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Master of Science Interactive Digital Media

Title: A review of multimedia formats and social media use for traditional radio broadcasting in Ireland

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Abstract:

This paper presents a review of multimedia formats and social media use for traditional radio broadcasting in Ireland. Over the last decade, there has been an increasing presence of Irish radio stations, shows and presenters on social media and user-generated content platforms, and an overall increase in multimedia output. The head of RTÉ's 2fm, Dan Healy, remarked in February 2016 that the station is attempting to keep up with trends towards the "visualisation of radio". April 2016 saw the centenary celebration of what is considered to be the first Irish radio broadcast, from the General Post Office during the 1916 Rising – the declaration of the Irish Republic by means of wireless transmission equipment captured from the Irish School of Wireless Telegraphy as an act of defiance against the censorship of the British regime.

In light of these events, this paper aims to re-evaluate the place of radio in today's Irish media landscape, and the use of social media and other non-audio formats by traditional broadcasters in order to encourage audience participation and attract a greater listenership. It is also an examination of the sensory experiences involved in engaging with the content produced by Irish radio stations today, from what was traditionally a blind medium. Critical media theory on convergence, obsolescence and participation is applied to the Irish radio context in order to address these topics. The conclusions drawn are that greater, quantitative research would be useful in the study of radio and transmedia, and while radio is far from obsolete in Ireland yet, the industry needs to continue its efforts to engage with younger audiences in order to survive in the future.