Ultra-Niche Video Content Networks

Modelling a proxy of networked power for independent corporate producers.

A project submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy

Katrina A. Jojkity

School of Media and Communication
The College of Design and Social Context
RMIT University

August 2015
ABSTRACT

According to media theorist Manuel Castells, the power to create for-profit media is usually in the hands of a small number of mass media conglomerates that are typically formed by constellations of multiple media properties operating in numerous ways and in multiple cultural and institutional environments brought together through their ability to decide the content and format of communication (Castells, 2011). However, the traditional articulation of this power has been radically altered in our current networked society (Castells, 2011). Castells (2011) observes that, in this shifting ground of power, there are new forms of domination and determination to be discovered (Castells, 2011).

The core concern of this study is with how independent audio-visual producers working at the corporate/commercial segment of the industry respond to proliferating media platforms and fragmenting media markets. This study takes a producer/creative practitioner centred focus and is concerned with the viability of alternative strategies for marketing audio-visual content production services. This research examines the democratisation of technologies of production, storage and distribution that have enabled organisations that sit between mass media conglomerates and consumers to create and broadcast their own niche video content for targeted audiences professionally and cost-effectively. This research is informed primarily through my own professional practice and the work of Saul Hansell, Chris Anderson, and Manuel Castells.

This practice-led doctoral research uses an action research method that encompasses the creation of two minor projects and one core capstone project. The strategies of particular interest are described throughout the dissertation as slivercasting and ultra-niche networking, as well as long tail networking. The study brings together contemporary theories of ultra-niche broadcasting, conceptions of small-scale video production practices and content marketing, with a focus on ultra-niche branded video content for niche audiences as seen as proxy of networked power for independent corporate producers. The primary beneficiaries of this research are independent audio-visual producers.
KEYWORDS

Multimedia, production, power, counter-power, the long-tail, slivercasting, digital media, content marketing, niche television, ultra-niche broadcasting, branded content, broadcast, Internet television, social media, targeted banded content, mass-media, ultra-niche audience, and community.
DECLARATION

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

Name:

Date: August 2015
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The PhD has been an extremely rewarding journey for me. However, none of this would have been possible without the help and support of many people, especially my supervisors Dr Chris Barker and Dr Leo Berkeley.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Dr Chris Barker for his amazing encouragement and support throughout this journey, as without his dedication and patience I would not have been able to complete this task.

A big thank you goes out to all my friends and family for all their support and encouragement. I would especially like to mention Karen Kim, Sheryl Ng, Stefan Hottinger-Behmer, and all the production team at Inspiration and Tiszai productions.

I must highlight the exceptional depth of support, love, help, and understanding, of my love and husband, Giovanni Di Lieto, without his support this project would not have been completed.

Thank you very much for all your support.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT 2
KEYWORDS 3
DECLARATION 4
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 5
TABLE OF CONTENTS 6
TABLE OF FIGURES 8
PREFACE 10
SECTION 1 16

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION 17
Media Production and Networked Power 23
Niche Video, Counter Power, Programmers and Switchers 24

CHAPTER 2 STATE OF THE ART REVIEW 29
An Introduction to Niche Broadcasting and the Move Away from Mass Media in Favour of Niche 30
The History of Niche Broadcasting 35
Networks 40
Power and Counter Power 43
Fragmentation of Media, Audience Fragmentation and Autonomy 49
Technological Developments and the Rapid Evolution of Ultra-Niche Broadcasting 50
Democratisation of Production Equipment 52
New Distribution Vehicles, Devices and Screens 54
Communities 59
Collaboration 61
Marketing Communication Theories: Using Ultra-Niche Video Content Networks to Target Consumers 62
Theories on Monetisation 68
Affinity Marketing 73
Brand Identity 74
Conceptual Framework for the Study 75
REFERENCES

Appendices 186
Appendix 1 – E-mail from Mr Dion Workman. 187
Appendix 2- Invitation to participate in a research project 188
Appendix 3- Release Form for Media 190
Appendix 4 – Survey Questions 191
Appendix 5- ‘Inspiration’ Meeting Minutes 193
Appendix 6- ‘Inspiration’ Plan of Action 194
Appendix 7- ‘Inspiration’ running order and segments 195
Appendix 8 - Media agent agreement 197
Appendix 9- Reference Letter from Mr Stefan Behmer 200
Appendix 10 -'Inspiration' Media Kit 201
Appendix 11 -RMIT Proposal 205
Appendix 12 -Higher Education Proposal 233

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1 ‘The Long Tail’ (Anderson, 2006 Backcover) 17
Figure 2 Illustrates the action research cycle (Baskerville, 1999 p. 14) 83
Figure 3 Practice-led action research process 87
Figure 4 Practice- led PhD Timeline 87
Figure 5 Inspiration Broadcasting Timeline 95
Figure 6 Total audience data by platform 108
Figure 7 Inspiration 13 Part Series Future Budget/Possible Revenue 121
Figure 8 the approximate in-house operating costs for setting up and running a RMIT television network for the first 21 months 145
Figure 9 Break-even analysis table broken down into four phases of development for the creation of an ultra-niche network (see Appendix 10, page 17 of the RMIT proposal). 154
Figure 10 Time frame- project schedule for RMIT TV (see Appendix 10, page 13 of the RMIT TV proposal) 156
Figure 11 Sample program schedule for phase 2 (page 13 of the RMIT TV proposal Appendix 10) 159

Figure 12 A flow chart showing the development phases and costs required to create a ultra-niche network for RMIT University (page 17 of the RMIT TV proposal Appendix 10) 160

Figure 13 illustrates how students would prefer to hear about a ultra-niche network. 164

Figure 14 Illustrates what type of content attracts viewers. 166

Figure 15 Illustrates the type of content viewers would like to see most on an ultra-niche network. 167

Figure 16 Illustrates students’ positive attitudes towards an ultra-niche network 170
PREFACE

The inspiration behind this study was derived from my own personal experience as an independent audio-visual producer working at the corporate end of the video production industry. The exploration, delivery and creation of ultra-targeted content that sits in between mass media appeared early and frequently throughout my 17 years of producing niche video content globally and has become the basis and foundation of this study.

I first created targeted video content for a narrow audience in London around 17 years ago after I had finished my fashion design and marketing degrees. My first video project was produced and presented on and for a group of ‘young creatives’ who were living in London's East End around the year 2000. In fact, these designers, artists and jewellery makers with whom I was affiliated, were involved in fashion events titled ‘Secret Rendezvous’ led by Taiwanese designer Meihui Liu. These events involved designers, such as Pauric Sweeney who was living in the East End of London in the late 90s early 2000s along with other young and new designers, such as Hussein Chalaya and Alexander McQueen who then went on to be enormously famous and significant in the world of fashion. At the time I was working as a fashion designer, branding and marketing consultant and was immersed in this world of ‘creative innovation where we were all experimenting and creating new fashion, media and marketing ideas. In the late 90s, London was a very exciting place to be as London was booming culturally, financially and politically with new Labour’s Tony Blair in power. For this reason London, in particular the East End, became a mecca for young creative people from all over the world. These creative second generation Hoxtonites, as Lida Hujic (2006) called them, shared a set of lifestyle values including a genuine passion and a belief in craft. Hoxtonites were reflecting the demand for a new kind of premium product to express a different kind of individuality, born as a reaction to the uniformity of the high street and to that of traditional luxury brands (Hujic, 2006).

In addition to being immersed in this wave of innovation and creation, I also discovered the semi-professional digital video cameras that were becoming affordable and readily available at the time. As Eli E. Hollander (in Carlson, 2001) confirms:
All of a sudden, we have a tool that's thoroughly professional and offers the vocabulary of high-end systems at an affordable price. It's an incredible democratizing device (Carlson, 2001 p. 31)

In fact, I remember filming at a fashion event in London in the year 2000 and, being the only one with a digital camera, I was a “big hit” as everybody was fascinated to see this new technology. Due to this, I took advantage of my knowledge and interest in affordable digital video technology and my unique access to this semi-underground ‘second-generation Hoxtonite’ creative community, and moved forward to create innovative ultra-targeted video content. This niche video content documented, showcased and commented on what was going on at these creative unpaid events that were created as an alternative to the ‘poshness’ of the fashion establishment at the time. This video content went behind the scenes and illustrated the exciting fashion world for its ‘community’ members and emulators. By telling these stories, and by capturing this unique moment in time from an insiders point of view, I felt like I had the ‘power’ and opportunity to show members of the community what actually goes on behind the scenes at fashion shows, as well as represent the up-and-coming designers, eateries and events that we were a part of for prosperity. In the late ‘90s and early 2000s, the media climate was very different to what it is like today; unlike today where practically ‘everybody’ has a phone (and therefore a video camera) with them at all times with which they can watch or film events and post them online instantly. In the late ‘90s, one had to know of an event, be invited or be a member of the accredited press and have a film crew to even gain access to most professional fashion events. This power dynamic was gradually beginning to change, as even though I had few resources and experience at the time, the democratisation of digital production equipment and the advent of digital editing software made it possible for me and a sole cameraman to shoot and produce content. Through the process of creating niche video content, I teamed up with a young filmmaker who had a digital video camera, editing equipment and microphone, and off we went to create my first targeted video for a limited audience. The fashion and lifestyle television show was entitled LUXE London and was the early predecessor to my TV show in Shanghai- Luxe Shanghai. Images of me filming at fashion shows and events can be seen in this video created by Hujic (2011) in connection with her book: Second-generation Hoxtonites (the noughties' section of the book).
Next, with previous knowledge on ultra-niche video content production and after my return to Melbourne in late 2002, I followed the Luxe London format and went on to create another independently produced niche video for a limited audience titled *Luxe Melbourne*. Again, not having a big production company or media conglomerate behind me, I set out to create and finance *Luxe Melbourne*, a television show that showcased Mercedes Australian Fashion Week, the first industry fashion show event held in Melbourne in November 2002. I decided to create and produce this content, as at the time there was no Australian made fashion lifestyle television shows, and I wanted to create a show that presented the kind of creativity that was emerging from young designers such as Toni Maticevski. With this project in mind, I contacted the organisers of Australian Fashion Week to obtain press status, employed a cameraman, soundman and editor, and executed the rest of the tasks including writing, presenting, researching and directing myself. I jumped in and did it myself.

Equipped with knowledge on how to create ultra-targeted fashion and lifestyle television shows, I move to Shanghai in 2005. The reason I moved to Shanghai was that in my estimation, China, and Shanghai in particular, was on the cusp of a creative surge. Chinese producers and manufacturers, in my opinion, had the technical know-how while not necessarily the creative capabilities, and were opening up and looking for creative imports from outside China.

In my opinion, China seemed like the place to be, as at the time it seemed as if everybody I knew was descending on Shanghai. Everything was booming and there were many innovative opportunities for a young creative person such as myself. As soon as I arrived in Shanghai I hit the ground running, contacting publishers, photographers, sponsors, models and translators in order to create my book *Dress for Success: The Clothes Make the Man* and, subsequently, I was the first non-Chinese person to publish a book with the Shanghai Book Shop Publishing Company. Although I did have a publisher on board, I financed and managed the entire project myself; again without a large organisation or team behind me. I used my persuasive, project management and creative skills to create a book and subsequent television show, with very little money.

The reason why I wrote a book and produced the corresponding targeted television show for a niche community of wealthy businessmen and new graduates was because I realised that
there was an increasing appetite from the growing middle class, newly rich Chinese business men and students who were working with foreign companies to gain ‘western’ knowledge on etiquette and how to dress through a clear educational and fun method.

Next, due to the emerging growth of the Chinese luxury goods market and after the success of the TV show Dress for Success, Tony Chen, my Chinese business partner, and I decided to work together to create a luxury lifestyle television show based on what I had done in London and Melbourne.

As Sam Frizell (2014) points out:

China is the country with the world’s largest number luxury of buyers, accounting for some 29% of the global market. The country’s one million millionaires and more than 120 billionaires are part of a vibrant culture of flashy gift-giving and visible spending, where Scottish tweed suits, pricey handbags, fine French red wines, Chanel perfumes, and Swiss watches swap hands like mah-jong tiles. (Frizell, Feb. 13, 2014)

Due to this fact, it seemed that the luxury market or community who purchased luxury goods and services was the “community of viewers’ to focus on.

Considering that the luxury market was our target market and that the local free-to-air television stations were run by tightly controlled state-run broadcast monopolies, it did not seem appropriate to broadcast our luxury lifestyle TV show on one of them.

Also, it did not seem fitting to broadcast a luxury show to all 22 million inhabitants of Shanghai, many of whom still did not have running water and would not have related, nor would have had access, to the luxury lifestyle we planned on portraying. With these limitations in mind and by conducting market research, we came to understand that the type of educated middle-class customer who travelled on aeroplanes was our target audience. Therefore, it was decided that the best place to target and broadcast our TV show was an airline. After months of negotiation with the state-run department that was in charge of inflight entertainment for Shanghai Airlines, LUXE Shanghai was born.
**LUXE Shanghai** was broadcast and made especially and exclusively for Shanghai airlines and was a monthly 10-minute branded content television program shown on all Shanghai airlines inbound and outbound flights from Shanghai and online. In addition, **Luxe Shanghai** was also shown in all Star Alliance, Shanghai airlines first and business class lounges providing advertisers access to a niche high-end luxury consumer.

Every presenter-led magazine style show was made up of three to five, one to five minute segments that were purchased by advertisers that aspired to sell luxury goods or services to a traveling targeted audience of educated people. Each segment was created for the specific need of each advertiser and was produced to showcase each advertiser’s goods or services in a positive way as well as to entertain, inform, and inspire the audience. Every one of our tailor-made shows was produced with the censorship requirements of Shanghai airlines, the advertisers’ requirements, and the audience in mind. In order to generate an income, **LUXE Shanghai** had a number of advertising and sponsorship opportunities available for advertisers to purchase; these can be the viewed in the 2009 **LUXE Shanghai** Media kit (see Appendix 10).

Co-executive producing **LUXE Shanghai**, the only bilingual luxury television program made in China, especially for an airline and that was dedicated to luxury, was an extremely educational and challenging experience. Moreover, as the producer and presenter at **LUXE Shanghai**, I learnt a tremendous amount about how to produce and manage a targeted television network. This was made even more challenging due to the fact that I was not Chinese and that an in-flight niche television network had never been created in China before. Nevertheless, I felt privileged to have been able to learn and use my unique video production and marketing knowledge to create targeted branded content for a specific market and community, and aspired to explore and research the field in more detail. This is because our small-scale production company created a targeted niche television network that had influenced and resonated with Shanghai airlines’ passengers.

Adding to this research aspiration and by experiencing the transformation of Shanghai into what seemed like the city of lights, videos and advertising screens, over the five years I was living in Shanghai, screens with video content broadcast on them were almost everywhere - from bus stops, to taxis, outside every shopping centre, and in every elevator, lobby and supermarket. As a 2006 **PR Newswire** article confirmed, **Focus Media**, China's largest out of home multi-platform media company, had provided:
Over 72,898 display units in commercial and in-store networks and approximately 90,000 advertising poster frames throughout China. With more than 1,543 international and domestic advertisers placing advertisements throughout its networks as of December 31, 2005 alone. (Newswire, 2006)

As well as installing screens, Focus Media created an outdoor digital news network named I-Street Public News (C. B. News, 2007). This network broadcasts network news, weather and traffic information through a wireless network of 550 screens in central areas of Shanghai (C. B. News, 2007). As an ultra-niche production practitioner witnessing this rapid amalgamation of digital branded content, outdoor LED screens and marketing communication in Shanghai first hand, I came to the conclusion that I had the expertise, knowledge and practical knowhow to research long tail/ultra-niche video content and could build on notions of network-making power to model a new form of communication power/counter power when I returned to Melbourne. Having gained unique exposure to global ideas and innovation, particularly while I was living and working in Shanghai running my own targeted branded television program, I had an inkling that this business model, innovation and system had the power to be used on a large or small scale and could work for many different types of institutions, companies and organisations, giving them the ‘counter power’ and ‘know-how’ to reach their target audience through video content, no matter how big or small.

As an independent audio-visual producer and practitioner, I could see the gap between theoretical and commercial knowledge and it seemed to me that I was in the ideal position to explore this notion further. It could also be said that, since I had produced ultra-niche networks for many years, I had the basis on which to build a study. Subsequently, I believe that all my previous work and experience put me in good stead and has enabled me to undertake this study in order to bridge the gap between existing knowledge and practice in the network, digital media, communication and marketing fields that would lead to the generation of new knowledge and new creative works.
SECTION 1
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The core concern of this project is with how independent audio-visual producers, working at the corporate/commercial segment of the industry might respond to proliferating media platforms and fragmenting media markets. This dissertation takes a producer/creative practitioner centred focus and presents an account of an inquiry undertaken at RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia. The study is concerned with the viability of alternative strategies for marketing audio-visual content production services. The strategies of particular interest are described throughout the dissertation as slivercasting and ultra-niche networking, as well as long tail networking. A portfolio of three related creative practice activities provides the empirical foundations for this dissertation. The first two activities are audio-visual production projects and the third project is a proposal for production activity based on insights generated from the first two projects and informed by original audience research of the proposed target market. Bringing together contemporary theories of ultra-niche broadcasting, conceptions of small-scale video production practices and content marketing from the fields of Marketing Communications (FOR 150502), Media (FOR 200104), Video Communications (FOR 100509) and Digital Media Studies (FOR 200102). Subsequently, the primary beneficiaries of this research are other independent audiovisual producers.

In recent years, massive changes have taken place in media globally with the move away from mass media to ultra-niche broadcasting. In his book, *The Long Tail*, media theorist Chris Anderson argues that demand for media has moved relentlessly from the head of the distribution curve to the tail, as illustrated by figure one below.

![Figure 1 ‘The Long Tail’ (Anderson, 2006 Backcover)](image-url)
Anderson (2005) commented:

As the number of channels available in the average home goes from 80 (analogy cable) to 200 (digital cable) to infinity (Internet TV), it’s easy to see the shift towards less concentrated audiences continuing and more people migrating to truly niche content. (Anderson, January 10-17 2005)

In addition to this move away from mass to niche media, there are new distribution vehicles, and new devices and screens of various sizes and types proliferating everywhere (Berry, Harbord, & Moore, 2013; Rosman, 2013). Adding to this is the democratisation and affordability of production equipment that has enabled organisations to produce and broadcast their own niche video content for targeted audiences professionally and cost-effectively (Anderson.C, 2006; Manuel Castells, 2009; Hansell, 2006). Similarly, audiences now have an even greater choice in what they watch, and the ability to seek it out, than ever before (Napoli, 2011). Nowadays, audiences can also be provided for, no matter who they are and how ultra-niche their interests (Napoli, 2011). Globalisation and online video technologies have created unprecedented opportunities for worldwide online community building (Clothey, Austin, \#45, & Li, 2010).

This, in turn, has enabled organisations to use ultra-niche video content networks to build and communicate with an e-community around shared interests (Manuel Castells, 2009). At the same time, audiences demonstrate a reticence to pay for content; film/video production financing sources are being eroded (A. D. a. Lotz, 2014; ScreenAustralia, 2014).

The demand for video content, especially online, is increasing. Evidence of this is provided by a white paper commissioned by Internet networking corporation Cisco. As an ongoing initiative to track and forecast the impact of visual networking applications, Cisco collated the data outlined in the white paper through a combination of methods, including the analyses of projections, estimates and forecasts obtained in-house, as well as through direct data that they collected from Strategy Analytics, Screen Digest and Nielsen, amongst others (Cisco, 2014):

Between 2012 and 2013, the highest growth that happened on the Internet was the growth in online video with 16 per cent year-over-year growth. In 2018, digital TV and online
video will be the two most highly penetrated services, 86 per cent and 78 per cent respectively. The fastest growth will come from online video. (Cisco, 2014)

Echoing this sentiment is a 2014 Screen Australia report which states that 50 per cent of Internet-connected Australians are watching professionally produced film and television video content via the Internet, representing an increase from 43 per cent in 2012 (ScreenAustralia, 2014). In addition to this, by 2010 the nonpartisan Pew Research Centre reported that 71 per cent of American Internet users watched or downloaded video online, up from 33 per cent in 2006 (Kathleen Moore, 2011; Purcell, 2010). This change in the way media is accessed has led to huge transformations in the way niche or ‘long tail’ video content is being produced and disseminated, and in who is able to create and distribute ultra-niche content.

In this content rich and potentially saturated environment, content producers and marketers are relentlessly pursuing fresh ways to engage consumers and viewers already on sensory overload (Rosman, 2013; Stählberg & Maila, 2013). Narrowcasting, niche content broadcast on cable TV, and its successor Slivercasting, niche video content broadcast on the Internet (Hansell, 2006), are alternative marketing and highly selective advertising channels offering advertisers the opportunity to connect with consumers and viewers in the right place, at the right time, with a targeted message through branded content on the Internet (Hansell, 2006).

Correspondingly, the need for knowledge on content marketing (which includes all types of content that directly or indirectly promotes a business, brand, product, or service (Gunelius, 2011) is increasing in demand as more organisations seek to take advantage of the new opportunities for engagement and interaction niche digital video content marketing has created, since the lines between editorial and advertising have blurred (Basney, 2014):

Forrester Research predicts that enterprise content volume is growing at a rate of 200% annually (Rose, 2014 p. 28).

Information on how to create compelling and engaging ultra-niche video content is also required as the role of publisher is a major shift in the way organisations have traditionally approached marketing and communication (Basney, 2014). For instance, the General
Manager Marketing, Kmart Australia stated in an email he sent to me dated 15 December 2011 10:43:52 (see Appendix 1):

The idea of a dedicated TV channel is indeed one of the ideas that has been reviewed in the past and while we agree in principle, the investment required for installation, maintenance and most importantly the content creation slows our appetite for this type of project….. We are a retailer and not a media organisation so we will require assistance in this space!

The quote above illustrates the issues non-media organisations face in creating video content marketing in an environment dominated by either large conglomerates or low quality small home videos and blog gossip (Castells, 2011 p. 15).

As niche broadcasting is in its infancy and marketing strategy is emergent, there is clearly a lot of confusion as to how to apply and use content marketing, as a 2013 report by The Content Marketing Institute recounted in Internet Business News:

92 per cent of non-profit professionals use content marketing, with 91 per cent using Facebook to distribute content, and 65 per cent producing more content than they were one year ago... 69 per cent of non-profit organisations have someone in place who oversees content marketing, although only 25 per cent have a documented content strategy. (I. B. News, 2013)

Overall, the report states that only 26 per cent of businesses say they are effective at using content marketing to attract and retain clients/viewers (I. B. News, 2013).

Joe Pulizzi, the founder of the Content Marketing Institute and author of Epic Content Marketing affirms the popularity and need for clear guidelines on how to create compelling video content marketing, as he stated in a recent Content Marketing Institute marketing professionals study, B2B Content Marketing: 2014 Benchmarks, Budgets, and Trends: North America:

93% of B2B marketers say they are using content marketing in some way, shape, or form and 73% of those marketers are creating more content than the previous 12-month period (J. O. E. Pulizzi, 2013 pp. 16-17).
According to Pulizzi (2013), although many of these companies say they are creating content marketing, they are not really. They are just producing creative advertising instead of focusing on communicating with their customers and prospects without selling, and need guidance on how to create compelling video content marketing (J. O. E. Pulizzi, 2013). This is coupled with the fact that online video has become the preferred content channel for business-to-business (B2B) marketers around the world, as organisations are now using engaging niche videos to educate, entertain, inspire and attract customers (Litt, 2014).

Now that so many organisations are adopting some form of content marketing, it is becoming even more important to comprehend how organisations can differentiate themselves with compelling content that truly engages customers and prospects and, more importantly, leads to action. By the same token, understanding about how to continually provide relevant content in an oversaturated media environment, is essential:

> It would take an individual over 5 million years to watch the amount of video that will cross global IP networks each month in 2018. Every second, nearly a million minutes of video content will cross the network by 2018. (Cisco, 2014)

Moreover, the report, *Online and On Demand: Trends in Australian online video use*, compiled by Screen Australia using research conducted by Nielsen, summarises the point that new media business models are essential:

> The challenge now for industry is to find and adopt business models that adapt to the new ways we watch while creating a compelling enough offer, or clever enough platform, to monetise it. Meeting this challenge is vital if content creators are to continue financing and making stories that will capture our imaginations into the future. (ScreenAustralia, 2014 p.2)

Similarly, Gibs points to the need for and lack of new Internet TV creative and business models, when he states:

> As more and more “TV” is being shown on an Internet platform, how the media itself is being consumed and how individuals interact with it are changing radically. These changes will almost certainly change every part of the TV industry, from the business model to the creative process. (Gibs, 2009 p. 11)
In the light of this analysis, Anderson’s suggestion that the long tail concept can be (and has been) used to sell services and marketing opportunities that use Castells concept of ‘networks’ and technology is evidenced as producers and marketers such as myself tap into and provide diverse targeted content for online social groupings. Many commentators, such as Clay Shirky, have pointed out that there are significant hurdles to jump in the monetising of aggregate audiences, especially with regard to the ways in which the action of a group of viewers adds up to something more than just aggregated individual action (Shirky, 2008).

Of course, as with all new forms of media, there exist new problems and opportunities as the conceptual and technological framework is constantly changing, or is in flux.

Outlined above are a number of the pressing problems in relation to ultra-niche broadcasting and marketing including the democratisation of production and distribution, audience fragmentation and autonomy, the need for knowledge about successful video content marketing, audience expectations, as well as individual versus group audience aggregation. This study has offered some data which suggests that there is a clear need for research that might attempt to resolve some of these new problems.

Given these new forms of dissemination and production, and that there is an emergent market in flux, this suggests that there are benefits to, and the need for, research and development across this site. One way to examine issues of niche power and the long tail is to do so in production and critical reflection.

By the same token, it has been useful to address the question of production and market through the notion of networked power, read primarily via the work of sociologist and network theorist Manuel Castells. Castells (2011) examines the changing fields of power in the TV industry and questions whether power as traditionally formulated through mass media makes sense in the network society. That said there is an important qualitative difference that needs to be acknowledged between the critical purpose of Castell’s endeavour to revise theories of social power in light of changing communication networks and technologies, and the practical problem-solving purpose of this study. Castells attempts to build a general theory of networked social relations on a global scale and this project endeavours to re-purposes Castells' concept of networked social power for use in developing applied
knowledge of niche/slivercasting strategies and seeks to solve problems for independent producers. This is done by applying and operationalising the theory of "networked power" as a guide to action in the field of independent/corporate audio-visual production. The following section clarifies this further by addressing key points of Castells’ theorisation of power and shows how the long tail and slivercasting can be utilised and situated within a larger content model as a form of counter power.

**Media Production and Networked Power**

According to network theorist Manuel Castells theories of social power in light of changing communication networks and technologies, the power to create for-profit media is usually in the hands of a small number of mass media conglomerates that are typically formed by constellations of multiple media properties operating in numerous ways and in multiple cultural and institutional environments brought together through their ability to decide the content and format of communication (Castells, 2011). However, this power to create and disseminate power, as traditionally articulated, has been radically altered in our current (networked) society (Castells, 2011). Castells (2011) observes that, in this shifting ground of power, there are new forms of domination and determination to be discovered.

These new forms of domination and determination are significant to this study as they make concrete statements about questions of power and counter power. Through the development of the project work, this study attempts to build on and discover if an ultra-niche video network model can be seen as proxy of networked power for independent corporate producers, and presents an ultra-niche in-house TV model as a power/counter power and provides a framework to understand these dynamics.

Castells explains that in order to form a new networked subject a complex set of joint actions is required (Castells, 2011). These complex sets of joint actions are akin to the disparate ultra-niche broadcasting issues and practices that must be addressed in order to develop and model a self-sustaining in-house television network.

