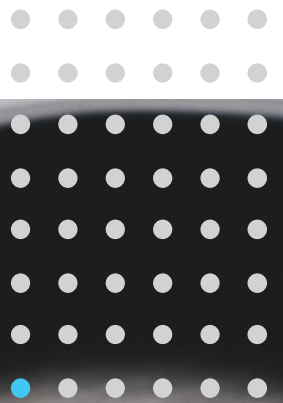


November 2023

egta Snapshot

..... A short-form egta insight



RADIO AUTOMATION: OVERVIEW OF MARKET INITIATIVES TO AUTOMATE RADIO SALES

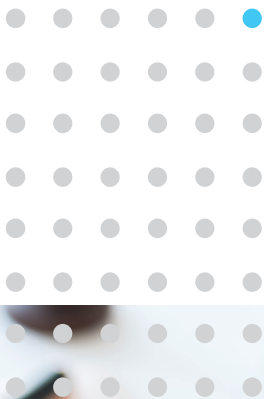
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INTRODUCTION

Over the past several years, and further intensified by the pandemic, the pace of digital transformation has accelerated. Technology is disrupting and impacting business across all industry sectors, motivating companies to embrace the change and reshape the way they work.

Technology can simplify, accelerate and maximise the efficiency of processes, resulting in many benefits for business, such as improved agility, productivity, transparency, and much more. One of the most significant innovations in this area is **automation**, defined by the *Techopedia Dictionary* as “the creation and application of technologies to produce and deliver goods and services with minimal human intervention”. Today, automation is ubiquitous – automated solutions can be found in most areas of life (e.g. GPS in cars, customer support, hiring processes, payments, etc.).

Automation represents a real opportunity for the business, making radio and audio easier to buy in an increasingly complex media ecosystem. The advantages are numerous: better inventory management, reduction in time-consuming tasks, and thus lower risk of errors, maximised efficiency, as well as the ability to keep up with the way digital media is bought.

Automation can be implemented at various stages of the radio buying process, for example, at the planning, booking and invoicing phase. In this publication, we

will focus on several selected examples of technical solutions developed on a market level (as in applied by most of the players on the market) to automate the buying and selling process. Having analysed automation advances across various radio markets including Australia, Germany, Switzerland, the UK and the US, as well as consulted with experts behind these initiatives, we hope to provide egta radio members with an overview of some existing systems that automate radio trading. The objective is to highlight the challenges, best practices and lessons learnt to help pave the way to make radio easier to buy in other countries.



Website: <https://mediatel.co.uk/audio>

J-ET IN THE UK

What J-ET does

95% of UK commercial radio is traded via J-ET (JICRIT Electronic Trading), a system which was built, and continually enhanced by Mediatel, on behalf of the UK's radio industry. Mediatel, which is part of Advanted Group, runs J-ET and its sister system, Audiobook. Together they have over 10,000 users across 51 media agencies, 177 media owners, and 110 creative agencies, almost all the companies involved in audio campaign booking in the UK.

The IPA (Institute of Practitioners in Advertising), representing media agencies, and Radiocentre (representing the sellers) commissioned J-ET over 20 years ago to:

- Make radio more accountable
- Grow the advertising industry's confidence in radio
- Standardise information delivery
- Reduce the administrative burden of planning, buying, and accounting of radio activity
- Decrease the length of time for post campaign information to be made available to agencies
- Reduce account queries

Since its introduction, J-ET has reduced the amount of time spent planning, buying, and reconciling radio campaigns by around a third, for a trading cost of just 0.25%. Ninety-five percent of J-ET bookings are paid on time, error-free. The efficiencies it brings to buying and reconciling radio campaigns is estimated to account for an increase of 5% - 10% each year in commercial radio revenue.

“J-ET is a simple to use application that provides agencies with a simple yet effective way to trade with the sales houses. In addition, the functionality allows greater transparency by enabling agencies to analyse data at spot, campaign, and group level. The system in short, means proposals/bookings are no longer lost, PCA's (post-campaign analysis) are delivered on time and endless hours are saved.”

--- Head of Audio, Initiative

J-ET's remit is to be accessible to all owners and agencies, regardless of size and technical capability. Last year alone, 750 brands who had not previously used audio in their campaigns, were booked via J-ET.

Mediatel's impartial position in the buy/sell process ensures J-ET services the needs of the buyers and sellers of audio campaigns equally. On launch, Derek Morris, then Chairman of the IPA's Radio Working Party said: “You've got something other media would kill for.” At the time, few appreciated what he meant but faced with trading costs upwards of 40%, a lack of trust and transparency, and huge inefficiencies in processes, J-ET has become the envy of other media.

“J-ET has quietly underpinned radio trading and post campaign evaluation for the best part of twenty years. It is an exemplar of how to create and run this type of service. It is both cost effective and continually developing, totally at one with the industry it serves.”

--- Institute of Practitioners in Advertising



“The main difference that we have in Radio with J-ET is constant and trackable campaign management. The JCN (JICRIT Campaign Number) allows us to know what was approved, when it was approved, when it was amended and what the results were. We almost never have post campaign debates on radio about what was approved or what went out – it’s transparent and owned by both sides of the transaction.”

