by Brandwatch.com in 2013, radio listeners on Twitter are three times more likely to interact with a tweet that mentions a celebrity [44;45]

Bennet says that it is important to give the audience news of the events that are happening right at the moment. Audience is excited to see things on social media that are live. One example of this is Facebook Live, which allows to broadcast live video on Facebook. The radio station's Facebook followers can receive notifications when live broadcast starts so they know to tune in at just the right time. [41]

There are many general guidelines for writing a successful social media update. The update should, for instance, be new information, positive, funny when appropriate, critical, marketing, and not absolutely comprehensive, since it should leave room for conversation. Social media updates are always read on the screen of a device, so the text part of the update should be easy to glance through, compressed, and short. The compact form is also important, since there are statements that young people's concentration has already shortened to a one-minute video or 140 sign tweet. The message of the update should be concise and engaging, so that it gets and keeps the attention of the viewer. Posts including a picture get much more attraction, since an image has the capability to awake emotions, bring back memories, or give a new experience just in seconds. The old saying "a picture is worth a thousand words" applies in social media, too. [13,10;14,40;46,12]

Videos are powerful forms of storytelling, since they can evoke emotions and express their message in a tight and easily understandable form. The popularity of videos has increased and if the growth of video formed communication continues, it has significant influences on all digital services. A radio station has to be able to produce good enough quality video content quickly and cost-effectively. Videos have to be published on many different platforms so that they will get an audience as big as possible. Videos should be available both on big smart TV screens and small smart phone screens, since a consumer moves easily from one device to another and often uses various devices at the same time. Availability on mobile devices is important, since especially younger people use mobile devices much more than desktops and laptops and they assume that all content has to be available on mobile. [13,11;14,37-40;47]

According to the Twitter related study mentioned earlier, radio stations receive more interaction from Twitter users when their posts include the following features: celebrities (300 percent increase), images (285 percent increase), hashtags (73 percent increase),

and links (47 percent increase). Main topics of conversation about the radio itself were the song being played (30 percent), requests for songs (30 percent), presenters (15 percent), and show content (12 percent). In the US, the celebrity culture is a popular topic of conversation, with over a quarter of all listener mentions relating to celebrity news, interviews or songs. 41 percent of the accounts radio stations tag on their posts are celebrities and 32 percent are brands. In the US, it is also proven successful for stations to hold competitions on social media. [44]

Listeners' interests change with time, as they have followed the station in social media longer. When they first start following the station through social media, their main purpose is to get updates or links to story content. Over time they start to appreciate more the behind-the-scenes perspective and getting to know the hosts as "real people". When a listener has followed a radio station longer, a relationship or sense of connectedness develops between the hosts and listeners. Listeners are more likely to engage with a radio presenter's own account than an official radio station's Twitter account, which is why it is important that DJ's also have their own accounts that they use for tweeting. Of all radio presenters' personal tweets, only 5.5 percent are about their radio station. [37;44]

### 3.4 Creating a Social Media Strategy

Creating a social media strategy is extremely vital for any radio show or station on social media. It gives common guidelines to all the employees, whose work includes using social media and maximizes the success of the radio station's social media presence. In order to build a good social media strategy, a radio station has to know, who its audience is, and what the station's values, view and mission are. A radio station needs to understand which social media platforms its target audience is using and then act in those channels using the right tone and content. Knowing what kind of devices their target audience uses is important as well for creating a good user experience. [12;13,54;16;18,46,53]

Petra Soikkeli is in charge of the social media content and interaction of Yle Puhe, which is a talk radio station that belongs to Finland's national public broadcasting company Yleisradio. Soikkeli was interviewed by email for this thesis about making a social media strategy for a radio station. She says that it should be thought beforehand, what goals

the station has regarding social media and whether the priority is in attracting big masses or in making the followers interact with the station in social media. Some other issues to consider are the visibility of the station, the role and sphere of responsibility of each content producer, the improvement of social media channels and the analysis of the results, and visual aspects such as image quality. Also, for instance, the writing style, reacting to comments, and the amount of posts and the times of publishing them should have guidelines. [20]

A social media strategy can be made on the basis of general knowledge on the subject, own research and with the help of social media analytics tools. There are many different factors that determine, how many people an update will reach and how many will interact with it. In order to reach as many people as possible and make them engage with the posts, it is necessary to know what kind of content to share, where to share it, how to share it and when to share it. [48]

Social media analytics consists of a variety of modelling and analytical techniques, which help to understand, analyse, and present large amounts of social media data. Social media analytics process consists of a capture stage, an understanding stage, and a presentation stage. The capture stage comprehends gathering data from different sources, pre-processing the data, and extracting the essential information from the data. Next on the understanding stage this data is examined with analytics tools such as opinion mining and sentiment analysis, topic modelling, social network analysis, and trend analysis, which are introduced in more detail in the following paragraphs. In the last phase, called the presentation stage, the findings from the understand stage are summarized and evaluated, and then presented. [48]

**Sentiment analysis**, or opinion mining, is used for gathering information on user sentiment or opinions from text sources. This can be done automatically by utilizing methods of text analytics, such as computational linguistics, and natural language processing. Many social media monitoring systems and trend analysis applications use the technique as their basis. At its simplest, a sentiment analysis can be done, for example, by counting how many times a word or a phrase is used. If, for instance, the radio station is mentioned many times on social media, it can be assumed to mean that the station evokes conversation and is therefore liked. [48]

However, this conclusion is not always correct. To get a more accurate picture on the context the station was talked about, a program can examine the text the station was mentioned in and find out if it includes terms that are categorized as positive or negative. More complicated approaches of sentiment analysis examine text content by considering many different factors at the same time. However, both sophisticated and simple methods of sentiment analysis can be flawed or ineffective. It should be remembered that sometimes, for instance, the satisfied listeners may be silent, whereas the few unsatisfied listeners may loudly speak about their opinions, which may distort the sentiment analysis and give a flawed overall picture of the opinions among the listeners. [48]

**Topic modelling** is a method used for detecting dominant themes or topics from large amounts of text. Themes can be used, for instance, for discovering user interests or finding out popular topics of conversation. A radio station can exploit this information, for example, by finding out what their listener base is talking about on social media and joining the conversation, or learning more about their current or potential listeners. Related to topic modelling, it is possible to optimize the use of hashtags by using tools that show, which hashtags are currently trending and in which part of the world. [45;48]

**Social network analysis** examines the network structure in a social media community. By utilizing it, a radio station can model its social network dynamics and growth. A station can learn, for instance, who have interacted with them on social media and which of these users have the most influence on other users on the social media platform. If this kind of a key influencer is detected, they should be shown extra consideration. [48]

