

Accelerating Public Service Media: People, Values and Processes

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3 year international funded study - 150 interviews, 500+ photos from city & office 'walkabouts', & secondary literature (City strategies, company reports, news reports).

.....we don't know all the answers, but we have one or two recommendations....

1. Aggregation vs. Isolation

Finding:

- PSM is **not engaging with high technology clusters**
- High technology firms have a high level of partnership working
- PSM workers have a **low awareness of the need for change** amplifying the isolationism

Recommendation:

- PSM explore **a range of partnership models**
- Move away from almost exclusive use of the 'Commissioning Model'
- Partnering with High Technology SMEs requires new **collaboration strategies**
- Collaborate with audiences e.g. Living Labs is also recommended (**multi-stakeholder development**) alongside live feedback loops

2. Entrepreneurialism vs. Commercialisation

Finding:

- Firms in high technology clusters demonstrate **high levels of entrepreneurialism**.
- High technology firms are also often 'mission-led' interested in eudaimonic content (improving quality of life) the circular economy or climate change.

Recommendation:

- We argue entrepreneurialism (concerned with **new ventures**) and commercialism (maximisation of *profit*) are merely **different currencies** of output or value.

3. Agility vs. Rigidity

Finding:

- High technology firms have more **fluid organisational structures**; a basis of continuous change.
- **Decision-making is swift**, increasing the ability to pivot in response to external technological, cultural, and societal change.
- PSMs operating structures are more rigid & decision-making is slow, the Director General, as Editor in Chief, presides over a ‘referral upwards’ process, **a military framework.**

Recommendation:

- It may be necessary to focus work on projects for specific audience segments and interests rather than departmental structures. This could be facilitated through the use of big data and AI.
- CBC’s **‘River of Content’** is an example of PSMs approaching content delivery using fluid non-linear structures.

4. Advanced vs. Emerging pro-social workplaces

Finding:

- In high technology clusters **trust relationships** are developed in the cafés, bars, project spaces, communication booths, roof gardens, 'chill-out' spaces and reading/discussion corners provided in the pro-social workspaces commonly found (e.g. co-working spaces).

Recommendation:

- Several of the Public Service Media included in the study have adapted their offices to provide pro-social spaces.
- PSM need to learn **how to build trust relationships through pro-social engagement.**
- Hire a proactive relationship manager for each department to enable growth in interactions with a far **wider range of skilled creatives & technologists.**

5. Communities of practice vs. 'traditional' partnership relations

Finding:

- Successful co-working spaces consider the Community Manager to be the most critical employee.
- They run networking evenings, 'bagel breakfasts', 'beers on a Friday' and afterwork parties. As has been said, **trust relationships are seeded in face to face interactions** and there are more meetings at the beginning of a project.
- When production is going well, one interviewee commented, project management and communication can move online. If problems are encountered face to face meetings temporarily resume.

Recommendation:

- Larger PSMs have partnership relationship managers. Their role needs to change to **managing a much wider range of types of interaction with a wider range of firms.**

6. Technology-oriented Neighbourhoods vs. Corporate Headquarters

Finding:

- **Pre-existing conditions** enabled clusters to form; a relationship with a university science or technology department or a military research facility (Silicon Valley).
- **30% of the Public Service Media in this study operate in proximity to a high-technology cluster** (Boston/Cambridge, Austin) with low interaction.
- **Corporate PSM HQs in isolated areas inhibit clustering.**

Recommendation:

- PSM as an **active member of any 'pooling' activity** going on (Komorowski, 2019); networking, Associations, meet ups, hacks.
- Critically review two existing models: VUB, the Flemish PSM's planned relocation to the Brussels Media Park & the BBC move to Media City in Salford in the north of the UK.

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