The projects examine various aspects, or nodes, of the construction of counter power distributed via Intranet, online or on LED screens throughout an organisation for the purpose of creating a community and to be used as a promotional, entertainment or informational tool.
A practice-based research model is essential as Castell’s counter power is seen through the lens of activities and practices, rather than ideas. Castells noted that an investigatory methodology is the best way to approach and find the specific network configuration of actors that form new kinds of domination and determination:

Who does what, how, where, and why through this multiprunged networking strategy is a matter for investigation, not for formal theorization. (Castells, 2011 p.786)

Formal theory will only make sense on the basis of an accumulation of relevant knowledge. For this knowledge to be generated, though, we need an analytical construction that fits the kind of society we inhabit. (Castells, 2011 p.786)

Therefore this investigation answers Castells call for knowledge on specificity in the analysis of power relationships via a practice-led methodology set in a contemporary small-scale video production environment.

**Niche Video, Counter Power, Programmers and Switchers**

The democratisation of technologies of production, storage and distribution have enabled organisations that sit between mass media conglomerates and consumers to create their own niche video content for targeted audiences professionally and cost-effectively. This study examines the creation of niche content through Castell’s concept of programming and switching.

Castells explains that in a society of networks, the ability to apply control over others depends on two basic means, programming and switching (Castells, 2011). Programmers have the capacity to establish network(s) and to program or reprogram them in terms of the goals assigned to the network (Castells, 2011). Switchers have the ability to connect and ensure the cooperation of different networks by sharing common goals and combining resources while warding off opposition from other networks by setting up tactical alliances (Castells, 2011).

In the creation of the project work, both notions of programming and switching were modelled, implemented, and analysed using a reflective, iterative methodology with varying focuses. Even though Castells (2011) attempts to build a general theory of networked social
relations on a universal scale and his work on “networked power” is sociological in nature, it has been possible to re-purpose Castells’ concept of networked social power for use in developing applied knowledge of ultra-niche broadcast strategies. Consequently, this practice involved the production of, and reflection on, both switching and programming powers and sort to solve issues for independent producers by applying the principles of “networked power” as a guide to action in the field of niche audiovisual production.

The reflective and investigatory practice led methodology that this study undertook was primarily conducted through ‘Action Research’ and encompassed the creation of two audio-visual projects (Inspiration and corporate branded content) and a proposal (the RMIT proposal or the model for a self-sustaining in-house television network).

Chris Argyris’s action research model involves a progressive process of collective problem solving through a reflective method in order to improve the way issues are addressed and solved (Argyris, 1993). As Bridget Somekh (2013) describes, action research mixes research into practical issues with research into the process of development in order to deepen understanding of the enablers of, and barriers to, change (Somekh, 2005). It is a means whereby research can become immersed within practice, going beyond describing, analysing and theorising practices to working in partnership with participants to reconstruct and transform those practices (Somekh, 2005). This process studies action research involved a cyclical process of answering and re-answering questions until the outcomes arise. The systematic critical process of answering the research questions was paramount to answering the outcomes of this study.

In responding to new forms of communication power and counter power, this study sought to build on and re-contextualise Castells’ question:

How can networks relate to one another without blurring the focus that ensures their specificity, and therefore the implementation of their programs? (Castells, 2011 p.786)
Accordingly, this study seeks to solve problems for independent producers by applying and operationalising Castell’s theory of “networked power” as a guide to action in a comparatively narrower field of independent/corporate audiovisual production. Consequently, this study answers the following key questions born from the results of a critical literature survey on the emergent field of targeted branded video content for ultra-niche audiences. Specifically, each question comes from either the reflection or reading of one aspect of the wider main question of, can an ultra-niche video network model be seen as proxy of networked power for independent corporate producers? In addition, this study assumes that it is possible to create a global network model and implementation system with varied actors. It asks:

- What are the relationships of programming and switching present in ultra-niche broadcasting networks? And what are the implications for independent corporate audio-visual producers?
- What skills, knowledge, and network-making capacities do independent corporate audio-visual producers require to explore ultra-niche opportunities?
- How do the technologies and networks of niche media, and slivercasting change the social relations of video production, distribution, and consumption?
- Can ultra-niche broadcasting models bring network-making power to small actors (independent corporate audio-visual producers)?
- What are the sites of ultra-niche broadcasting network models?

It also asks:

- Can an ultra-niche broadcasting network connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action?

Through an iterative practice and reflection model, this study answers what the mechanisms are for defining, addressing, and keeping an ultra-niche audience in a changing media environment where distribution methods are constantly changing and developing. This scholarship also addresses how ultra-niche video content networks can be produced and disseminated by an organisation no matter the size or budget. Answering the problem (and possibilities) of how independent corporate producers can help organisations use video content marketing to communicate with their audience. Issues of community building, branding, differentiation, and recognition of ultra-niche video content networks are also addressed. This study also examines how digital internet-based technologies that have broken
the broadcast monopoly on TV can create open distribution platforms and opportunities for independent ultra-niche content producers.

To build on and explore these relevant ultra-niche video production and content marketing issues, the practice involves progressive recapitulation, development, and reflection through three projects as well as analyses of digital niche broadcasting and marketing communication theories.

The empirical foundations for this thesis are provided by a portfolio of three related creative practice activities that have been undertaken over a period of approximately five years. Two of these projects are audiovisual production projects. The third project (RMITV or an ultra-niche network proposal) was a proposal for production activity based on insights generated from the first two projects and informed by original audience research of the proposed target market. The first audiovisual production project was a female targeted short series entitled ‘Inspiration’ (Kim, 2011), underwritten by independent producers, with sponsors interested in communicating with the target audience coming on board at various points in the project development and production process. Notably the content created in this project was made available to niche audiences on a wide variety of platforms on a non-exclusive basis, including social media, video aggregators, broadcast channels, subscription TV, and branded websites. In the second project (Corporate Branded Content) the Inspiration format and series provided the basis for a customised web channel developed for a corporate sponsor - Credit Suisse. This Corporate Branded Content was located on the Credit Suisse website and intranet and was used to increase the general public and the employees’ awareness of the philanthropic and corporate social responsibility involvements of Credit Suisse.

The third project (RMITV Network proposal) was a proposal to aggregate, brand, and slivercast RMIT generated audiovisual content, and to augment and support this activity through some additional production activity. This proposal drew on insights generated from the first two projects and was informed by original audience research of the proposed target market. Hence, as part of the proposal project, empirical research in the form of an online survey was conducted. This anonymous online survey was conducted through the online survey website www.surveymonkey.com and 50 national (Australian) and international current and previous university students and participants. Survey participants were contacted.
and recruited online via Facebook or e-mail and the survey was disseminated via the friends, students and staff at RMIT (Appendix 4).

In order to identify the practical challenges that must be addressed in order to develop and model a proxy of power and counter power, each project used different tools of analysis, each skewed to address different aspects of the key research questions. Hence the results of this study were discovered over a period of three years through testing, gathering and collaborating with a team of interns, media professionals and creative people. Within a defined timeline, this study involved gathering, journaling and analysing my actions and practice, and initiating a practice-based reflective cycle to address problem solving in a constantly changing, fast-paced production environment.

As with any newly and rapidly growing and changing digital media practice, the significance of addressing and building on these ultra-niche broadcasting and niche networking power issues is important to digital media and marketing communications academics and commentators such as Castells and Chris Anderson. This practice-led study is primarily of significance to marketers, practitioners and organisations that sit between large professional media production companies and low quality home video creators that distribute on YouTube. The reason for this is because a ‘niche power’ proposal or model is able to give network-making power to smaller actors and not just a handful of conglomerates and their surrogates and partners, i.e. the long tail of network makers.

Next this work will discuss the power categories of Castells in more detail, as well as identify the critical literature that is essential in a discussion of networked (counter) power (programmers and switchers). Offering an argument suggesting that it is here that there is some useful theoretical content to unpack that explains and exemplifies the kind of power relations will be examined further.
CHAPTER 2 STATE OF THE ART REVIEW

This chapter presents the results of a critical literature survey and focuses on why theoretical knowledge from a range of disciplines and research approaches are relevant to independent corporate audio-visual producers.

This section also concentrates on what can be built upon and how practices of producing ultra-niche video content relate to previous research and artefacts, with the aim of understanding and identifying the practical research challenges that corporate audio-visual producers must address in order to develop and model an ultra-niche in-house television channel.

This is done to establish the measures of excellence, limits and opportunities, and in order to contextualise previous work that has been done to establish both the site and the consequences of this study.

In examining the relationship between ultra-niche content and power, this chapter defines ultra-niche broadcasting, i.e. slivercasting and long tail video, provides a history and explains the factors that contribute to move away from mass media to ultra-niche broadcasting. By investigating how ultra-niche broadcasting models bring network-making power to small actors this study reviews literature on how, due to technological advances, ultra-niche audiences can be profitable, leveraged and harnessed. Again, this scholarship reviews literature by that are useful to niche content producers on subjects such as the transformation of the consumption, supply and distribution of media through the rise of the networked society, primarily using the work of sociologist and network theorist Manuel Castells, whose influential sociology of new media looks at the social implications of digital networks.

This study has also examined literature on the technological developments that have enabled independent corporate audio-visual producers to produce and broadcast their own ultra-niche video content. In addition to investigating how a ultra-niche broadcasting network can connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action, literature on the expansion of different types of ultra-niche distribution methods as well as how the media landscape is responding to a merging of marketing theories with digital video production practices was also studied. In fact, this mélange was due to the technological developments in production and distribution tools that organisations and advertisers can now use to target and
communicate with consumers. This study also examined literature on the monetisation of ultra-niche video content by media, economic and television theorists such as Eli Noam and Amanda Lotz, as well as literature on how branding can be used in relation to the creation of ultra-niche content networks. Similarly, literature by academics such as John Hagel and Clay Shirky on how organisations use ultra-niche video content networks to build and communicate with an e-community around shared interests was also reflected on. To study how long tail or ultra-niche broadcasting networks can connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action, this study examines academic literature by Janine Nahapiet, Sumantra Ghoshal, Don Comstock and Sally Fox on how ultra-targeted video content can create a community of sharers and learners with which organisations can use to connect and interact. The final section of the chapter outlines the conceptual framework for the study and highlights the relevance of these authors’ insights in which niche, slivercasting and long tail marketing communication strategies might be operationalised by corporate video producers.

An Introduction to Niche Broadcasting and the Move Away from Mass Media in Favour of Niche

To place this practice of producing ultra-niche video content in a technical, social, cultural, economic and research milieu of ultra-niche broadcasting, this section will define, provide a brief history of, introduce and explain the move away from mass media to ultra-niche broadcasting and how organisations can harness these new power relations to create their own ultra-niche networks.

Chris Anderson’s work defines ultra-niche broadcasting and examines the move away from mass media to ultra-niche broadcasting in recent years. Anderson, a professional communicator who has done much to popularise and make accessible key concepts in network economics such as ‘The Long Tail,’ describes how ultra-niche content has become increasingly available and in demand as the costs for production and distribution have fallen (Anderson, 2006). Consequently, video content that is not available through conventional distribution networks can still be profitable. Thanks to metadata and search links, this content can find markets. In the light of this we find ourselves in an environment that includes:
Video that could and would be made if only there were a good way to find an audience for it. (Anderson, January 10-17 2005)

The definition of the Long Tail video in the context of this exegesis is:

Content that is not available through traditional distribution channels but could nevertheless find an audience. (Anderson, January 10-17 2005)

For the most part, this will be the definition of ultra-niche video used in this exegesis. Anderson writes how this could include TV shows that are made but not broadcast in a specific area, content that cable channels and providers don’t carry foreign language TV, obscure local sports and events, archived television shows, from old to relatively recent, as well as current ultra-niche shows. Further, ultra-niche content could include videos that are made but not broadcast, such as independent films, commercials (which are broadcast but not scheduled and findable), amateur videos, including news, and commercial or corporate videos intended for targeted audiences, similar to the ones that were created as part of this study, as well as video that could and would be made if only there were a good way to find an audience for it, explains Anderson. The best sense of what that might be can be found by looking at the online videos that have been made since the broadband web became a reality Anderson believes (Anderson, January 10-17 2005).

In order to provide a context for the current work, and to inform the creation of a process that consolidates disparate practices in content production, Anderson’s work on the long tail raises new questions about audiences; specifically, what are the mechanisms for defining, addressing and keeping an audience in a changing media environment? Anderson’s work examines how digital and Internet-based technologies and products have broken the broadcast monopoly on TV and have created an open distribution platform. In his discussion of TiVo, a digital video recorder that allows a television viewer to record programming for viewing at a later time, Chris Anderson observes:

‘Prime Time’ is already meaningless to a TiVo user. So is ‘channel’. Soon ‘available in my area’ will be, too. As the instruments of scarcity dissolve, audiences are flowing more naturally across the spectrum of available content, usually at a cost to the hits broadcasting. (Anderson, January 10-17 2005)
In the context of the current project, Anderson’s ‘Long Tail’ is also noteworthy as it provides the theoretical support that allows us to conceptualise how video content can be distributed and produced for a niche audience. Facilitating the idea that creating content for a small-scale audience would not have occurred in part without the reduction in costs and, in particular, the democratisation of production equipment. As Anderson (2006) claims the benefit and importance of the evolution of technology in the past decade has turned mass markets into millions of niches.

This is a key concern in relation to answering the problems of access and how ultra-niche video content can be produced and disseminated by an organisation no matter the size or budget. Moreover, questions of access related to bringing the network-making power of programming and switching to small actors (independent corporate audio-visual producers) are highlighted. Anderson’s work on long tail video is important as it summarises how ultra-niche content can be economically viable in an environment that is markedly less controlled by the traditional media and entertainment industries. One of the main effects of this is unfiltered access to content of all kinds, from the traditional to the extreme of the avant-garde, is that it has created an environment far less ruled by the established media and entertainment industries. Anderson explains further, one of the most noteworthy things about traditional television broadcast is that it can bring one show to millions of people with unequalled proficiency; although it cannot do the contrary - transmit a million television shows to one person each. However, that is precisely what the Internet does so well (Anderson 2006). The economic success of the broadcast era required successful television shows with large budgets to catch huge audiences; the costs of the Internet age are the opposite (Anderson 2006). As Anderson recaps:

Offering the same stream to millions of people at the same time is hugely expensive and wasteful for a distribution network optimised for point-to-point communications. There’s still demand for mainstream content, but they’re no longer the only market (Anderson 2006).

Big budget popular television shows compete with an infinite number of niche markets, of any size, large or small. Allowing engaging content produced on a large or small budget to
find a market place, and as a consequence consumers, is increasingly favouring the one with the greatest choice (Anderson, 2010).

The era of one-size-fits-all is ending, and in its place is something new, a market of multitudes. (Anderson, 2010 p. 5)

This shattering of the mainstream into a zillion different cultural shards is something that has upset traditional media and entertainment no end (Anderson, 2010 p.5).

After decades of executives refining their skill in creating, picking, and promoting hits, those hits are suddenly not enough according to Anderson (Anderson, 2010).

Anderson explains that the old concept of the few hits that counted with everything else that did not, is not viable anymore. He states that the mass market is turning into a mass of niches (Anderson 2010). This mass of niches has always existed, although the cost of reaching them before the Internet was developed was prohibitive and impractical (Anderson 2010). Explaining that in the past it was hard for viewers to find niche content, and for niche content to find viewers, now it’s rapidly becoming a cultural and economic force to be reckoned with. Nowadays, in a new era of networked consumers and digital everything, the economics of distribution are changing radically as the Internet absorbs each industry it touches, becoming store, theatre, and broadcaster at a fraction of the traditional cost (Anderson 2010). Online content producers are also now able to find audiences due to the relatively low cost of digital distribution.

The sales data and trends from these services show that the emerging digital entertainment economy is going to be radically different from today’s mass market. If the twentieth-century entertainment industry was about hits, the twenty-first will be equally about niches. (Anderson, 2010 p.16)

In fact, what is truly amazing about the Long Tail is the size of it (Anderson 2010). Business strategies that build upon Anderson’s Long Tail concept are challenged by Anita Elberse (2014) on the grounds that it still, in various situations, does not make commercial sense. In its place, she argues, is the old chart showing a few big hits and a million misses, a world controlled by the strength not of people, but of wealth. Everything considered, she writes:
Although advances in digital technologies may at first blush seem to have a ‘democratising’ influence, in reality they tend to have the opposite effect: they foster concentration and a winner-takes-all dynamic. (Elberse, 2014)

Elberse (2014) suggests that big companies have dominated and taken over the Internet. As one thinks of the Internet now, one doesn’t think of a space controlled by small traders; one thinks of Google, Amazon, Apple and Facebook. She claims that large companies leave no space for smaller companies to prosper online and have ambushed the Internet (Elberse, 2014). Although this is an important counter argument, and while Elberse may have some valid points with regards to some business models such as her criticism of Quickflix, an Australian movie rentals service where she argues that, in her analysis of ratings data, movies in the tail are rated on average lower than movies in the head, therefore, movies in the tail are fated to stay in the tail (Elberse, 2014). This is not the case when producing in-house targeted video content networks, as the audiences themselves are looking for specialised programming that interests them or provides content on what an organisation is known for. Accordingly, it would be inappropriate to broadcast a ‘blockbuster’ movie on an in-house TV channel produced by a tea company, for example, dedicated to broadcasting and creating programing on tea for tea enthusiasts. In fact, when the content and distribution channel is made by and for a specific targeted ultra-niche audience, connecting supply and demand is dramatically lowered and becomes accessible to more organisations, not less as Anderson points out:

This is not just a quantitative change, but a qualitative one, too. Bringing niches within reach reveals latent demand for non-commercial content. Then, as demand shifts toward the niches, the economics of providing them improve further, and so on, creating a positive feed-back loop that will transform entire industries--and the culture--for decades to come. (Anderson, 2010 p.26)

From the point of view of an ultra-niche video producer the impact of the long tail permits us to revisit questions of the viability of niche audiences, content production, and distribution as:

Millions of people now have the capacity to make a short film” Talent is not universal, but it’s widely spread: Give enough people the capacity to create and inevitably gems will emerge. (Anderson, 2010 p. 54)
This is significant to this study in relation to answering problems of content production expertise and costs, as many more people can now produce enormous amounts of content relatively cheaply. The fact that the costs and expertise associated and required to produce content are no longer prohibitive allows consumers and professionals alike to attempt to create innovative content with limited resources and training. This provides evidence for why there is a need for a proposal on how to create original content for an ever-narrowing and increasing audience.

Moreover, just because everyone watches the same few things doesn't necessarily mean that that is what they all want to watch. It is perhaps a consequence of the problem that that was all that was available at the time (Anderson, January 10-17 2005). Ultra-niche in-house TV networks can solve this issue by providing tailored content to a targeted audience when they want to watch it.

The History of Niche Broadcasting

According to media executive and commentator, Francoise Sabbah (1985), media is no longer mass media in the traditional sense of sending a limited number of messages to a homogeneous mass audience.

To put this transformation succinctly; television has already gone through a number of changers from free to air network TV to cable TV, to today, with the shift from analogue to high-capacity digital and internet TV distributed on smart phones, tablets and Internet-enabled television sets (Anderson, January 10-17 2005). Interestingly, according to Anderson, in 1980, the average American home could watch any one of 16 channels, although nearly 80 per cent of them were watching one of the three main networks in prime time. In 2005, according to Anderson, 95 per cent of those homes had an average of 110 channels and only half of them watched the main free to air networks in prime-time (Anderson, January 10-17 2005). Today, people expect to be able to see whatever they want, whenever they want, wherever they want as they spend a full five hours and 16 minutes a day in front of a screen, and that’s without even turning on a television (Rosman, 2013). Anderson encapsulates the development of niche broadcasting when he writes:

As the number of channels available in the average home goes from 80 (analogue cable) to 200 (digital cable) to infinity (Internet TV), it’s easy to see the shift towards less
concentrated audiences continuing and more people migrating to truly niche content.
(Anderson, January 10-17 2005)

To clarify this transformation of media consumption from mass to niche further, this section summarises the history of niche broadcasting by introducing the concept of Narrowcasting, niche content broadcast on cable TV; and its successor, Slivercasting, niche video content broadcast on the Internet.

The notion of narrowcasting is when video content that might not appeal to a large audience is broadcast over a network to reach a narrow audience (Simpson & Greenfield, 2007). This audience is greater than the slivercasting (content produced and broadcast for niche audiences online) audience but smaller than the general mass broadcast audience and sits somewhere in between mass and ultra-niche. Narrowcast content is usually provided free of charge (supported by advertising) on cable television, pay-per-view or on a subscription basis (Simpson & Greenfield, 2007). The use of the term Narrowcasting, according to an article written by Patrick Parsons in 2003, first entered the dictionary due to computer scientist and psychologist Joseph Carl Robnett Licklider, who in a 1967 report, projected the development of a variety of cable television networks aimed at serving the requirements of a smaller targeted audience (Parsons, 2003). Carl Robnett Licklider’s concept of narrowcasting rejects and dissolves the constraints imposed by a monolithic mass-appeal broadcast approach (Parsons, 2003). This contributes to addressing where ultra-niche broadcasting has evolved from and how knowledge on the production and distribution of ultra-targeted content for niche audiences has developed. This point is also sustained by Eastman, Head, and Klein who state that, with the proliferation of cable channels and emerging technologies, networks must serve a niche audience if they are to be economically successful (Eastman, 1985). Adding that:

By attempting to reach a demographically or psychologically defined group that the established services do not serve or by challenging the existing services for their audiences. (Eastman, 1985 p.283)

To put it concisely, narrowcasting adds greatly to understanding the evolution from mass TV content towards niche, and to the development of ultra-niche broadcasting. The 1970s saw for the first time that video content was produced for a narrow targeted audience outside the
framework of the mass broadcast television system. By the same token, the development of cable TV and the lack of targeted content provided by traditional television networks served the need for the narrowcasting concept and the need to create a market for new channels (Smith-Shomade, 2004). In the same way that by developing a model for creating an ultra-niche TV network this study endeavours to go beyond narrowcasting to create a platform where niche organisations can focus on ultra-targeted groups of interest.

Ultimately, questions of what are the emergent ultra-niche broadcasting theories and how my practice of creating a model for an ultra-niche content network can be seen as a new form or kind of ultra-niche broadcasting, Carl Robnett Licklider’s concept of narrowcasting is important because it informs and guides my knowledge on the past developments of broadcasting content for niche audiences and it contextualises my work within the emergent ultra-niche broadcasting continuum.

Chris Anderson’s and Saul Hansell’s notion of slivercasting addresses the historical context of content produced and broadcast for niche audiences online. As the successor of narrowcasting, Slivercasting is tailor-made video content distributed via the Internet for a narrow niche audience.

As Chris Anderson (2007) describes in an article on the long tail form of distribution:

> Slivercasting is the opportunity for monetizing niche micro audiences. Slivercasting is leveraging lower distribution costs to reach a specific niche and audience. There are thousands of producers whose programming would never make it into primetime but have highly dedicated small audiences. It is a phenomenon that could be called slivercasting. (International, 2007)

By the same token, Saul Hansell (2006) reports on the fact that in 2006 a sailing enthusiast and London computer consultant who could not afford to go down the traditional broadcast or cable route launched an online sailing channel entitled Sail.tv. Sail.tv was filled with everything sailing, sailing talk shows, product reviews, programs on sailing techniques and intense coverage of the sort of smaller races that didn't make it onto traditional television but attracted 70,000 viewers online (Hansell, 2006). To explain slivercasting further, Hansell writes that there are thousands of independent producers whose programming would never
make it into prime time but who have very dedicated small audiences that can be harnessed through the concept of slivercasting online (Hansell, 2006).

In short, the slivercasting theory provides insights into the evolution of ultra-niche broadcasting and allows me to test and formulate through practice, what structural and technological developments have transpired within the online niche video-broadcasting sphere since slivercasting was coined in 2006. This is significant, as understanding the complex set of joint actions that were required to form, define and how independent commercial audio-visual producers, might respond to proliferating media platforms and fragmenting media markets is one of the key concerns that underpins this research. Hence, Chris Anderson’s and Saul Hansell’s work on slivercasting, as a development of narrowcasting, was helpful as the problem of what changes in both the medium and the message (Marshall McLuhan’s dictum) have occurred in the development process from narrowcasting to slivercasting are fundamental to the idea that my work is a development of slivercasting, as slivercasting is a development of narrowcasting.

Furthermore, Hansell explains the concept of slivercasting when he gives examples of how American cable and satellite television network, Trio, ran into the same problem with finance as Sail.tv, and has subsequently broken its network into three distinct sites in order to focus directly on programming for each niche audience. The first being the music and pop culture network Triotv.com; the second spin off network was brilliantbutcancelled.com, an online channel that features old TV shows; and the third, outzone.com, focusing on gay and lesbian programming. VegTV.com featuring vegetarian cooking writer and food promoter Marie Oser had previously been broadcast on cable networks, and is now a website that gets up to 1000 hits per day (Hansell, 2006). The fact that audiences were tuning in to watch these online channels in such large numbers encouraged leading broadcast companies such as Discovery Communications (creator of animal planet and discovery health) to look into even more specialised programming over the Internet according to Hansell. The technological developments that have enabled the distribution of the niche online videos Hansell mentions in his article have opened up many further opportunities for independent content creators, such as myself, to not only produce but to distribute video content that can establish a niche online audience. The break-up of traditional networking power systems of distribution and
the shift towards a democratised online distribution method, illustrates how online audiences are created and aggregated, modelling a method for online audience creation.

In his article, Hansell (2006) also offers the following examples of the practical application of the concept of slivercasting and how the concept is being used to aggregate an audience globally.

Darrin G. Ramage, the chief executive of Maxim Media Marketing and who operates Brain Damage, a company that produces and distributes horror films too obscure to show in theatres, states that the company has no choice but to move to online distribution.

The bottom line is that for independent horror movie fans - people from 18 to 25 - the Internet is where they are. Anything they want to know about, they go on the Internet.

If they want a movie, they go on the Internet. (Hansell, 2006)

Important to examining the relationship between ultra-niche content and power is the idea that the Internet is seen as a network of networks that affords global reach to a range of media, including broadcast media. Although video content may only be relevant to a micro-targeted audience scattered globally by distributing ultra-niche video content online eliminates any geographical impediments. This is because the Internet has no geographical boundaries and a relevant global audience may be reached no matter where they are. As Hansell explains, among the niche audiences that are considered both large and attractive to Internet broadcasters are immigrants and expatriates seeking news and entertainment from their home countries (Hansell, 2006). This, says Hansell, has assisted Toronto based JumpTV, to provide live Internet transmission of television station broadcasts from more than 60 countries around the world, including such diverse channels as VTV4 from Vietnam, Channel 10 from Greece, Amazon Sat from Brazil and, the original Arabic-language version of Al Jazeera, the news channel based in Qatar (Hansell, 2006). Mr Tuzman, the director of JumpTV, says he faces rivalry from cable and satellite TV services, especially in the United States where there is already a lot of programming for the largest ethnic groups. As a consequence, Mr Tuzman has decided to focus on smaller niche ethnic groups, as he explains:

The Bengali community in the U.S. is not the size of Dominicans. But guess what? They can't watch Bengali TV anywhere else. If you are a Mexican in North America, you are
much better served by cable and satellite than if you are a Moroccan in Europe. Our company is a very exciting company because we aggregate a lot of different audiences, but any one of those audiences is a very small niche. (Hansell, 2006)

Hansell’s idea that a slivercasting network is able to focus on smaller niche groups globally is important in examining the relationship between ultra-niche content and power as it reflects exactly the type of micro-niche audience that this study has aimed to monetise and aggregate. On top of that, Hansell also mentions how Kostas Metaxas who runs Exero, an Australian company that produces interviews with luxury brands, has also moved his video production online in order to reach a global niche audience (Hansell, 2006).

