



Radio in Cebu in the Internet Age: Opportunities and Challenges

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Abstract – The study focused on the opportunities and challenges in radio broadcasting in Cebu. The descriptive method was employed in this study, with face-to-face interviews as the data collection tool. Furthermore, the respondents comprised 20 male and female radio station workers from Metro Cebu. Their years of experience range from 5 to 30, and they all work in different divisions of the radio station. The interview was composed of two parts which focused on the opportunities and challenges encountered by the respondents while working in radio stations in the age of the Internet. The results yielded different opportunities in the radio industry which include; Broader Reach, More Communication Channels, improved public service initiatives, and multiplatform content delivery. Moreover, the study also found the different challenges in the radio industry which include the lack of funds to purchase the equipment, the lack of broadcast journalists interested in working in the radio industry, the low pay of radio industry employees, and the mediocre performance of its employee.

Keywords: Radio Broadcasting, Internet age

Introduction

Radio can be heard by almost everyone. Because one could now engage in other activities while listening to the radio, illiteracy or even a busy schedule were no longer barriers to radio's success. Due to its extraordinary reach, radio also developed into an instrument for social cohesion, bringing together individuals from many socioeconomic groups and backgrounds to experience the world as a nation. As a result of its low entry costs and accessibility even in distant areas, radio is still the medium with the broadest reach, according to Jonathan Santos, news editor of Philstar.com. Community radio stations with access to the Internet are now extending their coverage, engaging with a larger audience, and broadening their reach despite financial limitations, a lack of infrastructure, low- and poor-quality connectivity, and competition from dominant language media material. By way of new media platforms and changing consumer expectations, radio broadcasting is becoming more and more difficult. Numerous broadcasters are experimenting with potential fixes and changing how they produce their content (Hirschmeier et al., 2018).

Radio stations have started to broadcast their shows live via the internet in order to showcase particular segments of their programming, as well as to retain a link and engage in conversation with their audience. In addition, traditional radio stations have established a presence on social media, with a growing number of them having a presence on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube, as well as spreading out to a variety of mobile apps in order to engage with their audience (Laor et al., 2019). This trend is expected to continue.

According to Inson and Rivera (2019), rural radio transmission has a considerable effect on the surrounding community, particularly on the socio-cultural, political, and economic aspects of listeners' lives. A great number of radio stations now make use of mobile applications, which give listeners the ability to access and engage with their content and bring them many benefits. Members of the community who have relocated to other cities or countries and who prefer to remain informed about issues affecting their hometown as well as maintain connections with former neighbors will benefit enormously from this opportunity. As was discussed in the article titled "The Importance of Community Radio in the Digital Era," many radio shows are now being transferred to various digital platforms. This results in data being kept that may be seen at any time.

From this perspective, this study is designed to discover the opportunities and challenges of broadcasting on radio in rural locations as they embrace digitization to remain relevant in the media industry

Methods and Materials

The descriptive method was employed in this study, with face-to-face interviews as the data collection tool. The descriptive method has been deemed appropriate for examining the current state, conditions, characteristics, and advancements in the radio industry in the Internet age. Furthermore, the respondents comprised 20 male and female radio station workers from Metro Cebu. Their years of experience range from 5 to 30, and they all work in different divisions in the radio station. Similarly, this study's research instrument was a face-to-face interview. The interview was composed of two parts which focused on the opportunities and challenges encountered by the respondents while working in radio stations in the age of the Internet.

Results and Discussions

The following are the presentation and discussion of the results of the study. There are two tables; the first table presented the Opportunities in the radio industry in the Internet Age while the second table presented the Challenges in the radio industry in the Internet Age

Table 1. The Opportunities in the radio industry in the Internet Age

Opportunities	Rank
Broader Reach	1
More Communication Channels	2
improved public service initiatives	3
multiplatform content delivery	4

