

The 360 Degree Station:

How to Reinforce Your Station's Brand & Channels

Radio listenership in Australia continues to rise each year, but how people listen is increasingly fragmented. Streaming services, podcasts and DAB+ listenership are all growing in popularity. Because of this, community broadcasters must take advantage of all the channels at their disposal to keep up with their audiences' rapidly changing listening habits.

These channels might include:

- Your AM/FM broadcast
- A [DAB+ broadcast](#) (if you broadcast from an eligible location)
- A [livestream](#) on your website
- [Listen back services](#) on your website
- The [Community Radio Plus](#) app
- [Podcasting](#)
- Video (such as YouTube)
- Smart speakers
- Social media channels

Successful broadcasters no longer consider themselves merely a radio station but rather a *Media Brand*. Whether your station utilises some or all of the channels listed above, it's important to consider how they interact with one another. Your website and social media channels should not merely exist to support your live linear broadcast product but as an extension of your digital brand. With so much time and resources poured into your on-demand, multimedia content, it's essential that your listeners know how to engage with it.

Announcers

Announcers are busy (and often volunteers!) – so make it easy for them to keep up with everything else going on at the station.

Communicate to your announcers the importance of educating listeners about the ways they can tune in to your station; point them towards the features on your website; the live performance footage on your YouTube channel; or the extended interview content available in your podcasts. Help keep your announcers informed about everything that's going on at the station with newsletters and noticeboards, so they can pass the messages onto their audience – whether it's a special edition of your podcast, or to visit your website for more details on an upcoming station

event. Doing this helps to maximise the reach and impact of these channels in an organic way.

Another way you can enable announcers is to have pre-recorded content that they can play in the studio. Having some 30-second announcements promoting podcasts, your website, or newsletter is an easy way to get the message across to listeners. Produce an announcement that lists all the ways that listeners can tune in to your station to get that extra cut-through. Much radio listening is done in the car, so it's a good idea to remind listeners they can continue listen when they get home, whether it's through your website, the Community Radio Plus app or via a smart speaker.

Encouraging the cross-promotion of other radio programs helps your station feel like an ecosystem, rather than a collection of programs. Have your announcers spruik other shows on the grid, and if it's a late-night show, get them to talk about the on-demand features on your website. Aim to remind your listeners what they're listening to every 15 minutes, whether it's through a presenter, a short sting, or announcement.

Smart Speakers

35% of Australians own a smart speaker, and those numbers are projected to grow. 65% of users reported listening to the radio through their smart speaker in the last month; a substantial figure considering only just a few years ago that answer was almost 0%. Record some brief stings reminding your listeners that they can listen in via their smart speaker; it's even worth telling listeners what to say to their smart device: "just say: play c b a a radio".

Social Media

Social media is a great example of how one channel can connect with others. Find which social media platforms work for what you're doing, and which ones get the most audience engagement. Use it to let your audience know what's happening on-air, but also to link your audience to your website, your podcasts and your YouTube channel.

Audiences are more likely to engage with announcer-focused content, so get your listeners' favourite broadcasters to help deliver your message. Giving listeners a glimpse of what life is like at the station creates a visual connection to the announcers they love and helps deepen their sense of connection with the station.

Several media brands effectively utilise social media tools to readapt on-air content into bite sized chunks. Investigate which tools may help in luring your listeners from social media into the catch-up and live formats of your broadcast.

Podcasts

As podcast listenership continues to grow in Australia, it's worth exploring whether it could be a useful option for your station. They might be an on-demand version of a show, they could include bonus content you didn't have time to air, or they could be brand new content separate from your broadcasts. Podcasts are a great opportunity to repackage your talk-based content and reach listeners when they're not near a radio.

Branding

Another way to tie all these elements together is to consider your station's voice across your platforms. If your station has a focus on local news and your content has a more serious tone, your social media and website may reflect this. If your broadcasts are known for having a more light-hearted tone, create continuity by writing your articles and posts in that same tone. If you're broadcasting on DAB+ or repackaging your content for podcasting, consider whether you want to refer to your station as the frequency, or just the call sign. Instead of saying, 'You're listening to 2CBAA 101.7FM', maybe 'CBAA Radio' or simply 'CBAA' works more consistently across all your platforms. Consistency across your channels is a must because it contributes towards your station's branding, identity, and community, which is ultimately what your listeners connect with.

Summary

Your listeners value local, independent media—so it's important to let them know how they can stay connected with your content. Regularly remind them which station they're listening to and how they can tune in across your various platforms. By making full use of every channel at your disposal, you not only grow your listenership but also deepen the audience's sense of connection with your station. Offering multiple ways to engage adds value for your members and makes their support go even further. While the growing number of digital platforms might seem overwhelming, using them effectively can help you grow your brand as a station, and help reach audiences you couldn't before.