In order to continue to build on and question the relationship between ultra-niche content and power, the work of Hansell and the idea of slivercasting is important in the context of this study because of the actions taken in order to examine the main question involved the creation of targeted video content broadcast on the Internet to a global niche audience i.e. slivercasting. Therefore, the concept and the preceding examples of slivercasting ultimately clarify how it is possible to create a new form or global network or content platform model and implementation system with new kinds of actors.

By providing background knowledge on the development of niche broadcasting this study addressed the historical context of content produced and broadcast for ultra-niche audiences. In fact, this analysis describes networking power; the main theory that propelled this project and outlines theories on the fragmentation of media, audience fragmentation, and autonomy by digital media scholars such as Philip M. Napoli who consider the implications of niche broadcasting and Castells theory’s on network making power for media and communications industries and institutions. Next this study also describes how, without the break-up of traditional methods of distribution, audiences would not be able to choose what and when they watch video content, and the creation of a model for a self-sustaining in-house television network would not be feasible.

Networks

To further introduce and locate the work within the field of ultra-niche content and power, this study addresses the transformation of the consumption, supply and distribution of media
through the rise of Castells networked society. The concept of ‘networks’ is defined by Castells (2009):

Networks are complex structures of communication constructed around a set of goals that simultaneously ensure unity of purpose and flexibility of execution by their adaptability to the operating environment. (M. Castells, 2009 p. 26)

Networks are infinite and able to develop without limits, incorporating new nodes as long as they are able to communicate within the network, specifically as long as they share the same communication values or functional purposes (Manuel Castells, 2009).

Because the convergence of social evolution and information technologies has created an ideal environment for the proliferation and use of online networks (Manuel Castells, 2009), the need for the development of a new innovative ultra-niche network model has become apparent. In other words, the need for a new specific network configuration of actors and interests that communicate with and build an e-community around shared interests, such as a web video system for ultra-niche audiences, is needed, as Castells points out:

Communication technologies have intensified in recent years, and because mindful communication is the characteristic feature of humans, it is logical that it is in this realm where society has been most profoundly modified. (Manuel Castells, 2009)

Castells’ concept of networks and technology help answer how independent producers and marketers, such as me, can tap into and provide targeted content for widespread and diverse online social grouping. Castells’ concept of social networking and technology also illustrate how the creation and dissemination of ultra-targeted content via the Internet can now find an audience that it might not have otherwise found. In addition, Castells’ ideas on affordable technology and two-way horizontal communication networks enable organisations to produce and broadcast their own ultra-niche video content professionally and cost-effectively using consistently changing technologies.

Castells’ writings on networks and technology illustrate how technological developments often find their expression as new tools to operate within a network on the Internet (Manuel Castells, 2009). Research on how to create and model new developments in network process and infrastructure will unavoidably involve a wide variety of inter-related practices that
require further iteration, recombination and development. A lot of this development occurs in a co-dependent (networked) environment, where new tools and capacities are regularly modelled and re-modelled (e.g. video protocols, bandwidth, infrastructure, access, content acquisition and storage, audiences, measurement and analytical tools). This is quite a complex net of relations that are undergoing constant change.

Castells describes the emerging order of a new form of social organisation and therefore a new way of regarding, consuming and broadcasting targeted media that blurs the lines between the virtual and the real world. This study follows the logic of a society where media choice is the new normal and as Castells states:

Electronic communication overlies everything we do, wherever and whenever we do it.

(Manuel Castells, 2009 p. xxx)

Castells’ work in relation to ultra-niche content creation supports the need to research questions such as: How do we factor in the interrelationship of networks with development of tools when creating a self-sustaining in-house television network model? How do we approach the building of a model or framework for understanding the enabling technologies in regard to the development of the concept of ultra-niche/long tail video networks? This signifies further the need for research on how to create a new network-making form or model that resonates with a continually connected virtual audience with vast amounts of choice regarding what and when they watch.

This move away from traditional broadcasting to the adoption of IP technologies as the foundation of the network is explained by Axel Bruns who states:

The emergence of IPTV (Internet Protocol TV) and similar technologies for the delivery of televisual content over Internet Protocol-based broadband networks points to the likelihood of a gradual replacement of other networking infrastructures with IP-based networks; this is especially likely where most television viewers have already switched from broadcast to cable networks, and/or where broadband access is widely available and affordable. (Bruns, 2008 p.87 )

As more and more television viewers migrate to watching video content broadcast on the Internet, the need for research on how to create and model an online ultra-niche content
network, increases as production companies and organisations desire to reach them. Similarly, Jon Gibs’ work (in Gerbarg, 2009) on Internet television points to the need for, and lack of, new Internet TV network creative and business models when he states:

As more and more “TV” is being shown on an Internet platform, how the media itself is being consumed and how individuals interact with it are changing radically. These changes will almost certainly change every part of the TV industry, from the business model to the creative process. (Gibs, 2009 p. 11)

Castells adds:

The key feature of wireless communication is not mobility but perpetual connectivity. (Manuel Castells, 2009 P. xxx)

Our society is becoming a society where we are not only increasingly connected via a virtual horizontal network, but we are all individually and constantly connected via mobile devices no matter where and when (Manuel Castells, 2009; Manovich, 2001). This study aims to learn from, and build on, these perspectives by exploring how organisations can take advantage of this wireless connected two-way communication network by providing targeted ultra-niche video content that is constantly available electronically, anywhere and everywhere. In fact, these new and constantly changing innovations (power shifts) in the TV industry support the idea that working on network-making creates new knowledge. This is due to the densely inter/intra relations of networked broadcast models, thus practice-based research, t.e. making models that can trace and find connections, discover nodes, opportunities, blocks and surprises.

Power and Counter Power

The power relation this study intends to deconstruct through this study is the horizontal digital communication power of global/local multimedia networks of mass communication (including mass self-communication), by critiquing and exploring the power/counter-power that sits in between the power of mass media and prosumers (a term indicating a production that is midway between a professional and a consumer (Browne, 2013). In examining the relationship between ultra-niche content and power, Manuel Castells’ theories on networks, fields of power, counter power and, most notably, network-making power have been the most significant theories that have underpinned this research.
Power is the relational capacity to impose an actor’s will over another actor’s will on the basis of the structural capacity of domination embedded in the institutions of society. Following this definition, the question of power holding in the networks of the network society could be either answered very simply or simply impossible to answer. (Castells, 2011 p.782)

Castells queries power in the network society further by adding that perhaps the question of power as traditionally articulated does not make sense in the network society; however, he states that there are new forms of domination and determination that are shaping people’s lives (Castells, 2011). Consequently, there are new power relationships at work, in new forms and with new kinds of actors that need to be determined (Castells, 2011). There are new technological developments that allow for the creation and re-mapping of networks, that is, there are new ways of creating, influencing and disseminating messages and information through new multimedia-distribution channels. These new power forms and channels comprise the Internet and other horizontal digital communication networks including outdoor LED screens, online blogs, wikis, social networks and virtual worlds, as well as countless continually evolving forms of content sharing sites. The new actors Castells is referring to include smaller professional media producers, non-media organisations and prosumers (or mass self-communicators) who are now able to, due to technological developments, produce and publish their own messages. The use of and access to these new network-making technologies allow for forms of communication that are disruptive, distributed and aggregated along the lines of new technological developments.

The problem of new forms of domination and determination are significant to this study as they build on and question if an ultra-niche broadcasting model brings a form of network-making power to small actors (independent corporate producers). This is important to discover, as new knowledge can be disruptive to existing technologies, enterprise and power relations.

By the same token, communication networks are the fundamental networks of power making in society (Castells, 2011). Networks of power do not merge with other power networks, they work within partnerships and competition (Castells, 2011). With that said, and with similar qualities to branding, the most important form of power in relation to this study follows the logic of network-making power:
Network-making power is the power to program specific networks according to the interests and values of the programmers, and the power to switch different networks following the strategic alliances between the dominant actors of various networks. (Castells, 2011 p,773)

To clarify network-making power further, Castells reasons that in a society of networks, the capacity to exert control over others depends on two basic means, programming and switching (Castells, 2011). Programmers have the capacity to establish networks and to program/reprogram them in terms of the goals assigned to each network (Castells, 2011). Switchers have the ability to connect and ensure the cooperation of different networks by sharing common goals and combining resources while warding off opposition from other networks by setting up tactical alliances (Castells, 2011). In short, programming is being able to create and program a network, and switching is the management of the interface between two or more networks (Castells, 2011). As might be expected, the programming capacity is process specific to each network and, naturally, the process of planning and creating a network is not the same in global finance as it is in military power, in scientific research, in organised crime, or in content marketing/branding, for example (Castells, 2011). Networks do, however, share common cultural materials and this culture is mostly embedded in the processes of communication, particularly within global multimedia business networks with the Internet at its core (Castells, 2011).

The second source of power is switching, switchers are able to connect, control and collaborate with various strategic networks for example between academic networks and business networks, such as with the RMIT proposal/ultra-niche network model (Castells, 2011). These specific networking systems are different to consultants as they are stable operating methods that go beyond the formal self-presentation of institutions and organisations, although traditionally this only occurred and was possible within really big powerful networks (Castells, 2011).

Moreover, sociologist and network theorist Castells argues that although programmers and switchers are the principal forms of power in the network society, only in an ideal pure form can programming and switching be incorporated under one power (Castells, 2011). Castells argues that no unified elite power is capable of keeping both the
programming and switching operations of the all important networks under their control, as they are too big to be able to control the power (Castells, 2011). Castells adds for these power relationships to be asserted, the programs of the dominant networks of society need to set compatible goals between these networks and they must be able, through the switching processes, to communicate with each other, inducing synergy and limiting contradiction, which is very difficult to do (Castells, 2011). There also exists countervailing processes that are excluded, under-represented or are resistant to power that operate using the same power mechanisms: the programs of the networks and the switches between the networks (Castells, 2011).

Castells states that network power exercised by mass digital networks operate as protocols of communication (Castells, 2011). In theory, everything can be digitised explains Castells, although it can have a significant effect:

> It amplifies the diffusion of the message beyond anyone’s control. Digitization is tantamount to potential viral diffusion throughout global networks of communication. This is highly positive if you do want to diffuse the message, but devastating if you do not want to diffuse the message (if, say, the message is a video recording of your wrongdoing). In this case, the network power exercised by digital networks assumes a new form: the removal of control over message distribution. (Castells, 2011 p.780)

The quote above illustrates that Castells is in opposition with the traditional network power of mass media, which reformats the message to be appropriate for the audience in accordance with their corporate strategy (Castells, 2011). In order to consider specific proxies of networked power for independent corporate producers, Castells work on programming and switching prompts questions on whether an ultra-niche broadcasting network can bring this distribution control back in order to stop the “removal of control” over the message.

Castells also describes networking power as having the capacity to let the medium or a message enter the network through gatekeeping procedures or gatekeeping nodes (Castells, 2011), adding that those in charge of the communication networks are the ‘gatekeepers’ or, as Castells describes it, they are gatekeeping the message (Castells, 2011). This also encourages me to question if an ultra-niche broadcasting
network could bring these powers together, i.e. the switching and programing power by examining if ultra-niche broadcasting networks can connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action.

According to Castells, this is an important question to respond to as even in the case of mass multimedia, programing and switching are separate, and it is mass media that usually holds the network-making power as Castells (2011) outlines below:

Because they interact among themselves, as well as with the programmers of other communication networks, it can be said that programmers constitute a network themselves—a decision-making network to set up and manage the programs on the network. But their power is specific, as it is geared to ensure the fulfilment of the goals of the network, with the primary objective being to attract an audience regardless of whether it is to maximize profits, or influence, or something else. The overarching goal of network management by the networked power of programmers is to constitute the programmed. The programmed are the subordinated subjects of the power holders in the communication networks. However, the networked management of the communication networks operates under the conditions of a metaprogram that has been designed by someone else from outside the network. This enigmatic ‘someone else’ is the subject of the most determining form of power—network-making power. (Castells, 2011 p.781)

The sentiment expressed in the quotation embodies Castells’ view that network-making power is usually in the hands of a small number of mass media conglomerates that are typically formed by networks of multiple media properties operating in numerous ways and in multiple cultural and institutional environments with the ability to decide the content and format of communication and a lot more besides (Castells, 2011). Hence, Castells explains:

Metaprogrammers empowered with network-making capacity are themselves corporate networks. (Castells, 2011 p. 782)

Can a model of an independent ultra-niche broadcaster or ‘Metaprogrammer’ show an example of network-making power via the ultra niche broadcasting and show how smaller actors reach and influence their constituencies and target markets?
It is, however, important to also note that, even though mass media communication networks are benefitting from broadcasting online, more people are empowering themselves by building their own networks of mass self-communication (Castells, 2011). Consequently, Castells states that network-making power in communication is presently characterised by the action of mass multimedia corporate networks, including big business and government, which interact with networked users that both consume and create their own media:

Networks interact with networks in the shared process of network making. (Castells, 2011 p.782)

Despite this interaction, there is still unequal competition between professional media production and lower quality prosumer home videos (Castells, 2011). How does the idea of ultra-niche or long tail broadcasting sit in between mass media and mass self-communication? We revisit Castells’ question of:

How can networks relate to one another without blurring the focus that ensures their specificity, and therefore the implementation of their programs? (Castells, 2011 p 786)

The idea outlined by Castells above is important in the context of this study in that it facilitates the need to test if an ultra-niche broadcasting network can connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action through an alliance with a prominent online blogging network that has a large following, particularly on social media. By doing this, this study also discovers if an ultra-niche broadcasting network can connect with other power networks through a fundamental mechanism of power-making in the network society - switching power. Castells clarifies:

Switching functions, and therefore switchers, vary a great deal depending on the characteristics and programs of the networks they switch and on the procedures of exercising switching power. But their action is central to the understanding of power making. Thus, programmers and switchers are the holders of power in the network society. (Castells, 2011 p. 786)

It is important to also note that actors are humans that are shaping networks and the structures of powers behind these networks for organisational aims. When shifts in the development of
interactive, horizontal networks of communication occur, the balance of this field of power changes (Castells, 2011).

Counter power is exercised in the network society by fighting to change the programs of specific networks and by the effort to disrupt the switches that reflect dominant interests and replace them with alternative switches between networks. Actors are humans, but humans are organized in networks. Human networks act on networks via the programming and switching of organisational networks. In the network society, power and counter-power aim fundamentally at influencing the neural networks in the human mind by using mass communication networks and mass self-communication networks. (Castells, 2011)

Ultimately, Castells concept of "networked power" is sociological, political and ethical in nature and can be seen to be disruptive to existing technologies, enterprises and power-relations globally. As a sociologist Castells presents a picture of a new kind of future that is undoubtedly networked; there will be new lines of power that will be drawn across the network, some of which are currently in flux as outlined throughout this chapter, which allows for a re-direction of old systems and the potential to remake the boundaries of power. Accordingly, this project endeavours to re-purpose Castells' concept of networked social power in order to develop applied knowledge of ultra-niche broadcasting strategies for independent producers.

Fragmentation of Media, Audience Fragmentation and Autonomy

In order to build on and question the relationships between programming and switching, media technologies and ultra-niche broadcasting networks further, theories on the fragmentation of media, audience fragmentation and autonomy by digital media scholar Philip M. Napoli are significant as they describe how, without the break-up of traditional methods of distribution, audiences would not be able to choose and consume content on a network of choice anytime (Napoli, 2011). Napoli points out that the media environment has changed in the last decades in two fundamental ways: fragmentation of media, and audience fragmentation and autonomy:

As media technologies continue to facilitate the increasing fragmentation of content options, the distribution of audience attention to a certain degree follows suit - which brings up the notion of audience fragmentation. Audience attention can now be dispersed
across an unprecedented array of content options. This fragmentation process has been aptly described by one Internet audience measurement firm executive as involving “millions of audiences of hundreds instead of hundreds of audiences of millions” (Napoli, 2011 p. 57).

This media fragmentation means increased television channel options, additional niche content, and, in general, increased publishing platforms with carefully targeted content for niche audiences. For example, in the United States 90 per cent of television channels have less than 1 per cent of the audience (Napoli, 2011). Napoli’s notions illustrate the fact that audiences now have an increased choice of what they want to watch, and seek it out. Subsequently, audiences can now be leveraged and provided for no matter who they are and how niche their interests are as long as they know about it (which is a separate marketing issue). Increased fragmentation of content has enabled organisations to use the programming and switching ‘power’ of media technologies and online distribution to standout and attract an audience in an increasingly oversaturated market place. In fact, organisations can use the programming and switching ‘power’ of digital technologies and online distribution to leverage their existing customers and community members to become viewers of their ultra-niche branded television network. Within this study the proxies for programming and switching power are articulated as affordable technologies, multiplatform distribution, peer-to-peer communication (social media) and collaboration. Therefore to be clear, brand identity, branded content, and diverse revenue sources are proxies or indicators of “programming” power, and affiliate marketing and viewer aggregation figure as indicators of “switching” power.

Technological Developments and the Rapid Evolution of Ultra-Niche Broadcasting

Dr Craig Lefebvre’s work ties-in with Castells’ notion that a specific network configuration needs to be analysed and examined when he argues that we need to use new media in new ways, not using new media (Lefebvre, 2007). In order to provide a context for the current work and to inform the creation of a process that consolidates disparate practices in ultra-
niche content production to develop a new form of domination and determination within niche broadcasting, collaboration and promotion are imperative. Lefebve explains:

Social media facilitate collaborations and interactions among others. In its simplest forms, these media can be thought of as digital extensions of the interpersonal channels of promotion (the proliferation of word-of-mouth [WOM] and viral marketing campaigns in the commercial sector) and the narrowing of broadcast-type communication (slivercasting). However, thinking about these new media as simply new promotion channels to exploit misses the essence of what the new revolution is all about: using media in new ways NOT using new media. These new technologies have implications for how we think about the behaviours, products, and services we market; the incentives and costs we focus on; the opportunities we present; and places where we interact with our audience and allow them to try new things. (Lefebvre, 2007 p.32)

This is significant as Craig Lefebvre not only points to the issues of using an ultra-niche broadcasting channel or a slivercasting network as a promotional tool but the need to also understand how we can use new technologies to create new power relations and develop new ways of connecting and creating experiences for audiences. ‘Using media in new ways, not using new media’ is not only the logic behind the practice, it is key to the idea of consolidating disparate ultra-niche broadcasting practices to form a kind of networking power.

In order to build on, and question the relationship between programming and switching, ultra-niche broadcasting networks and technology, Castells idea of ‘commodification of freedom’ through Web 2.0 is significant as he illustrates how organisations can harness the collaborative potential of the Internet to connect and communicate with other like-minded people wherever they are.

The term Web 2.0, coined in 2004 by Tim O'Reilly (O'Reilly, 2005), describes changes in the way content is created and consumed through the Web and is generally seen as a technological innovation compared to the ‘Web 1.0’ (Allen, 2009). Many scholars, including Castells and San Murugesan, believe Web 2.0 has opened the door to create, distribute and promote content and is an evolution in the way people or organisations are using technology (Murugesan, 2010). It is about harnessing the distributed collaborative potential of the Internet to connect and communicate with other like-minded people wherever they are: creating communities and sharing knowledge, thoughts, ideas, and dreams (Murugesan,
Now, with Web 2.0, broadband and media content, today’s consumers are in control like never before (Murugesan, 2010). These technological developments have greatly increased the ability of consumers to choose the content they want, when they want it, in the way that they want it. O’Reilley’s notions of Web 2.0 also demonstrate how organisations can create groups, share their stories, product or service information, opinions and thoughts through the creation of ultra-niche video content distributed via the web. The development of Web 2.0 rationalises and shows how opportunities for creating ultra-niche broadcasting in recent years is due, for the most part, to developments in Internet technology.

Democratisation of Production Equipment

As we have seen, an understanding of a complex set of joint actions is required to consider how the social relations of video production, distribution and consumption are changed by the technologies and networks of niche media, and slivercasting. Therefore, in order to create an ultra-niche broadcasting model it is paramount to understand what are the implications for independent corporate audio-visual producers and what skills, knowledge and network-making capacities do they require to explore ultra-niche opportunities. Hence, as new interconnected technologies allow for access to and production of networks, one of the most important and evident issues is the technological developments in distribution and the democratisation and affordability of production equipment that has occurred in recent years (Anderson, 2006; Manuel Castells, 2009).

Constantly evolving ‘affordable technology’ can be harnessed and used to implement ultra-targeted video content networks for ultra-niche audiences, as well as how organisations with limited resources and training produce viable ultra-targeted niche video content networks.

As digital gear becomes more powerful, ubiquitous and affordable, the tools of media creation are increasingly in everyone's hands. Equipment that a generation ago required breathtaking investment now costs a relative pittance, while the tools of publishing, such as blogs and video sharing, are nearly free. (Gillmor, 2008 p.45)

Kellison, Morrow and Morrow (2013) explain how access to more affordable equipment and software allows producing web video more viable for independent producers and non-media organisations. Kellison et al. (2013) explain how producers like myself can now buy excellent professional quality, or prosumer (a term indicating a piece of equipment that is
midway between a professional and a consumer (Browne, 2013) video and photography cameras such as Canon or Nikon DSLRs and shoot a major motion picture or 30-second video. Similarly, the computerisation of the editing process has enabled an ultra-niche video project to be manageable and inexpensive (Kellison, Morrow, & Morrow, 2013). Adding to arguments on the transformation of media creation and the shift in network powers through technological advances in production equipment, is the low budget filmmaker and author Kevin J. Lindenmuth:

It’s not like the old VHS, big cameras that you carry on your shoulder. This is a quality of the camera. The biggest thing is the access. For me, it’s incredible to have all of those tools. (Lindenmuth, 2013)

The revolution in video production through affordable technology in recent years is most evident through the rapid development of digital technology and the explosion of the professional quality cameras and video production equipment available now. These digital cameras are competitively priced at anywhere from US$1,000 to US$9,000 (Kellison et al., 2013) are suitable for most productions and are used in all projects associated with this study. These digital video cameras are state of the art, relatively inexpensive and very flexible. Almost all digital cameras offer creative options such as choice of formats on which to store the footage and audio, lenses, in-camera settings, varying shutter and shooting speeds, and built-in optical illusions (Kellison et al., 2013). All are digital broadcast-quality, work within most production budgets, and reflect what professionals are currently using (Kellison et al., 2013).

In fact, as Kellison et al. state:

The advent of affordable and nonlinear editing software, digital video, and Firewire capability has directly influenced the rise of web video. (Kellison et al., 2013 p.210)

How emerging practices and theories on ‘affordable technology’ can be harnessed to create an ultra-targeted video content network for niche audiences in order to transform network powers is one of the primary issues that prompted this study to be carried out through practice. It is also important to recognise how new interconnected technologies, such as the democratisation of production equipment in particular digital video cameras, allow for access to, and the production of, networks. Whereby through relatively inexpensive means, content
that would not generate enough interest or revenue from broadcasting on mainstream TV or to a large general audience online, can now be made available to a small but highly devoted audience of viewers, and can only be profitable because it can be inexpensively made due to technological advances (Hansell, 2006). Facilitated by affordable technology, the saving on staff and equipment is significant to the transformation of new media production, consumption and distribution to transform network powers. This is because affordable technology enables production of an ultra-targeted video content network to be generated and distributed for, and by, an organisation with limited resources. The development of the Internet, affordable technology interlaced with the long tail theory, can be seen as a proxy of networked power for independent corporate producers. As without ideas on emerging technologies and access to affordable technology, it would be improbable that academics and practitioners could envisage this power shift from mass media to a mass of niches (Anderson, 2006). This signifies the need for research on issues such as whether organisations need to factor in continuous training in the use of the constantly developing digital technologies used to create self-sustaining in-house television networks.

New Distribution Vehicles, Devices and Screens

In conjunction with the democratisation of production equipment, the development of new multimedia distribution methods for ultra-targeted video content is one of the most influential factors that enabled the transformation of network powers from mass media to a more diffused consumption pattern.

There are new distribution vehicles, new devices and screens of various sizes and types proliferating everywhere (Berry et al., 2013; Rosman, 2013). This expansion of different types of ultra-niche distribution methods, such as YouTube, mobile phones and tablets, as well as indoor/outdoor LED screens, is an important factor to consider when questioning how the programming power of new distribution methods can be incorporated and employed ‘by small actors’ when creating and modelling an ultra-niche TV network. Therefore, notions on ultra-niche distribution methods illustrate the most appropriate distribution methods for an own-branded TV channel and explain the importance of social media and/or YouTube as a distribution method. In any case, no matter what type of platform video content is shown on, a simple ‘end to end’ distribution model which allows content to be easily discovered, bought
and consumed is the important factor when considering a distribution method for video content (Wilson 2009).

The proliferation of smart phones has meant that it is important for ultra-niche video content be mobile/smartphone compatible, as Castells explains below:

Mobile communication has exploded reaching over 2 billion mobile phone subscribers in 2006 in contrast to 16 million in 1991. So, even accounting for the differential diffusion in developing countries and poor regions, a very high proportion of the population of the planet has access to mobile communication, sometimes in areas where there is no electricity but there is some form of coverage and mobile chargers of mobile batteries in the form of merchant bicycles. (Castells, 2007 p.246)

Complementary to the fact that smartphones are proliferating globally is the fact that the majority of Australians are using smartphones to connect to the Internet. As Alex Dunnin (2012) illustrates in his online article that predicts:

More than 20 million smartphones will be used by consumers by 2016 and that by 2014 more Australians will access digital services via a smartphone than a computer. This rate of penetration means Australia will have as many smartphones as people, and the major use of smartphones is accessing the internet, said Telsyte. (Dunnin, 2012)

These figures suggest that in the future viewers will more than likely be using smartphones and tablets to view ultra-niche content and will, as a consequence, require more short-form professional content that is easily viewed and distributed on these devices.

Given that viewers are increasing be watching ultra-niche video content via smart phones, as outlined in the previous paragraph, it was evident that mobile content needed to be immediately organised, easily accessible and viewed through voice control, gesture or search engines (Kellison et al., 2013). This was because, most viewers want their niche content distributed in a way that can be shared instantly and directly uploaded to and from mobile devices (Kellison et al., 2013). For example, YouTube mobile viewers have access to their YouTube accounts, ‘favourites’, videos and channels, as well as the ability to directly upload from mobile devices and share videos instantly. In addition, they have the ability to rate and comment on videos directly from their mobile phones (Jarboe, 2011). It is important to note,
however, even though smartphones create opportunities, they also create challenges, as handsets typically use large amounts of data to download, stream and view audio-visual content correctly. Although, as Wilson states:

Viewers who consume significant amounts of mobile screen content are likely to own handsets with good screens, decent navigation and reasonable data plans. The lack of clarity and consistency around pricing has meant, of late, that consumers are reluctant to download large video files over an on-line network unless they are confident of the data plans associated with their mobile devices. Wireless downloading, or device shifting from PC to mobile handset, is another matter entirely, as costs are transparent and contained. (Wilson, 2009 p.12)

When content is streamed or downloaded to the phone from a mobile customised website, it is important to consider that consumers shoulder the costs of viewing the content, so pricing is an important consideration although this is constantly changing as costs for mobile data are coming down and new ways for telecommunication companies to raise revenue are being created. American telecommunications company, AT&T, for example, announced they would launch ‘Sponsored Data’. Sponsored Data would allow businesses to increase their mobile presence by subsidising data consumption for certain videos. This service allows content companies and advertisers to reach an expanding audience of mobile video content users who are cautious about running enormous overage charges on their limited data plans. When opening sponsored content, wireless subscribers will be notified via a ‘sponsored’ icon in the status bar so that they know that the data usage won’t show up on their mobile bill but instead be paid by the sponsor, decreasing the fear of mobile bill blowout and encouraging more video content mobile viewers (Team, 2014). Mobile distribution and the cost of data are relevant to this study as the more viewers that use smartphones to view niche video content networks, compatibility, data affordability and accessibility issues need to be explored and reconciled. White (2008) adds to this discussion on how mobile distribution will be the key to the future of targeted video content:

Wireless Internet technology will be the key to the future as one will be able to demand whatever you want, when you want it and if you can't deliver it your' company will disappear. (White, 2008 p.22)

Corresponding to White’s notion that wireless Internet technology is of key concern to mobile delivery systems is Katherine Rosman (2013) who states that as of October 2013 the
average American spends five hours and 16 minutes a day in front of a screen, and that's without even turning on a conventional television (a statistic taken from eMarketer, a research firm that focuses on digital media and marketing). Again as fields of power change, the need for understanding as to how to continually provide relevant content on an ever-increasing range of devices is required as audiences are dedicating more attention each day to smartphones, computers and tablets. This information is important to this study because as audiences watch more video content on the Internet via mobile devices, the need for research on how to create and model an online ultra-niche content network increases as production companies and organisations determine how to reach this desperate unfocused audience. As Van Tassel and Poe-Howfield (2010) state:

It is clear that the ways media enterprises now market, sell, and deliver content requires much more complex business strategies than were needed in the past. (Van Tassel & Poe-Howfield, 2010 p.363)

This suggests that research on how organisations can use the innovative digital media technologies newly available to them to create and distribute video content to either promote their business or create a community online or for LED screen is required.