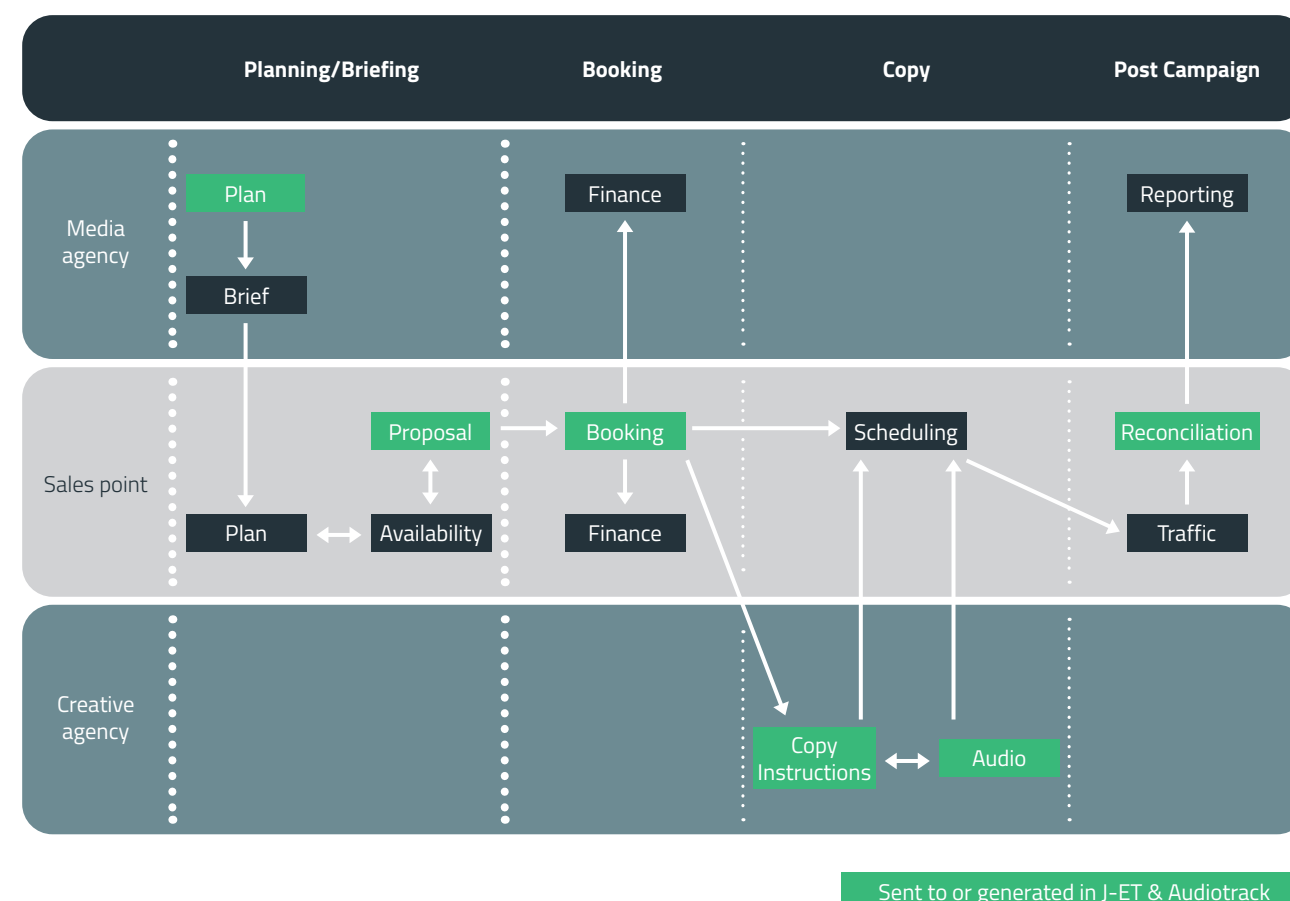
--- Co-Founder, Trisonic

How J-ET works

J-ET & Audiotrack handle all phases of the trading process from planning and briefing by the media agency, through to sales house proposals, negotiations and booking, with copy instructions and audio delivery via Audiotrack, to reconciliation, which includes full reporting of what was booked against what was delivered against the campaign audience. (See fig. 01)

J-ET pulls together briefs, proposals, orders, and post-campaign information in one interface connecting with agency and owner subsidiary systems. A JICRIT campaign number (JCN) runs through the entire process allowing over 120 system integrations with 40+ API methods across 60+ companies.

FIGURE 01: HOW J-ET WORKS



Source: J-ET

Media buying agencies and sales points have different views in J-ET, but the purpose is the same, to ensure data is exchanged in a secure environment.

J-ET Copy+ & Audiotrack

J-ET Copy+ was introduced to connect creative/production departments with the campaign management process. It allows buyers to specify the creative agency or production house responsible for producing ad copy who can then enter relevant details at script level, including information on associated ad clearance codes, music and/or artist details required for music licences, distribution company and any other element associated to copy.

In 2016, Mediatel created Audiotrack, a sister system to J-ET, which added audio copy distribution to the process. Creative agencies can now see upcoming campaigns and with campaign details being automatically verified against the media booking, complete playout accuracy is assured.

J-ET Revelation

J-ET Revelation is J-ET’s reporting suite, used by both buying agencies and sales points for all levels of analysis and bespoke reporting. It provides the radio industry with single source accountability.

“Having used Audiotrack and the J-ET system from when it was first launched, I can honestly say that the platform is a brilliant tool which has helped keep our clients’ deadlines and deliveries on track. The visibility on future campaigns, the ability to view current and past supplies and the ease of its use are some of the many reasons we always supply via Audiotrack. The other of course is their fantastic customer service, the speed of the delivery.”

--- adam&eve DDB

Agencies can access their campaign playout data in several ways:

- Campaign summaries within J-ET giving fast access to top-line data
- Detailed reporting via a bespoke reporting tool
- Raw playout data accessed via APIs (Application Programming Interface)
- Bespoke reporting via APIs
- Automated reports transferred to S3 (Simple Storage Service) buckets

RAJAR API

The RAJAR API powers J-ET, enabling users to measure their plans, bookings and delivered campaigns by the UK radio industry’s gold standard audience measurement. The API can:

- Process over 1 million reach & frequency requests an hour
- Validate over 6 million planned and booked spots, against more than 150 demographics
- Reconcile 200,000 transmitted spots against 28 million RAJAR listening events
- Provide analysis across 5000+ campaigns

“Audiotrack is the most user-friendly delivery system that we use. They supply everything we need in a timely fashion with all audio in the correct format and copy instructions that are always clear, concise and easy to understand. They provide outstanding levels of communication and customer service and are always quick to respond to any queries. Overall, they make the whole audio process run smoothly and are a pleasure to work with.”

--- Bauer Media Group



JEX

The latest evolution of J-ET is J-ET Exchange (JEX), which offers a fully automated booking module allowing objective-based briefing. Agency users simply enter key objectives such as budget, CPT (cost per thousand), reach, OTH (opportunity to hear), setting priorities for each of these. This brief is then delivered directly into station systems via an API which can, utilising live availability, automatically return a proposal. Proposals are generated using Mediatel's RAJAR API in combination with the station's internal systems. Agencies can either accept or review and adjust their briefing parameters to re-brief. Once satisfied, agency users can request to book their preferred proposal, turning it into a booking. This all happens without the need for human intervention on the owner side, with the entire process of initial briefing to booking taking minutes. JEX is designed to work alongside more manual workflows and any user who wishes to create granular radio plans, as they have done traditionally, remains able to do so.

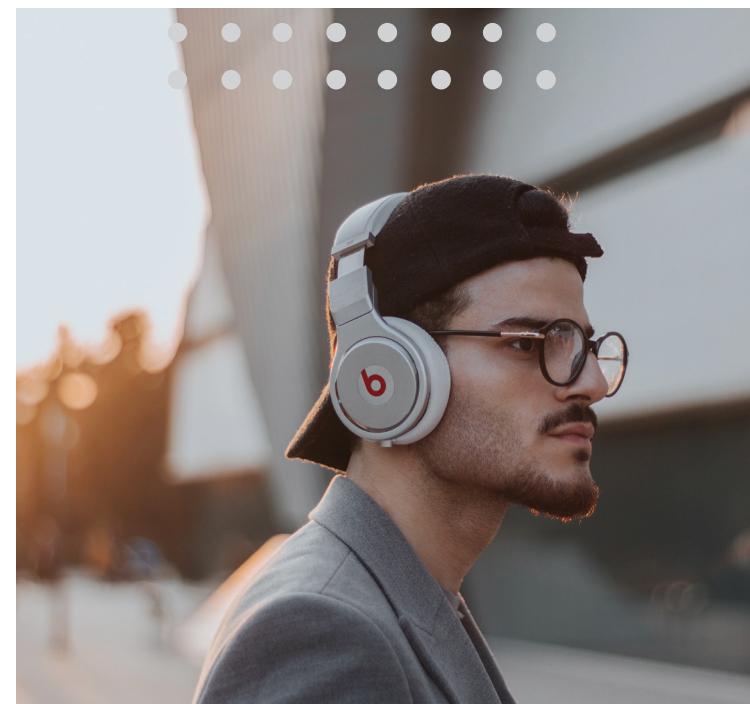
At all stages of the process, whether manually generated or briefed and booked automatically through J-ET, users maintain visibility over all their campaigns, and at what stage of the process those campaigns are at.

What's next for J-ET & Mediatel Audio

J-ET's key to success has been its ability to adapt to requirements from its stakeholders as audio evolved over time. Due to its unique ownership structure, it has been able to respond to changes in the landscape to the benefit of all parties involved in the audio campaign management process.