Influencers have an access to the audience the radio station wants to influence and they can be identified with social media tools, by the number of social connections someone has, by the quality of their audience, and by the topics they post about. After identifying the influencers, there should be a strategy on how to get them to become advocates. [18;58;59;61]

Advocates are people who interact with the station's posts and content in a positive way. They, for instance, leave positive comments and retweet posts. To build loyalty with this group, they need to be engaged, encouraged and rewarded. For instance, if a Facebook user posts something on the radio station's page and many of the user's friends or some other users like the post, the radio station should make sure that the key influencer wants



to keep repeating a similar action in the future. This can be done by rewarding the person, for instance, by commenting or liking their post. Advocates are the station's biggest asset since they are willing to spread what it has got to say and add to its social voice. [18;48;58;59;61]

**Trend analysis** examines historical data gathered over time in order to predict future outcomes and behaviours. A radio station can use it, for instance, for predicting the growth of their audience, the effectiveness of their advertisement campaigns, or changes in their target audience's sentiment. [48]

**Visual analytics** makes large amounts of data more easily understandable through interactive visualizations. Seeing results in a graphical form helps non-technical users to better understand the complex analytic results, and allow them to identify trends, patterns and other information in the data. Visual analytics includes several activities from data collection to data-supported decision making. Visual analytics gives the most accurate results, when a human checks the results from mistakes. Figure 2 is an example of an interactive visual graph. [48]

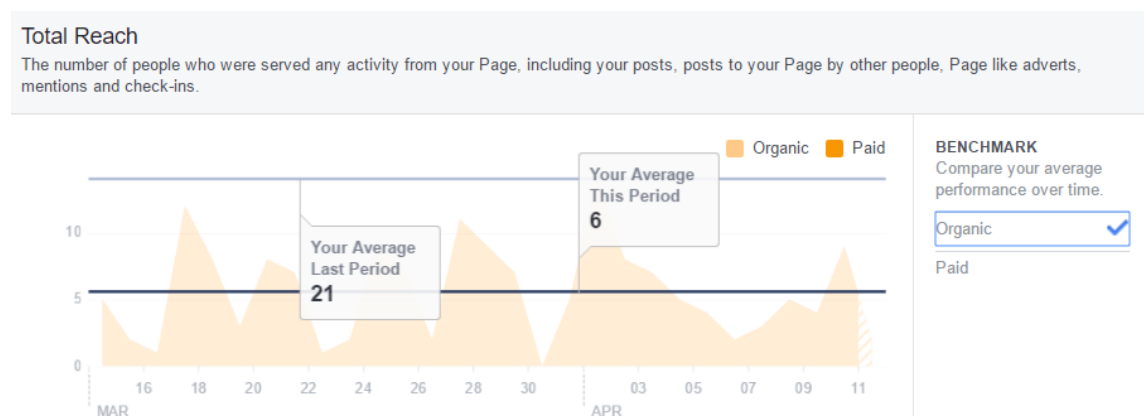


Figure 2: Facebook Insights [49] facebook.com

The screenshot in figure 2 is from Facebook Insights' Reach page and shows the statistics for the total reach, which is the number of people who were served any activity from the page. The visual form helps the users to comprehend the large amount of data much more quickly than it would be to read a list of each day's reach number. The graph is interactive and allows the user to compare the page's recent success to its average success.

A radio station does not have to be able to examine the social media data themselves: the station staff can just view the results that either free or paid social listening and analysis services present to them. These services can be either found online or a radio station can buy services from social media consulting firms that help them in person. Yle Puhe monitors their social media channels both with the own measurement tools of the channels and Falcon service. Falcon gives the possibility to manage everything related to social media updates and content creation, such as answering to comments, following different hashtags and, of course, view the analytics. Soikkeli says that Yle Puhe measures results approximately once a month. Falcon also offers consulting, but Yle Puhe has not used the service. [18,50-52;20]

Yleisradio also uses KPI Dashboard that gathers all Yleisradio's social media channels' content and measures likes, followers and interaction, and it is possible to set target figures for each channel. Soikkeli tells that Yleisradio has a social media team that with Yle Puhe has discussed about the goals of every social media channel. If needed, they can be consulted and they can help going through the analytics. [20]

Some social media analytics tools give information on which posting times have been the most successful for the account in the past and what time they should post in the future. Generally people use digital services on their mobile phones more on certain times of a day and certain times of a year. Most use happens early in the morning, when people travel to work on public transportation, or late in the evening, perhaps by the bed before putting the phone away. The use also increases during weekend and summer, when people have more free time. [14,38-39]

### 3.5 Different Social Media Services

In this chapter some of the most popular social media platforms are shortly introduced and compared to each other. These platforms are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, Periscope, and YouTube. They were chosen both because of their popularity and because they were used in the pop-up radio project. Facebook is discussed more than other platforms, since it is used by most of the radio stations and is the most versatile. All of these platforms are cost-free, like most of the social media services are. The user amounts of the platforms are reported based on the number of monthly active users. Monthly active users mean users, who have logged in during the last 30 days, and the

indicator is used in this thesis as new enough information on the number of daily active users was not available on all the discussed platforms. [49]

**Facebook** has approximately 1 860 million monthly active users [49.] As the leading global social platform, Facebook can be a very important asset for a radio station. It is not only a place to connect with the current listeners but also to get new people engaged with the station. In addition to being an important publishing platform, Facebook is also a good place for advertising. Young adults use Facebook the most, while teenagers seem to prefer other social media services. Older adults use Facebook more than other social media services. [30;50]

Technically Facebook is very diverse. For instance, Facebook supports 360 videos and live streaming, allows to add captions to videos, and lets schedule posts. Facebook offers a big selection of features and is, thus, a platform that can be used for many different purposes. There are five different page roles that can be assigned to people who manage the Facebook page: admin, editor, moderator, advertiser, and analyst. The roles can be assigned on the basis of how many features a user needs access to. For instance, an admin has an access to all the possible rights but an analyst can only view insights and see who published something on the page. Multiple people can have roles on a page and their personal Facebook accounts are linked with the page. Page managers can see which of the admins posted or commented something with the station's profile. [51;52]

Facebook Insights gives statistics about the page, such as number of impressions and the reach a post gets. Impressions refer to the number of times a post is displayed, and people may see many impressions of the same post. Reach is the number of people who received impressions of a post. Reach might be less than impressions since one person might see a post more than once. It is also possible to get further information on the people, who like the page of the radio station, such as their age, gender, country, city, language, or when they use Facebook. A station can get more visibility for a post by paying money. Like figure 2 showed, in statistics, organic reach shows the total number of people who were shown the post through unpaid distribution. Paid reach refers to the total number of people who were shown the post as a result of advertisements. [53]