Another example of the changing fields of power in the distribution of niche video content is showcased in the work of Berry, Harbord and Moore (2013) who discuss how new distribution mediums, devices and screens of various sizes and types have increased globally:

Over the last decade and more, electronic moving image screens of various sizes and types have moved out to proliferate across the public spaces of the world’s cities. From the huge LED screens that cover whole sides of office towers and shopping malls to ATM screens and information screens in the lobbies and entrance halls of stations, banks and other publicly accessible buildings, they have become commonplace. (Berry, Harbord & Moore 2013 p.110)

This further illustrates how ultra-niche content networks work across multiple and continually changing platforms. The fact that fields of power are changing is also evident, as the attention spans of audiences are shorter, people are busier and there is far more information and entertainment available, everywhere and anywhere (Van Tassel & Poe-Howfield, 2010). Nevertheless, whatever the distribution method, it is imperative that all
viewers have a ‘decent experience’ on any screen size, including outdoor LED screens, TV, desktops, tablets and smartphones.

Moreover, alternative consumption and distribution methods, such as outdoor LED screens atop trucks at live venues, on buildings, in complexes and in institutions, are important to mention in the context of changing fields of power, as they provide alternatives to online distribution of ultra-targeted networks. They demonstrate different methods viewers now have of consuming targeted media and the need to identify the complex set of joint practices that must be addressed in order to develop, and model, an ultra-targeted TV network distributed via intranet, online and on LED screens.

Chris Anderson (2006) argues that consumers have an increasingly insatiable appetite for information at all times and want contextual and customised information, whether they are waiting in a line at an airport, on board a plane, at a doctor’s office or watching a live show. Considering that viewers are now getting their information in a mixture of ways on a variety of devices, the need to develop, retain and expand audiences is ever present:

Tell the truth, make it matter and never be boring. Inform, Entertain, Inspire, Persuade, and Connect’. ‘No matter what the delivery system, if the content is relevant, listeners and viewers will be there. (Van Tassel & Poe-Howfield, 2010)

Castells’ theories on ‘the network society’, ‘fields of power and counter power’ (Castells, 2011) outlined above, in conjunction with theories on democratisation of production equipment and the development of the Intranet, Internet and affordable LED screen systems over the past decades, represent some of the structural manifestations that must be addressed in order to develop, and model, an in-house television network, distributed via intranet, online and on LED screens.

Furthermore, and in conjunction with the main research imperative of this study (to remake the boundaries of power), Castells’ (2011) work on counter power and network-making power articulates how the ability to harness the power to influence and address an audience is more accessible and available. This is because mobilising technology and interactive and horizontal networks of communication allow organisations to directly communicate with their audience and their audience with them (Castells, 2011). Castells’ (2011) work on power and counter power in relation to ultra-niche content distribution and audience also explores
the secondary goal of this study: how organisations can use new knowledge applied in a commercial context to fulfil the objectives of an organisation; whether it is to increase profits or to influence or build a community. Castells’ work also illustrates how organisations are able to use this power of direct communication to participate in the development of new markets. This is only made possible because of the deeper challenge to hegemony that is represented by the creation of new networks.

**Communities**

In order to consider how are the social relations of video production, distribution and consumption changed with the technologies and networks of niche media, and slivercasting ideas of virtual communities developed by Hagel (1999) are essential, as they define and explain how virtual communities started as unprompted social events on electronic networks at the inception of the Internet. Early on, people gathered around common areas of interest, engaging in shared discussions that persisted and accumulated over time and which led to a complex network of personal relationships and an increasing identification with the group as a community (Hagel, 1999). Hagel (1999) believes that these spontaneous virtual social communities provide the foundation for a very attractive business model. This theory is also significant as it answers how organisations can employ a power/counter-power network model to engage a virtual social community of like-minded people while maintaining their scope of action. Adding to this Wind and Mahajan (2002) explain that digital interactive media enables shared interest communities to be formed faster and over wider areas than was possible before through traditional broadcasting. This itself can be seen as counter to the power of traditional broadcasting, as it enables organisations to develop direct relationships with viewers and allows viewers to trust and engage more easily with organisations while maintaining their scope of action. This also illustrates how digital online communities present marketers and digital video producers like me with enormous challenges and massive opportunities to use new ‘network powers’ to commercialise and engage viewers counter to the power of traditional mass media.

To further build on and question how a long tail or ultra-niche broadcasting network connects with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action theories on communities are significant as they define online community members as individuals who have opted in to engage with an organisation or group (Kapin & Sample Ward, 2013). This opt in can come in
various forms, for example, maybe individuals signed up on a website to receive email updates, liked a Facebook Page, or subscribed to a YouTube channel (Kapin & Sample Ward, 2013). Similarly, the idea that communities are made up of people who have common attitudes and interests and have chosen to connect to the same organisation either in person or via the Internet, explains how organisations can use this power/counter-power to join networked communities of viewers and followers with common attitudes and interests, and how organisations can use a long tail video content network to tap into their ‘communities’ to inform and entertain.

Research on ‘communities of practice’ developed by Wenger, White, and Smith (2009) play into the creation of ultra-niche networks, as they state that virtual television network communities have the ability to learn together. Wenger et al. (2009) add that technology enables a ‘communities of practice’ where the learning component is central. When technology supports an experience of togetherness it enables a community to create a social container for learning together (Wenger, White, & Smith, 2009). This theory clarifies how ultra-niche network producers can use ‘communities of practice’ to reduce audiences sense of isolation and enables audiences to get to know each other online in a relevant way that can enhance the simultaneous interplay of diversity and common ground so that they can learn from each other as well as from the video content. This relationship between communities of practice and ultra-niche broadcasting online enables audiences to take initiative, assume leadership and find each other to create sub-communities when they engage with a targeted own-branded TV network.

Wenger et al.’s (2009) work on how technology extends and reframes community relationships, changing the dynamics of participation by enabling very large groups to share information and ideas at the same time and helping smaller groups with narrower, more specialised and differentiated domains to form and function effectively maintaining their scope of action. This counter power enables ultra-niche production and distribution technology to enable communities of like-minded people to emerge in public and open their boundaries limitlessly. Wenger et al. also illustrate how technology makes it easier for communities to open up private spaces that in the past were open only to members.

The theories of Wenger et al. (2009) offer a significant perspective on the use of communities of practice through the creation of online ultra-niche content, as communities of practice are not defined by place or by personal characteristics, but by the potential to learn and join together. This prompts research into how organisations can aggregate these global
communities of practice using ultra-niche video content. The authors also explain how communities of practice continuously evolve and reinvent themselves as new members join and others leave. This theory illustrates how a new form or kind of long tail networked subject can be used to create a community of sharers and learners, and illustrates how virtual communities can use ultra-niche content to learn together (Wenger et al., 2009).

Clay Shirky (2008) adds to Wenger, White and Smith’s findings on the impact of new technology on the nature and use of groups and social interaction enabled by technology is changing the way humans form groups and act within them, with enormous positive and negative short and long term social and economic consequences. New technologies, such as the tools used to create and distribute ultra-niche TV channels, are enabling us to create new social networks and groups by allowing us to do new things in new ways, as well as permitting new and longstanding groups to do old things better and more easily than they could in the past. Society is changing, as the existing traditional ‘power’ structures that exist to manage the work of groups are increasingly eroding. Further, a new technologically enabled sociality is transforming what we do and who we are (Shirky, 2008). This study aims to extend on this knowledge by using these new ‘technologies’ or switching powers to consider how are the social relations of video production, distribution and consumption changed by the technologies and networks of niche media, and slivercasting.

Collaboration

Intertwined with community is collaboration, as Clothey et al. (2010) state:

    Globalisation and web technologies have created unprecedented opportunities for worldwide collaboration. (Clothey et al., 2010 p.304)

Notions of collaboration offer insights into how niche corporate producers/practitioners can build a sense of community through online niche video network sites.

Collaboration is defined by Beyerlein (2009) as the organisational assets that enable people to work together well and where information and expertise are held by different people or groups. Social relationships and interactions are a must, as with the creation of a new form of power/counter power and a model for the creation of a long tail video content network
(Beyerlein, 2009). Moreover, as Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) state, people are more willing to engage in social relationships, in general, and collaborate, in particular, where trust is high.

Theories on collaboration are not only relevant in relation to online communities collaborating together in order to build a greater sense of connection and trust. Collaboration theories also build on, and question, the relationships between programming, switching and ultra-niche broadcasting networks further. Collaboration theories also help answer what skills, knowledge, and network-making capacities independent commercial audio-visual producers require to explore ultra-niche opportunities. Hence it is important to create a collaborative environment that builds trust, openness and shared experiences. Collaborative learning, as the basis for effective organisational team building, requires a level of awareness, intimacy and trust, allowing team members to listen to one another with respect and understanding (Comstock & Fox, 1995). Therefore, establishing trust is essential to the successful establishment and growth of any new team (Glacel, 1997). This in turn demonstrates how collaborative learning is the basis for effective organisational team building. Self-awareness, intimacy and trust between team members are also the ‘essential ingredients’ required to establish a successful project. This is paramount, as the practical aspects of this study all require working with a team of people, including editors, camera people, clients and organisations.

Theories on collaboration also illustrate how, when researching if ultra-niche/long tail video network is a new form of communication power/counter-power, it is imperative to foster an open environment where feedback is encouraged and issues are shared openly. Collaboration theories also describe how essential it is to listen to team members either in a research or practical environment when they tell you things are not working as well as encourage team members to listen to each other. Also, when ultra-niche producers create a supportive environment where concerns or problems can be raised in an open setting, ‘everyone’ pulls together to find a solution to a common goal. If team members are clear about where they are headed, they are more likely to contribute to the collective goal together, in the way that is required when creating an ultra-niche in-house television network.

Marketing Communication Theories: Using Ultra-Niche Video Content Networks to Target Consumers
Before the coming of the web, companies could attract attention to their products or services by either buying advertising or getting a third party media outlet to cover them. Now, the key is for companies to develop relationships directly with consumers using web and internet tools. (Scott, 2007)

Manovich (2001) adds to this by stating:

Every citizen can construct her own custom lifestyle and select her ideology from a large number of choices. Rather than pushing the same objects to a mass audience, marketing now tries to target each individual separately. (Manovich, 2001 p. 60)

Consequently, and not surprisingly, the project work has a strong focus on the merging of marketing theories with digital video production practices. This is because marketing communication theories are the bridge between the undertaking of the research (counter power) with the goal and use (commercialisation) and the field that will most probably use or recognise the innovation in the development of new tools and practices to develop and maintain efficient means of communication with its audience and customers. Therefore, in order to establish and question how new network models show a legitimate form of counter power, Barbara Basney’s (2014) work is important as she explains how content is becoming a powerful marketing tool enabling new opportunities for engagement, interaction and amplification, as the lines between editorial and advertising are diminishing (Basney, 2014). As a result, the problem (and possibilities) of how organisations can best use an ultra-niche video content marketing model to communicate with their audience is key to the idea that technological development in the production, distribution and creation of video content is contributing to the use of content in new and unprecedented ways that have, in turn, enabled organisations to become publishers (Basney, 2014). This shift in power has prompted research and development on a set of guidelines that marketers and organisations can use to become their own video content publishers or network-makers. Susan Gunelius (2011) defines content marketing as:

All forms of content that add value to consumers, thereby directly or indirectly promoting a business, brand, products, or services. (Gunelius, 2011 p.10)

Content Marketing is a particularly valuable programming power tool when applied to the changing perceptions of a brand, as it allows for the production and delivery of content that provides powerful storytelling with personal and emotional engagement, relevance and
credibility (Basney, 2014). This programming power is beneficial, as organisations can use content marketing to build integrity and long term relationships with customers. Marketers, have also embraced content marketing as one of their key customer relationship management (CRM) tools:

> Companies spent more than $40 billion on all forms of content marketing in 2010, according to research by ContentWise and the Custom Content Council. In a 2011 survey by Roper Public Affairs and Corporate Communication, 84 per cent of CMOs agreed that custom content represents the future of marketing. (Ståhlberg & Maila, 2013 p.186)

At the same time, Gunelius (2011) writes that even though content marketing occurs both online and offline, the emergence of free and simple switching tools like social media have opened up the ability for organisations of all sizes to compete alongside one another, not for market share but for voice and influence;

Gunelius explains that:

> Marketing a business using content isn’t a new concept; however, it has evolved in recent years to mean far more than creating a company brochure filled with overtly promotional messages and images. …today, content marketing focuses on creating content that is meaningful and useful to consumers with promotion taking a backseat to adding value, particularly adding value to the online conversation happening across the social Web. (Gunelius, 2011 p.10)

Pulizzi and Barrett (2009) also illustrates how marketing is moving online at a hurried speed as well as how there is need for research on the merging of content marketing theories and niche content production. This is because Pulizzi and Barrett work on content marketing and provide data that indicated that in 2012 the Internet had become the world’s number one advertising medium (J. Pulizzi & Barrett, 2009). They explain that consumers and business professionals now spend 60 per cent less time than their parents watching TV, and more time online as viewers are tuning out conventional marketing at a startling pace (J. Pulizzi & Barrett, 2009). As a consequence, organisations can use this power shift from mass broadcast TV to niche online communication to connect with their audiences.
Bloomgarden-Smoke (2013) explain how the Internet has opened the door for brands to have the programming power to create and produce networks and the switching power to connect with other networks:

Instead of paying money to rent an audience, they can own their own audience,” said John Hazard, director of community for Contently, a company closely tethered to the branded content explosion. (Bloomgarden-Smoke, 2013)

Bloomgarden-Smoke’s work illustrates how organisations now have the programming and switching power to own their own audience instead of just advertising to someone else’s less targeted audience. Correspondingly, Magee (2012) explains how, with the popularity of smart TVs, firms should bypass traditional TV channels and broadcast their own branded video and TV offerings online. As former director of global news for the BBC, Richard Sambrook states:

Smart TVs will mean that ‘in the next two to three years broadcast scheduled channels will compete with everything on the web. (Magee, 2012 p.22)

Like many others, writes Magee (2012), Richard Sambrook thinks that this power modification will have a huge long-term opportunities for brands to create their own content.

Brands invest heavily in getting their content into other media owners’ hands. Why doesn’t a brand take its expertise, passion and knowledge and become its own broadcaster? Instead of getting broadcasters to carry it, they can distribute it themselves online. (Magee, 2012 p.22)

According to Magee (2012), many home YouTube videos receive more views than TV programmes.

It is important to note, however, that even though the content is sponsored by a brand it is not always directly about it, as Bloomgarden-Smoke (2013) explains. Content marketing is not that different from content written for a magazine, for example, that has to be careful not to offend its advertisers:

These brand-backed lifestyle verticals look and feel like the real thing – and many would argue, actually are – because there’s real interviewing and writing involved,
even if it’s not exactly investigative reporting on human rights abuses or the like.  
(Bloomgarden-Smoke, 2013)

For these reasons, the preceding research and theories on the relationships between 
programming and switching power and content marketing also shed light on how video 
content can be used to create content that is meaningful and useful to viewers.

Theories on the concept of content marketing not only contribute to understanding the 
relationships of programming and switching present in ultra-niche broadcasting networks, 
they explain how an ultra-targeted video network can be a form of content marketing itself, 
offering organisations an alternative to online video advertising, as well as an effective way 
to reach their audience.

Nicola Smith (2012), in writing about own-branded TV channels, adds to the debate that 
content marketing is fast becoming a powerful switching and programming tool. Following 
the huge success of YouTube, she writes, companies have found that own-branded TV 
channels are a great way to boost consumer engagement, reach new audiences and convert 
website visits into purchases (Smith, 2012).

In adopting online TV channels, brands are becoming even more like media owners, 
using their online hubs to test different types of creative content and format, and in doing 
so learn more about their audience. (Smith, 2012 p. 38)

Smith’s research on own-branded TV channels indicates that there is such a wealth of online 
video content available, an own-branded TV channel must stand out to attain an audience. 
This signifies the need for research into how an organisation can create interactive and 
engaging content that will increase viewer engagement.

In response to Smith’s article, Mr Sam Kayum, UK managing director of Smartclips (a 
multiscreen video and brand advertising platform provider) wrote a letter to the editor of 
Marketing Week stating that it is true that companies are turning to own-branded TV channels 
to increase brand engagement and drive purchases due to increased demand (Kayum, 2012). 
Although it is also important to note that consumers who watch own-branded TV channels 
may already be interested in a particular brand. Instead of needing to convert them, writes
Kayum, brands need to provide more specific information about a product or service (Kayum, 2012). He adds that the challenge is to maintain this consumer interest:

With such a wealth of online video content available, an own-branded TV channel must be interactive and engaging. As well as tutorial tips, as suggested in the article, brands could also use customer case studies, competitions, celebrity endorsement, and music specials. Competition in creativity is hotting up in online video advertising and brands need to step up to the changes. (Kayum, 2012 p.10)

Basney adds:

While some companies have hundreds of people dedicated to content development, most companies do not have sufficient content development resources. As a result, content development is a distributed function and involves a multitude of individuals from varied roles, such as marketing, internal thought leaders, freelancers and agency partners. (Basney, 2014 p. 101)

Each of these theoretical positions make an important contribution to our understanding of the programming and switching power of creating content marketing in relation to ultra-niche content networks, as they demonstrate how organisations can use their programming and switching powers to attract consumers who are already interested in a particular brand through engaging educational content marketing as well as the use of competitions, celebrity endorsements and promotions. Furthermore, content marketing practices illustrate how organisations can use their programming and switching powers to maintain viewers’ interests in an over-saturated market place.

Similar to content marketing is the notion of branded content, as the two terms can on occasion be interchangeable. Although, in relation to this study, content marketing is used to describe an in-house television network created by an organisation for the purpose of marketing, whereas branded content is described as a form of monetisation through sponsored content within an in-house or ultra-targeted video content network.

Ultimately, as the mass audience continues to fragment into ever smaller niche audiences and communities of interest, and new technologies evolve, the successful brand marketers and media companies, writes Askwith (2007), are those learning to reconfigure their advertising
efforts in several key ways including creating their own branded entertainment assets that appeal to customers directly.

Theories on Monetisation

Globally, television used to be a straightforward business: a technically homogenised medium with a similar institutional structure, content and business model. It provided nationwide, unadventurous content delivered by national networks, distributed regionally by TV stations with some local programming thrown in for good measure, and with either advertising or government funding as its financial model, explains Eli Noam (2009).

In order to understand how independent audio-visual producers, working at the corporate/commercial end of the industry, might respond to proliferating media platforms and fragmenting media markets, it is important to understand how to reconcile the erosion of traditional sources of financing power of television content, due to the changing expectations of audience around paid content, and emergent (“counter power”) models of financing.

Though advertisers have provided the dominant source of funding for U.S. television for the last sixty years, significant uncertainty about the future of television advertising persisted in 2014, consequently calling into question the future organisation of the television industry. (A. D. a. Lotz, 2014 p.171)

Due to the amalgamation of television and Internet, innovative post-network advertising strategies are now required as the ‘power’ of conventional spot advertising is being questioned (Donaton, 2004).

This ‘loss in advertising power’ has inspired the development of promotional alternatives that merge the advertising and entertainment industries (Donaton, 2004). At the same time, audiences have also become more fickle and have more power in their viewing habits, as they are now able through digital video technologies to make choices about which commercials to watch and which to skip (Spurgeon, 2007). This is where branded entertainment is key, as it extends advertiser involvement in the production and authorship of content (Spurgeon, 2007). Unlike sponsorship and product placement, which affiliates brands with existing film and television vehicles, branded entertainment involves the creation of content that contextualises
brand images in ways that are so appealing that consumers will seek them out for inclusion in their personalised media and entertainment flows (Spurgeon, 2007). Spurgeon’s work on branded entertainment builds on and explains how independent ultra-niche broadcasting models can bring network-making power to independent corporate producers through the ‘proxy power’ of branded entertainment.

Adding important contributions to the counter power of branded content as a way of monetisation is Amanda Lotz who states:

Branded entertainment marks a fundamental shift from intrusive advertisements pushed at audiences who are engaged in other content to advertising of such merit or interest that the audience actively seeks it out. (A. D. Lotz, 2007 p.192)

This is significant because the problem of monetisation is crucial to the development of new network models that show a legitimate form of counter power, as new ideas need to be explored as advertiser involvement in the production and authorship of content is on the rise. As a consequence, research on monetisation illustrates how ultra-niche video content can be funded through sponsorship and product placement. This in turn clarifies how independent ultra-niche broadcasting models can bring network-making power to small actors or independent corporate producers as organisations can fund their own ultra-niche content by incorporating product placement and sponsorship to help monetise their network. It also clarifies how brand images can be integrated within ultra-niche content in order to appeal to consumers.

Tungate (2013) explains that in a world of unlimited choices, branded content is about creating ideas people want to watch, adding that branded content, similar to content marketing, prompts viewers to seek content out, rather than interrupting them with content:

It’s now common for brands to have their own ‘channels’ on YouTube, where they launch new videos and archive older material. There is plenty of evidence to suggest that viewers will respond to quality branded content. (Tungate, 2013 p. 245)

The extent to which branded content differs from traditional advertising methods is contestable as it can be integrated with in an ultra-niche story or narrative therefore being able to connect with audiences in a far more empathetic way then traditional advertising.
Because branded content frees its creators from the constraints of the 30-second spot, the storytelling can be richer and more engaging. This stuff on branded content might be more at home when you start discussing content marketing. (Tungate, 2013 p.246)

For this reason, explains Harp is ‘on trend’ (2012):

The key to digital branded content is that it is produced by an organisation that is trying to reach their target audience in a less obtrusive way than traditional forms of advertising. The divide between advertising and entertainment is less apparent in digital branded content, which allows the user to develop their own meaning for the brand through the positive associations that they develop while interacting with the digital branded content. (Harp, 2012 p. 3)

Digital branded content should provide a unique entertainment experience for the audience, and the ease with which consumers can access the Internet has made it an appealing medium through which advertisers can communicate with their target audience (Harp, 2012). Pearlman et al. (2014) verify:

Branded content is the phrase du jour; everyone, from global ad agencies to nascent bloggers, is jumping on the bandwagon. The upside is clear. Creative and strategically placed content can heighten brand awareness, spark consideration, amuse and generate brand love. (Pearlman, Guglielmetti, & Listfield, 2014 p. 12)

Interestingly, and another justification for the development of a niche counter power broadcasting model, an industry report has revealed that consumers actually prefer branded videos online to user-generated videos online. According to Media Management, New Media and Audience Behaviour researcher Jiyoung Cha, a study investigating whether (and how) online video platforms displace television found that:

The heavy consumption of branded video content via the Internet indicated that these viewers generally had positive attitudes toward branded content. They may even have felt loyalty to particular branded content. (Jiyoung, 2013 p. 79)

Another possible form of monetisation ultra-niche video content networks is that the viewers themselves pay directly for access to the content (Wilson, 2009). The subscription-based model can be difficult, as with any online content, due to the web’s prevailing “free model”
(Kellison et al., 2013), especially when producing ultra-niche branded video content for a particular brand or organisation which is predominantly using the network as a promotional tool. However, to be successful in gaining subscribers, organisations need to provide superior quality content they cannot find anywhere else in order for them to be willing to pay. A very good example of this is Lynda. This video content network contains a large amount of technical tutorials in the form of well-delivered videos from experts in their field (Kellison et al., 2013). The tutorials are clearly thought out, well produced, and broken down into smaller topics, making them easy to understand and follow. There are also some free examples that one can try out first before taking out a subscription. The subscription is inexpensive and is available on a monthly or annual basis. Hulu (which can only be viewed from within the US) is also a very good example of a subscription video content network, as it offers some free content, good service and programming that convinces and attracts viewers to subscribe to the full HuluPlus service (Kellison et al., 2013). Another way to gain revenue for the sustainability of ultra-niche video content is for viewers to pay to watch content through iTunes or Amazon subscriptions, by selling each video individually or as an entire season on these websites, which is very attractive to today’s audiences who have become accustomed to having whole seasons of shows available to them online, or full-season box set DVDs (Kellison et al., 2013).

One of the most up-to-date forms of the monetisation is the sale of mobile device applications that deliver targeted video-on-demand content at a fee. Mobile applications offer profitable opportunities for web video because devices are now faster and can handle a larger range of higher quality video formats that make it more attractive for users to download, use and purchase. Tablets are also supporting saleable interactive electronic books, which can hold embedded video content (Kellison et al., 2013).

Sponsorship and advertising are other significant factors to consider when monetising ultra-niche video content network. Sponsorship is largely used by organisations as a method of marketing communications and is at that point when sponsors or advertisers pay for the privilege to connect with an audience (Meenaghan, 2001). In other words, it is when a company pays for the right to be associated with an ultra-niche TV network, single segment or program. Sponsorship is when a fee is paid to buy rights for a defined period and may include the right to advertise and have a logo integrated within the content in the hope that it will build an association with the content and engage with the community of viewers.
(Wilson, 2009). Furthermore, according to Meenaghan (2001) states that commercial sponsorship represents one of the most rapidly growing areas of marketing activity, due to the fact that the last three decades have seen the development of a more concerted commercial version of sponsorship. He adds that further growth of sponsorship is indicated by the fact that it has exceeded both media advertising and promotions in terms of year-on-year growth in expenditure over the last decade (Meenaghan, 2001).

Wilson (2009) explains that traditional advertising in the context this study is when overlays, banners and pre roll and post roll advertisements run before (pre roll) or after (post roll) a segment of online video content. Digital advertising is one of the most typical methods of monetising online content. When this model of advertising is used to monetise ultra-niche networks viewers do not pay for video content directly, they pay with their viewership and, hopefully for the advertiser, future purchases (Wilson, 2009).

Whereas TV advertising is hard to quantify or accurately measure, in the online environment it is possible to determine the amount of time, attention and, more importantly, interest shown by consumers [based on their responses]. Increasingly advertisers are looking to pay based on consumer interest, rather than simply on the ‘viewing figures’ for a website, which are relatively easy to manipulate. (Wilson, 2009 p.26)

Wilson clarifies further that advertising is, in fact, one of the least successful revenue models for online digital content unless the site is a broad based digital portal with a large and broad demographic, such as Ninemsn or Yahoo (Wilson, 2009). If producers want to make money through ordinary online advertising, they must have a high volume of traffic and a clear understanding of what advertisements will appeal to the audience their content attracts. Regardless, for the majority of websites broadcasting video content, advertising should only be considered a small part of commercialisation of online content, not the only revenue stream, as sponsors tend to prefer to talk directly to their niche audience through branded content and sponsorship rather than blanket advertising (Wilson, 2009).