Some exciting developments underway across Mediatel Audio include:

- Assistance with digital audio workflows across growing audio markets
- The capture of the long tail to allow audio to compete with Facebook and Google
- Dynamic Copy Delivery: the ability to deliver relevant ad content, by a series of targeting rules, controlled by media and creative agencies in conjunction with publisher systems – ensuring the right listeners hear the right ad messaging. This impartial delivery reporting and ad verification is long-awaited by advertisers.
- Fingerprinting audio files to allow for the verification of delivery and measurement over different platforms.
- Expansion of J-ET into international markets



"It hasn't been recognised as much as it should have been as to how pioneering J-ET was and how it revolutionised radio."

--- **Bauer Media Group**

"The main benefit of Revelation for me is the ease with which I can now compile reports and generate data for client audits. The system makes it easier to collate large amounts of data, quickly and efficiently."

--- **Mediacom**

"It's easy to forget how J-ET has transformed the way we do business, and even now is held up to be an exemplary system compared to anything available to other channels."

--- **Managing Partner,
Operations at Omnicom Media Group UK**

"J-ET has quietly underpinned radio trading and post campaign accountability for over 20 years and is constantly evolving to match user requirements on both the trading and buying side. The latest development is J-EX (J-ET Electronic Xchange) which can deliver proposals to planners and buyers within minutes of an agency brief being sent to the media owner. The average turnaround from brief to proposal has been reduced from hours to minutes with no human intervention required delivering the same levels of accountability as briefs delivered manually. J-ET constantly strives to make radio trading as simple and efficient as it can possibly be."



--- **Lucy Barrett,
Client Director Radiocentre
and JICRIT Board**

"The key piece of advice we would give other markets is to work collaboratively and involve both buyer and seller in the process right from the beginning. Choose an independent supplier who you can work in partnership with and consider the funding model carefully, so the focus is on developing and supporting the best possible system for your market."



--- **Ben Knowles,
Product Manager and CS
Manager, Mediatel**

MediaPilot in France

Mediatel has been acquired by Adwanted Group in 2021. In France, Adwanted Group developed an inventory management tool called MediaPilot. Numerous French sales houses are equipped with this solution for booking and invoicing of radio campaigns. Recently, new solutions were added to MediaPilot.

The first one is **JAM** (Just Ask Me), which enables sales house to connect with new types of buyers (e.g. smaller agencies), and simplifies and guides them through the buying process in an interactive way.

The second one is an **allocator, which** is an artificial intelligence solution that takes into account different situations and criteria to propose the best possible plan to the buyer. The allocator is based on the information selected by the requesting party in the JAM module, as well as the information on the availability of stock from Media Pilot.

The different technologies interact with each other to offer sellers a frictionless environment, free of double entry and as automated as much as possible.

What's next for automation in France

To facilitate the business of multimedia sales houses that include radio, Mediatel Group is working on the development of a web portal, which will employ the technologies within Media Pilot and JAM but also AdwOne, their new collaborative advertising campaign management tool intended for agencies of any size as well as direct advertisers.

The goal is to give sale houses the possibility to have an all-in-one tool for the sale and the management of their inventory, including artificial intelligence, connection to ad servers or existing sales tools, CRMs, data visualisation tools, etc. This portal aims to help sales houses capture new revenues and automate low-value-added processes.

“Media Pilot software is the most complete and best adapted independent software for a leading advertising network.”

--- **Thierry Czerwec, Director of Planning and Broadcasting, Next Régie**





Website: <https://www.tritondigital.com/>

THE JELLI RADIOSPOT BY TRITON DIGITAL IN THE US

Jelli was founded in 2008 and the company's original focus was on creating crowd sourced radio with listeners controlling the programming by voting songs up and down in real time. But over the years, Jelli's focus has shifted to creating a platform that makes it possible to automate the process of buying and selling radio ads in the easiest and fastest way.

iHeartMedia – the biggest US radio group – acquired Jelli in 2018. Triton Digital – the global leader in technology and services for the digital audio and podcast industry – was acquired by iHeartMedia in 2021. In 2022, Jelli joined the Triton Digital family. Combined, Triton Digital and Jelli are now able to deliver technological innovations and solutions that support the entire audio ecosystem: over-the-air, streaming and podcasting.

The Jelli RadioSpot solution will continue to be managed and offered by Triton Digital. RadioSpot is a programmatic supply-side platform (SSP) to sell and manage radio advertising inventory. RadioSpot represents the largest programmatic footprint in the US and powers iHeartMedia.

Capabilities of RadioSpot:

- Ad Serving, real-time traffic and campaign activation
- Inventory management
- Planning and buying workflows
- Advanced targeting
- Compliance monitoring and management
- Forecasting and reporting



INTERVIEW WITH JOHN ROSSO, PRESIDENT & CEO, TRITON DIGITAL

egta: *What's next for Jelli? In terms of both: technology and integration with Triton but also application on the US audio market?*

John Rosso: We will evolve Jelli's programmatic advertising solutions, continuing to serve our US customers and now expanding globally. Our goal continues to be to help our partners build their audience, maximise revenue, and streamline day-to-day operations. In the US, our Triton Audio Marketplace is an open audio exchange that aggregates audiences across all audio segments, making it easier for marketers and agencies to plan, buy and measure the impact of cross-platform audio advertising, which we will continue to scale across all forms of audio inventory.

egta: *What is your key piece of advice to markets who would like to start the process for an automated buying tool for radio?*

John Rosso: Broadcast radio has unique complexities that are important to address when exploring a programmatic advertising solution. RadioSpot was purpose-built for selling broadcast radio inventory programmatically. We understand the complexities of radio and how to help broadcasters modernise their advertising infrastructure.

egta: *Do you have any US numbers/insights to share with the egta members to illustrate the benefits of making radio easier to buy: for example, new advertisers coming to the medium, new kind of buyers, incremental ad spend?*

John Rosso: iHeartMedia, the number one radio broadcaster in the US, reaching 9 out of 10 Americans monthly, is a long standing customer of RadioSpot, which powers their SmartAudio initiative. A few category-specific results experienced include the following:

- CPG Sales Attribution: Campaign Exposure drove **20.2%** increase in net sales rate vs. unexposure.
- Wireless Carrier Incremental Reach: Delivered **18%** lift in audience impressions among Light TV Viewers through SmartAudio targeting vs traditional demo buy.
- QSR Store Visitation: Campaign Exposure drove **10.3%** increase in store visitation rate vs. unexposure.

egta: *Are you looking into international partnerships?*

John Rosso: Yes, now that we are part of Triton Digital, a global technology and services leader for audio operating in more than 80 countries, we are excited to take Jelli solutions global.



RadioMATRIX

Website: <https://www.radiomatrix.com.au/>

RADIOMATRIX IN AUSTRALIA

RadioMATRIX is the Australian radio industry's ad platform launched in 2017. The radio industry has united and worked closely with media agencies to develop this solution that removes complexity, ramps up efficiencies and makes it easier for advertisers to consider radio for every campaign.

The RadioMATRIX journey started in 2013 with a trial to minimise radio billing errors and account queries, with the introduction of Radio Holdings (an Australian advertising term for the confirmation of audio booking details that a network is holding on behalf of the Agency and Client).