Based on the data collected, it came to light that the majority of the participants considered broader reach as one of the opportunities for radio in Cebu in the Internet age. The radio stations' websites are accessed by thousands of listeners throughout the Visayas and Mindanao regions, as well as in Canada, Australia, the United States of America (USA), and Middle Eastern countries including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Qatar. While Facebook users of the same radio stations have a greater reach, such as millions of listeners across the country, it also reaches Saudi Arabia, Hong Kong, the United Arab Emirates,

and other places where the majority of the listeners are Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW). It is easier for viewers to watch different radio station programs while they are in Cavite but used to listen to them while they were in the Visayas over transistor radio. Radio, unlike many other traditional media formats, has managed to adapt to the significant changes brought about by the emergence of the mobile internet, according to [statista.com](#). While traditional radio may be in decline from its prime, people in the United States have demonstrated that they value what it provides as a source of news and entertainment. New internet-based or online radio platforms currently account for more than \$585 million in streaming music revenue, and the format is growing with each passing year. According to [Statista.com](#), the decline of over-the-air radio is being compensated in many ways by the expansion of its online counterpart. Over-the-air radio station advertising sales have declined by more than four billion dollars since 2010, while online ad revenue has climbed by a similar amount. According to [Bonneevillebayarea.com](#), radio is a companion medium that touches listeners while they are at work, at home, or on their mobile devices.

The second opportunity identified by the respondents for radio in Cebu in the Internet age is more communication channels. For the longest time, radio served as a communication channel via a physical transmission means such as a wire or a logical connection via a multiplexed medium. Those who have an electrical connection can easily listen to the radio for as long as the signal can reach them, while those who live in remote areas without an electrical connection listen through a transistor radio powered by batteries. With the growth of technology, additional communication channels, such as social media sites like Facebook; personal computers, and mobile phones; and, of course, the website that they have created, have become available to everyone. The majority of Cebu's community radio stations broadcast their programming live on Facebook. Facebook has allowed radio stations to stay relevant and engaged with their current listeners while also gaining new listeners. It also includes components like text, graphics, and video to encourage user interaction. Social networking websites like Facebook may make this type of internet-based radio broadcasting possible ([Harliantara, 2019](#)). As a result of the extensive usage of social media and the enhanced opportunities for connection that it gives, many people utilize Facebook. Because Facebook has effectively eliminated the previously existing geographical and temporal limits and has established itself as a more convenient marketing weapon in comparison to traditional radio, Facebook has transformed the structure of the station's content and programming ([Jackie, n.d.](#)). [Jackie \(n.d.\)](#) went on to say that radio broadcasts can now be received not only locally, but also via a computer or a mobile phone connected to the internet. Radio broadcasts can be accessed by listeners from all over the world over the Internet using a personal computer or mobile phone, regardless of location or time constraints, and the device must be connected to the Internet via a network connection.

The third opportunity selected by the respondents for radio in Cebu in the Internet age is improved public service initiatives. As part of radio's improved public service programs, the advancement of technology allows the listeners and the community to convey their concerns to powerful authorities. Unlike in the past, listeners have to physically attend the radio station to discuss their pressing concerns. In addition to visiting the radio station in person, listeners can contact to vent their grievances and worries about their neighborhood through telephone. Listeners can discuss their issues and difficulties in the community in real time. Today, people are grateful to the most recent social networks that broadcast, share, comment on, query, and dispute news reports in minutes as well as other platforms that permit quick and efficient ad hoc

collaboration between users quickly, and virtually in real-time (Bruns, 2011). When there is a problem in the community that has not been addressed by the leaders, people directly contact any radio show via their Facebook account and want a solution. Social networking sites have grown commonplace in many regions of the world. Public service broadcasters have begun offering such services to reach new audiences (Moe, 2013). As radio continues to adapt to online spaces, radio stations are becoming more active on social networks. User interaction with posted content and comments is a key indicator of social network success (Laor, 2019). According to McMahon, radio station management sees Facebook as an important promotional tool that can be easily integrated into radio programming and gives radio a digital online presence that reaches far more people than broadcasting.