Anderson’s (2009) concept of ‘free’ offers insights into how long tail or ultra-niche broadcasting networks can connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action. This is because, by creating ‘free’ ultra-niche networks, they can independently (without relying on sponsors) interact with current and potential customers, build and foster a positive reputation, and ultimately sell a good or service:
Newspaper and magazine publishers don’t charge readers anything close to the actual cost of creating, printing and distributing their products. They’re not selling papers and magazines to readers; they’re selling readers to advertisers. It’s a three-way market. In a sense, the Web represents the extension of the media business model to industries of all sorts. Media companies make money around free content in dozens of ways. (Anderson, 2009 p.24)

Online, pretty much everything is given away for free in some version with the hope of selling something else; or, even more frequently, with no expectation of pay at all (Anderson, 2009).

This section illustrates the different ways of monetising long tail video networks, exploring how, with the amalgamation of television and Internet, post-network marketing strategies are required as concerns are raised over the effectiveness of the conventional ‘power’ of advertising models, inspiring alternative theories, which further instigate the convergence between the marketing, advertising and digital media production fields.

Affinity Marketing

Affinity marketing is another one of the switching power issues that are important to consider when questioning how independent commercial audio-visual producers, might respond to proliferating media platforms and fragmenting media markets. According to Van Tassel and Poe-Howfield (2010), there are two meanings of affinity marketing. The first established model calls for marketing to existing groups of people, such as members of associations and clubs, employees of the same organisation or industries, students and other social groupings. This form of affinity marketing effort typically offers special arrangements, programs or discounts for people who are in the affinity group. The second is solely Internet biased; this affinity model refers to partnerships or links between websites created in order to attract viewers who seek similar content. For example, a website dedicated to real estate may partner with a mortgage lender or a home improvement chain store. Likewise, a guitar manufacturer could implement agreements with a site that hosts a community of music creators such as a songwriter's site or a musical instrument web store, sheet music store or repair service (Van Tassel & Poe-Howfield, 2010). The work of Van Tassel and Poe-Howfield (2010) on affinity marketing explains how organisations can commercially exploit affiliations, how theories on
affiliate marketing can facilitate and help answer questions regarding how viewers can find out about a video content or network, and how its appeal can be best communicated.

Mariana Danilovich, CEO and president of Digital Media Incubator adds:

This whole game is not about the creation of great programming. It is about serving a niche demographic. Now you can't serve a niche demographic with a single property. You can be very creative but it's the whole experience, designed with the entire lifestyle of the audience in mind, allowing you to fully serve the target demographic. (Van Tassel, 2013 p.498)

A key element of this model is that it follows the same group over time, perhaps many years. A marketer using this model must continue to profile consumers at regular intervals so that the content and ecommerce opportunities evolve with the changing customer.

The Web is still so young that this aspect of cohort marketing is only now surfacing as people in the Gen X cohort enter their thirties. E-tailers who focused on that group must now shift their strategies from urban, fashion-conscious, entertainment-driven singles to suburban marrieds with children buying their first home and entering the substantive years of their careers. (Van Tassel, 2013 p.498)

Van Tassel concept of affiliate marketing provides insights into how long tail or ultra-niche broadcasting networks can connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action, as well as how viewers can find out about the video content produced by an organisation and in what way audiences can be convinced to view and access this content. Van Tassel concept of affiliate marketing provides knowledge on how targeted video content networks can be used to build brand awareness, encourage loyalty, educate and engage customers, as well as enlarge and drive revenue. Affiliate marketing theories also illustrate how digital marketing communication theories can be applied to long tail broadcasting networks in order to appeal to a given segment and why audiences should pay attention and watch, as well as how video content networks can build brand awareness and revenue through affiliation.

Brand Identity
One of the principal motivations that formulated this project work was the consolidation of the different practices that go into creating self-sustaining in-house television networks. This section outlines theories on how the programming power of ‘branding’ can be used in relation to the creation of long tail content networks. The ‘power’ of branding, differentiation and recognition is fundamental to the idea of creating a recognisable self-sustaining in-house television network, since understanding the ‘power’ of branding and attracting an audience in an over-saturated marketplace are some of the key issues that underpin this research. In addition, as the primary function of an in-house television network or power/counter power model is for it to be able to promote a brand and build a community for a particular organisation, it is extremely important that a long tail network use the power of branding to have an instantly recognisable, homogenised brand identity. As Chan-Olmsted and Kim (2001) note, a viewer’s connection, perception and expectation of a particular television station or network comes into play when he or she is making a viewing choice in an increasingly crowded television environment (Chan-Olmsted & Kim, 2001).

Faced with the explosion in programming choices, station and network logos have become the latest branding tactic of the broadcasters. The trend was actually started by CNN, when it started using on-screen logos to strike back at channels taking its footage and re-broadcasting it without credit. (Chan-Olmsted & Kim, 2001 p.80)

Accessible brand identities take disparate elements and unify them into whole systems, writes Alina Wheeler (2012). This study aims to learn from and build on these perspectives by exploring how organisations can use the power to establish clear and memorable brand images that stand out in an increasingly complicated marketplace filled with infinite content and choice. This study also explores what is the best way to create a brand image for a long tail television network and what are the processes involved in creating a strong brand image. These are also important concepts to grasp, as they illustrate how ultra-niche video content networks can connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action through a strong brand identity.

**Conceptual Framework for the Study**
The aim of this section has been to discuss Castells’ power categories and to identify theories that are essential in the discussion of networked (counter) power (programmers and switchers). This study suggests that there is some valuable theoretical content to explore and has explained and exemplified the kind of relations that will be examined through practice.

For example, Castells states that power, as traditionally articulated, does not make sense in the network society; however, he states that there are new forms of domination and determination to be discovered (Castells, 2011).

At the same time, writes Castells (2011), communication networks are the fundamental networks of power making in society. In fact, in order to form a new networked subject a complex set of joint actions is required and in a society of networks the capacity to exert control over others depends on two basic means, programming and switching (Castells, 2011).

Programmers and switchers are the principal form of power in the network society and as Castells points out, only in an ideal pure form can programming and switching be incorporated under one power (Castells, 2011). Castells adds that no unified elite power is capable of keeping both the programming and switching operations of the all-important networks under their control, as they are too big to be able to control the power. Network making power is usually in the hands of a small number of mass media conglomerates that are typically formed by networks of multiple media properties operating in numerous ways and in multiple cultural and institutional environments with the ability to decide the content and format of communication (Castells, 2011).

However, more people are building their own networks of mass-self communication online, therefore empowering themselves (Castells, 2011).

Despite this, there is still unequal competition between professional media production and lower quality prosumer home videos (Castells, 2011).

The democratisation of technologies of production, storage and distribution have enabled organisations that sit between mass media conglomerates and prosumers to produce and broadcast their own niche video content for targeted audiences professionally and cost-effectively (Anderson, 2010; Manuel Castells, 2009; Hansell, 2006). Technologically enabled
societies are transforming what we do and who we are (Shirky, 2008). As a matter of fact, as Napoli explains, smaller organisations are able to find an audience for their niche content no matter who they are and how ultra-niche their interests, as audiences now have an even greater ability to seek out and watch content. Furthermore, stronger creative targeted video content is required to attract an ever more distracted and choice rich audience. In fact, as the nature of broadcasting has changed, technological advances have enabled us to move away from traditional broadcast distribution methods and to choose when and what we watch (Van Tassel & Poe-Howfield, 2010). Austin-Li (2010) and Castells (2011) argue that globalisation and affordable online video technologies have created unprecedented opportunities for worldwide online community building as organisations are able to use ultra-niche video content networks to build and communicate with an e-community around shared interests.

This aspect of the ultra-niche broadcasting subject, should be seen in conjunction with the need for content creators to find a way to monetise their niche content, as traditional sources of financing television content are eroding due to the changing expectations of audiences around paid content (A. D. Lotz, 2009).

Similarly, screens of various sizes and types are proliferating and the average American spends around five hours a day in front of a screen (Berry et al., 2013; Rosman, 2013). This is confirmed by the fact that demand for video content, especially online, is increasing at the same time as the Internet is flooded with video content (Cisco, 2014; Kathleen Moore, 2011; Purcell, 2010). Adding to this is the rise of more intelligent tools available for organisations and advertisers to target consumers, as well as the fact that we find ourselves at a point where Chris Anderson’s long tail, Sal Hansel’s Slivercasting, Castells’ discussion on networked infrastructure, programmers, switchers, network making power and counter power can all be examined anew.

In summary, this study focuses on three main supporting arguments. The first part of the supporting argument establishes ultra-niche networking as the preferred way of framing audiovisual market fragmentation. The second part of the argument follows and borrows Castells network society thesis to explain long-tail networking as a multifaceted expression of social power. In fact, at least three types of social power (as theorised by Castells) are then associated with ultra-niche networks, including, "network-making", ‘programming’, and ‘switching power’.
Therefore, this study seeks to answer via a practice-led research approach if, due to technological advances in content distribution, production and the Long Tail, programmers and switchers are able to be kept under control in an ultra-niche/long tail video network model and can this model be seen as proxy of networked power for independent corporate producers.

The methodology chapter positions the practice as the primary place where these questions are examined and is the primary way in which the knowledge is engage with.

The next chapter discusses the methodology throughout this study and explains how each project explores a different aspect, or part, of the investigation into the question of counter power.
CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

This research was undertaken as an immersed practitioner and researcher; I acted concurrently as a small-scale video producer and Ph.D. student, developing project artefacts and academic research outcomes throughout the course of a four-year investigation. Chapter 3 expands the examination of the broad construction of this practice-led study by building upon the theoretical foundation of the stand-alone ultra-niche video content issues, and by recognising the gap in knowledge outlined in the previous chapter. This chapter aims to substantiate the materials, methods and conceptual framework that shape and determine the knowledge that has been produced in order to identify the practical challenges that must be addressed in order to develop and model a self-sustaining long tail in-house television network. As stated in the previous chapter, the intent of this study was to find the disparate digital video production and marketing practices that need to be consolidated in order discover if an ultra-niche/long tail video network can be seen as a proxy of networked power for independent corporate producers. This was done through the development of three small scale video production case studies/projects that sought to both refine and test this hypothesis through a reflective and investigative practice. In order to do this, the design of this study attempted to incorporate new and existing ultra-niche video content production and marketing theories and practices to create a model that could be seen answer how independent commercial audio-visual producers, might respond to proliferating media platforms and fragmenting media markets.

This study used video production practice as a setting not only for the application of knowledge but also for its generation (Schon, 1995). As Schön (1995) discusses:

Asking not only how to apply the results of academic research, but what kinds of knowing are already embedded in competent practice. (Schon, 1995 p.30)

Consequently, the outcomes of this practice-led study have been achieved in an experimental research arena that encouraged creative interactions, mindfulness, reflection and investigation. This is a space for critical analysis and renewal that has enabled a greater understanding of work processes, which can evolve into the establishment of a new model of communication counter power.
As Candy, Amitani, and Bilda (2006) explain:

The practice-led research process is one of co-evolution between creative acts and research knowledge drawn from both informal experiences and organized studies. (Candy, Amitani, & Bilda, 2006 p.209)

The practice-led research process permits experienced practitioners to recognise and apply research to their daily professional work in ways that differ from, but can be supported by, conventional approaches such as autobiography and narratology. As Dadds and Hart (2002) explain:

The process involves applying and exploring methodologies with engaging qualities that ‘foster the development of professional thinking and practice’. (Dadds & Hart, 2002 p.2)

Furthermore, as Brad Haseman (2006) points out below, it is entirely reasonable to use a practice-led approach in applied commercial research contexts (such as those represented by each of the projects/case studies within this dissertation):

The practice orientation of practice-led research is aligned with the processes of trailing and prototyping so common in applied commercial research and in the development of research applications for online education, virtual heritage, creative retail, cultural tourism and business-to-consumer applications. (Haseman, 2006 p. 9)

As this study involves a practical solution to a problem, the specific approach to research was largely informed by the action research cyclic method. The projects undertaken for this dissertation provided opportunities for cumulative learning about ultra-niche marketing through practice-led research with numerous opportunities for research created in each project. For example project 3 -the RMITV proposal would not have eventuated if not for the knowledge gained through the process of developing and creating projects one and two. This was because the first two projects sparked the idea for and led to the third. Through the exploration of issues such as the democratisation of production tools and equipment, the monetisation of content and the aggregation of an audience in projects one and two issues of creating niche content for an individual organisation came up. Therefore questions on how a small production company/organisation can use this knowledge to create their own content and network emerged. To expand on the process of action research further, Costello (2011)
explains that action research is a flexible spiral and cyclic process that is problem solving and practice oriented. The reason why this type of practice-led research method was selected is because it involves bringing theory and practical knowledge together in the same way as Castells suggests when he calls for an investigation into power relationships not for formal theorisation (Castells, 2011). As outlined in the previous chapter, Castells notes that actors in there networking provisions form networks. Consequently, this study revisits and builds on Castells’ call for knowledge on the analysis of power relationships:

We must find the specific network configuration of actors, interests, and values who engage in their power-making strategies by connecting their networks of power to the mass communication networks. (Castells, 2011 p.786)

In order to consider specific proxies of networked power for independent corporate producers, this study tests and builds on Castells’ hypothesis that:

The centrality of communication networks to implement the power-making process of any network. (Castells, 2011 p. 786)

Therefore, through the project work this study re-examines whether switching different networks is a fundamental source of power, or otherwise.

By using a practice-led methodology, this study took Castells’ suggestion that an investigatory methodology is the best way to approach and find the specific network configuration of actors that forms new kinds of domination and determination:

Who does what, how, where, and why through this multipronged networking strategy is a matter for investigation, not for formal theorization”(Castells, 2011p. 786). “Formal theory will only make sense on the basis of an accumulation of relevant knowledge. (Castells, 2011 p.786)

In order to study how are the social relations of video production, distribution, and consumption changed with the technologies, networks of niche media and slivercasting, this work aspires to answer if, due to technological advances in content distribution, production, and the development of the long tail concept, programmers and switchers can be kept under control. Thus, discovering if this study can constitute a counter power example and if organisations are able to use this new knowledge to make and distribute their own ultra-niche video content via their individual network that reaches their constituencies and target markets.
that is counter to the power of mass media or mass self-communication networks to which Castells refers.

To do this, this study forms separate networks and reform existing networks, i.e. by producing corporate branded content, a small scale online TV channel and ultimately a long tail video network proposal that is neither owned nor produced by a big media conglomerate or an amateur. Through this practice, this study explores all the collective issues that shape networks and the structure of powers behind these networks when fields of power change.

Costello (2011) explains that, in order to question consider how independent commercial audio-visual producers, might respond to proliferating media platforms and fragmenting media markets the action research that was done involved gathering, interpreting and analysing data thorough applied research, systematic, critical reflection and action undertaken in order to comprehend, evaluate and change current practices for the better. This critical reflection also involves reviewing actions undertaken and planning future actions (Costello, 2011).

Bridget Somekh (2013) explains action research further:

> It promotes equality between researchers from outside the site of practice and practitioner–researchers from inside, working together with the aspiration to carry out research as professionals, with skilful and reflexive methods and ethical sensitivity. Action research involves actively participating in a change situation, often via an existing organisation, whilst simultaneously conducting research. Action research can also be undertaken by larger organisations or institutions, assisted or guided by professional researchers, with the aim of improving their strategies, practices, and knowledge of the environments within which they practice. As designers and stakeholders, researchers work with others to propose a new course of action to help their community improve its work practices. (Somekh, 2005 p. 1)

Ultimately, the action research is practical by nature and involves a cyclical process of answering and re-answering questions until the outcomes arise. The systematic critical process of answering these research questions is paramount to the outcomes of this study, as Mottram (2009) explained in saying the role of the research questions is absolutely necessary to maintain the scholarly integrity for practice-led research methods. To answer the main question, this study commenced a reflective practice-led, methodology that involved three
projects that examine the key and sub-questions sequentially using ‘Action Research’ to refine, test and implement discoveries, practices and methods, in turn.

The figure above demonstrates the most prevalent action research cycle (Susman & Evered, 1978) and showcases the five phase cyclical process involved in action research (Baskerville, 1999). First, a client-system infrastructure or research environment must be established, which in the context of this study was a small scale video production company (Baskerville, 1999). Then, the researcher (me) proceeds through (repeatedly) the following five phases: (1) diagnosing, (2) action-planning, (3) action-taking, (4) evaluating, and (5) specifying learning (Baskerville, 1999).

The diagnosing phase corresponds to the identification of the primary problems or key research questions (Baskerville, 1999). The diagnosing phase also involves the development of certain theoretical assumptions, for example, a working hypothesis or questions (Baskerville, 1999). Next, the action-planning phase outlines the actions that should ease or improve the primary problems (Baskerville, 1999). The theoretical framework guides the discoveries of the planned actions, which indicate both some desired future outcome and the changes that would achieve such a state (Baskerville, 1999). The plan determines the target and the method of change (Baskerville, 1999). The action-taking phase then implements the planned action (Baskerville, 1999). The researcher/practitioner performs the actions identified
in the planning stage to resolve the primary problems. The process can involve engagement, learning and reframing and, as Castells (2011) explains a complex set of joint actions is also required. When creating a new ultra-niche broadcasting network, a complex set of joint multifaceted issues needs to be considered, including hiring and training team members and budgeting, as well as creative development, planning and implementation processes, amongst others. There is not one singular aspect to consider; therefore, through the creation of three projects, this study considers all the aspects that go into creating and modelling a long tail TV network in order to discover if a long tail TV network can be considered a new form of power/counter power.

In addition, these complex sets of joint actions are not dissimilar to the disparate ultra-niche broadcasting issues and practices that must be addressed in order to develop and model a self-sustaining in-house television network.

According to Baskerville (1999), the evaluation, or reflection, phase includes assessing the complex set of joint actions taken after they have been completed and involves the evaluation of the outcomes. Evaluation incorporates determining if the theoretical effects of the action were realised and whether these effects relieved the problems. Where the change was successful, the evaluation must critically question whether the actions undertaken were the sole cause of success. Where the change was unsuccessful, some framework for the next repetition of the action research cycle (including adjusting the hypotheses) is established (Baskerville, 1999). The learning phase is typically an ongoing process and is when the learning is formally undertaken. The knowledge gained in the action research (whether the action was successful or unsuccessful) can now be employed and formulated (Baskerville, 1999). Where the change was unsuccessful, the additional knowledge gained may provide a foundation for further action research. In short, the success or failure of the action research provides important knowledge that can be used in future research settings and can be seen as disruptive to existing technologies, enterprises and power relations (Baskerville, 1999).

The action research process within this study involves producing a women's community multimedia platform, ‘Inspiration’, ‘corporate branded content’, and ultimately the practice and steps completed to acquire a series of recommendations and outcomes that are embodied within the capstone RMITV content network or new power/counter power model.
Through the process of developing these three projects many activities were performed that were seemingly similar or indistinguishable from actions that might have been undertaken had they been solely commercial video production projects. These included (but were not limited to): all stages of the implementation and video production process from developing concepts, hiring and managing staff, pre-production through to post-production and transmission, as well as everything in-between, such as negotiating with television broadcasters and media platforms, creative direction and management, setting advertising sales budgets, sales, presentations, marketing, business development, PR, overseeing website design and deployment; accounting, training, human resourcing, planning and strategy, account management, writing media content and budgeting.

What makes the undertakings in this study different from the same activities as practiced in a commercial production environment are that these processes (while done in order to achieve the goal of a particular project) were always accomplished within the framework of the particular research question under investigation. The actions taken in this mode involve extensive documentation of the activities, theoretical reflection and critical analysis of the video and marketing practice activities outlined above.

By undertaking these activities, theories on the practice from inside the practice itself emerged. In order to achieve this and to reveal material to be discovered and discussed, data was collected, journals kept and interviews other digital media professionals were conducted amongst other activities; these actions and practices were then analysed. Observations were also made on how problems were solved, in a constantly changing, fast-paced production environment. Throughout this process, this scholarship strived to document many of the academic reflections about particular events and artefacts of the study as they occurred. Observations about what happened when small scale production teams work together well, what changed when new technologies were used in the production process and what was revealed when producing corporate branded content. Further, observations were also made on what was discovered that could not have been known through any other method of enquiry when putting together the long tail video content model/RMIT TV proposal and determining if it can be considered as a proxy of networked power for independent corporate producers. The following table outlines the practice-led action research process that was followed throughout this study:

<p>| Table: Practice-led Action Research Process |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step No.</th>
<th>Title of Activity</th>
<th>Activity Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Diagnosing</td>
<td>The diagnosing phase involves the analyses and research of academic literature in the field of niche media and communication with a focus on Castells network and power/counter power theories, Chris Anderson’s long tail theory, slivercasting, and narrowcasting as well as content marketing. The analyses of existing models, the examination of new digital technologies and government policies that affect the advertising and niche media industries. Through the evaluation of the literature a gap in knowledge emerged that consequently led to the development of the hypothesis/ main question, can an ultra-niche video network model be seen as proxy of networked power for independent corporate producers?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2       | Action-planning  | Following the primary and secondary investigation on current ultra-niche broadcasting practices and literature, the action-planning phase includes defining the actions, activities and tasks that need to be undertaken in order to build on and re-contextualised network theorist Manuel Castells’ notions of network-making power to model a new form of communication power/counter power.  
This action planning phase is undertaken in order to plan the entire research project. This was also done separately for each individual project, as the action research cycle was repeated throughout the project work as projects and question arose.  
This stage includes the inception of the three projects, the development of the key and sub questions that need to be answered by and through the development of each project; the creation of a timeline and the development of a method and plan of when and how each question was to be answered. |
| 3       | Action-taking    | The action taking stage involves the implementation of the planned actions.  
For me as a researchers/practitioner this involved the creation, management, and implementation of three long tail video content projects.  
The setting up of a partnership agreement, the appointment of a production team, the creative direction and management of small scale long tail video networks.  
The collation and analyses of data, information and academic literature on networks, free and branded content, content marketing, monetisation, collaboration and the way in which production and distribution technologies are used in the production of ultra-niche networks.  
Journal keeping and the analysis of the systems that go into creating long tail content networks and what contribution the practice and innovation brings to the fields of marketing communication and media and communication.  
The gathering of primary and secondary research on existing practices and developments - including case studies, surveys and interviews with advertising agencies, production companies, students, online TV producers, distributors, media outlets, including in-store media networks.  
As this practiced-based research is problem focused this stage involves the answering of the key and sub questions through the creation of each project. |
| 4       | Evaluating       | The evaluation stage involves the evaluation and analysis of the results, processes and outcomes of all answers to the sub and key questions discovered in the action taking phase.  
The evaluative approach focuses on comprehensive evaluation of all data gathered.  
Evaluation includes determining if the theoretical effects of the action were accomplished and if these effects solved the main problem.  
Through the evaluation process the possible shortfalls are reviewed systematically and applied in order to be consistent with the overall design of the investigation. |
The learning phase involves the articulation of the knowledge gained throughout the action research. All outcomes are of value and are significant to practitioners and academics in the field of digital media studies and marketing communications, as well as smaller production companies and organisations that want to use a communications counter power to grow web traffic and increase sales leads. Once the results are acknowledged, a wide variety of dissemination methods will be used to connect with marketing managers, CEOs and academics including newsletters and press releases. I will endeavour to write reports and journal articles, and I will create a website that will transmit information about the new process of niche network making. I will also attempt to attend conferences and make presentations in order to promote the project and its outcomes further.

Figure 3 Practice-led action research process

Timeline:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Activity</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PhD Quarters (School target time)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnosing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action taking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specifying learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4 Practice-led PhD Timeline

This section outlines the projects and questions that are addressed through the creation of these three projects. These inquiries are informed by the discussion of the fields of practice that were seen to be important sites of discussion in regard to the question of counter power emerged from the practice.

Of the questions that emerged from the practice, there was one key question that motivated the research (power and counter power); but the other questions that emerged, through the activity of practice. In order to create a new form or kind of networked subject through practice, this study investigated what other issues were involved, as well as what additional industries, questions, restraints, players and existing theories are involved when creating a new form or kind of networked subject.

Through practice, this study was also able to make some contributions to the field of ultra-niche broadcast networks and to ask questions of it. These second questions were not questions at all; they were more like ‘things demonstrated in practice’, and are offered up as
data and discussed in the following chapters. In fact, the three projects evaluate connected practices and theories that are associated with the integration of content marketing and niche video production for an ultra-targeted market.

Next, I discuss which aspect, or part, of the investigation into the question of counter power each project builds on and explores.

**Project 1 - Inspiration**

In order to examine how practice impacts on the research question, I produced *Inspiration* a 16-episode women’s community television program (Kim, 2011). Through the process of creating *Inspiration*, many different practices are undertaken covering the creation, use and distribution of ultra-niche networks. *Inspiration* was community and commercially minded, experimental, and was used primarily as a project to familiarise with the field and to engage as an active participant in the theoretical and practical challenges in production. Through this process I was primarily interested in understanding and evaluating how the democratisation of technologies of production, storage and distribution can be harnessed and used as a form ‘programming power’ to create an in-house TV channel. Through the process of creating Project 1, I also gained knowledge about sponsorship and the programming power of creating content marketing and branded content in order to reconcile the erosion of traditional sources of financing the power of television content, due to the changing expectations of audiences around paid content and emergent (counter power) models of financing. In the interest of testing and engaging with brand identity theories, this study questions how small content producers can use the programming power of brand creation to establish a clear and memorable brand image that stands out in an increasingly complicated marketplace, filled with infinite content and choice. To explore the question of counter power further, this study also investigated whether it is possible for social media to be used as a programming and switching power to build brand awareness and expand long tail audiences as well as explore how programmers can connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action. To build on existing, and to develop new, knowledge on collaboration and long tail broadcasting networks through the process of creating Project 1, the ‘power’ of a collaborative environment was also investigated.
Project 2 - Corporate Branded Content

The aim of project two was to examine how the production of corporate branded content has impacted on the research question.

Hence, Project 2, the production of ‘corporate branded content’, incorporates the problems answered, resolved and questioned through the process of planning, acting/producing, observing and reflecting on Project 1. Through the process of producing corporate branded content, many different practices were also attempted including covering the formation, use and distribution of ultra-niche content.

Project 2 was investigational, and was chiefly used as a project to research if independent ultra-niche broadcasting models bring network-making power to small actors, and to engage as an active participant in the theoretical and practical challenges that are required when creating ultra-niche content marketing that attracts audiences. By creating corporate branded content, I test how organisations can create compelling and engaging video content that stands out beyond the simple offering of product information and into the realm of story-telling. I also consider why an organisation’s target market would want to watch their ultra-niche content and the ‘power’ of engaging content that informs or increases the ability of an organisation to reach its constituencies and target audiences. I explore how long tail broadcasting networks can connect with, and attract, an audience in an increasingly oversaturated market place through the power of programming and switching.

Project 3 – RMITV: An Ultra-Niche Network Proposal/Model

The practice within this study highlighted a number of very important considerations that culminated in the recommendations outlined in Project 3.

The aim of the final project is to bring together all the knowledge gained through the process of developing the first two projects, and provides data and empirical research that illustrates the major considerations of a broad scale implementation of a ultra-niche network. Project 3: the RMIT TV proposal incorporates all of the practices that contribute to answering how
independent commercial audio-visual producers, might respond to proliferating media platforms and fragmenting media markets; including collaboration, community, brand identity, monetisation, affinity marketing, tools and democratisation of technology.