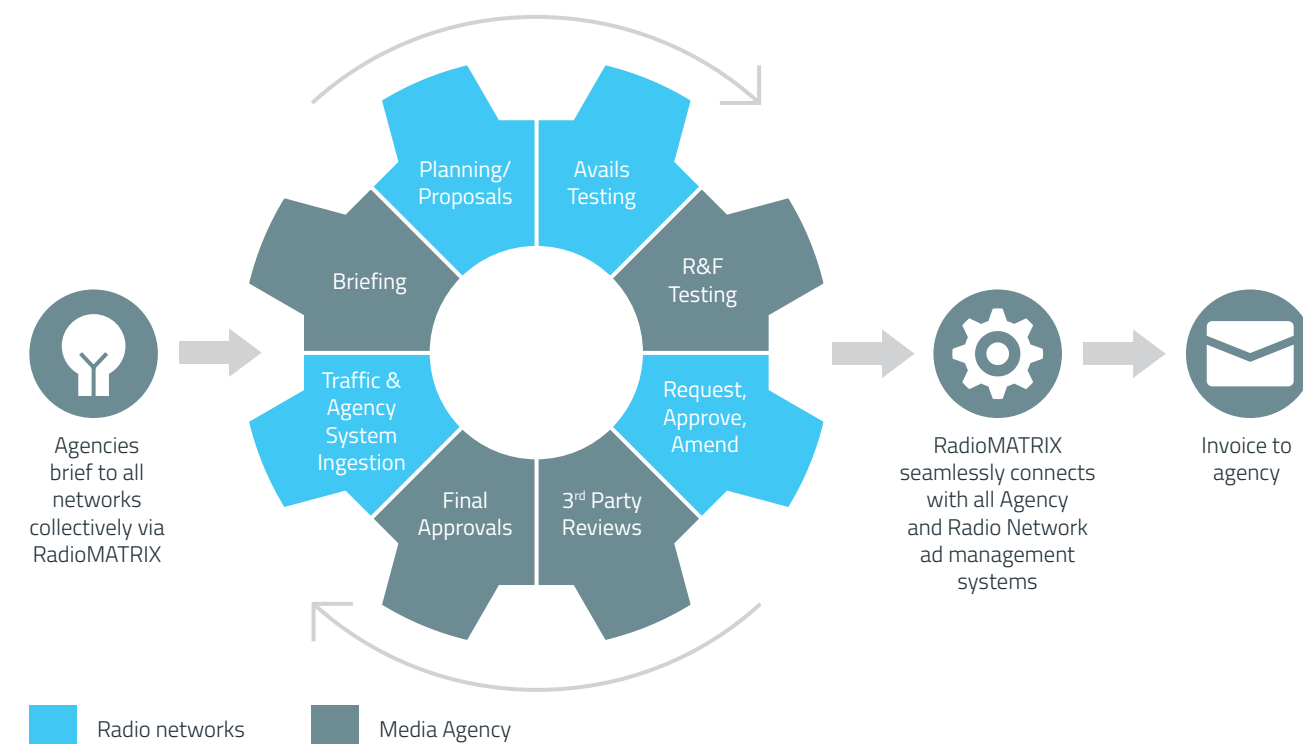
The successful delivery of Radio Holdings by AudioNET, established a new level of market momentum and unprecedented levels of engagement between agencies and networks. As a result, the platform through which Commercial Radio Australia (the industry body representing the interests of commercial radio

broadcasters throughout Australia) could deliver the simplification of the buying of audio via RadioMATRIX.

RadioMATRIX has forever changed the way media agencies and radio networks interact and work together. This collaborative working environment enables media agencies and radio networks to share a media plan in real-time through the media buying process, drastically reducing the risk of human error and the time required to plan, propose/brief and negotiate radio campaigns.

With RadioMatrix, media agencies can say goodbye to planning and buying in Excel. Agencies can create a campaign from scratch or use an existing campaign template and brief all networks collectively. They can customise, test and tweak campaigns across all Commercial Radio Networks, as well as check reach, frequency and CPMs against availabilities at any moment during the campaign build. This cloud-based, collaborative platform allows agencies to buy across the full spectrum of commercial audio in one place: linear, digital and streaming. A centralised, cross-channel audio planning, briefing and buying delivers a more consistent campaign experience for marketers, elevating the quality and effectiveness of the audio advertising product. The system allows agencies to eliminate hours of manual data entry with easy editing tools and to spend more time on client servicing, ideation and collaboration.

FIGURE 02: RADIOMATRIX PROCESS FOR BRIEFS/PROPOSALS/BOOKINGS



Source: RadioMATRIX

The three main **benefits for agencies** are:

1. Control:

- » Once a media plan is set up, they can share it with a selection of stations or farm it out to every station in Australia.
- » System, business and workflow rules are highly flexible and can be completely customised and layered to suit the needs of the agency, whether by team (or team branch), client, market, channel, agency-wide operating or workflow policy or a pre-negotiated radio network position.
- » At all times agencies know who did what, and when, and they can control who sees what information. (See fig. 02)

2. Time efficiency:

- » Agencies can build up their own templates in RadioMATRIX or even load in their existing Excel plans. Template permissions can be used to lock in process across their team and their entire business, including approval processes and change management.
- » Agencies can standardise planning and briefing processes and templates across agency teams, irrespective of what market they are in. They can reuse plans and briefing templates within and across clients and client teams.
- » They can roll back a plan or a brief to an earlier version using the version control log.

3. Best practice:

- » Working collaboratively with the commercial radio ecosystem in RadioMATRIX reduces agencies' time managing (or reinventing) process. That will enable them to move more of their time into strategy and innovation, whilst improving team billability and margins.
- » Agencies' client response times reduces, providing them more opportunity to be tactically responsive to shifts in the market and for strategy in general. System level permissions and process standardisation will reduce planning and briefing errors.

For **Radio Networks**, the RadioMATRIX cloud-based platform, enables their team to submit and manage broadcast, streaming and podcasting media proposals collaboratively with individual or multiple media agencies concurrently, whilst protecting client identities and commercial specifics, all within a single platform.

Proposals for broadcast, streaming and podcast activity can be sent to agencies proactively at any time. Radio networks can send a proposal to a single agency or multiple agencies at once, with each version tailored to each agency.

When responding to briefs, Radio networks are able to develop a custom response or reuse a proposal that they created earlier by creating a new version and moving it from one client to another. They can then customise the new version in any way they need to.

Any supporting documents whether they be PowerPoint presentation, sizzle reels or PDFs can all be attached to the proposal and will remain linked to that proposal throughout the iteration process. Attachments can be updated, deleted or reused if needed. The system eliminates hours of manual process, giving more time to build customer relationships, and focus on collaboration, ideation and innovation.

The two main **benefits for radio networks** include:

1. Connectivity

- RadioMATRIX connects to radio networks' sales and trafficking stacks and media agencies' media management platforms via API, removing the need for highly manual and error-prone double entry. The proposal activity will be automatically synchronised with the sales platform.
- Approved proposals are automatically pushed to the station's trafficking stack via Radio Holdings.

2. Reduced errors

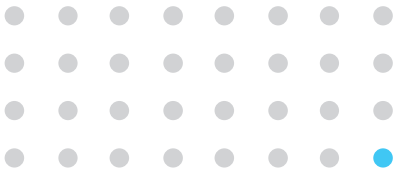
- Version control helps protect from sending incorrect information and ultimately having that information accidentally approved and trafficked. It will also allow for roll backs to earlier versions if negotiations take you back to an earlier proposition.
- In the event that a single proposal needs to be sent to multiple agencies with small variations in each version, document versioning will help to make sure the right version goes to the right agency and platform security will ensure that each opportunity remains commercially confidential at all times.

