



Augmenting the Radio Experience by Enhancing Interactions between Radio Editors and Listeners

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Our goal is to understand how
i) listeners
ii) radio makers
(including hosts, editors, online managers etc.),
interact with each other, to allow us to define problems and opportunities that can serve future potential of interactive radio.

Figure 1. Co-design workshop with radio makers of VRT in Belgium.

Discussion

Similarities between radio makers and listeners

Also, listeners raised the point that radio items are not always relevant, or might take too long. To give feedback to the radio makers, they envisioned an application to give feedback. This concept overlaps with the needs defined by several radio makers (of VRT and StadtFilter).

As listeners found it frustrating to miss interesting content, they were also wondering if the rich content could be explored on a later basis. They envisioned concepts (such an application that would push older items that are linked to a particular location) to discover content of the radio archive. Similarly, radio makers also referred to the radio archive as a potential source of information for more personalized services.

Similarities between broadcasters

It was not the scope of this study to compare results of three radio broadcasters in detail, yet results revealed 3 interesting insights.

In all workshops with radio makers, the work effort concerning maintaining social media contacts was named as a frustration. In the large-scaled stations, dedicated online editors take care of content for each social media channel. In the small-scaled station, this work is done by radio hosts. They all recognize opportunities to automate these interactions.

On the other hand, in all workshops with radio makers, a certain fear towards chatbot technology was expressed. Radio makers fear they would misinterpret messages of listeners, and respond not according to the values of the radio station.

In the workshops with listeners, all participants expressed a general requirement to respect the community (as exemplified in the concept on smaller communities) and background functions of radio (illustrated by concepts that deal with radio as a mystery).



Figure 2. Cartoon illustration of one of the concepts concerning voice control.

Next steps

This exploratory study is framed within a larger design research project on the interactive potential of radio. Our next steps will include the definition of i) user scenarios and ii) prototypes. For i), we will cluster the concepts from the workshops and write a scenario for each of the above mentioned attention points. For ii), we foresee a workshop with the 3 broadcasters and other industrial stakeholders (e.g. radio software developers) to collaboratively identify the needed interfaces and rank according to their preferences. Then, we plan to pilot these prototypes within the stations of the broadcasters, and iteratively refine the concepts.

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Related work: MARCONI: Interactive, Smart & Lively Environment for Radio

Study set up

The study took place at 2 public broadcasters, which both house 5 or more radio stations (i.e. VRT in Belgium, NPO in The Netherlands) and 1 independent city radio station (i.e. StadtFilter in Switzerland), which also gave us the opportunity to reflect on similarities and differences through observations and co-design workshops and guided by the research question:

"How can we augment radio experiences through interaction?"

Workshops with radio makers

24 Radio makers (of which 12 female) participated in one of the 3 co-design workshops. These radio makers have various responsibilities (e.g. an editor of online content, the host of a show) and are connected to different types of radio stations (e.g. station that aims at youth, fans of classical music or rock music etc.).

Workshops with listeners

22 Listeners (of which 9 female) participated in one of the 3 co-design workshops. Listeners varied in age (AVG. 35 y.o., SD. 15), experience levels towards interaction with radio station (e.g. calling, sending text or chatbot messages) and type of station.

Points of attention

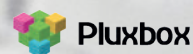
A Facilitating relevant feedback: Several concepts concerned the need to understand the listener, and to find out what is relevant at a certain moment.

B Co-creating content: Three concepts built upon this need to understand the listener by allowing him to co-create radio items or compose their 'own' radio show.

C Allowing personal services for listeners: Other concepts focus on creating personalised radio experiences.

D Providing content on demand for listeners and radio makers: Several concepts focused on the ability to filter content and explore the radio archive.

E Feeling part of a community: Some concepts were concerned to protect radio as a collective experience, and proposed solutions to strengthen this community aspect.



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