Through the process of developing Project 3, this work was predominantly interested in understanding and evaluating how the democratisation of technologies of production and distribution can be harnessed and used as a form ‘programing power’ to aggregate an audience and to prompt it to take action. I was also interested in documenting how slivercasters can attract web traffic to their ultra-niche video content. Through the process of putting together Project 3, I investigated the sites of ultra-niche broadcasting network models and analyse the costs involved in producing a long tail video content network. I engaged in a break-even analysis, as well as explored how monetisation, sponsorship and content marketing can enable organisations to attain financial sustainability and commercial success for a long tail video content network. I developed a set of phases that can be used by organisations to implement long tail video content networks.

Empirical research in the form of an online survey through the Internet survey website http://www.surveymonkey.com was used to discover if an ultra-niche broadcasting network can connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action, to study how digital production practices and theories on platform integration can build an audience to create a greater sense of community for an ultra-niche video content network, and to examine how niche video content networks can measure their ability to reach their constituencies and target audiences. Fifty current and previous University students from within Australia and overseas participated in the survey. Potential participants of the survey were contacted and recruited via Facebook or emailed via friends, students and staff at RMIT. I posted a link to the survey on my production company’s (Tiszai Productions) Facebook news feed. I invited current and past RMIT students to post the link on their Facebook pages and asked Dr Christopher Barker to send out an email to his students with a ‘Participant Information Sheet’ attached explaining the procedure and anonymity of the survey. The Participant Information Sheet explained to students that they had the right to choose to participate in the survey if they felt comfortable and felt it was appropriate. Similarly, the link on the Facebook page explained that participation in the study was completely voluntary and there was a ‘Participant Information Sheet’ attached (see Appendix 2) explaining the procedure and anonymity of the survey.
The RMITV proposal or ‘counter power’ model can be considered the major tangible outcome of the research, as it brings together all the results of the practical and theoretical research completed as part of this study and is the first viable model of a long tail video content network. This proxy power/counter power model of monetising ultra-niche content, illustrates all the outcomes borne from theory, practice, empirical and action research cycles that are characterised by critical reflection research in the form of recommendations.

Ethics and Ideology

This study strives to consider all the ethical implications and norms that are required when researching ultra-niche video content production and marketing communications, such as permission from subjects to use materials in research, copyright issues, and permission to record conversations and have privacy and confidentiality issues considered.

As Resnik (2001) explains, there are many ethical norms in research that are important to follow and consider when researching, such as authorship, copyright and patenting policies, data sharing policies, and confidentiality rules in peer review, all of which are designed to protect intellectual property interests while encouraging collaboration (Resnik, 2001).

Following Resnik’s lead, this study endeavoured to aim for research that is ethical, knowledgeable and truthful. Since this practice-led study has often involved a great deal of cooperation and coordination among many different people in different disciplines, a high ethical standard that promotes the values that are essential to facilitate collaborative work, such as trust, accountability, mutual respect, and fairness, have all been employed.

I have required all persons filmed to sign a consent form (see Appendix 3) and I have provided participants with accurate information about the purpose, methods, demands, risks, inconveniences and discomforts, if any, that may accrue, and made sure that they are all fully aware of the terms and use of the study. In addition to this, and as required as part of the survey within this study, approval from the RMIT ethics committee was sought and has been granted.
In addition to the ethical issues outlined above, perhaps the largest contemporary ethical conundrum facing creative practice in niche audiovisual markets is the trend towards branded content and the breakdown of the difference between editorial and advertising content (Couldry & Turow, 2014). For example, media studies scholars have equated the social implications of this transgression to the collapse of the distinction between Church and State (Couldry & Turow, 2014). In fact, this thesis is fundamentally concerned with the viability of ultra-niche and slivercasting marketing strategies that are underpinned by the blurring of lines between advertising and editorial content (in fact, branded content was the core concern of the second case study). Therefore, how the associated ethical issues were managed in the project work was extremely significant. Throughout the process of working on the case studies, I questioned- how practitioners manage conflicts of interest with funding sources.
The projects undertaken for this dissertation provided opportunities for cumulative learning around ultra-niche marketing through practice-led research. Therefore the main aim of this section is to discuss how my practice as an independent corporate audiovisual producer has impacted on the research question. Consequently this section of the exegesis focuses on the key findings generated through the projects on the value of ultra-niche networks to independent audiovisual producers.

The following three chapters illustrate in detail the specific activities that were accomplished in order to develop Inspiration, corporate branded content, and the RMIT TV proposal, or ultra-niche TV network model.

Section 2 also concludes with the last two chapters: the results and conclusion.
CHAPTER 4 PROJECT 1 - INSPIRATION

The first project, Inspiration, is an illustrative ‘figure’ that aids in answering if ultra-niche broadcast networks can be seen as proxy of networked power for independent corporate producers, due to technological advances in content distribution, production and the Long Tail. The following chapter discusses, solves and contextualises the set of practical, technological, technical and theoretical ultra-niche video network broadcasting issues that were observed and determined through the practice of producing Inspiration.

‘Inspiration’ is a 16 episode (including three special episodes) community women’s television program production in Melbourne Australia. ‘Inspiration’ features interview segments with successful women in business, the arts and the community, as well as tips to camera on fashion, finance and lifestyle. ‘Inspiration’s 16 part series was seen by an niche, targeted, educated audience of predominantly women on it’s own internet TV website powered by YouTube, on community channels Aurora 183 (FOXTEL) as well as Channel 31, Melbourne and WTV Western Australia, directly reaching an audience of 2 million plus people per month. ‘Inspiration’ was targeted to women over 25 to 55 years of age who make up 80% of household consumers Barletta (2002). In order for ‘Inspiration’ to be financially sustainable it is made up of branded segments and was funded by sponsorship. ‘Inspiration’ offers a variety of integrated sponsorship and advertising solutions – both on-air and online to help sponsors reach the target customers. To get a better understanding of ‘Inspiration’s’ sponsorship offering please view Inspiration’s media kit in Appendix 5.

Inspiration was produced in order to examine the democratisation of technologies of production, storage and distribution that have enabled organisations that sit between mass media conglomerates and consumers to have the counter power create and broadcast their own niche video content for targeted audiences professionally and cost-effectively. The demonstration of counter power in this project was mainly limited to our ability (due to the democratisation of production equipment) to create a television show watched by over 161,311 people with a small initial outlay of $7000.

All episodes of Inspiration are available on Inspiration’s online television channel- www.Inspirationalwomen.tv. Inspiration was also shown on air on the following dates and times.
**Dates and Channels** *Inspiration* was broadcast On-Air and Online

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Episode</th>
<th>Aired On C31 on the date(s)</th>
<th>Aurora Foxtel on the date(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ep 1</td>
<td>5 June 2011</td>
<td>20 July 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ep 2</td>
<td>12 June 2011</td>
<td>27 July 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ep 3</td>
<td>19 June 2011</td>
<td>3rd of August 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ep 4</td>
<td>26 June 2011</td>
<td>10th of August 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ep 5</td>
<td>3 July 2011</td>
<td>17th of August 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ep 6</td>
<td>10 July 2011</td>
<td>24th of August 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ep 7</td>
<td>17 July 2011</td>
<td>31 of August 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ep 8</td>
<td>24th of July 2011</td>
<td>7th of September 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ep 9</td>
<td>31 July 2011</td>
<td>14th of September 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ep 10</td>
<td>7th of August 2011</td>
<td>21st of September 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ep 11</td>
<td>14th of August 2011</td>
<td>28th of September 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ep 12</td>
<td>21 of August 2011</td>
<td>5th of October 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ep 13</td>
<td>28 of August 2011</td>
<td>12 October 2011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Inspiration*’s one-hour International Women’s Day Special 2012: Aired on Aurora Foxtel 8th of March 2012

*Inspiration*’s Spring Special: broadcast on the 21st of October at 8.30 pm 2012 on Aurora Channel and WTV Perth on Saturday 20th Oct 2012 at 8 pm with a repeat for Wednesday 31st Oct at 1.30 pm.

*Inspiration*’s International Women's Day Special 2013: aired Friday March 8th 2013 at 7:30 pm on C31.

*Inspiration* International Special 2013: Aired on C31 at 8.30 pm Sunday December 8 2013

**Figure 5** Inspiration Broadcasting Timeline

When exploring and researching ideas for practical projects as part of this study, I made contact with accomplished independent audio-visual production professional Karen Kim, we
met and decided to create a self-funded short form television series dedicated to women. The reason why I (we) selected this project was because not only was (are) co-producer Karen Kim and I extremely passionate about encouraging and motivating women to be all they can be, we thought it would be a worthwhile niche market to capture. This is because at the time (2011) there was no other television series dedicated to businesswomen. In addition, I felt that a small-scale series with no financial backing from a traditional free-to-air broadcaster like Inspiration would provide many opportunities for cumulative learning concerning ultra-niche marketing through practice-led research. In addition to this, if I was going to spend so much time, money, and effort on a study it had to be a project I felt passionate about. In addition to this, we estimated that between us we had the skills to create, produce, and broadcast a small-scale TV series on our own with very little monetary investment, so we set out to learn from undertaking this experiment. It was a leap of faith. The series (project) could have easily been about gardening or cars it was just that inspiring women is what interested Karen and I at the time. What is important is that Inspiration was a fitting project in which to explore of ‘how independent audiovisual producers might respond to a proliferating media platforms and fragmenting media markets?’ Throughout the process of producing and implementing Inspiration, the main stakeholders were co-producer Karen Kim and I, director of photography and camera operator Tim Brown as well as camera operator and editor Julian Lucas.

The process involved multiple activities and stages, including set-up, production, post-production and delivery. Hundreds of hours of work, numerous activities and many production meetings were held over three years in order to set up, deliver and execute Inspiration. These actions were undertaken in order to answer the main, sub and key question of this study. This process of investigation involved a lot of trial and error, collaboration, reflection, and re-examination, particularly as I endeavoured to focus on my research questions under examination as well as produce a television show with a very little budget. Examples of the types of issues discussed in production meetings can be viewed in the minutes of the meeting held 18 May 2010 at 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM (Appendix 5). Karen and I predominately ran and created the Inspiration TV network exclusively (with a small initial investment of A$3,500 each), with the support of a small professional and amateur freelance production team. Karen and I managed, wrote all marketing materials and interview questions; we also set up all distribution channels (including community TV, social media and the website) and cross promotions. We directed, edited, presented, and were present at all shoots and editing sessions. We advised the camera operators on framing and handled the
location, crew, and interviewees. As partners (a partnership agreement was set up) we had full control of who and what we would film and what business and marketing alliances we developed. Karen and I did most of the ‘programming’ and ‘switching’ tasks that were required to create Inspiration (as stated on page 43 this study argues that brand identity, branded content, and diverse revenue sources are proxies of "programming" power, and affiliate marketing and viewer aggregation figure as indicators of "switching" power). Both Karen and I had previous small-scale production experience, although by no means were we a large multimedia company, nor were we complete amateurs.

The next section outlines how the production of Inspiration has impacted on the research question by explaining the actions taken in order to answer the following key issues and sub-questions.

**Affordable Technology**

Through the process of producing Inspiration, I address how independent corporate audiovisual production professionals use the democratisation and affordability of production equipment as a tool to create in-house/ultra-niche TV channels in order to address how ‘affordable technology’ can be harnessed and used as a form of ‘programming power’ to create, edit and shoot long tail video content. As Verbeek states:

> When technologies are used, they inevitably help to shape the context in which they fulfil their function. They contribute to the coming about of specific relations between human beings and reality, and co-shape new practices and ways of living. (Verbeek, 2009 p.64)

Although rudimentary to most independent corporate video producers, understanding how organisations that sit between mass media conglomerates and consumers can harness the ‘programming power’ of affordable video production and editing tools to implement ultra-niche networks is one of the primary issues to be addressed in this study. As without these relatively inexpensive tools and equipment that create video content, the power to create an in-house TV network would solely be in the hands of large media conglomerates. Therefore by utilising digital cameras, editing software and the tools required to produce small-scale video content for an in-house TV channel, I evaluated this key concern. As one of the aims of producing Inspiration was to attempt to answer if an independent ultra-niche broadcasting
model can bring network-making power to independent corporate producers, it was also important to pay close attention to ultra-niche theories discussed in Chapter 2. These theories explain how the democratisation of production equipment, and in particular digital video cameras, are constantly opening up new opportunities for small-scale producers and marketers. Namely, I built on Hansell’s and Anderson’s idea of slivercasting, whereby, through relatively inexpensive means, content that would not generate enough interest or revenue from broadcasting on mainstream TV or to a large general audience online, could now be made available to a small but highly devoted audience of viewers and could only be profitable because it could be inexpensively made due to technological advances (Hansell, 2006).

The outcomes of the practice were discovered early on in the initial production meetings with the small team of camera crew and editors involved in the production of Inspiration. We determined that affordable, ever improving and evolving digital cameras were the predominant tools that would be used in order to tell stories and where the main technological advances that allowed for the type of low cost video content that we were producing (namely the concept of slivercasting). This outcome was also informed by Kellison, Morrow & Morrow’s (2013) work, which outlined that video cameras today are almost always digital, as digital video is the format of choice for online videos, and as a professional-quality camera is within almost any producer’s budget to purchase or affordable enough to rent for a shoot (Kellison et al., 2013). Not surprisingly, digital video cameras are the most appropriate cameras to be used in the production and implementation of small scale niche video content.

For this project, which attempted to discover if ultra-niche broadcasting models could bring network-making power to independent corporate producers, it was also vital to pay attention to the type of affordable technology that is required to produce ultra-niche content that is of broadcast standard and within a limited budget. Therefore, through the process of producing Inspiration we almost always used two cameras rather than one, even for simple interviews. Two cameras are not always necessary, although they are highly preferable when it comes to getting good coverage and adding to the overall production value of the video content. We used several different two-camera strategies depending on whom and what we were shooting.
The number of cameras was a significant consideration because it has an impact on the number of crew members one will need to hire and the rental or purchasing costs of the cameras, consequently, affecting the cost effectiveness of a long tail video network as the amount of equipment and staff required was a major factor when budgeting for long tail TV networks. That said, if shooting with two cameras is not within the budget, with a little creative forethought it was possible to create the editing illusion that two, or even three, cameras were used when there was really only one camera on set. Smart phones, consumer cameras, prosumer cameras (a term indicating a camera that is midway between a professional and a consumer (Browne, 2013), DSLRs, and professional cameras can all be used when creating content. By attempting to film Inspiration with a small consumer camera, prosumer and a smart phone camera, we found the quality of the footage was usable, although ultimately the finished video was not always broadcast standard; however, it is likely that a smart phone will be developed soon that will have professional capabilities. While these cameras are satisfactory for personal work, low-end consumer cameras and smart phones simply do not offer the image and audio quality, professional features or accessory options that professional cameras do. Therefore low-end consumer cameras and smart phones are not recommended for the professional creation of long tail TV networks.

To shoot Inspiration, we used two Digital Single Lens Reflex (DSLR) cameras. These are essentially digital photo cameras that have the added function to shoot high quality high definition (HD) video. On advice from our camera operators, we used these cameras as they have big imaging chips and, as I learnt from the camera operators, the bigger the chip, the better the image. Therefore, DSLR cameras offer superior image quality over most Prosumer Cameras. Another positive feature of DSLR cameras is that they have interchangeable lenses, which means that one has much more creative flexibility. Because it is still a camera, the lenses are smaller and more affordable to buy or rent. Nevertheless, the biggest factor that led us to use DSLR cameras is their affordability, as they are $1,200 to $9,000 (with lenses) (Kellison et al., 2013). That said, there are also some significant limitations that come with using DSLR cameras. Primarily, DSLR cameras are still photo cameras, first and foremost, so they are designed with still photos in mind and video as an afterthought.

The main limitation of DSLR cameras is that they do not have audio inputs that allow you to use professional microphones and mixes. Furthermore, DSLR cameras normally have a
limited recording time of about 12 minutes per clip. Therefore, it is important to make sure that the camera does not stop recording at a crucial moment.

Even though we used DSLR cameras to produce *Inspiration*, any decent, moderately priced HD camera would do the job well; however, it is just as important to make sure the camera has all the necessary features required for a particular shoot.

Another example of how affordable technology provides that ‘programing power’ to long tail producers is in the edit, sound mix and the creation of visual effects. This is because these jobs can now all be done on the same small laptop. Taking the lead from audio practitioner, Young Guru who said in an interview with Justin Hunte:

> My laptop probably couldn’t fit in my room if I were to take each of those things and make a physical representation of what it took to have that in the studio. Say you have a bunch of plugins in your laptop, in a real studio; you would only have one if you pay the $5,000 for this compressor that really affects one vocal. Now, you pay $3,000 for a plugin, and you can have many of them as the processing power of your computer can hold. It’s an incredible idea to be able to have all that power in a laptop. (Hunte, 2013)

All of *Inspiration*’s episodes were edited, mixed and created on existing laptops and desktops with the editing software *Final Cut Pro*, which sells currently at $379.99, as of February 2015, (ITunes store, 2015). This illustrates that cost and technological knowhow were not as much of a barrier to the production (programing power) of *Inspiration* as they may have been in the past when production companies or organisations required specialist training, huge editing suites and expensive video cameras, editing equipment and software.

Saving on equipment is a significant factor with regard to affordable technology enabling the production of ultra-niche networks by organisations with limited resources, such as *Inspiration*. Affordable technology gives organisations the programing power to create ultra-niche networks that reach their constituencies and target audiences. For example, as we had a limited budget, we hired camera operators who also owned their own reasonably priced, semi-professional quality video and photography cameras, such as a Canon or Nikon DSLR camera. These cameras work perfectly well for small productions such as the segments produced as part of *Inspiration*, online content and mobile delivery systems, and could more than adequately be used for any type of small scale video production. Added to this, the
simplicity of the editing and shooting process enables the cameraperson or editor to inexpensively interview and edit footage of any subject to be broadcast online. All this can be done relatively cheaply with a small amount of training, by purchasing or renting production equipment at the outset, and which can continue to be run cost effectively by the production crew.

To address how independent corporate producers can use new technologies as proxies of networked power it was important to harness the programing power of affordable production equipment, such as lights, audio equipment and video cameras. In fact, by using affordable technology, a team of semi-trained skilled editing and camera people with the know-how to set up two camera, and work the sound equipment, brings programming and switching power together in that it enables the production of high-quality video content on a very low budget. Although the use of these production tools and practices is fairly obvious to anyone who has had any video production experience, it is important to note that the provision of resources (no matter how small) to purchase editing software or rent digital cameras, tripods, audio equipment and, if necessary, lighting equipment needs to be considered and accounted for when producing an own-branded TV channel. As new technologies are constantly being developed, it is important to keep up to date with what is new and to revaluate requirements and confirm costs before developing a budget for an in-house TV channel. It is not relevant what software or production equipment is chosen, what is critical is that it is appropriate and within the budgetary framework and the capabilities of the operators.

In summary, affordable audio-visual technology can undoubtedly be seen as a proxy of networked power for independent corporate producers. As affordable technology becomes even cheaper and easier to use, the capacity to create ultra-niche video content increases. This, in turn, enables more organisations to have the ‘network-making power’ to create their own branded channels. For example, childcare centres now have the ‘programing power’ to able to train their employees to video and edit children’s milestones to be shared and streamed on a dedicated online channel for parents to watch at work or at home.

**Distribution of Ultra-Niche Video Content**
The great thing about broadcast is that it can bring one show to millions of people with unmatched efficiency. Although, it cannot do the opposite – bring millions of shows to one person each, yet this is the beauty of the internet. (Anderson, 2006 p.5)

For this project, which sought to discover if an ultra-niche broadcasting network could connect with other larger ‘power’ networks while maintaining its own scope of action, it was important to pay close attention to literature outlined in Chapter 2 on distribution methods.

As outlined in the literature, the Internet has enabled organisations to harness the programing and switching power for ultra-niche network distribution, as never before have we had a medium that is able to reach such a large niche audience and connect with another network so easily and cost effectively (Anderson, 2010; Bhatia, 2009). In addition, video content has become vital for any organisation that wants to succeed online. Online video is powerful; it engages the eyes and ears and educates audiences on important topics. It also motivates people to take action like nothing else, no matter what product or service an organisation sells (Wuebben, 2011). Video content websites have been seen as tools that allow small organisations the ‘power’ to compete with their bigger counterparts (Ong, 1996).

Based on this premise, in order to develop new knowledge on the best ways of creating an online presence for a long tail network, it was essential to establish a customised web channel for Inspiration. In order to set up a customised website, distribution method and content management system (CMS) for Inspiration, we consulted and collaborated with a web design and development agency, even though this was not always necessary as tools for creating websites are continually improving and becoming more affordable. Now (in 2016) if we were to set up a customised website for a TV channel I would use a template from a website software development site such as WIX, Squarespace or WordPress, as they allow websites to be built with the same appearance, support and functionality as the custom-build website and CMS created for us by a web development agency, for a fraction of the cost. For example Wix website templates offer email marketing, online stores, SEO(search engine optimisation) tools and many other features that would have cost a lot more money for a web developer to individually create for a brand or producer only a few years ago. The value of this ever changing technological advancement in website creation to independent audiovisual producers is that it has becoming easier and easier to create one’s own website/broadcast
platform for one’s self or a client. Therefore these days the challenge is not the creation of the platform it is the creation of the audience.

Working with the web development agency involved many meetings and discussions on how we were going to best integrate videos, our logo and branding, as well as what content was going to be included. There are several elements that go into building a viable long tail video content website. The first element to consider is usability, since users are generally not patient enough to spend a lot of time trying to figure out where information is. Menu and video items need to be clear. Text needs to be readable. Navigation should be easy, with videos on the home page. The site should be designed to work with any type of browser and on any type of device, whether on a laptop, tablet or smartphone, so that the videos can be distributed and viewed by online audiences anywhere.

When using a website as a distribution method, the second key concern is structure. Through the process of designing Inspiration’s online platform, it became evident that the layout must to be clean and engaging if it is to attract and retain viewers. The branding, colours and fonts ought to be consistent throughout. This helps optimise a site for lead generation and conversion, due to fact that the branding is recognisable to the viewers. Consistent design elements also insure that the branding is cohesive.

As the Inspiration website was created as a distribution method for niche content, it was of paramount importance that we consider the best way of embedding the videos. Online video content can be broadcast to viewers through third party video hosting sites such as YouTube, a company’s Intranet system, primary sites and dedicated sites which control the relationship with consumers (these are also known as branded sites), library or gallery sites where large amounts of video content from many providers are available for viewing or sale (iTunes is an example) (Wilson, 2009). In meetings with web and graphic designers, the key issues to consider when deciding between a third party and a primary site as a venue for video content were discussed and decided upon. Together we considered the strengths and weaknesses of each by reflecting on the costs, revenue, effectiveness and access of each in order to figure out which online hosting method to use. Important to the concept of long tail niche video content networks for niche audiences is the notion of ease of access and branding. Therefore, to gain additional exposure, brand recognition, and to enable us to expand the audience base, it was decided that we would create a YouTube video channel to embed videos onto the
primary website through the integrated CMS. This allowed video content to be constantly uploaded and streamed on YouTube as well as on the primary branded website. Hosting ultra-niche video on YouTube then embedding it on Inspiration’s web channel also allowed the videos to be viewed on smart phones and tablets. This is not always the case with video content that has been embedded onto a website using Adobe Flash video players. Videos on YouTube also have the added benefit of monetisation as a YouTube channel has a function that allows videos to have pre-roll advertising before the video starts as well as banner advertising while the video is being shown, allowing additional revenue to be earned, although in reality it is unlikely to be a large source of income for a non-exclusive niche multiplatform network. For example even with a total of 39,766 views (as of February 2017) the Inspiration YouTube channel has made very little money through YouTube advertising. Even though a revenue splitting arrangement is available when video content is monetised on YouTube there is no assurance of how much and how many viewers one needs to make substantial income on YouTube, as explained on the ‘YouTube help’ page entitled ‘YouTube partner earnings overview.’

‘There are no guarantees under the YouTube partner agreement about how much, or whether, you will be paid. Earnings are generated based on a share of advertising revenue generated when people view your video - so more views may lead to more revenue.’ (YouTube, 2017)

As one can perceive from this ambiguous statement income from YouTube cannot be counted on when monetising niche audiovisual markets through the use of long-tail distribution techniques. A YouTube channel should be used as distribution method not a sole revenue source and margins should not necessarily be provided for when developing business plans for ultra-niche networks that include revenue streams from third party aggregators. Nevertheless, the biggest benefit of using the services of a third party video aggregator (YouTube) is that it is easy to track and compare traffic.

Inspiration’s (www.Inspirationalwomen.tv) primary site, or channel, became the main location for accessing the video content after it had been broadcast on cable or free to air television and incorporated all the videos produced, information on all stakeholders, sponsors and material on all interviewees. In addition to using the Inspiration website as a broadcasting method, there was the opportunity to monetise the website by using third party advertisement placement services such as Google AdSense. Although we did not use this type of service, it was certainly contemplated and advisable to anyone creating a ultra-niche
content network. The reason for this decision was that our website was not initially set up with the ability to insert third party advertisements. Furthermore, as the website was created by an external graphic design company that was rather expensive to commission, it was something that we did not think would be worth the investment at the time. Instead we preferred to concentrate on revenue sources from affiliate marketing practices (described below). If we were creating Inspiration's website now (as discussed above), we would use a website template platform such as ‘WIX’ that has integrated features allowing website owners to easily create space for third-party advertising, such as Google AdSense. This technological development is another innovation that has made it easier for niche corporate audiovisual producers to monetise their content.

The use of both a website and a YouTube channel as distribution methods brings programming and switching power together in that it enables the distribution of an own-branded TV channel to connect with other power networks while maintaining its scope of action. This is because primary sites offer more branding and monetisation opportunities as well as greater control over content management, and a YouTube channel has the potential to help build a larger audience and connect with other networks. An equally significant aspect of using YouTube is cost; YouTube is one of the most cost-effective ways producers can promote, generate an audience, and broadcast ultra-niche content online. This is because video is extremely bandwidth heavy and can be hugely expensive to service. This is not the case when loading content onto YouTube, as the site is free, simple and straightforward. It is no wonder YouTube is the best and most popular web video content host (Wilson, 2009). Adding to the advantages of YouTube as a ‘programing power,’ is the demand for professionally produced ultra-niche content on YouTube as even though there is a lot of user generated content available on YouTube, research conducted in the Netherlands in 2008 shows that the most popular content on YouTube is professionally generated (Kruitbosch & Nack, 2008), such as the content created as part of Inspiration.

Adding to this, the advantages of YouTube distribution and ‘switching power ’discussed in the previous paragraph, is the fact that once videos are uploaded on YouTube and embedded on a web channel, sharing on social media sites such as Facebook becomes very simple and was unimaginable a few years ago.
The advantages of using the ‘switching power’ of *YouTube* as an online distribution method and promotional tool, was cemented by Jason Miles (2013), who points out that, “*YouTube* is the second best search engine online, only behind Google.”

*YouTube* is an outstanding tool to spread the news about a brand, business, charity or social issue (Miles, 2013). By effectively using keywords and titles on your videos, you can have content that gets found by searchers looking for your topics of interest. Besides what is even better is that effective search engine optimization on *YouTube*, positions your content extremely well for displaying in the Google search engine results pages (SERPs). (Miles, 2013)

With the ‘power’ to connect with audiences in mind, long tail video content producers can leverage their position on *YouTube*, as sponsors have the chance to gain click through from potential consumers. Equally, sponsors can obtain new clients or cultivate existing customers due to the fact that ultra-niche videos are online for years and serve as long term promotional tools. In fact, a female naturopath who bought a tip segment on *Inspiration* in 2011 still had the segment embedded on her website through our *YouTube* channel in February 2015.