RadioMATRIX is underwritten by Commercial Radio Australia and is the **industry's new gold standard** for managing commercial radio audio planning, briefing, proposal and approvals.

RadioMATRIX is being launched in stages, the upcoming milestones include direct integration of audience survey data in 2021, network reporting interface with all post campaign reporting from all stations consolidated within RadioMATRIX under a single value currency in 2022. Finally, in 2023, attribution and a full-spectrum channel audio buying with programmatic will be launched. Radio networks are, however, cautious about the use of programmatic not to commoditise their premium inventory.

Lessons learned from the Australian market:

- Build in stages allowing for flexibility and adjustments.
- Design for the future, not for the now.
- Expect that achieving alignment amongst stakeholders will take longer than expected.
- All stakeholders in the planning, briefing and buying process, along with executive management, sales, accounts, security, technical people should be included as early as possible.
- Engaging the marketers/brands is just as important as engaging and educating agencies and networks.





Websites:

<https://aprileconsulting.com/>
<https://goldbach.com/ch/en/about-us/companies/switzerland>

MAI IN SWITZERLAND

In 2017, Swiss Radioworld AG, Goldbach's radio sales house for private radio stations in Switzerland, started a project to automate their sales and booking processes in radio advertising in collaboration with aprile consulting GmbH.

The new platform offers direct trading of inventory (including inquiries, price negotiation, booking) and direct handling of audio spots (including delivery, exchange, playout), in addition to streamlining and automating radio booking and traffic. This makes it easier to buy and sell with faster, dynamic delivery of radio spots, but also significantly reduces the number of incorrect bookings due to manual operations (by 46%). The solution has been a great success with agencies with now nearly 85% of the agencies using the web portal *mai* (Media Agency Interface) to communicate automatically with Swiss Radioworld. The campaign management is being successfully handled by the integrated system called *amily*.

In 2018, Swiss Radioworld launched a new radio advertising solution - data-driven and automated campaign - for broadcast/linear radio. This solution dynamically adjusts media plans and copy versions based on pre-set scenarios and data sources (such as weather, traffic information, sports scores, etc.). It is completely automated and can be used simultaneously across more than 50 radio stations.

The added data layer brings higher value, making radio advertising more immediate and relevant for listeners and more attractive to advertisers. Radio has always

been the fastest and most reactive medium: the strategic application of this new ad tech solution is accelerating this tactical nature of radio even further, positioning it as a part of the programmatic ecosystem and bringing efficiency and new clients to radio.

This solution addresses marketers' expectations for advertising to be not only effective in traditional media terms, delivering reach and frequency, but also to be easy and fast to book, dynamic as well as responsive.

For radio companies, this technology saves time for the station, on average from two hours to ten minutes for each campaign. It also leads to bigger revenue as the price per second for data-driven campaigns is higher by approximately 18%.

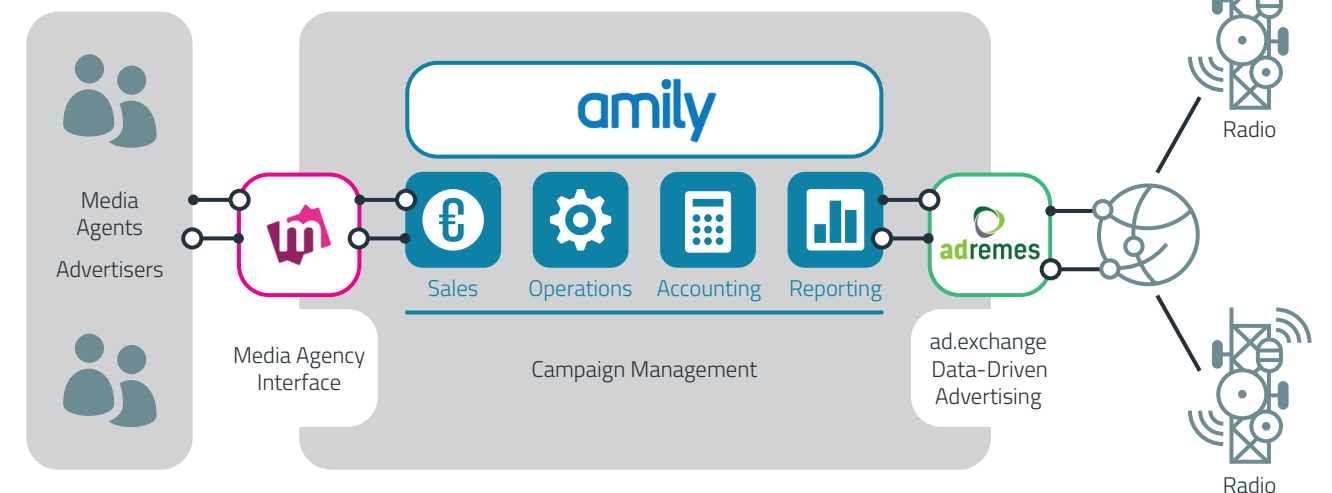
How it works – launching data-based radio campaigns

The communication to the media agencies is managed via the web portal *mai* – Media Agency Interface. The campaign management activities are implemented in *amily*. The policies and the triggers for data-driven campaigns are managed in the ad-exchange platform *adremes*.

The three systems are directly connected and exchange campaigns, policies and all data. The cloud-based system, *adremes*, connects the publisher's advertising and playout systems with the planning and booking tool from Swiss Radioworld. In addition to its other benefits, this solution enhances the effectiveness of radio campaigns by making them automatically responsive to specific input data events/triggers such as weather, sports, traffic, client data (e.g. special offers for under-booked products) or adjusts the campaign to the specificities of a given radio station (e.g. music, genre).

External data is connected to the radio exchange by *adremes*, which in turn is connected to individual stations. In an automated process, this external data determines which ad copy will go on air, depending on a game result, hot or cold weather, and other factors. The rules of this automated trading are defined beforehand by all involved parties. (See fig. 03 and 04)

