

Will radio become an audiovisual channel in the future?

By [Megan Sayle](#), issued by [Dentsu](#)

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The world around us is constantly changing and evolving as new technology becomes available and mainstream. The extent to which our world is changing now more than ever, was recently made abundantly clear at the 2017 CES Conference, held in Las Vegas this year. New technologies on show included augmented and virtual reality, wearable tech and connected homes.



What was made clear, is that the world has already changed, the technologies on show were not things of the future but the realities of today. What hasn't evolved quite as quickly is how we, in media, utilise this new world and the new platforms presented. It needs to be our priority to introduce and manage the brands we work on to ensure that we utilise these new developments to remain relevant in the consumer's new, connected world.

It is one thing to ensure our media executions use these new technologies, but the traditional media channels, where we often place our media, need to evolve to facilitate this as well, or risk getting lost in the sea of new platforms becoming available.

A good example of a channel which will need to evolve quickly to remain relevant is radio. Technology is creating a lot more "hands-free" time for consumers and radio needs to figure out where a predominantly audio-based channel fits into a world where everything is becoming audiovisual. Radio has always had a fantastic role to play in delivering audio when eyes, or attention, might be distracted but what happens when we no longer have to pay attention to the task at hand?



The introduction of driverless cars, for example, could mean that people no longer have to have their eyes on the road, but instead have a few hours in their day where they could experience a richer audiovisual experience. Couple self-driving technology with virtual reality and there might be no place for traditional radio in cars. Why would you tune in and listen to audio when you could pass the time in the traffic with the latest blockbuster movie projected via VR technology in your driverless car?

This might seem really far-fetched, but driverless cars are already here and so is VR. When they join forces, radio stations

will need to adapt and really consider how they can expand their offering to virtual and augmented reality, interactive visual and voice communication and AI.

Could existing stations become full audiovisual experiences? Yes, they most certainly could.

Sure, right now this outlook is predominantly relevant to the early adopter end of the market, but just take a look at smartphone adoption and the rate of tech innovations becoming more than just concepts. In the space of a few years we have seen how virtual reality has gone from being something accessible only to the wealthy, to the introduction of the affordable Google Cardboard, making virtual reality, well, a reality for all.

So the question is, how are traditional channels, like radio, planning for the inevitable day when these cutting-edge technologies will once again force the industry to change. Are we ready or should we wait and see what happens?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Megan Sayle graduated with a BA degree, majoring in English and Philosophy, from the University of Stellenbosch in 2013. She continued her studies in 2014, completing a Postgraduate Diploma in Marketing, Advertising and Communications at Red and Yellow in Cape Town. After completing an internship across all the divisions within the Dentsu Aegis Network, she took up a position at Carat as an Account Executive and has worked across both client services and strategy for a number of brands.

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