The difference between Facebook and, for example, Twitter is that on Facebook the posts in the news feed are not shown in a chronological order but in the order of what

Facebook thinks the user is most interested in. That is why Twitter is optimal for live updates that need to reach people fast and with a big certainty, while Facebook is better for creating a community. Figures 3 and 4 demonstrate this difference. [54]



Figure 3: BBC Radio 1's Facebook post [55]

In figure 3, a radio station uses Facebook for posting an update that needs an instant reaction from the audience. The radio station tells that its users have only a couple of minutes to comment on the post their song requests that could be played on the radio soon. The problem with using Facebook for this post is that many followers might see the post too late, even if they would have been browsing the news feed at the moment it was posted. Figure 4 shows an example of how Facebook suits well for creating a community.

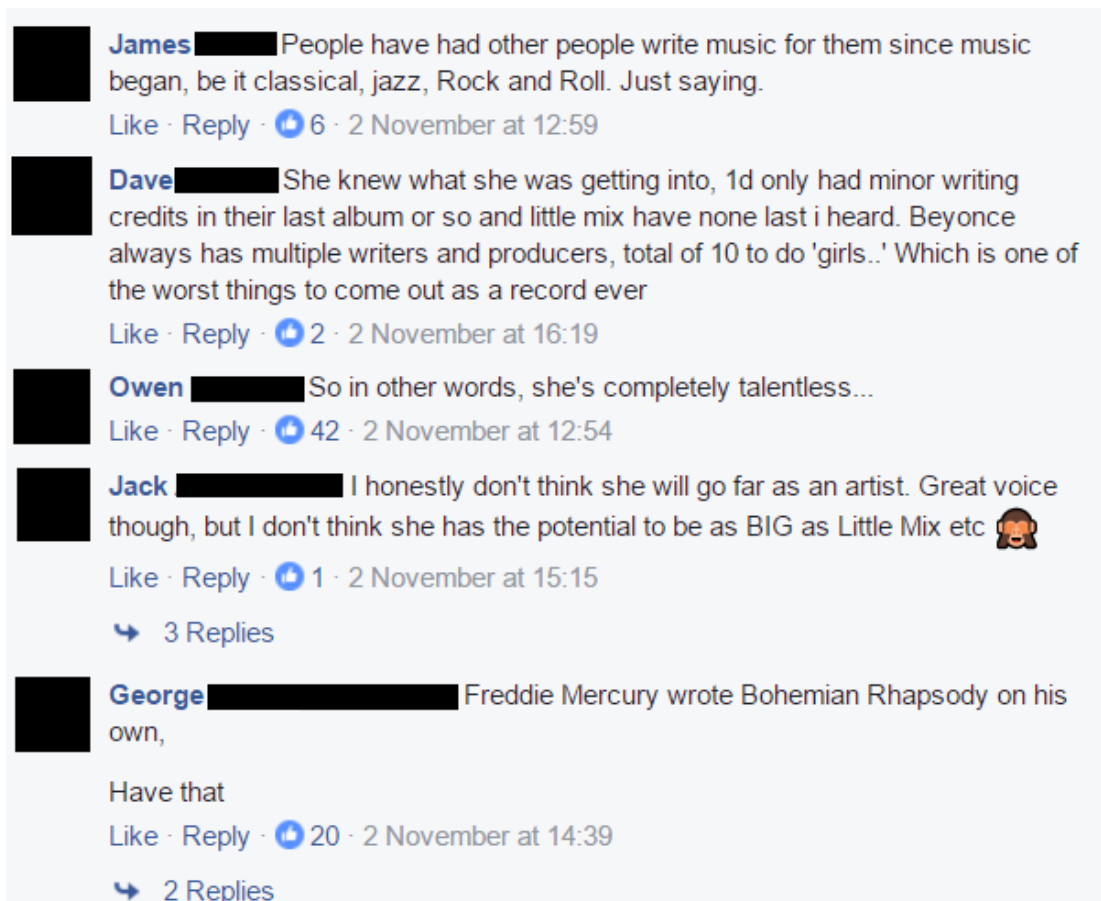


Figure 4: Facebook comment section [56]

In the screenshot of the Facebook comment section shown in figure 4, people who do not know each other discuss about a topic that radio station has posted. They interact with each other by commenting, liking each other's comments, and replying to comments.

**Instagram** is a picture and video sharing platform, where a user can take a photo or shoot a video with their mobile device, modify it, and finally share it. The creators of Instagram say they created the application to solve three problems: They wanted to make mobile photos look more professional by using filters, make sharing pictures on multiple platforms easier, and make the uploading experience fast and efficient. Instagram has around 600 million monthly active users and they are younger than in Facebook. [57;58]

Instagram Stories is a new additional feature that reminds Snapchat. It allows to share multiple photos and videos that appear one after another in a slideshow format. Like

Snapchat, with Instagram Stories one does not have to worry as much about posting too much content, since other users can easily skip through posts they do not find interesting. Normal Instagram posts are permanent and only disappear if they are manually deleted, whereas the content posted in Instagram Stories will disappear automatically after 24 hours.

An Instagram profile can either be public or private. If the profile is public, anyone can subscribe to follow it. The subscribers will see the photos on their news feed. In the private mode, a user has got to approve all follow requests before these users will become their followers. Pictures posted with a private profile are not visible to anyone else than to the subscribers of the profile, even if they include hashtags. An ordinary Instagram profile can be transferred into a business profile. In order for a company to do this, the business must have a Facebook page, since Instagram and Facebook collaborate with each other and use the same service for Insights and other business profile management features. Most of these features are the same as with Facebook.

After converting to a business profile, it is possible to include additional information about the business on the profile, such as a phone number or an email address. Instagram allows to add accounts into an account, which means that a radio station employee can have both their personal and radio station's account logged in at the same time on their mobile device. This saves from the effort of logging in and out when wanting to use a different account.

**Twitter** is an information network made up of 140-character messages called tweets. In addition to posts consisting entirely of text, Twitter is used for sharing pictures and videos. Twitter allows its users to quickly discover the latest posts that they are interested in. Twitter has approximately 310 million monthly active users, and like Facebook, its user demographic consists of people of all ages but has young adults the most. [59;60]

By default, tweets on Twitter are public. Alternatively, a user can make their tweets protected, which means that their tweets are visible only to their followers. Public tweets can be seen by anyone and they can be found, for example, via hashtags. By searching tweets with a hashtag, Twitter shows a feed of tweets that include the hashtag. That is how tweets concerning the same topic are gathered in the right place. Twitter home page

also shows a list of the fastest trending hashtags at that moment. This list shows the hottest topics of conversation either worldwide or by a specific location.