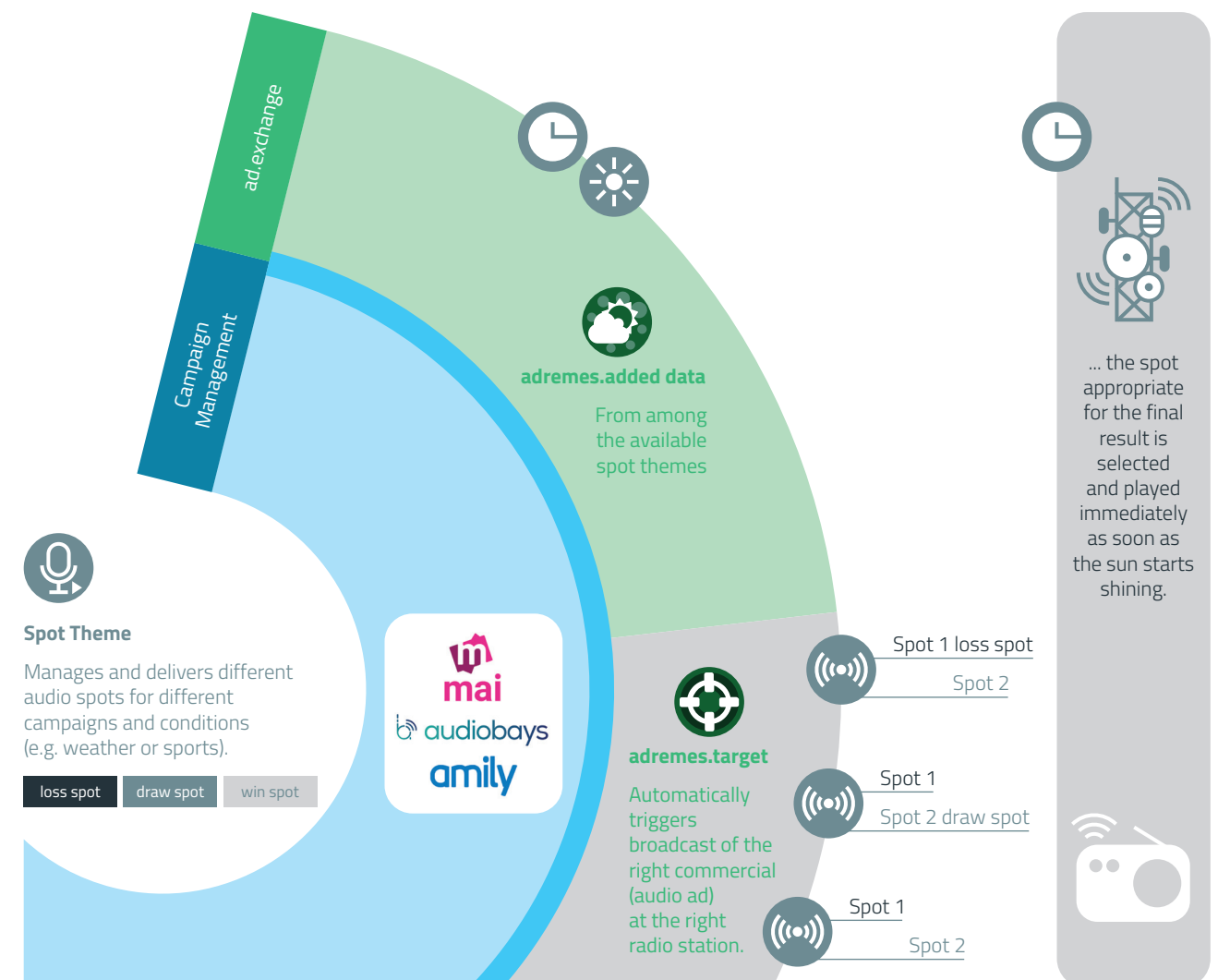
FIGURE 03: AUTOMATED CAMPAIGN MANAGEMENT



Source: aprile consulting GmbH

FIGURE 04: AUTOMATION AND DATA-DRIVEN ADVERTISING IN RADIO

A project of aprile consulting GmbH. Fully automatic and on more than 50 radio stations at the same time





INTERVIEW WITH

NICO APRILE, MANAGING DIRECTOR, APRILE CONSULTING GMBH

egta: *You have successfully implemented your automation solution in Switzerland, tell us more about it.*

Nico Aprile: The automation modules at Swiss Radioworld include *adremes* (as AdExchange), *amily* (as integrated campaign management) and *mai* (as the portal for media agencies for the bi- directional exchange of campaign data with Swiss Radioworld).

The development and implementation of such complex digital projects require process analysis, change management and project management – in this case provided by aprile consulting GmbH in close cooperation with Swiss Radioworld.

Swiss Radioworld reaches just about the entire radio advertising market and manages all campaigns with *amily*. More than 50 radio stations are now connected via *adremes*.

egta: *Are other publishers in Switzerland also using your solution?*

Nico Aprile: Yes, *amily* is also used by Energy in Switzerland.

egta: *Are you active in other markets?*

Nico Aprile: Yes, the AdExchange platform is used by other radio companies and sales houses. In total, more than 220 radio stations are now hooked up to *adremes*.

German sales houses such as Studio Gong, Radio NRW, and RMS use *adremes* to deliver to their own radio stations or to respond to queries regarding available inventory.

In Germany, Austria and Switzerland, more than 75% of advertising sales of all private radio providers is handled by *amily* technology.

egta: *For those companies that might be interested in implementing your solutions - can you describe what a radio station needs to do to get the ball rolling?*

Nico Aprile: The most important thing is the will and the energy to carry out a process that will lead to digital transformation. This kind of a project starts with the analysis and planning. What follows is the implementation of software solutions.

I strongly recommend considering the entire process as a "project" and structure and start it accordingly.

The advantages of digital transformation are obvious. On the one hand, processes are optimised and automated, which in turn lowers costs and improves efficiency. On the other hand, competitive advantages and future viability are a natural consequence of the automated sale of advertising inventory. Without digital transformation and the automation of processes and systems, there would be no online booking platforms, programmatic advertising or modern forms of advertising.

I think it is also important to emphasise that the individual modules of the automation stack can be used separately. The expertise of aprile consulting GmbH can also be used with or without using *amily*, *adremes* or *mai*.

egta: *In your experience, what are the main hurdles that need to be overcome to automate radio sales?*

Nico Aprile: Digital transformation changes processes and not just software systems.

Automating procedures and sales, data-driven campaigns and all innovative forms of advertising complement the core business.

Without transformation however, it is not possible to deploy this innovation. And change, when initiated by the company itself, requires willingness and energy.

For all of this to function well, the transforming company must be willing to adopt an effective project management and, ideally, expert consulting support by its side. Then comes the adaptation or replacement of the software systems currently used and deploying state-of-the-art, suitable and comprehensive updated solutions.

egta: *Can you give any examples of data-driven campaigns that were implemented thanks to your solution?*

Nico Aprile: Swiss Radioworld, for example, launched campaigns with data-driven, fully automatic placement of audio spots on FM radio and simultaneously across approximately forty radio stations in Switzerland.



One example was a weather dependant campaign by Coop. When the weather was good, an advertising spot focused on barbequing meat aired; when the weather was bad, a spot for soup aired. Another example is a Sanofi campaign: depending on the pollen count, different ads were played for the appropriate medication. The result in both cases was more efficient planning and use of the advertising budget. Such data-driven campaigns can be sold at a higher cost per thousand.

egta: *What are your future development plans?*

Nico Aprile: Our latest development is the addition of an audio content management system called *audiobays*. It is used to automate the audio spots processing and it includes ad serving.

We will further advance the automation of processes in the audio advertising business and focus first on radio where publishers and marketers still make most in advertising sales.

Other areas where we will be developing new products include: electronic inventory management, ad serving, booking platform, and market places.





Website: <https://amy.radio/>

AMY BY APRILE CONSULTING

The electronic platform for automated and programmatic purchasing

amy is a software system, designed and developed by the aprile consulting team, operating under a SaaS (Software-as-a-Service) structure, fully cloud-based and scalable, and based on state-of-the-art software technology and architecture. This platform is the digital B2B marketplace for linear radio advertising.

Innovative, globally scalable, independent, and purpose-built, amy's main functionalities include programmatic radio advertising (DSP- Demand-Side Platforms/SSP- Supply-Side Platforms), an online booking platform for agencies and advertisers, an online booking platform for SMEs (coming soon), an integrated audio workflow management, and a customer portal for direct interaction and communication between buyer and seller. (See Figure 5 on amy's functionalities.)

How it works

The platform generates packages of ad impressions and further trades them on first or third-party marketplaces. The radio inventory is received from the publisher and is then offered to agencies and advertisers via a booking platform. The "programmatic units" of the media agencies as well as advertisers themselves can buy radio inventory via the common DSPs. The booking is automated for I/O (insert order) campaigns and packages for direct booking. The inventory is further enriched with first and third-party data (geo, reach, program, targets, suggestions yield management, etc.).