Correspondingly, it is also important to note that as distribution costs approach zero, the ability to broadcast and store ultra-niche content is virtually infinite. This new frontier in the entertainment industry is far from incremental. In this new environment, the concepts of hits, windows of distribution, and ‘shelf life’ are disappearing (not including time-sensitive content such as breaking news and sports) (Bhatia, 2009). In fact, it did not matter what time, date or order the content was viewed online. As long as the *Inspiration* segment was relevant to the viewer, it does not matter if it was watched a week, month, or even year after it was aired or produced, the ‘shelf life’ remained, consequently, increasing *Inspiration*’s potential audience. Information on how to bake a ricotta and apple cake or how to start a new business can be relevant for years to come, no matter the date of time of the original broadcast.

*YouTube* gives ‘programming and switching power’ to organisations and producers to create their own branded channels and has the potential to help build larger audiences through additional promotional and monetisation tools. *YouTube* enables programmers to establish network(s) and to program/reprogram them; *YouTube* also enables switchers to have the
ability to connect, control and collaborate with various strategic networks and ensure the cooperation of different networks by sharing common goals and combining resources. Honan (2012) pointed out that YouTube is transforming into a play anywhere, multi-channel network:

It’s becoming a cable network for people who don’t have cable. YouTube doesn’t want you to watch videos anymore — not in the singular sense, at least. It wants you to stick around and see what comes next. It wants you to start watching on your phone as you head home from work, pick up again on your TV as you relax in the evening, and then nod off to its content while you’re lying in bed, as it streams from your tablet. (Honan, 2012)

By building on this knowledge, works by Killison, Morrow and Morrow (2013) and my own experience of producing, creating and connecting ultra-niche networks, ‘programing and switching power’ can be brought together and ‘controlled’ when actors such as myself use YouTube and platform integration as distribution methods to connect with and build a sense of community and increase website traffic. This is because it is a completely free online video-hosting service that allows networks to be created and for video content to be used directly for marketing and social media purposes, as well as a way to embed video onto external websites. In the period from 11th May 2011 to February 2015, we have had 32,311 views on YouTube alone.

In order to answer if the conventional ‘power’ of television broadcast would enable an ultra-niche broadcasting network to connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action, we approached community broadcasters to secure a broadcast time slot. We emailed both the Victorian community broadcaster Channel 31 and cable television network Foxtel’s community channel Aurora. Channel 31 agreed to broadcast the program, although with the proviso that we allow them to broadcast Inspiration before cable channel Aurora. We agree to this term and signed a broadcasting agreement with both channels. By broadcasting Inspiration on-air and online, it became evident that for some of our potential sponsors and businesswomen looking to promote their businesses with us it was extremely important that we were still broadcasting on free-to-air community television not exclusively online; even if the monthly reach was not always consistent it was a larger number than on YouTube/online. The monthly reach for Inspiration broadcast each Sunday night on Channel 31 at 9.30 pm was: June 2011- 82,000; July 2011-31,000; and August 2011-16,000 viewers.
Caitlin Jolly, a programming team member at Channel 31, provided these figures to me on 21 September 2011.

Below is a table outlining Inspiration’s total audience data by platform as of February 2015. The number of views on Foxtel’s *Aurora* channel are not recorded or included in this table, as I could not obtain the relevant data from the *Aurora (foxtel)* channel.

| Total *YouTube* views of all Inspiration videos as of February 2015 | 32,311 (this is a constantly shifting number as the content/videos are still online able to be viewed) |
| Total *Channel 31* views of all Inspiration videos as of 21 September 2011 (Inspiration was not broadcast after that date) | 129,000 |

Figure 6 Total audience data by platform

Broadcasting on community channels, surprisingly (to me anyway), gave *Inspiration* credibility as well as the most views and visibility. We discovered this through audience data collection/ratings as well as through discussions we had with female small business owners, all of whom liked the fact that we were broadcasting on free to air as well as cable television. Perhaps this was the case because many of the women we worked with on the show, such as cook Stephanie Alexander, had grown up with broadcast television and still viewed it with reverence, even though many watched online television. Interestingly, the fact that *Inspiration* was broadcast on air was a contributing factor for them to go on the show to promote their non-profit organisation or purchase a branded content segment. It is important, however, not to overemphasise the strength of this argument, as online viewing habits and attitudes have changed a great deal since we broadcast our 16-part series in 2011. As of 2014, 50 per cent of internet-connected Australians watch professionally produced film and television video content via the Internet, representing an increase from 43 per cent in 2012 (ScreenAustralia, 2014). The Australian government has since confirmed that all community TV stations in Australia will lose access to Australia’s sixth TV channel at the end of 2016, and will be broadcast online only (Knox, 2015). The implications of the removal from the broadcasting spectrum of C31 for independent audio-visual producers is undoubtable profound, despite the fact that audiences are tuning-in online more then ever before, the case
for maintaining community control of a small portion of broadcasting spectrum is strong. This is because community television not only provides small creative audio-visual producers/practitioners an opportunity to reach a larger audience, but it may also be a gateway for future online initiatives. Audiences may view a program on community television and then may decide to watch C31’s catchup service or tune in to the ultra-niche network online. This is a great advantage for niche audiovisual producers operating in an oversaturated marketplace, as community television gives niche audio-visual produces additional "programming" power that they may not have broadcasting online alone.

Through the process of distributing Inspiration online, on air and on social media, it became obvious that the power to easily and cheaply distribute across multiple mediums is an important way ‘programming’ and ‘switching’ power can be brought together. This is evident for most content created today. For example, Luc Besson's movie, Home, premiered on YouTube on the same day as its theatrical release, online streaming of hit TV shows are aired the same day as their prime time broadcast, on platforms such as Hulu (Bhatia, 2009). Ultra-niche content might have many distribution platforms such as YouTube, or a website or a social media site, such as Twitter or Facebook, as an additional media platform providing mini episode fixes. As in Inspiration case, we also broadcasted on community TV as well as on our primary website, YouTube channel and social media sites. We also broke up our episodes into small segments to be broadcast on social media. By broadcasting via all these methods, I show how cross-platform integration permits small scale producers such as myself to use the switching power of social media practices and principles to connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action. By having the capacity to be flexible and by adapting to different consumption habits (for next to no financial cost or substantial organisational power), and alternating between different distribution platforms, it was discovered that multiple broadcasting platforms reinforced engagement and built audiences. In fact, by having the ‘power’ to broadcast in different ways and forms for next to no cost brings network-making power to smaller actors as long tail video producers are able to adapt to different viewing habits and media channel preferences relatively easily and quickly, thus giving smaller organisations the power to compete with their bigger counterparts. That said it is important to make sure each channel is satisfying in its own right rather than being repetitive. This network-making power can work for revenue rising as well. One segment could be sponsored to pay for another platform, while another could be free, and another audience or advertiser paid. These empirical details illustrate and support a larger argument
about niche marketing being understood as a multiplatform strategy, which also undercuts pre-internet hierarchies of value based on distinctions between commercial and non-commercial media, as well as exhibition windows. Importantly to producer/creative practitioners the content created in this project was successfully made available to niche audiences on a wide variety of platforms on a non-exclusive basis, including social media, video aggregators, broadcast channels, subscription TV, and branded websites. This has also encouraged me to further question how corporate producer/creative practitioners working between mass media conglomerates and consumers can use a long tail or ultra-niche broadcasting network to connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action.

Collaboration

To further understand opportunities for independent audiovisual producers in ultra-niche networking strategies, this section shifts the focus from questions of distribution/exhibition to issues of program production. As was outlined in the literature review chapter, collaboration is another one of the most important factors to respond to and consider if network-making power is to be brought to small corporate producers/creative practitioners. In the practice, this was addressed through the development of new knowledge on collaboration within an ultra-niche network context. Although collaboration may seem like an obvious concern, it is an important issue to address in the implementation phase of ultra-niche video content and is an important factor to consider if long tail video content is to be viable, since no one lives in isolation. Productions involve working with countless different people including, pre and postproduction teams, clients, auxiliary staff, sponsors, web-designers, coders, investors and contributors. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that finding the appropriate team, communicating and understanding others’ needs and wants, and, most importantly, the needs, wants and outcomes of the client are particularly significant when creating practicable long tail video content.

In order to consider how independent commercial audio-visual producers, might respond to proliferating media platforms and fragmenting media markets it was important to keep costs down. This was done by working flexibly and by collaborating closely with friends, interns and by using existing resources; for example, as my business partner on the Inspiration
project is a musician, she wrote and sang the song for the opening titles, we used animation and graphics graduates to create the animation, logo and animated transitions. I was the presenter; as I had experience producing and presenting Luxe Shanghai in the past, it was decided that I was going to be the host and presenter of the show, allowing us to save money on hiring another presenter who required payment. Through this process, I also questioned and tested if it was possible to train someone with no experience in presenting and interviewing to be a host and interviewer for a long tail network with a limited budget. The outcomes of the practice were that it would be possible to train, for example, a gregarious nurse at a nursing home to interview and present content on and about its residents. Primarily, this is because of the ease of use and affordability of contemporary production equipment. Take the nursing home scenario for example, with a couple of days of intense training on how to operate a digital camera and tips on interview techniques, a keen nurse would easily be able to learn how to setup a camera to interview clients.

In addition, to further investigate if an ultra-niche broadcasting models can be seen as a proxy of networked power for independent corporate producers, Karen and I decided to share the task of editing between us, as we both had editing software Final Cut Pro on our computers. We also hired camera operators and editors who had the ability to film and edit because it saved considerable time and money. This is because one only has to explain the concept to one person and that one camera operator and editor knows what footage and cutaways that were shot and are required to achieve the desired segment.

While filming segments for Inspiration it became clear that if a cameraperson was directing and filming at the shoot, they knew the subject of the interview or segment, the questions asked, as well as what type of footage was needed for the cutaways. As a consequence, I would always try to use a cameraperson and editor in future, not a separate cameraperson and editor.

In order to question other specific proxies of networked power for independent corporate producers, it was also important to pay close attention to cost of staff. This aspect was addressed by the hiring of interns and recent graduates who owned their own production equipment as they charge less money than more experienced directors of photography (DOP) and editors as they do not have as much experience.
The outcome of producing *Inspiration* with a team of interns ‘hungry for experience’, new graduates, passionate about filmmaking, or women enthusiastic about creating a platform for women's voices, was that working with dedicated, creative individuals makes up for a limited budget. Whilst working on *Inspiration* our graduate team members felt that they were learning and gaining knowledge and experience. Julian, one of the initial assistant directors of photography that was employed to work alongside Tim, the more experienced professional director of photography, gained so much experience and knowledge through the process of filming and editing *Inspiration*, he now runs his own production company creating short films, and has gone on to win the Australian short film competition *Tropfest 2014*. Later on *Inspiration* employed Julian as the first DOP at a professional rate on a freelance basis when required. The outcomes of this practice were that, in some cases, young less experienced and consequently cheaper creative editors/directors/camera people are more willing to take risks, try new things and generally are more willing to take direction and advice. Student and graduate involvement in program production impacted upon the production process, as not only do the students gain valuable experience, corporate producer/creative practitioners are able to keep costs down. That said, working with interns and students does come with some costs, in many cases a minimum payment is required depending on the applicable labour laws. In addition to this, transport and catering costs may need to be factored into the budget as well as any associated taxes. Another cost that needs to be considered when working with interns and graduates is the time and effort it takes to plan, train and develop a program for them. This work may take time away from other important production activities; generally speaking, interns require a lot of guidance and normally lack autonomy. An intern may have the basics skills to be able to use the production equipment, but may not have experience and/or the confidence to communicate with interviewees/other production staff or vice versa. Working with interns can be time-consuming and can take an audiovisual practitioner away from other important tasks. That said it is sometimes just useful to have an extra pair of hands when setting and packing up a shoot. Although each intern experience is diverse, on the whole working with interns can be a very rewarding experience for both parties involved, nevertheless it is important to factor in additional time if not money into the budget.

Through working on *Inspiration*, It was found that the quality and creativity of the filming and editing (a form of programming power) was not determined by either experience, cost of the camera operator/editor or team; however, it was influenced by their willingness to experiment with different editing and filming techniques and concepts. What was important was the ability of crewmembers to adapt to ever changing production technologies and their
willingness to learn, collaborate and follow direction and advice on the format of the long tail video content.

The results of working on *Inspiration* with a more experienced and expensive cameramen and editor, was that they were more expensive and were less likely to take into consideration *Inspiration’s* style or follow instructions on how *Inspiration* needed to be filmed and edited to create a coherent brand image. It was discovered that some of the most experienced professionals that we worked with were change-averse and desired to film in the way they had always done over many years. I am sure this is not always the case, although it does reiterate the idea that it is not about the budget of the long tail network that makes it successful, it is how the team collaborates and works together. Conversely, employing more experienced crewmembers can be more expensive, easier and less time-consuming as they require less time training. In terms of insights and recommendations for the production of ultra-niche video content networks, I would suggest using a team of experienced professionals and young inventive graduates who can balance out innovation and knowledge.

Consequently, the practice that was involved in producing *Inspiration* was significant in answering how corporate audio-visual producers with limited resources and training can produce a viable long tail video content network. This knowledge acts as an illustrative figure that demonstrates and helps answer how an independent ultra-niche broadcasting models can bring network-making power to smaller actors.

Social Media Marketing

In 2011, the Pew Internet Research Centre claimed that 65 per cent of adult Internet users used a social networking site like MySpace, Facebook or LinkedIn, and 71 per cent of online Americans used video sharing sites such as YouTube and Vimeo (K. Moore, 2011). To explore how independent corporate audio-visual producers can connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action (i.e. connect with their target audiences and constituencies), I used the switching power of social media to connect with *Inspiration’s* target audience. By utilising social networking, messaging and content-sharing sites like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, I responded to the issues of whether the use of social media can help brand awareness and expand long tail video content audiences to help companies
and organisations create an ongoing ‘in-store’ and/or ‘online’ television presence thereby bridging the gap between customers and an organisation. For this project, which attempted to discover if a long tail network could connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action, it was important to pay close attention to the writings of Luo and Wang (2013). They explored how organisations are increasingly embracing social media to strengthen their connections with their audience, and how organisations have been actively establishing a large presence on various social outlets (L. Luo; Y. Wang, 2013).

To build on Luo and Wang’s (2013) theories, segments, tips and short 30-second videos produced especially for social media were uploaded. In addition, as social media technologies take on many different forms such as blogs, micro blogs, wikis, social networking sites, social bookmarking sites, photo, and video sharing sites, it was important to analyse which approach enabled an ultra-niche broadcasting network the greatest opportunity to connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action. Social media sites have introduced substantial and extensive changes to communication between many different actors including organisations, communities and individuals allowing slivercasters to increase brand awareness. In fact, by testing Wilson’s (2009) theories, I understood that ‘social media marketing’ can also help increase the reputation and awareness of video content as consumers are able to discover content that they would not otherwise find (Wilson, 2009). It became clear that it was important to build a strong online social network through content-sharing sites like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. As it was easier to build online buzz for the content from within a social network than from a website alone, social media sites became necessary tools to promote sponsorships, brand recognition and to let online followers know when the next show was going to air.

This was confirmed by Pulizzi and Barrett (2009) as, depending on the goals of the content and target audience, sites such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube can be leveraged to promote content effectively. For example Pulizzi and Barrett state:

A company could launch a branded Facebook fan page where employees can share content with customers on a regular basis. (J. Pulizzi & Barrett, 2009 p.26)

Twitter, a micro blogging tool (140 characters per post maximum), is also an excellent combination between social networking and content distribution say Pulizzi and Barrett
(2009). Consistent with my findings, Pulizzi and Barrett note that not only has the blogging community embraced Twitter, but also businesses such as Starbucks, Kodak and the American supermarket Whole Foods have also employ successful Twitter strategies. According to Pulizzi and Barrett (2009), computer company Dell also leverages Twitter for customer service purposes as well as to promote refurbished Dell computer offers through @DellOutlet.

By utilising the ‘programming’ and ‘switching’ power of social media to promote Inspiration through the process of uploading video content (for next to no cost), it became clear that to maximise reach across constituencies and target audiences, identities should be created in as many social spaces as possible. These identities should be full of images, status updates, news stories and needs to be maintained constantly to gain ‘Likes’, and therefore a larger audience. Through the practice of producing Inspiration, I also become aware that ‘free’ by using social media outlets as promotional tools demands a lot of commitment, time and effort. This is because to build an online identity and create and manage a long tail video content community it is important to constantly update and post new material. For example, to gain ‘Likes’ and build anticipation with the audience, every time we would go out on a shoot, whether it be filming video content for Inspiration, photos where always taken to document and posts on Facebook and Twitter. As Wilson notes:

> Comments need to be responded to and the characters need to ‘live.’ For engaged fans, the newsfeed (status update) elements are an important indicator of ‘what’s happening.
> (Wilson 2009 p. 17)

She adds:

> It is also important to befriend people as widely as possible, as this creates additional exposure through secondary networks (social protocols often result in users being ‘friended’ in return by friends of friends). (Wilson 2009 p. 17)

To explore how independent corporate audio-visual producers can use social media as a programming and switching power to connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action, on the Inspiration women’s day special aired on March 8, 2012, the Inspiration team set up an alliance with prominent ‘mummy bloggers’. The Inspiration team filmed a video segment on how mummy bloggers who, from the comfort of their own home...
and while looking after children full time, manage to generate a large online following particularly on Twitter and Facebook. The premise of the segment was that these mummy bloggers review different baby, children and mothers’ products and services for an online community of parents and have translated their social media activity into a successful marketing business. These bloggers, with a large online following of women, agreed to chat on Twitter during the live broadcast of the Inspiration TV show in exchange for being on the show and promoting their own personal brands to gain publicity. This switching power to connect networks was very successful as Inspiration and the ‘mummy bloggers’ both gained exposure to new audiences. For example, Ali Price known as ‘Motivating Mum’ to her followers, (one of the bloggers featured in the segment) mentioned Inspiration five times to 43550 of her followers on 8 March 2012. Kate Pickle another one of the mummy bloggers featured on the program mentioned Inspiration in 4 tweets leading up to the airing of the program on 8 March 2012 to 4131 of her followers. The principal blogger that was featured in the episode, Louise Claire, tweeted from her personal Twitter account nine times from 6 March 2012 to the 8th of March 2012 to 2760 of her personal followers. In addition to this, Louise also tweeted from her business Twitter account ‘Brand Meets Blog’ 4 times to 3831 followers. This had a knock on effect, as Inspiration also gained exposure from fitness mindset coach Katie Mitchell and ‘mummy blogger’ Claire Sarcone, who re-tweeted posts on the segment to their 3931 and 3514 followers. Soap maker Veronica Foale also mentioned Inspiration in two separate posts on 8 March 2012 to 6472 of her Twitter followers. This mutually beneficial arrangement was a successful example of how ultra-niche broadcasting networks can connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action.

To further test how organisations can use the switching and programming power of social media to build brand awareness and expand long tail video content communities, it was decided, through marketing meetings, that existing Inspiration footage was to be re-edited into bite-size one-minute video tips, to be downloaded daily onto Facebook, Twitter and YouTube in order to test and discover which social media site provided the best return for a particular objective (‘likes’ and viewers) and which site customers affiliate with more. This was also done in order to promote Inspiration in between episodes, i.e. to give people a reason to visit our social media sites. To be in the forefront of viewers’ minds, footage needs to be uploaded constantly. It was important for us to be the ‘go to’ place for inspirational tips directed at women. Reflecting on this practice and realising that as smart phones proliferate, it was important to not only create half hour or hour-long television programmes for broadcast but to also break them up into smaller 5 to 7 minute segments that can be easily
watched online or on a smart phone anywhere and everywhere. We then broke this content down even further into 20 second and one minute bite size segments for social media sites; for example, in the case of Stefanie Alexander, we created a 30-second ‘tip’ that encouraged children to cook. This ‘tip’ was then added to social media outlets such as Twitter and Facebook. These short segments gave our viewers and community a chance to be informed in a bite-size way every day, encouraging participation within the online community. The decision to reiterate and regurgitate our footage was taken by listening, thinking and responding to what the community of viewers were saying and to discover what a successful social media marketing strategy looks like. Therefore, it became apparent that it is important to constantly be in contact with a long tail audience and not let them forget about the video content while it is not on air or in between online uploads. We also realised that, if the video content on Twitter and Facebook was not useful to an audience, there will be no benefit and a loss of credibility may occur. Although, we realised well-structured and relevant videos and content enhances the reputation of a network, can deliver traffic back to a network’s website and encourage sales. By uploading video content to social media sites, I also tested theories King (2012) had written about:

When viewers friend and hold conversations with your organisation, it makes you that much more human to your customers. (King, 2012 p.31)

It is also crucial to encourage people to comment on posts, to be able to enter into a two way discussion that allows communities to comment on what they see and to have their comments valued and commented upon. Participating in social networks assures viewers that there is a real person at the other end, not just a machine. Participating makes it ‘real’ and ‘alive’ within that social network encouraging members of the community to feel part of the community.

Ultimately, when long tail video content networks upload, communicate and interact on social media, they want viewers to think about their networks and brands, and they want to create the feeling of personal connection to their video content and brand. Therefore, networks that have vibrant online communications made up of viewers that are satisfied with the ‘connection’ they have with the network, then ultra-niche broadcasting network are able to connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action.
The Programming Power of Branding

For this project, which endeavours to uncover the skills, knowledge and network-making capacities required by independent corporate producers to explore ultra-niche opportunities, it was important to pay attention to brand identity theories and literature outlined in Chapter 2 by Wheeler (2012). Through the practice of producing *Inspiration*, Wheeler’s work was used as a guide for the creation of an on air and online brand identity. This included branded opening titles, an identifiable logo, animation and colour schemes. As Wheeler (2012) notes, the animated version of an identity should be part of the initial concept rather than an afterthought, the animation must support the essence of the overall brand and meaning of the identity.

The *Inspiration* animated titles created a strong brand image as they included the name of the show, using the logo that incorporates the *Inspiration* colours, a rich burgundy red representing passion, and gold representing success. Two animated titles were created for the show: a 30-second animated title for the start of the show; and two 5-second titles, one to separate the segments and another one to introduce the ‘Tip’ sections. As Wheeler states:

> The best brands speak with one distinctive voice. On the web, in a tweet, in conversations with a salesperson, in a speech given by the president, the company needs to project the same unified message. It must be memorable, identifiable, and cantered on the customer. (Wheeler, 2012 p.26)

As Wheeler (2012) explains above, a strong brand identity can be achieved through the creation of an identifiable logo, website, animation, colour scheme, style and look that communicates and forms its own robust image, which is clear and easy for sponsors and viewers to understand.

Taking Wheeler’s lead again:

> Keep site goals, audience needs, key messages, and brand personality central to each and every decision. (Wheeler, 2012 p. 167)

To keep the overall key messages, brand personality and image of *Inspiration*, and to make sure that each episode and segment’s format was uniform, it was decided, through various
brainstorming techniques and dialogue, *Inspiration* would keep to the following format: one short interview, one long interview, and one or two ‘tip’ segments. The tip segments would adhere to the following theme: How women can empower themselves in many ways (finances, business, real estate, fashion, body-mind-spirit, education); an example of the type of content can be seen in the *Inspiration* running order and segments document (see Appendix 7).

This model of incorporating short and long interviews and tips with a variety of subjects including segments on what's on, who's who, and what's new, can be adapted for any length of long tail video content, subject or brand image.

The creation of a solid brand identity brings network-making power to small actors. If a network does not have a recognisable format, appropriate name, logo, brand, animation, colour, and key messages, then it will be very hard for the network to achieve differentiation and an audience. Additionally, skilful and appropriate design adds significant value to content marketing by making it more accessible and appealing. Consequently, content that is well designed and has an integrated brand identity can increase awareness of an ultra-niche video network.

**Sponsorship, Branded Content and Monetisation**

In order to reconcile the erosion of traditional sources of financing power of television content due to the changing expectations of audience around paid content and emergent (counter power) models of financing, *Inspiration* was made up of branded segments and was funded by sponsorship. The *Inspiration* long tail network offered a variety of integrated sponsorship and advertising solutions, both on air and online, to help sponsors reach their target customers. To get a better understanding of the *Inspiration* sponsorship offering, see *Inspiration’s* media kit (see Appendix 11).

As outlined in Chapter 2, sponsorship is where a company pays for the right to be associated with an online television network, single segment or program (Wilson, 2009). A fee is paid to buy rights for a defined period and includes the right to advertise and to have their logo integrated within the content, thus building an association with the content and engaging with
the community connected (Wilson, 2009). This is noteworthy as the problem of monetisation of a long tail video network is key to bringing network-making power to small actors. In the practice, this aspect was addressed by exploring advertiser involvement in the production and authorship of content. Therefore, practice led research on monetisation enabled me to answer how ultra-niche video content can be funded through sponsorship and product placement. This in turn illustrates how organisations have the ‘programming power’ to fund their own ultra-niche content, incorporate product placement or sponsorship to help monetise their network, as well as determine how brand images can be integrated within ultra-niche content in order to appeal to viewers.

To test these ideas and to question if advertising, sponsorship and branded content can provide an income for Inspiration and therefore for ultra-niche video content, we determined it was necessary to appoint a media sales agent (on a commission basis) who was in charge of selling sponsorship and Inspiration’s branded content segments to provide revenue required to run Inspiration long term. We engaged Tanya Fullarton from The Slattery Media Group to sell sponsorship opportunities on a commission basis. From this experience, I found that this commission arrangement is particularly attractive to independent sales agents or agencies who are already selling advertising or sponsorship for other media outlets to similar clients and would like to package it with another option for advertisers. An example of a media agent’s agreement can be viewed in Appendix 8 - Media agent agreement.

In discussions with potential clients, sales agents and while selling branded content and sponsorship for Inspiration, I established that branded content and sponsorship are the major sources of income for slivercasters such as Inspiration. Therefore, it is ideal to have a number of sponsorship opportunities for advertisers at varying levels of commitment and cost. Consequently, with this knowledge in mind I created a media kit that outlined all the branded content and sponsorship opportunities and rates available, including title and associate sponsorship, branded tips and segments, as well as product placement and advertising (Inspiration’s media kit can be seen in Appendix 11). Through the process of selling Inspiration myself and appointing and training a sales person, it was discovered that a clear and concise media kit that comprehensively stated the benefits and costs of the branded and sponsorship opportunities available was paramount when selling long tail video content networks for niche audiences.
The title sponsorship option in the media kit is the most expensive form of sponsorship and brand association offered, as sponsors have the chance to be associated with the program and content directly, gaining a high level of brand association, credibility and recognition as an organisation that is affiliated and speaks to a particular niche audience. By analysing responses that were acquired thorough discussions with potential sponsors, I found that the title sponsorship option is more suitable for bigger businesses that have large media sales budgets. From our experience small businesses did not have the money to spend on title sponsorship. Moreover, due to the fact that we were a 'start-up' with no ratings or viewership history we were not able to secure title sponsorship before the first Inspiration episode went to air on the 5th of June. It could be argued that this was because the audience numbers were unknown and the cost of title sponsorship was too high for an organisation to take a risk on.