In the Internet era, multiplatform content dissemination is the final option selected by respondents for radio in the Cebu metropolitan area. Radio currently transmits content via multiple platforms, providing listeners a variety of options. In addition to traditional broadcasting via transistor radio, radio stations in Metro Cebu use Facebook, YouTube, and Zoom in addition to traditional radio broadcasting. Facebook, the social network with the most users worldwide, is presented by Liga et al. (2018) as a tool of great interaction and reach at the service of thousands of corporations, industries, and media: of all sizes and characteristics, who find this platform an ideal way to get closer to their users, clients, and/or audiences. The majority of radio stations transmit news and talk programs through Facebook live streaming; however, some radio stations use Facebook Messenger to communicate breaking news. Broadcast channels, powered by Messenger, are a public, one-to-many messaging service that enables artists to communicate directly and at scale with their audience. Using text, photos, video, voice notes, and polls, broadcast channels allow creators to keep followers informed of the latest updates and behind-the-scenes moments (Introducing Broadcast Channels, a New Way for Creators to Deepen Connections with Followers). On conventional radio, listeners only hear how field reporters characterize their coverage, which may include a fire, an accident, or any other incident in the neighborhood. While the reporters are now communicating via Facebook Messenger, they can be seen live in the report and are supplying audience members with real-time footage of the situation. After newscasts and chat programs have concluded for the day, radio stations will upload the video to YouTube so that other listeners can view it. According to Glaesener (2023), although YouTube is commonly perceived as a platform for user-generated content, mainstream media has been available on the network for years. Viewers of the participating news channels are more interested in expressing their ideas or opinions through comments on crime, politics, protests, and health-related news videos, or in the fact that these videos generate discourse on YouTube (Deori et al., 2023). In addition to Facebook Messenger and YouTube, radio announcers also utilized Zoom to disseminate the news. While the breaking news is being disseminated, the anchors wish to interview the authorities involved in the crisis via Zoom in order to get their reaction.

Table 2 The Challenges in the radio industry in the Internet Age

Challenges	Rank
that lack of funds to purchase the equipment	1
lack of broadcast journalists interested in working in the radio industry	2

the low pay of radio industry employees	3
mediocre performance	4

The majority of the respondents said that one of the difficulties facing radio in metro Cebu in the era of the Internet is a lack of funding to buy the necessary equipment. The participants stated that the radio stations where they work lacked the resources to buy the necessary hardware and software, namely for production. Many of them believed that the management was more concerned with the workers' pay than with spending more money on equipment that would destroy the radio station. According to Gandhiraj and Soman (2014), the communication technologies used in modern civilization are very intricate and intertwined. Modern communication devices' hardware upgrades are difficult. It is necessary for new hardware to work with older equipment.

The absence of broadcast journalists who are interested in working in the radio sector is another issue that the majority of the respondent's encounter. Each academic year, journalism programs graduate hundreds of students, yet none of them go on to work in radio. Concerns have been raised about the multi-skilled, multi-media news production's hustling and superficiality, as well as regarding its effects on news output and the evolution of television news production, according to Cottle and Ashton. The participants also admitted that because they are not all journalism graduates and because the modifications to their daily radio operations are too complicated, many of them do not appreciate them. A small number of people entered the radio industry as a result of a communication gap between media organizations and journalism schools, which revealed a significant discrepancy between what managers and editors expect from job applicants and what students expect (Vasilendiuc and Sutu, 2021).

Another difficulty is that few individuals desire to work in and stay in the radio sector due to the low remuneration of its employees. The participants admitted that although they were paid the minimum pay, due to the strain of using technology, it did not adequately cover the risk of the job or the complexity of the covering. Cabico (2018) claims that many Filipino media employees, whether employed by large news organizations or tiny community media outlets, have relatively low salaries and endure difficult working conditions. Cabico noted that small neighborhood businesses in the provinces are also struggling, with many of them unable to pay their staff even the minimum wage.

An additional challenge raised by participants is the mediocre performance. A particular instance of this is that the radio reporters have no idea how to use the equipment that was handed to them, resulting in mediocre performance. According to Social Media Usage in News Gathering and Transmission Among Broadcast Journalists in South-East Nigeria, some reporters have not fully embraced social media in news gathering and transmission. Most of them never receive rigorous training because some of them do not graduate from journalism school, resulting in subpar output every time they are in the field for coverage.

Conclusion

The radio industry in Cebu in the Internet age faces several opportunities and challenges. Opportunities in the radio industry include a wider audience, more communication channels, improved public service initiatives, and multiplatform content delivery. Moreover, the challenges facing the radio industry in the internet era include a lack of money for equipment purchases, a

dearth of broadcast journalists interested in working in the radio sector, low pay for industry employees, and subpar staff performance.

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