The booking of inventory with third-party SSPs/DSPs is all handled by amy. (See Figure 6.)

amy has already run two successful pilots of programmatic buying for radio (PoC). So far, two marketers, four publishers, three media agencies, and four advertisers have joined the ride to automation.

Advantages

- Via a modern interface, amy connects directly with the systems of publishers and marketers and integrates their processes. Automation and programmatic are now possible – without the need for purchasing new systems. Integration instead of new acquisition.
- The publisher and/or the marketer has always control over the released inventory and the respective conditions (discounts and floor price).
- All processes (communication, offer, order, audio workflow management, etc.) harmoniously embedded in one customer portal
- Radio inventory can be handled automatically and parallel to the other digital media
- Radio gets advertising revenue which otherwise would have gone only to digital media.
- The I/O booking process used by media agencies accounts for more than 95% of the total radio advertising turnover at the moment.
- Automation as provided by amy improves process efficiency, lowers operating costs and increases the appeal of radio as an advertising medium for the buyer
- Direct booking of ad campaigns on the part of the advertising customer and SMEs opens additional turnover potential
- Adding data (1st and 3rd party data) to the advertising inventory makes target group-specific campaign management possible (targeted campaigns) and models attractive forms and ways of advertising

This platform therefore benefits to both the seller and the buyer.

FIGURE 05: AMY'S FUNCTIONALITIES

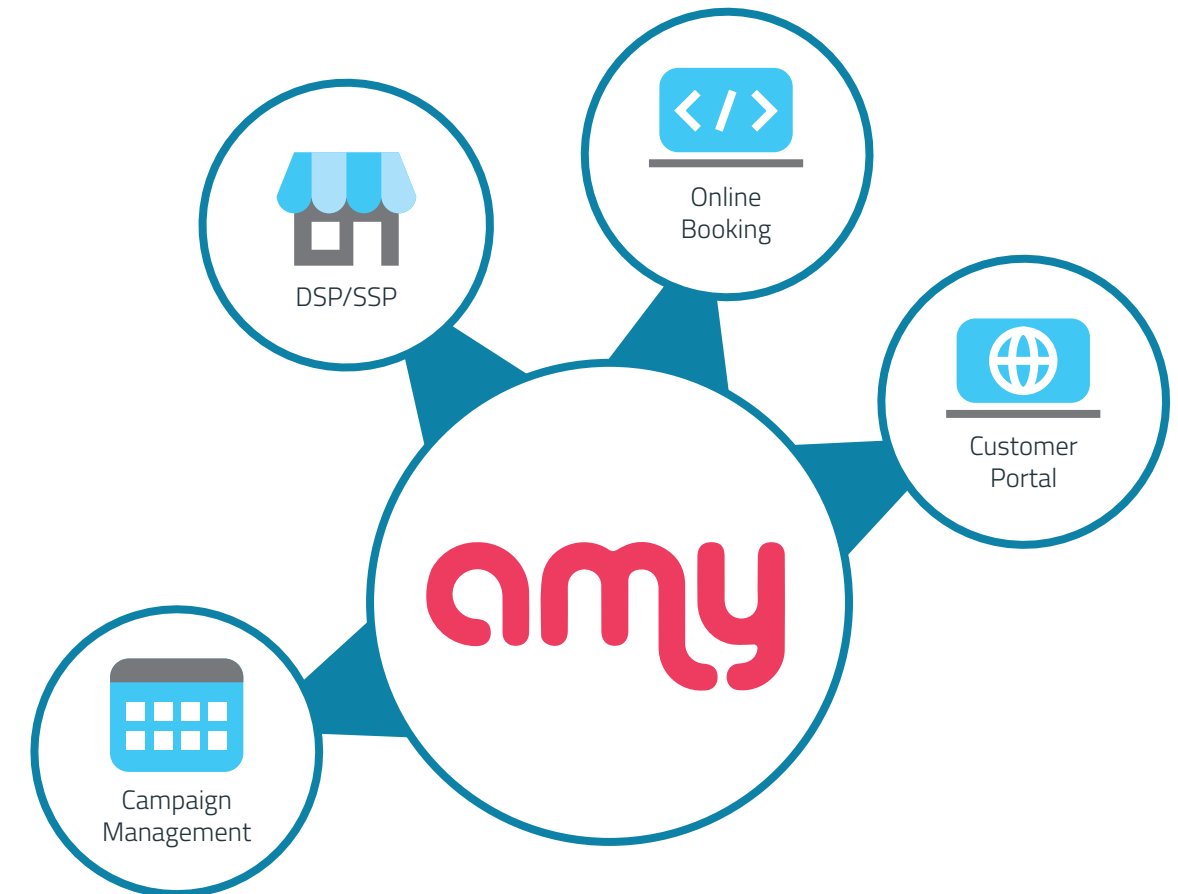
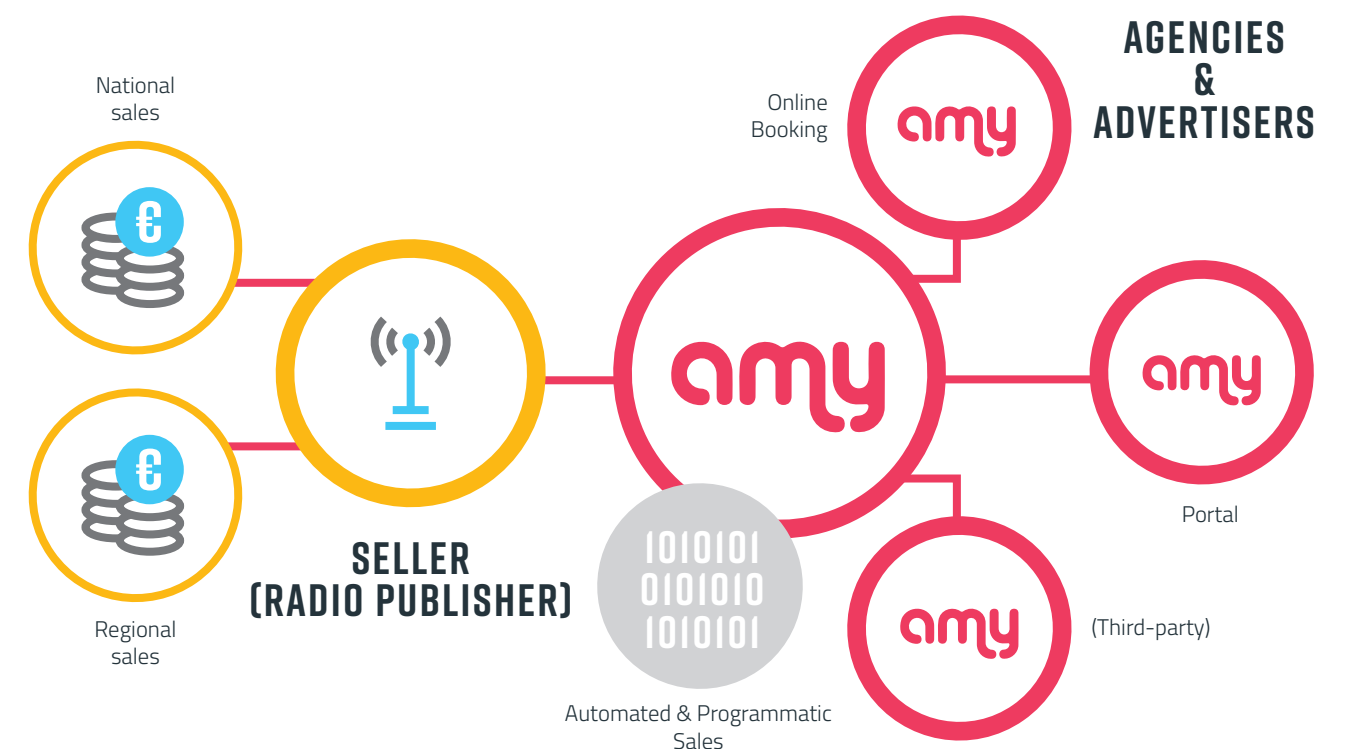