One of the biggest advantages of Twitter compared to its competitors is real-time communication. Compared to Facebook and Instagram, where followers might notice a post that would have needed immediate attention hours or even a day too late, Twitter is better for fast communication. A user's home page shows a news feed that gathers all the latest updates from those users that the user has chosen to follow. Users have the ability to choose whether they want to see the posts in a chronological order or let Twitter show them in an order the user is most likely interested in. These tweets are chosen, for instance, based on the accounts the user interacts with the most. This feature can be turned on or off, but even when it is on, the updates are in a relatively chronological order compared to Facebook. The home page also notifies if a new update from anyone the user follows has been published since the timeline was last refreshed. On the bottom of the page is also a section labelled as *While you were away*, which gives a summary of the most interesting tweets received since the last visit. There may also be promoted tweets, or tweets Twitter thinks a user might be interested in a timeline, which means that sometimes a user might see tweets from accounts they do not follow.

Like Facebook and Instagram Insights, Twitter Analytics gives statistics about tweet interaction, reach, audience demographics, etc. The webpage [analytics.twitter.com](https://analytics.twitter.com) also gives tips on how to succeed better in Twitter by telling, for instance, how to make tweets reach a bigger audience or get more interaction.

Twitter owns a **Periscope** application used for broadcasting live videos with a mobile device, the same way as Facebook or Instagram Live. This Twitter owned application allows anyone to have their own "broadcasting station" and stream live video either publicly or privately anytime and anywhere. Periscope users can find streams and videos to watch either by the broadcasting location, hashtags or by searching the broadcaster's account. Viewers can interact with a broadcast by clicking hearts on the screen, commenting live, or sharing broadcasters on Twitter. Once the live stream has ended, it can still be found and replayed on Periscope for 24 hours before it is removed. The broadcaster can get the stream automatically saved on their phone, after which it can be treated just like any other video, which means it can be published online, re-watched, and so on. Most of the Periscope users are aged between 16-34. [61]

**Snapchat** is a mobile application used for sharing pictures and videos. What makes Snapchat special is that the multimedia messages sent can only be viewed by a user-specified length of time before they are automatically deleted. The messages can be sent directly to selected users or updates can be posted in My Stories section, where they will be visible to the account's followers for 24 hours unless deleted earlier. Unlike the platforms discussed before, Snapchat does not have an inbuilt free analytics tool. Snapchat has around 301 million monthly active users and is especially popular among teenagers. [62;63]

**YouTube** is a video-sharing website that eight out of ten of the world's 18-49 year-olds use every month. On YouTube, users can search and watch videos, create own channels, upload videos, like, comment and share other videos, follow other channels and users and create playlists. YouTube also has an inbuilt analytics tool. Of all the platforms introduced in this chapter, YouTube has the broadest demographic by age. Even older adults use it, although not as much as young adults. YouTube is the most popular among 25-34 year olds. [64]

## **4 Arabia Street Festival Radio Project**

In this chapter there will be a discussion on the pop up radio project that I participated in as a part of this thesis. The pop up radio project was implemented by Metropolia University of Applied Sciences and carried out in a collaboration with Arabia Street Festival.

### **4.1 An Overview of The Project**

The team working on the project included eight bachelor students of culture and arts as DJ's and reporters, and three media engineering students, who were in charge of the technical aspects, and there were also four teachers helping with the project. My own role was to participate in the planning of the social media strategy and observe its functionality. The social media content was produced and posted by the presenters and reporters. The broadcast was held during the Arabia Street Festival on Saturday 14.5.2016, and the day before and after it. On Saturday, the broadcast was live excluding some pre-recorded segments but on Friday and Sunday only pre-recorded content was



broadcast. Just Saturday's broadcast is examined in this thesis, since live broadcast suits better for the examination of social media use.

The target audience of the radio were the people attending the festival, and the goal was to create content that served people of all ages. The programme content was specifically designed to interest people living in the Arabianranta area and there was conversation about local political issues such as what to do with the rapids located in Arabianranta.

The temporary radio studio was built inside the Technical Museum of Helsinki, which was one of the venues for the festival. There were reporters on the field making live reports from the farther festival areas using Skype and Lucylive applications with their personal mobile phones for the purpose of sending audio to the studio, where it was then mixed into the radio broadcast. The frequency of our station was 102.0 MHz and the broadcast was transmitted with FM technology and a 400-watt transmitter, which according to a radio teacher provided rather wide area coverage for such a small project covering the whole Arabianranta area. It is not possible to calculate an accurate transmission distance with the watt value, since the shape of the surrounding area, such as tall buildings or hills, interfere with the signal. The length of the transmitting antenna has some influence on the size of the covered area, but the information about the length was not available. There were no official estimations on how many listeners the radio had, but the radio station was played at the festival that had an estimated 8 000 visitors, so many people might have listened to it for at least a moment while passing a speaker playing it. Anyone with a radio in the covered area could have listened to the radio channel, as well. In addition to these listeners the online broadcast could be listened on [Kaupunkiradio.fi](http://Kaupunkiradio.fi) at any location. No figures were measured from the online listening.

The only contact method the radio station offered for their listeners was social media, although they also encouraged the listeners to meet them by visiting the studio in the museum. Other contact methods such as calling were not offered due to the technical and financial challenges they would have brought. These challenges were not worth undertaking, since this was a small-scale project, whose priority was not in learning to use different contact methods other than social media.

The social media services the pop up radio used were Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, Periscope, and YouTube, and they were offered both as contacting platforms for

listeners and publishing platforms for the radio station. These social media services were chosen, because they are among the most commonly used services used by radio stations. All of them were chosen for learning purposes so that the students working in the project would get experience on working with them in the radio station environment. Offering a big variety of applications also made it possible for listeners to choose a contact method they felt most comfortable with. In addition, offering all these applications did not require any particular extra effort, since the accounts used were already existing Kaupunkiradio's social media accounts.

