

c&binet / Radio Independents Group Press Release

Audio content revenue has potential for real growth, conference reveals

A conference in central London on 30 November revealed the extent to which, under the right circumstances, there could be a significant growth in revenue for the sector and for UK plc.

The conference 'Monetising Audio Content: the Way Forward' was jointly organised by the Department for Culture, Media & Sport's 'c&binet' initiative and by the Radio Independents Group (RIG), the trade body for UK independent radio and audio content producers.

As well as producers being given a clear exposition of the rights they currently hold, a range of high-profile speakers were on hand to explain how best to currently exploit them. These included BBC distribution channels, for example BBC Worldwide Director of Audio & Music Stephen Davies, who stated that independently-produced programmes outperform in-house production in terms of international sales. BBC Audio Books' Jan Paterson was optimistic about future revenues, particularly from the collector's market, provided there was still good content available, also Roly Keating gave further details on the BBC Archive.

In addition there were contributions from commercial players such as Audible.co.uk, Mixcloud, 7Digital and Ooyala, who not only outlined current business models, but discussed which rights, including underlying rights, would need to be restructured in future to enable workable business models to emerge. The conference also heard from producers working on new distribution models, including Made In Manchester's Ashley Byrne, who is making dramas in association with The Independent newspaper, and Neil Gardner, co-founder of the soon-to-be-launched audio content aggregation agency Spokenworld Audio Ltd.

Commenting on the event, Minister for Creative Industries Siôn Simon said:

"The UK has a wealth of talented audio content producers and an increasingly productive and valuable independent sector, which has the potential to grow significantly over the next 10 years. I have been interested to hear from those involved in the sector and how we can work with them to support and encourage its development."

Phil Critchlow, RIG Vice-Chair and MD of TBI Media, added that:

"This has been a very important event for RIG, both in terms of giving members the information they need to better monetise their content, but also to begin the discussion on how we move that monetisation to the next level and turn our audio content industry into a genuine world player".

Notes

1. The Radio Independents Group - RIG - is the trade body for independent radio production companies supplying BBC and commercial radio networks across the UK. RIG was formed in 2004 and now has 90 members, representing most of the independent radio production companies making programmes for UK national networks. They also produce other audio content, for example podcasts, audiobooks and audioguides.
2. C&binet, the creativity and business international network, is a global voice for the creative industries. Designed to champion the sector and focus on its big issues, the network brings together business, governments and creative talent for the first time. It aims to support the industries' continued growth by promoting the flow of funds between the creative and financial sectors, encouraging different parts of the creative economy to share ideas, new business models and success stories, and helping the next generation of creative entrepreneurs.

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