FIGURE 06: ROAD TO PROGRAMMATIC





For the first time in Germany, in July 2023, a German radio sales house, Studio Gong, was able to carry out the first two amy test campaigns with GroupM media agency, and the clients KFC and department store – Galeria Kaufhof. Both campaigns lasted each 8 days, with a number of 14 spots aired for KFC and 25 spots for Galeria Kaufhof and the spot length of each varied from 10 seconds for the KFC campaign to 15 seconds for the Galeria one.



ANDREAS LANG, CEO, STUDIO GONG

“Our goal was to find a complete value chain, from the advertiser to the agency...getting it all on a programmatic platform. A spot would usually take days. With the platform, it was ready within less than an hour”.



NICO APRILE, CEO, AMY

“Our goal is to help radio take a stronger position in the advertising business. We do this through automation, harmoniously embedded in today’s processes, and through enabling innovative advertising offers.

National sales, regional sales, programmatic trading, online booking or direct booking: no matter how the market changes, radio remains in the focus of the media mix.”





Website: <https://www.audioxchange.de/>

AUDIOXCHANGE IN GERMANY

RMS (Germany's largest sales house for private radio stations) and ARD Media (a sales house for both public and private radio stations), who are competitors on the German market, decided to pool their strength to develop audioXchange, a new online booking system that is planned to be launched in 2023.

AudioXchange will not be just a booking tool, but a marketplace platform and central communication channel for the automated trading of radio and audio inventory. The first step is to digitise and automate the entire supply chain in the planning and booking process.

The two companies decided against purchasing a license for an existing system. A company, audioXchange GmbH, has been founded by ARD media and RMS to host the complete application. The objective behind this decision was to ensure to have a trusted host in the middle and to secure the confidentiality of all the participants' information.



INTERVIEW WITH JAN POELMANN, CEO, AUDIOXCHANGE GMBH

egta: *How did the idea to create this solution come about?*

Jan Poelmann: The two shareholders of audioXchange GmbH, RMS and ARD MEDIA, together account for over 90% of the German national audio advertising market. This market in turn represents 6% of the total German advertising market. These two shareholders – who are actually competitors – already have a lot of joint initiatives due to the small radio market. One of them is a joint planning system, a tried-and-tested tool for agencies in the market. They decided some time ago that it made no sense to create own solutions for the booking process. Instead, a joint solution was to make audio advertising more attractive for agencies and customers through automation, interfaces and associated opportunities. In addition, existing tools (planning, traffic/scheduling and broadcast systems) should be able to continue to exist. However, the underlying aim is a long-term change and adaptation to new market requirements.

egta: *What are the main goals of audioXchange?*

Jan Poelmann: As a first step, audioXchange will automate the purchasing process in terrestrial audio. This area still represents around 90% of total audio sales nationwide. However, through our close exchange with all market partners, we know that we have to think further. In particular, the topic of online audio or streaming audio should be mentioned here, which must be integrated. We are also planning functionalities

for data-based campaign control, reporting, spot management and many more. In summary, we want to create a platform on which audio can be planned, booked, controlled and reported, regardless of the transmission path.

egta: *Who will have access to audioXchange?*

Jan Poelmann: Any market partner involved in buying and selling audio advertising space will be able to use the platform. The interfaces are open and accessible to everyone.

egta: *What are the phases of buying/planning processes that will be handled by the solution?*

Jan Poelmann: Of course, as a first step we are targeting the direct buyers and sellers, e.g. agencies, direct customers and broadcasters or sales houses. In later stages of expansion, however, creative agencies, for example, will also be able to feed in their spots directly, provided that they have been approved by the customer. In the end, the entire process should be faster, more efficient and more transparent. This will benefit the attractiveness of audio overall, especially because other media are already much further along in some cases.



egta: *Will only RMS and ARD Media inventory be available on the platform, or will you open it to all the actors of the German audio landscape?*

Jan Poelmann: The platform is open to any partner who is part of the process around audio buying and selling. However, not all steps (e.g. spot management) may be available from the beginning.

egta: *Is the system intent to be not profit driven?*

Jan Poelmann: Indeed, the system is not profit driven. Agencies and their advertising clients pay nothing for using the system, while sales houses and publishers who offer advertising space pay a small revenue-based fee to cover the platform's operating and development costs. However, this is far below the percentage values paid in online advertising, for example. So, we are not creating a tech tax here along the lines of what online advertisers are paying.

egta: *Based on your experience as architects of audioXchange, what advice do you have for egta members that would like to develop similar solutions?*

Jan Poelmann: Of course, markets differ from one another, especially in terms of the players who play in them. Some markets are highly fragmented, some are dominated by a few large players. If I were to set this up in another market, I would try to find common solutions. In no market I know of is audio big enough to create island solutions. Audio needs to stand together to compete with TV, online, DOOH and other media. I also recommend taking a cue from the online market and the tools used there. Learn from the media that are already more advanced digitally instead of trying to cement old radio processes.

CONCLUSION

A certain level of automation is perceived as a given feature of the modern advertising ecosystem. Radio has to innovate in this area to remain competitive and grow the medium's market share.

Automated solutions reduce manual and complex processes for radio companies and their sales houses and thus open up more time to strategise and develop tailored solutions for clients. Additionally, these initiatives position radio as a fully digital, data-driven and programmatic medium in the eyes of buyers – essentially, they provide agencies involved in radio planning with a cost-saving model at scale.

Programmatic marketplaces are also popular among digital native companies that may not employ the services of a media agency. Thus, a radio buying dashboard unlocks radio's potential as an additional component of their media mix, potentially bringing new clients and new investments to radio.

egta will continue to monitor the area of automation by collecting and sharing best practice on what various markets are developing to make radio and audio easier to buy.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RADIO COMPANIES ON ADVANCING AUTOMATION

- Work collaboratively and involve all stakeholders (sales, accounts, tech people, etc.) of both buyer and seller in the process right from the start.
- View the entire process as a 'project' and consider expert consulting support.
- Choose an independent supplier.
- Address the unique complexities of broadcast radio when automating your sales process.
- Build in stages allowing for flexibility and adjustments.
- Design for the future, not for the now. Learn from the media that are already more advanced digitally instead of trying to cement old radio processes.
- Engage and educate agencies as well as marketers/brands.

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ABOUT EGTA

egta is the global trade body for marketers of advertising solutions across multiple screens and audio platforms. The association aims to help its members transform, grow and diversify their business, i.e. the monetisation of TV and radio content across their linear and online portfolios.

Currently, egta network counts 160+ members in 40+ markets in Europe and beyond.

Together, egta's TV members represent 75%+ of the European television advertising market, whilst egta radio members collect 50% of radio advertising revenues in countries where they are active.

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