Kaupunkiradio is a local radio station in Helsinki run by media students. On Instagram Kaupunkiradio has 323 followers, on Twitter 313 followers, on Snapchat 35, on YouTube five subscribers, on Periscope 95 followers, and their Facebook page has 1406 likes. On Kaupunkiradio's website *Kaupunkiradio.fi* there was a chat open for comments, but during the pop-up radio broadcast there were no new comments in the chat. The social media updates published were not planned or scheduled precisely, although guidelines were talked through beforehand, excluding the posts promoting certain segments in the broadcast and the posts promoting the sponsor, which were planned beforehand in more detail.

### **Social media usage**

**Instagram** was used for the sponsor, K-Market Arabianranta, update shown in figure 5. Hashtags gave the post more visibility. Compared to, for instance, Facebook, Instagram had better chances of reaching people who were at the festival and thus potential customers of K-Market Arabianranta. In order to get even more visibility for the sponsor, the same post was also published on Facebook. If even more visibility would have been wanted, the post would also have been shared on Twitter. However, the sponsor did not require this.



Figure 5: Kaupunkiradio's Instagram Update [65]

In addition to the post showing in figure 5, there was also another post about the sponsor on Instagram. The reporter who posted it had forgotten to use #arabiankatufestivaali hashtag, which could have brought a bigger audience for the post, since on Instagram the hashtag #arabiankatufestivaali got hundreds of posts at the time of this year's festival. However, the #arabianranta hashtag helped it potentially reach people located near the store, and all in all the sponsor updates were implemented successfully according to the sponsor's requirements. The sponsor was also advertised in the radio.

The radio posted 17 photos and four videos in total on Instagram. The average number of likes per picture was eight and the average number of views on videos was 44. The most watched video, that got 79 views, got two comments. A picture with eight likes got one comment but the other Instagram posts did not get any. Instagram did not have the Instagram Stories feature at the time the project was implemented. Kaupunkiradio's Instagram has not been converted into a business profile, which means the Insights and detailed statistics were not available. The hashtags used in the Instagram posts included #kaupunkiradio, #popupradio, #tekniikanmuseo, #museoidenyö, #arabiankatufestivaali, and #arabia. Posts also had hashtags that more specifically defined what was in the picture, like the location such as a street name #hämeentie, or a landmark #vanhankaupunginkoski, or a hashtag defining a topic, such as #graffiti, #katutaide, or #legotyöpaja.

The listeners were directed from radio to social media content and vice versa. For instance, a stuffed animal named Pera was talked on the radio and pictures of it was also posted to Snapchat and Instagram.

The radio station posted nine updates on **Facebook**. Six of them were pictures with additional text content. The station also shared one post, which a person working with the project had published on her own page. There was also one video update with additional text content that got 396 views but got only seven likes. The video got many views, since Kaupunkiradio's Facebook page has 1406 likes.

The average number of likes per Facebook post was four, whereas the average number of people reached per post was 697. This means that on average only under 0.6 percent of the people who saw a post, liked it. There can be many possible reasons for the low interaction percent. Looking at the past posts during the Kaupunkiradio's history on Facebook, the number of people who interact with a post compared to the number of people who have seen the post is extremely low. Being a student radio, many of the people liking the page are most likely people, who have been doing something for the station in the past. They might not be interested in what is happening with Kaupunkiradio currently. Someone who has once liked the page might have done it only to follow their friend's show and are not interested in what students, who they do not know, post. The same reason may apply to other social media platforms.

On Facebook, hashtags are not as popularly used as, for instance, Instagram and Twitter. On Facebook, ordinary users, meaning people that are not celebrities or public pages, do not usually try to get visibility for their pictures using hashtags. Posts are often private and targeted only for their friends. When searching for Facebook posts with #arabiankatufestivaali hashtag, the list of post was not in chronological order. Posts from previous years and this year were mixed. Using different filters the search can be narrowed down.

The station posted six updates on **Twitter**. Four of the updates were shared from the station's Instagram page. The other two posts were a 15-second-long video and a Periscope share. The tweets got a rather good visibility, since on average one tweet was viewed 793 times. However, there was one like per tweet and one share per tweet on

average. To get more visibility, the Twitter updates should have included more hashtags. The reporters had included hashtags only in one post, unlike they were instructed.

One video was streamed live on **Periscope** and its length was 12 minutes, 40 seconds. The video was the panel discussion Koskikeskustelu about the local rapids Vanhankaupunginkoski and it got 29 viewers. It was easy to film with just a tablet and with no hard preparations. One of the reporters filmed it and the task did not require special technical skills. The use of Periscope was not planned beforehand and therefore no guidelines were given for its use.

The pictures and videos posted on **Snapchat** were captured both at the Technical Museum and the other festival area. The reporter reporting at the farther festival area described what he saw in the radio, but extra value was brought to the radio content with Snapchat. By publishing videos of what the reporter described on the radio, the listeners got a chance to see the things themselves on Snapchat. The presenter and reporter encouraged the listeners on the radio to go to Snapchat to get a visual experience on the things he was talking about.

One video was streamed live on **YouTube** and its length was 7 hours, 6 minutes and 35 seconds. The video had 79 views but no likes. The video filmed everything that was happening around the studio desk during the day. It was filmed from a fixed angle with a web camera attached onto a pole next to the studio desk. Figure 6 is a screenshot of the live stream.



### Kaupunkiradion pop up Tekniikan museolta

 Kaupunkiradio

Figure 6: YouTube live stream [66]

After building the set-up for the YouTube stream showing in figure 6, only one stream supervisor was needed and no additional camera operators or other crew were required. The comment section was not in use because the reporters thought viewers might write inappropriate comments. After the publishing day YouTube administrators muted the video, since its audio track included copyrighted music.

Social media was mainly used when not being at the studio desk. While DJ'ing, the reporters were busy with the content they had planned earlier and did not have much time to check the social media sites simultaneously. Using social media was mainly a job for the reporters who were not DJ'ing at the moment. Every presenter pair had their own social media producer, who was in charge of the social media content published during the presenter pair's programme time slot.

Open Broadcaster Software was used for streaming the content from a web camera to YouTube. The video stream was transferred through a USB cable from the web camera to the computer that ran the Open Broadcaster Software. The audio on the background of the video stream came through cables from the radio studio's sound mixer. In the middle of the sound mixer and the computer was a sound card.

A WLAN, wireless local-area network, connection was used in studio and broadcasting, but with personal devices either WLAN or a mobile internet connection. Social media

was mainly used on mobile phones, but also with a tablet and a laptop. In total, there were nine mobile phones, and their models were Samsung Galaxy S4, Samsung Galaxy S3, iPhone 5s, and iPhone 6. The tablet used was iPad Mini, and the computer was HP 15-ac181no. The pop up radio implemented BYOD policy since most of the devices were owned by the users themselves.

### Technical challenges

There were some technical problems when using the social media applications. Once a reporter tried to film a video with Snapchat but the application threw them out, after which they decided to try again later. Later, when the application was started again with the same device, it worked normally. Another time Snapchat video recording looked like in the screenshot of figure 7.



Figure 7: Snapchat error [67]

The video had looked normal when recording, but apparently some kind of a bug occurred and the video had the error when viewed on any device. We deleted the video as soon as we saw the error. WLAN was used in publishing the video. Snapchat's technical support did not reply to the inquiry about the error. There was a situation where a reporter needed to download Snapchat on their phone but there was not enough memory space. The reporter decided to use another phone instead rather than start deleting files from the formerly mentioned device that did not have enough free memory.

Batteries of the mobile phones and other devices ran out of power during the long day. There were power sockets for the studio equipment, but unfortunately the mobile phones, computer and tablet used for social media purposes had only two sockets, while there were eleven devices that needed recharging along the day. However, social media is easy to use on personal devices such as mobile phones, so there was always a device that had enough power. Especially the popular applications were already downloaded onto many reporters' personal devices, since they use them on their free time and they did not have to download them just for this occasion. They just had to log out of their own personal accounts or attach Kaupunkiradio's account to their accounts, if the application had that option.

## 4.2 Survey

I decided to use questionnaires to examine the reporters' and listeners' opinions on social media use as it allowed me to gather a large quantity of data relatively quickly. A survey also allows to collect information on a broad range of things, including the background information and information on the experiment itself. The questionnaire made it possible to collect answers both in written and multiple option form. Written answers gave more detailed information, whereas multiple option answers gave results that could be easier compared to each other. The multiple option answers might not absolutely correspond to the real opinions of the survey takers. Multiple option scales with answers such as "seldom" and "sometimes" are not completely accurate, but still give considerable results.

The survey was made for the eight reporters and fourteen listeners and it was carried out to find out about the user experience of using social media in the interaction between the station and the listeners. The reporters were also asked about social media a publishing platform. There were separate questionnaires for both the reporters and the listeners and they were distributed either online or on paper according to the preference of the survey taker. I also offered the option in which I read aloud the question and the test subject could answer orally, after which I filled in the questionnaire for them. Two of the listeners wanted to use this option.



The reporters were asked individually about:

- the social media platforms they used in the project,
- how easy it was to use the platforms while working,
- if they faced any problems,
- how easily or fast they noticed listener's comments or other messages,
- how well they thought each platform suits for radio stations' use,
- would they like to use the platform again when working at a radio station,
- if they had any ideas on how to implement social media in the future if they were working in the radio.

The questions were asked for understanding better the user experience of the radio personnel, and to get to know, if there had been any problems or incidents I had not noticed myself or heard about. I also wanted to know, what the reporters generally thought about the relationship between the radio and social media from the journalistic point of view.

Each listener taking part in the survey contacted the radio station through one social media channel. The listeners executed a task of contacting the radio station. The listeners were asked about:

- their background information,
- how experienced they were in using the social media application,
- how experienced social media users they are overall,
- how often they listen to the radio,
- how often they contact a radio station,
- have they used this particular application for contacting a radio, television, or another similar show before,
- in what kind of situations they usually listen to the radio

The background information was asked because it has an influence on the test results. For instance, if a test subject is a really experienced Facebook user, it most likely takes them less time and effort to perform a task there than for a user that has never used Facebook before. I also wanted to know what kind of radio listeners they are to compare it to the theoretical information on radio listening habits.

After the test, the listeners were asked about:

- how they contacted the radio station in the social media service,

- what actions the contacting process consisted in,
- how much time the contacting process took,
- which device they used,
- how easy they thought the application was to use for this purpose,
- how clear it was for them where and how they had to send the message or update so that radio station personnel would see it,
- whether they faced any problems,
- did the contacting process in their opinion take too much time so that they would not like to repeat it again in order to contact a radio station outside the test scenario.

The information about the steps of the contacting process was asked in order to understand how the test subjects contacted the radio station and if it was the easiest and simplest way to do it or if there were any unnecessary steps. The time of the contacting process was asked to understand how long the tasks took. I wanted to know how the test subjects felt about the contacting process and if they faced any problems or thought the process took too long.

### **Survey process**

The concept of “a contacting process” was explained to the test subjects. In this survey it was defined as a process that starts when the test subject takes a device in their hand and ends when the message or update has been sent. In this case the stage of signing up or logging in and possibly out was excluded in order to keep the results more comparable to each other. The form also had an example of a contacting process in order for the test subjects to understand better what they would have to report.

Every test listener used only one platform for contacting the station, and the platform was either Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or Snapchat. None of the listeners contacted the station via YouTube, since the comment section was not open. The use of Periscope was not planned beforehand and therefore, no test listeners were instructed to contact the station via Periscope. The test subjects and I chose the platforms together in order to get results from different platforms and to get test subjects to test services they were not that familiar with before. Some test subjects refused to use the service I suggested for them, which is why there are not an even amount of test users per platform.

Although fourteen test subjects is a rather small number and does not give an accurate picture of the real behaviour and user experiences of the whole listener base, the test still gives considerable results. The results should not be generalized too much, however, but they are interesting examples of use cases that can be examined.

The devices that the test subjects used for contacting the station were an HP 15-ac185no laptop, an Acer E5-511 laptop, a Samsung Galaxy Tab A tablet, an LG 4G Spirit mobile phone, a Samsung Galaxy A5 mobile phone, a Samsung Galaxy S3 mobile phone, a Samsung Galaxy S4 Active mobile phone, iPhone 5 mobile phone and an iPhone 6 mobile phone. Most of the listeners accessed the social media application on their phone with an application and only one person accessed Facebook page through a web browser.

### 4.3 Results and Discussion

The background information about **the listeners** is gathered in table 1. The second column of the chart shows the number of test users per application, the third column lists their ages, and the rest of the columns list their answers. The answers of the test subjects are in the same order in every column. The written answers are discussed later in the text.

Table 1: The background information statistics

Applica- tion	Us- ers	The age of the test subject	Experi- ence in use of the application	Experi- ence in use of so- cial media overall	How of- ten the person listens to the radio	How of- ten the person contacts the radio
Instagram	4	24, 24, 32, 48	5, 5, 3, 2	5, 3, 3, 2	2, 5, 2, 4	1, 1, 2, 2
Facebook	4	21, 24, 22, 23	5, 5, 4, 4	4, 3, 3, 5	3, 5, 2, 2	2, 1, 1, 1
Twitter	4	16, 63, 20, 37	3, 1, 4, 2	4, 1, 4, 3	1, 3, 3, 5	1, 2, 2, 3
Snapchat	2	15, 60	5, 1	5, 1	2, 4	1, 2

Table 1 shows that on average test subjects said they listen to the radio sometimes (3 out of 5). Many told that they do this usually while driving a car or at work, when contacting a station is not that easy. Half of test subjects told they have not contacted a radio station during the last five years, six of them had contacted them “seldom” and one “sometimes”. This reflects the known fact that only a small percent of listeners interact with radio stations, and the big majority of listeners just wants to listen. None of the test subjects had previously used the same application for contacting the makers of a live radio, television or other similar show, so the scenario was at least a little bit new for all of them.

Table 2 shows the listeners’ answers for the question “How easy and convenient was it to use this application for this purpose?” in the column labelled as *The ease of use* and for the question “How much do you agree with the statement: The contacting process took so long that I would not like to do it again in normal circumstances (outside the test scenario).” in the next column. The first three columns are copied from the previous chart in order to make it easier to read.

Table 2: The statistics of the listeners’ contacting process

Application	Users	The age of the test subject	The ease of use	How much do you agree with the statement: "The contacting process took so long that I would not like to do it again in normal circumstances"
Instagram	4	24, 24, 32, 48	5, 5, 4, 3	1, 1, 1, 2
Facebook	4	21, 24, 22, 23	4, 5, 5, 5	1, 4, 1, 1
Twitter	4	16, 63, 20, 37	4, 4, 5, 3	1, 3, 1, 1
Snapchat	2	15, 60	5, 2	1, 4

The results in table 2 show that overall the test subjects found their application rather easy to use for this particular task, especially if they had used the application before. The 60-year-old test subject, who used Snapchat for contacting the station, had not used Snapchat or other social media before. Therefore, she had trouble in understanding how to find the station in Snapchat and send them a message.

Most of the test subjects strongly disagreed with the statement "The contacting process took so long that I would not like to do it again in normal circumstances", which means most of them did not find the contacting process too time consuming. One of the tested listeners mentioned that she does not usually feel that contacting the station is "worth it". For her, even a 30 second effort that has to be given for producing a social media post is too much time and effort, although she likes listening to the radio.

The average duration of a contacting process was one minute and 12 seconds, and the durations varied between 28 seconds and 2 minutes and 30 seconds. The durations varied for various different reasons: the contacting processes consisted on different tasks, some wrote more text on their updates or messages than others, some of the test subjects were more experienced users of social media and the used application than others, and some faced technical problems. Two of the test subjects told their slow internet connection made the process last longer. All of the test subjects, whose previous experience on using the application was either 1 or 2, had a little bit of trouble in finding the radio station's account at the social media platform or understanding which hashtags or accounts they should attach to their update in order for the station staff to see it. For most of the test subjects it was extremely clear, how and where they should publish their update or message.

Although the duration of the contacting process did not seem to be a problem to many, the test subjects had other reasons for why they would not have liked to contact the station. One of popular reason was they did not feel comfortable with the fact that their friends or acquaintances might see the post they published, unless they could be anonymous. They also did not like the fact that the station employees would know their real name.

The listeners who contacted the station through a social media platform they had not used before, succeeded to do it still quite fast and effortlessly. However, the more experienced social media user the listener was, the more effortless they found the task. The test subjects almost unanimously thought that applications they tested were easy and simple to use. Also the test subjects, who had not used the application they tested before, thought that it was easy to guess how to perform the task they were supposed to do. This tells that the applications tested have good usability and interface design.

Although the test subjects who did not have much previous experience in using their application succeeded rather well, one of them pointed out that they would not like to contact a station via a platform new to them, since they would have to register a new account. This would take more time and require extra effort that would not be worth it for just one message. This is a reason why a radio station should use platforms that their listeners already use.

The average age of the test subjects was 31. It seemed that the younger people found the contacting process slightly easier, performed faster and made less mistakes than older test subjects. The younger test subjects had better overall experience on social media, although they might have not been as experienced with the application they used in the experiment. The general understanding on social media seemed to help with new applications, since many social media applications have similar features.

**The reporters** generally thought that using Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, and Periscope at a radio station was rather easy and there were not many problems. The answers for the multiple option questions are in table 3. The numbers are the average values of all the answers, both because not all of the reporters had used every application, and some reporters did not answer to a question about every application, although they may have used it.

Table 3: The statistics of the reporters' questions

Application	The ease of use in this project	The messages/updates from the listeners were noticed quickly/easily	The ease of use generally for the radio's purposes
Instagram	4	4	5
Facebook	5	5	4
Twitter	4	3	4
Snapchat	5	4	4
Periscope	4	-	5

The reporters told that they noticed easily the messages and updates from the listeners. Listeners' interactions were especially easy to notice in Facebook, but in Twitter it was a bit harder. They said that overall using the applications in the project was easy, because

they have used the application in their personal lives, and all of the reporters were familiar with all of the applications. As seen from table 3, they also thought the applications seemed to suit well for the purposes of the radio in general. However, they found some things problematic: One of the reporters mentioned that it was a bit too time consuming and difficult to move between Instagram accounts, when she wanted to take turns in using her personal account and the account of the station. Instagram has the possibility of linking up to five Instagram accounts together and to switch between them without having to log out and log back in. However, this feature, being rather new at the time of the radio project, did not always work properly.

All of the reporters said that they would like to use all of the applications regularly while working at a radio station in the future. However, the reporters had different opinions on which applications they felt suited the best and worst for radio use. The opinions seemed to differ, for example, depending on how familiar the reporters thought that radio listeners are with the applications. One of them thought that Finnish radio listeners do not use Twitter and thus Twitter should not be used that much at radio stations. Some other reporters who used Twitter regularly on their free time had a more positive attitude towards using Twitter at a radio station.

This reflects well the service design problem discussed earlier in this thesis. If the person designing the service thinks they are themselves very similar to the customer, they easily start to design the service for themselves and generalizing the whole target group being exactly similar to them. The reporters listen to the radio themselves regularly, so they easily draw to conclusions that an average listener is like them. Although the assumptions may be right, they might as well be wrong.

The reporters thought that especially Instagram was a good tool for interacting with the listeners and a good platform to advertise the sponsor. They also thought that Snapchat worked really well with this particular project since it gave the listeners the opportunity to see the things the reporter described on the radio. Compared to Instagram, Snapchat worked even better for this since there were lots of video material. In Snapchat, the viewer can easily and fast move to the next video if they get bored. The reporters thought that Periscope suited well for the live streaming of Koskikeskustelu.

The reporters were also asked if they think some other applications services would suit well for the interaction between a radio station and a listener. One of the reporters mentioned that Skype worked well for reporting from the field and that it might also work well for talking with listeners.

The social media use in the project succeeded rather well, although there was also room for improvement. The presenters should have encouraged more the listeners in the radio to contact them in social media. Presenters told the listeners about the content the station had published in social media and told them to go see it, but the interactivity was not encouraged enough. When creating the social media strategy, the importance of the presenters' task to try to make the listeners to interact with them in social media should have been stressed more. Now the focus was more on the radio distributing content on social media and trying to get as many people as possible to see it. Although the visibility of the radio's posts was good, the social media performance could have been considered more successful, if the radio would have got more people to interact with them.

It would have also been interesting to use more versatile paid social media analytics tools, since now I only used the free tools of each application. If I could go back in time, I would have also made even more research with social media analytic tools before the broadcast day to see what kinds of posts had worked for Kaupunkiradio in the past. However, there would not have that much new information to discover, since Kaupunkiradio's updates have received a very even amount of success throughout its history and never got much interaction from social media users.

The survey gave answers for the research question of the thesis, which was "Why and how should radio use social media?" A lot of this information had been found out in the theoretical section, but now it was confirmed to apply also in practice, or at least with this project. The survey results also gave more detailed information on how the radio station's reporters and listeners felt about using social media. Overall the presenter's opinions on the social media use were very positive, whereas some of the listeners did not describe their experiences as good. Not all the listeners want to interact with a station in social media, although they might enjoy viewing the station's social media updates.



## 5 Conclusion

The research question for the thesis was “Why and how should radio use social media?” The question was answered with theoretical background information on the subject and with the survey conducted about the social media use of the pop-up radio.

Social media has many good characteristics which radio stations can make good use of. Nowadays publishing content on various different platforms is important, and being increasingly popular, social media is a good choice for one of those platforms. In addition to being a good place to publish content, social media can be used for communicating with listeners. A radio station can choose which contacting channels they want to offer for their listeners on the basis of what kind kinds of people their listener base consists of.

In social media, listeners can interact with each other without a DJ as the middleman, and statistics also show that following a radio station in social media makes the listening experience more fulfilling. Social media presence brings radio stations more visibility and helps them get to know their target audience. Social media services are easy to use on ordinary smartphones, tablets and computers, and both listeners and radio station staff are often already familiar with them. The downsides of using social media are, for instance, that not all radio listeners want to use it, it does not always allow the listener to be truly anonymous, the social media application downloaded on the company’s device might have an access to sensitive data, and the station cannot always control what the listeners publish about them. It should also be remembered that not all the listeners want to interact with the station.

Radio stations should make a social media strategy to create common guidelines for all the employees and to maximise the station’s success in social media. Social media analytic tools help in creating the strategy and to measure the success. Stations should find out which social media platforms their target audience is using and publish there the kind of content that the platform best suits for. Social media posts should be short and compact, and videos and pictures are recommended. Hashtags, links, and tagging celebrities in the posts bring more interaction and visibility.

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## Questionnaire for Listeners

The questionnaire contains questions for a use case of one application.

In questions that have options for an answer in number scale "1-5", and with options "yes/no", "I do not remember", or "I cannot say", circle the answer you want to choose. Write the written answers in the space reserved for them.

Read the questions carefully. If you do not understand something, ask.

Filling the form takes approximately 10 minutes.

The name of the used application: \_\_\_\_\_

### Background information about the user:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

- How experienced are you in using the tested application? (1 = Not at all experienced, 2 = Slightly experienced, 3 = Moderately experienced, 4 = Very experienced, 5 = Extremely experienced)

1 2 3 4 5 I cannot say

- How experienced are you in social media use overall (1 = Not at all experienced, 2 = Slightly experienced, 3 = Moderately experienced, 4 = Very experienced, 5 = Extremely experienced)

1 2 3 4 5 I cannot say





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- How much do you agree with the statement "The contacting process took so long that I would not like to do it again in normal circumstances (outside the test scenario)"? (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Undecided / Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree) Write why.

1 2 3 4 5

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## Questionnaire for Reporters

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

If you did not use one or some of the application, do not answer to the questions about them.

With the questions that have options for an answer in number scale "1-5", and options "yes/no", circle the answer you want to choose. Write the written answers in the space reserved for them.

Read the questions carefully. If you do not understand something, ask.

Filling the form takes approximately 10 minutes.

1. Which device did you use social media with, and do you own the device yourself? (Device, brand and model. For instance: phone, Samsung Galaxy S4)

\_\_\_\_\_

2. How easy and convenient was it to use the application for the radio's purposes? (1 = Very difficult, 2 = Somewhat difficult, 3 = Neither difficult nor easy, 4 = Somewhat easy, 5 = Very easy). Explain your answer shortly.

Instagram                      1   2   3   4   5

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Facebook

1 2 3 4 5

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Snapchat

1 2 3 4 5

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Twitter

1 2 3 4 5

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Periscope

1 2 3 4 5

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3. Did you face problems when using the application? What kind?

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4. Assess the following statement for each of the applications: "Messages/updates from listeners were noticed easily/quickly". (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Undecided / Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

If there were problems in noticing the messages/updates, tell shortly what do you think was the cause of the problem. If there were not any messages in the application, do not mark an answer.

Instagram                      1   2   3   4   5

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Facebook                      1   2   3   4   5

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Snapchat                      1   2   3   4   5

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Twitter                      1   2   3   4   5

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Periscope                      1   2   3   4   5

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5.                      How do you think the service suits for the use of a radio station? (1 = Very badly, 2 = Somewhat badly, 3 = Neither badly nor well, 4 = Somewhat well, 5 = Very well, ? = I cannot say) Write why you think that.

Instagram                      1   2   3   4   5   ?

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Facebook                      1   2   3   4   5   ?

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Snapchat                    1   2   3   4   5   ?

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Twitter                    1   2   3   4   5   ?

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Periscope                    1   2   3   4   5   ?

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6.                    If you could decide yourself, would you use the service regularly while working at a radio station in the future? Tell why.

Instagram                    yes / no / I cannot say

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Facebook                      yes / no / I cannot say

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Snapchat                      yes / no / I cannot say

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Twitter                      yes / no / I cannot say

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Periscope                      yes / no / I cannot say

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7. Are there any other social media services that were not used in this project that you think would suit well for the use of the radio? You can also tell about ideas you have about using them, if you have any.

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