By analysing sales records I found that the majority of sales from small to medium businesses came from branded content interview segments (advertorials) bought by businesswomen who wanted to tell their own personal story in order to promote their business on air, online and on their own website. In fact the first two episodes of Inspiration made $4823.50 in sales. This was before the first episode of Inspiration had even aired on the 5th of June 2011. This was the first step to reaching (see Inspiration 13 Part Series Budget/Possible Revenue) forecasted revenue of $15,300 per episode or $198,900 per series. Even though we did not meet the budget, this is a respectable sum of money for a television series with no viewer numbers/data, a start-up budget of $7000 and no track record.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13-part Series</th>
<th>Major Sponsorship</th>
<th>Assoc Sponsorship</th>
<th>Interview #1</th>
<th>Tip #1</th>
<th>Ads (1 x TVC)</th>
<th>Feature Interview</th>
<th>Ads (1 x TVC)</th>
<th>Interview #2</th>
<th>Tip #2</th>
<th>Total Per Episode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Episode 1</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$15,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episode 2</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$15,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episode 3</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$15,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episode 4</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$15,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episode 5</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$15,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episode 6</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$15,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episode 7</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$15,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episode 8</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$15,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episode 9</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$15,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episode 10</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$15,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episode 11</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$15,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episode 12</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$15,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episode 13</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$2,450</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$15,300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$78,000 $13,000 $31,850 $15,600 $6,500 $6,500 $31,850 $15,600 $198,900

Figure 7 Inspiration 13 Part Series Future Budget/Possible Revenue
In fact, when selling branded content and sponsorship options to potential sponsors for ultra-targeted video content networks for niche audiences (*Inspiration*), it was important to understand the size of the business and the estimated resources available for promotion. There was no point selling expensive title sponsorship to a small one-woman business run from home, as it would be unlikely that she could afford the lofty fee ($6000) for title sponsorship. As an independent corporate audio-visual producer selling advertisements to micro businesses we found that it was important to pitch the sponsorship options that would most likely fit best, so as not to scare off a potential advertiser by pitching an offering that would be deemed too expensive. We were a very small production company pitching to, in most cases ‘one woman shows’ so to speak. In most cases we offered a discount of 30% off the published rate to our sponsors. In fact many of the sponsorship deals we made as part of project 1- *Inspiration* involved some payment as well as in-kind contributions. Moreover, this form of product placement and sponsorship (the giving of a product or service) can be a win-win situation for the ultra-niche network and brand involved as it can reduce production costs and is a relatively cheap way for organisations to sponsor content, as money does not have to change hands.

In fact *Inspiration* provided many opportunities for cumulative learning on the subject of in-kind sponsorship. Through the process of producing *Inspiration* we struck a number of ‘in-kind’ sponsorship deals with Crown Casino and the Arts Hotel Group, whereby the *Inspiration* production team used their hotels, or ‘products’, as locations to shoot our segments in return their venues were shown/advertised within the content. Acknowledgments and branding was displayed in the credits at the end of the segments, providing the hotels with advertising and brand association. These product placement agreements were extremely advantageous as not only were we able to use beautiful surroundings that improved our production value and provided a sense of professionalism, but the use of the venues were cost-effective as we did not have to pay for the use of the location. Product placement agreements were another way network-making power could be brought to small actors, as independent corporate audio-visual producers are able to connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action for very little cost or without large media organisation behind them.

Obviously when selling sponsorship and advertising or any kind to prospective clients the number of viewers watching the content determines how successful video content is and,
therefore, how much money can be charged for sponsorship or advertising. That is why traditional rating have existed, although as Wilson points out, in the digital world this type of evidence has become relatively easy to count and collate:

In the digital environment it is possible to count: each individual user who accesses ones content once per counting period, referred to as a ‘unique viewer’ (UV). (Wilson 2009 p.31)

This corresponds with the number of people viewing content per month and the number of pages that are accessed in total by all users over the month. This is known as Page Views (PV) (Wilson, 2009). The average number of pages looked at by each user is calculated by dividing the total number of pages (PV) by the number of unique users (UV) or PV/UV; the number of times each user comes back to the site each month can also be counted (Wilson 2009).

On top of counting the number of viewers that visits the content website, if the content is on YouTube each view is counted and is visible to all, as in the case of Inspiration where content is downloaded onto YouTube and then embedded on the Inspiration website for viewers to watch. We were then easily able to see how many viewers have watched each segment and were able to report this figure to potential sponsors. As of 9 October 2016, Inspiration’s YouTube channel had 38,565 unique views.

Wilson (2009) explains further that it may be that each user only views certain segments, but they come back over ten times a month; this was significant as it explained how engaging content is relative to the other content on the network, indicating what type of content should be produced to attract the most sponsorship, advertising and product placement.

Although ‘cold calling’ may have its challengers, by setting out clear daily goals and with comprehensive training on how to contact potential sponsors, time effectively and systematically, sales people can build awareness; get sponsors and businesses on board successfully. Although we did not secure title sponsorship or manage to sell every segment overall we were successful in breaking even and we could see that if we kept producing Inspiration, attracted similar and growing audience numbers, it would have been a possibility to make the budget and create a profit.
Demonstrating that with substantial viewer numbers, sales training, relationship building, and product knowledge network-making power can be brought to small actors (in this case independent corporate audio-visual producers).

**Affiliate Marketing**

Intertwined with monetisation, the concept of ‘Affiliate Marketing’ is another issue that was addressed in order answer whether an ultra-niche broadcasting network can connect with other power networks while maintaining its scope of action.

In practice, this aspect was addressed through the process of setting up a number of marketing affiliations. As stated in Chapter 2, affiliate marketing is where content providers, usually with complementary target markets, agree to work with each other to their mutual advantage (Wilson, 2009).

One of the significant affiliations developed as part of this project was the partnership between online women’s magazine **DARE** and **Inspiration**. As a starting point, this involved **Inspiration** providing articles and video segments that were included within a unique section of the DARE online magazine’s March 2012 International Women's Day addition. In this special addition our sponsors were able to have their segments shown within **Inspiration**’s broadcasted program on community TV, on the **Inspiration** website, as well as integrated within DARE magazine. These sponsorship and/or advertising pages also had the option of including embedded video and all Inspiration/DARE pages were hyperlinked to a URL of choice. At the time we all thought that our audiences were a perfect fit (DARE online Magazine’s reviewership was 80% female) for each other and we felt that together we could significantly boost viewership/readership of our media outlets.

The possibility of creating other sponsorship packages was also discussed at this time; in this instance, DARE magazine offered a magazine page in exchange for services and/or similar promotional opportunities in **Inspiration**. This page would have been unconnected to any other 'dare inspiration' feature and would stand alone as an opportunity for readers.

The outcome of the alliance with **DARE** Magazine was that both media outlets increased the number of viewers watching a particular segment, creating greater brand awareness for
Inspiration. This was due to the fact that not only was Inspiration watched by our regular multi-channel audience but by DARE online Magazine’s unique readership as well. DARE online Magazine’s March 2012 International Women's Day special (in which Inspiration had its own section) was sent directly to an additional global database of over 36,000 readers in 39 countries according to an email we received from Tania Usher on the 3 February 2012. This alliance was an efficient way of aggregating viewers and an effective way to connect with other power networks while maintaining our original scope of action.

Jennifer Wilson confirms this argument when she states:

The affiliate model also allows consumers to be offered additional, relevant services with revenue being received from this. (Wilson, 2009 p.33)

The use of affiliate marketing within ultra-niche video content networks brings programming and switching power together because it allows content providers to pool and combine viewership, instantly increasing awareness and viewership. As Arnold, Becker, Dickinson, Lurie and Marsten (2012) explain:

Without an affiliate program, you would be missing out on one of the greatest opportunities on the web: letting others sell your products and services for them. (Arnold, Becker, Dickinson, Lurie, & Marsten, 2012 p. 13)

Marketing affiliate programs increase the reputation and awareness of a brand by building and nurturing a larger audience base of viewers that increases website traffic and, that ultimately, enables ultra-niche networks to connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action.

Through the process of creating associations and partnerships, it was determined that, not only can ultra-niche broadcasting networks connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action, but that to do this effectively it was paramount to build relationships with networks, groups and websites as well as find sponsors and broadcasters. For example, through the process of producing Inspiration, media partnerships with a number of women's groups were also established. One example of this was the official partnership that was set up between the International Women's Federation of Commerce and Industry (IWFCI) and Inspirational women’s TV. Inspiration filmed, reported on and interviewed
women at a number of events held by the IWFCI; in return for this publicity the women’s organisation would include *Inspiration* logo on their invitation, allow *Inspiration* to distribute promotional material at the event, and mentioned *Inspiration* in their speeches. At one such event I gave a speech showing clips of *Inspiration* to the attendees of the event in order to promote *Inspiration* and sell branded content segments. This presentation, and others like it, were successful in not only promoting *Inspiration*, but selling the *Inspiration* branded content opportunities we had available as a number of women who attended these events went on to buy segments and tips on *Inspiration*.

*Inspiration* has been significant in answering some of the key issues that are required to be answered in order to answer the main question: can a long tail video network be seen as a new form of communication counter power in a number of ways. Through the process of producing *Inspiration* I was able to show that due to technological advances in content distribution and production expertise. In conjunction with Hansel’s silvercasting and Chris Anderson’s long tail video theories, organisations that create ultra-niche networks such as myself and the controllers (again myself) and collaborators and actors such as *DARE* magazine or the mummy bloggers, are able to manage, produce and distribute, as well as promote, share and partner with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action, thus creating a new form of network making counter power, as organisations are able to reach their constituencies and target audiences through decisive switching multimedia communication networks. The use of ‘affordable technology’ as a production method brings programming and switching power together in that it enables independent corporate audio-visual producers to create, edit and shoot long tail video content. The use of YouTube and platform integration as distribution methods brings programming and switching power together in that it builds a sense of community and increases website traffic. Furthermore, the use of sponsor collaboration and affinity marketing enables independent corporate audio-visual producers, such as myself to have the switching and programming power to create profitable niche content. Small-scale producers such as myself can also use the switching power of social media practices and principles to help brand awareness and audience expansion in order to assist companies and organisations to create an ongoing in store and online television presence. In addition, I determined that notions on brand identity can be used as a programming power to increase awareness, and that brand identity is an important factor in the implementation phase of an in house television network. This is in conflict with what Castells (2011) states, as he says that no unified elite power is capable of keeping both
the programming and switching operations of the all-important networks under their control, because they are too big to be able to control the power. This is not the case with *Inspiration* as it was a long tail network that sits in between mass media and prosumer, and all the switching and programming issues and tasks can be managed and controlled more flexibly and easily.
CHAPTER 5 PROJECT 2 - CORPORATE BRANDED CONTENT

Incorporating the problems answered, resolved and questioned through the process of creating Project 1 – *Inspiration*, this chapter discusses, expands, solves and contextualises the practical, technological, technical and theoretical issues that were observed and resolved through building on existing knowledge in the field of digital media and marketing communications and the production of ‘corporate branded content’ with the intention to answer more of the key, and ultimately the main, questions of this study. Project 2 was investigational and was mainly used as a project to research whether ultra-niche broadcasting models bring network-making (counter) power to small actors (independent corporate audio-visual producers) and to engage as an active participant in the theoretical and practical challenges that are required when creating ultra-niche content marketing that attracts audiences.

The project involved creation of 11 customer-centered interactive targeted videos on the Sydney Symphony Orchestra’s Associate Conductor program to be shown on Sydney Symphony Orchestra’s social media and Credit Suisse’s sponsorship Internet platforms. As part of the process, I worked very closely with Credit Suisse’s sponsorship team to create video content that was engaging, informative and relevant to the bank’s customers. The video content that was produced as part of case study 2 was created and paid for in order for their [Credit Suisse] network to showcase the charities and organisations that the bank sponsors and are associated with positively.

My role was as the executive producer. I was involved in all stages of the application process from developing concepts, hiring and managing staff, and pre-production through to post-production, creative direction and management, presentations, training, finance, planning and budgeting. When I was approached by Credit Suisse to produce corporate branded content (owing to my experience creating *Inspiration* and *Luxe Shanghai*) I pitched the idea of creating ‘community documentary style’ content, similar to the kinds of human stories that were told throughout *Inspiration*. Due to the knowledge gained through the creation of *Inspiration*, I believed that this type of content would improve customer retention rates and would be a useful community-building tool, as it was for *Inspiration*. 
Project 2 was concerned with producing video content through reflecting upon and following on from the recommendations made through the knowledge learnt by producing *Inspiration*.

To be precise, Project 2 involved exploring the programming power/counter power of ultra-niche networks to engage with an organisation’s target market and constituencies by creating magazine style video content. This content highlighted the types of organisations Credit Suisse sponsors and is shown on their Intranet and Internet sites in order to boost brand awareness and to build a greater sense of community. The manifestation of counter power in project 2 was predominantly limited to the ability of a non-established media organisation to create/commission engaging content as well as act as its own network/broadcaster.

The main purpose of the Credit Suisse sponsorship website and the creation of documentary style content on the groups that Credit Suisse sponsors, such as the Cathy Freeman Foundation and Sydney Symphony Orchestra, is to bridge the gap between the community, Credit Suisse’s customers and staff, in order to create a sense of community responsibility, engagement and belonging.

Following is a list of links to videos that were produced and shown on various websites, blogs and on social media, and which were produced and reflected on as part of this project: videos produced as part of the series on the Sydney Symphony Orchestra Fellowship program sponsored by Credit Suisse and shown on the Sydney Symphony Orchestra Fellowship blog as well as on the Credit Suisse Multimedia Centre:

1. 2013 SSO Fellows - Som Howie and James sang-oh Yoo
2. 2013 SSO Fellows - Rebecca Gill
3. The 2013 SSO Fellows describe the Fellowship in one word
4. The Sydney Symphony Assistant Conductor Program
5. Meet Lucy - our 2012 Violin Fellow
6. Meet Eleanor - our 2012 Cello Fellow
7. Meet Doug - our 2012 Double Bass Fellow
8. Meet Sharn - our 2012 Horn Fellow
9. Meet Rowena - our 2012 Clarinet Fellow
10. Meet Roger - Sydney Symphony Principal Viola and Artistic Director of the Fellowship Program
As stated in the ethics section above, one of the main concerns of this study was the viability of ultra-niche and slivercasting marketing strategies that are supported by the blurring of lines between advertising and editorial content. In fact, the associated ethical issue of how sponsored segments were identified was a delicate issue to manage. When producing corporate branded content for Credit Suisse, it was assumed that audiences were aware that sponsored material was, in effect, commercial content (paid for in full by Credit Suisse) due to the fact that all the video content produced had Credit Suisse’s official corporate logo, intro and outro inserted pre and post each video segment. In addition to this, Credit Suisse mandated the use of this animation as well as the corporate font and colours throughout each video. Although it was not directly stated, it is very clear that the content was produced and commissioned by Credit Suisse. In fact the audio-visual content was also predominantly shown on Credit Suisse’s media/social media channels. How practitioners manage conflicts of interest with funding sources was a significant matter and deliberation on whether branded content is any less ethical than commissioned content was an important issue to unpack at this stage of the study. At any rate, several academics believe sponsored content is a necessary evil in today’s media landscape due to its strong monetisation opportunities (Sanderson, 2014). In fact, most media industry specialists and researchers believe it is the biggest monetisation option for independent corporate audiovisual producers (Sanderson, 2014). Consequently, sponsored content is one of the fastest growing segments, with 22 percent growth in 2013, according to eMarketer as cited by Lauder. That is more than double the growth rate for traditional banner advertisements (Lauder, 2013a).

Conversely, some media consumers feel hoodwinked (Lauder, 2013b). In 2013, the US Federal Trade Commission hosted a meeting titled "Blurred Lines: Advertising or Content?" to discuss whether media outlets are adequately identifying sponsored stories on their websites, and to consider if consumers might be misled (Lauder, 2013b). While the gathering was not a formal inquiry or investigation, some concerns still remained. In particular, airing sponsored branded content, particularly without clear distinction or
placement, may erode audiences’ trust in a media outlet and eventually disrupt their viewership. As Launder explains, misunderstandings about sponsored content have occasionally resulted in embarrassing results for producers looking to embrace the medium (Launder, 2013b).

Clear admission of branded content and high quality content creation are vital to branded contents economic model’s success (Launder, 2013b). However, content is either engaging or watchable or it isn't. No matter the funding source, viewers either want to watch a well crafted, engaging video segments or they do not. In this oversaturated YouTube dominated era, viewers are drawn to entertaining content, and not to the company or organisation that has paid for the video. In fact, the content created for Credit Suisse was not commissioned as a direct advertisement for Credit Suisse's products or services; it was stories/content created to build brand awareness and to shine a light on their corporate responsibility endeavours. Furthermore, no matter where funding comes from, the process of creating and producing a branded content segment is the same and audiences will watch it or reject it no matter who pays.

The Programming Power of Content Creation

Content marketing is the art of understanding exactly what your customers need to know and delivering it to them in a relevant and compelling way. (J. Pulizzi & Barrett, 2009 p.28)

Even though Credit Suisse is a large multinational organisation that producers targeted video content, its primary business and focus was not media - it was and still is, banking. Pulizzi and Barrett (2009) state that an irreversible shift has begun away from media company driven content, towards content created specifically for customers. As outlined in the previous chapter, organisations were realising that they were now able to harness programming and switching power to create content whose quality is equal to or better than what many media companies were producing. This is due to the distribution powers of the Internet and the falling costs of video production, which has enabled organisations to create ultra-niche networks. That said, one of the problems that was presented by the work was the issue of how organisations can use programming power to engage with their target market and constituencies. To respond to this issue, compelling content that attracts and builds audiences was created. Namely, by creating corporate branded content I tested how organisation can
create compelling and engaging video content that transcends the simple offering of product information and into the realm of storytelling in order for it to become a trusted resource. For this project, it was important to pay close attention to Pulizzi and Barrett’s (2009) theory that content marketing enables companies to build a level of trust among customers that makes it easy for those viewers to ultimately buy. The outcome of the practice was that organisations have the programming power to be more than just traders; they have the network-making power to become content providers for their current and future customers. Through the process of creating corporate branded content as an corporate audio-visual producer it became clear that organisations of any size have the programming power to be independent producers in their own right and are able to fill the void left by the faltering media, which Pulizzi and Barrett (2009) term the ability to answer the call of this new Internet-age buyer. The corporate branded content created as part of Project 2 demonstrates that non-media companies can not only create products and services for their customers, but are also able to use the programming power of affordable production equipment and Internet distribution to provide the information that will help their customers prosper and succeed.

Furthermore, as Pulizzi and Barrett (2009) outline below, organisations that utilise this programming power to create corporate branded content are not only providing compelling content that attracts and maintains their target audience, but they also have the ability to increase their revenue:

They are seeing that they can deliver tangible benefits to prospects and customers by offering relevant content that helps provide solutions to some of the toughest problems their prospective buyers are facing. This type of content marketing benefits the customers, of course. Customers love it. Who wouldn’t? But what we are also finding is that content marketing drives revenues and may ultimately be the most important and effective marketing strategy available to successful marketing professionals. (J. Pulizzi & Barrett, 2009 p.25)

At the same time, it was also important to consider why the audiences’ organisations want to watch this content and does the power of engaging content inform or increase the ability of organisations to reach their constituencies and target audiences?

Usually as Handley and Chapman (2012) explain, the outcome was that they want to be either entertained or educated either on an area of interest or need, or specific business topic.
Therefore it was essential to create videos that will, preferably, fall into one of those two categories or a combination of the two (Handley & Chapman, 2012).

By incorporating Handley and Chapman’s (2012) notions with practice, it became clear that ultra-niche content has the potential to tell powerful stories that organisations could use to reach their constituencies and target audiences. At the same time, the depiction of a true story within the content can be the difference between average video content and something that truly engages, explains new-media expert Thomas Clifford, (Handley & Chapman, 2012). Taking the lead from Handley and Chapman (2012), and by creating mini-documentary style video content featuring real stories starring real people showcasing their personalities, I endeavoured to create compelling content that attracts and connects a larger audience. This was done by producing content for the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Art Museum and the Cathy Freeman Foundation in a personal narrative and unscripted documentary style with limited branding and without mentioning the sponsor (Credit Suisse). I also gained insights on how to create compelling targeted niche content that attracts and builds a larger audience when producing corporate branded content while producing Inspiration. It also became clear that it was important to set the tone, pace and rhythm in the first few minutes of the video by using original relevant music and animation.

Taking guidance from Handley and Chapman (2012), the key to successful interviews in a documentary style was to map out an outline or loose script that will help shape the direction of the video content. To create an authentic story each person interviewed in the video should communicate in his or her own voice, using his or her own words, with the guidance of the interviewer and director in order for the video achieve its objectives. The content producer should give cohesion and continuity, vision and an outsider’s perspective. The best stories, Handley and Chapman point out, have a problem or challenge that is faced and overcome throughout the content (Handley & Chapman, 2012). By considering theories on content marketing as well as observations made through the process of creating Inspiration and corporate branded content, it became clear that to insight an authentic reaction from an interviewee it was important that the interviewer outlines the hurdles the interviewee or subject has overcome or something in his or her life that warrants capturing to obtain a personal emotional connection with the viewer. This style of content marketing story telling was demonstrated in the video created about the Cathy Freeman Foundation.
Undoubtedly, the key to standing out in an over-saturated market was informative and educational content, not just any content; viewers know the difference between educational and engaging content and an obvious sales pitch that has no intrinsic value. By creating corporate branded content that was rich in both information and design, organisations have the programming power in many cases to exceed the quality of content that was produced by some traditional publishing companies.

Even though mass media companies are often headed in the opposite direction as mass media companies serve two masters, their readers and their advertisers:

Sadly, as their ad revenues fall, they are caving in more and more to advertisers demands that they compromise content, which short changes their readers. (J. Pulizzi & Barrett, 2009 p.19)

This weakens the editorial product, which eventually results in lower engagement and perhaps an ongoing downward spiral of advertising revenue (J. Pulizzi & Barrett, 2009). Needless to say, not every media company has to make these compromises, although according to Pulizzi and Barrett:

Many former colleagues make it clear that this is an ongoing and almost certainly accelerating trend. In a parallel trend, some of the best editorial talent has been forced out of media organisations to save money. (J. Pulizzi & Barrett, 2009 p.19)

Consequently, producers are leaving voluntarily because they cannot do good work within the content constraints of the struggling media companies (J. Pulizzi & Barrett, 2009):

Many of the very best are moving to corporations, where they are given the resources to create great content without severe budget limitations. As smart companies understand that high quality content is a key marketing driver, they are paradoxically less inclined to compromise in the way that formerly pure media organisations are now doing. (J. Pulizzi & Barrett, 2009 p.19)

This echoes my own experience when producing corporate branded content, as I was given free rein in terms of creativity and storyline, and, if anything, they preferred a less branded approach. A sizable budget was allocated in order to create compelling content that would captivate an audience rather than sell a product.
By testing Pulizzi and Barrett’s (2009) theories outlined above when producing corporate branded content within the context of a corporation that already had an existing platform and infrastructure, it became evident that to attract and maintain viewership as well as integrate brand images it was ‘all about the story’, and that for branded content not to be too obvious or too pushy, the narrative and story behind the person being interviewed is the most important aspect. In order to develop an engaging story driven video, I worked closely with the production crew, the organisation, and subjects to discover what the overall theme and message of the video was going to be before the shoot. For example, when filming the 5-minute video for the Cathy Freeman Foundation, the main message and storyline was, “the Cathy Freeman Foundation provides educational programs and trips to Palm Island students to broaden their horizons and show them a life outside Palm Island. These trips are sponsored by Credit Suisse and without their funding these trips would not be possible”. Although some of the videos that were created for Credit Suisse were only 1-minute long, they all had a strong narrative. This was achieved by understanding the importance of having an idea of where the film was going at the outset.

To address how an independent ultra-niche broadcasting model can bring network-making power to small actors through the creation of fast paced, vibrant, engaging video content, it became evident that ultra-targeted video content networks need to be compelling, and attract and maintain an audience. It was important that ultra-niche audio-visual content does not just include talking heads intermixed with cutaways and archive footage. It was imperative that independent corporate audiovisual producers question what the audience/target market would like to gain, learn, and experience by the end of the video and how this outcome can be achieved. This was because generating well-crafted targeted audio-visual segments that provide an informative and visually stimulating narrative help situate the context of the network and allow small actors to gain network-making power, as well as enable ultra niche broadcasting networks to connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action.
The Programming and Switching Power of Ultra- Niche Broadcasting Networks to Connect with and Attract an Audience

Information and communication technologies have created powerful new expressions of community that go far beyond all previously known forms of community (Delanty, 2009).

Community building was another one of the important factors to respond to and consider when discovering if independent corporate audio-visual producers such as myself can harness the switching and programing power of ultra-niche networks to connect with audiences as well as connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action. Therefore, to build on prevailing, and to develop new, knowledge on online community building, theories on how producers of ultra-niche content networks can create and use the power of ultra-niche video content to create online communities were tested, and responded to primarily through producing corporate branded content. This was made possible due to the fact that niche content producers now have the ability to communicate directly with virtual communities online, as Rebecca Clothey and Stacy Austin-Li (2010) explain:

International Internet interactions have facilitated the formation of what some scholars refer to as virtual communities – communities of individuals who collaborate virtually around a common interest. (Clothey et al., 2010 p. 304)

In order to build on and answer how niche content producers can use the switching and programming power of ultra-niche networks to connect with audiences through the creation of corporate branded content, it was important to first build trust between the organisation and the community. To build this trust an organisation must communicate clearly and transparently, use similar language, in the same manner, and in the same location as their community. This was because it is not possible to connect with viewers if the semantics used are not the same as what the target market understands or relates to.

Not only did attention-grabbing ultra-niche content help build a community, the creation of targeted content also increased the amount of clicks Credit Suisse received for the content that was created as part of this project. This contributed greatly to the reason why the video content produced for Credit Suisse aided in building a community that appealed to their staff and clients. A letter from the sponsor (Credit Suisse) is offered as the main source of
evidence of success in relation to audience development. I am aware that statistics and hard
data would have provided a more in-depth analysis on the subject, unfortunately this was not
possible as Credit Suisse did not give me access to this type of detailed information.
Despite these limitations, outcomes in relation to the purpose of the project, to attract and
build audiences can be found in the business reference letter the former Vice President of
Corporate and Global Sponsorship Communications at Credit Suisse, Mr Stefan Behmer,
wrote to me in September 2012 (see Appendix 9):

Engaging and modern video productions for all of Credit Suisse’s online platforms
have been very well received and have produced double or in some instances triple
the amount of clicks when compared to previous content. (Appendix 9)

To achieve this kind of programming and switching success, it was essential to have a
comprehensive understanding of the community the video content was being produced for
before production started. In order for the video content to appeal directly to the audience it is
being made for, content needs to be tailor-made. In fact, only content that is intrinsically
valuable to a community will work as a core component of a content marketing strategy (J.
Pulizzi & Barrett, 2009).

Therefore, it is important to understand what viewers are interested in most, because if an
independent corporate audiovisual producer does not have an understanding of the concerns,
problems and challenges they face, ultra-niche programmers cannot confidently create
content that is truly relevant to their target market. Without understanding an audience’s
issues, producers and programmers cannot provide solutions. Uncovering information on a
target market enables producers to reach out to audiences with precision and facilitates
carefully targeted messages that are totally under the producer’s control. This demonstrates
that targeted stories, informative, creative and diverse voices, supported by visual imagery
are the building blocks of compelling content that engenders and encourages community
building, which, in turn, enables ultra-niche networks to connect with other power networks
while maintaining their scope of action.

Undoubtedly, the focus was on telling a story accurately and making it relevant to the
audience. Successful niche content concentrates on the story and the audience that it is aimed
at. This outcome was addressed through the creation of educational and entertaining content
that bridges gaps, generates goodwill and builds a greater sense of awareness, and which ultimately assists ultra-niche broadcasting networks to connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action. In order to build on and answer questions around the ability of ultra-niche networks to connect with virtual communities further, Delanty’s (2009) work on communities is important, as virtual communities are creating new kinds of social groups, which exist in several different forms and are highly personalised and lifestyle-oriented. These communities build a collective identity around a sense of community and a shared collective purpose (Delanty, 2009). Knowledge of community was essential to have when producing corporate branded content for the Credit Suisse Intranet. This was because the community of staff members who have access to Credit Suisse’s Intranet was completely different to the community of customers for whom the Internet content was created. For example, a video that I produced named Jane’s Sydney featured Communications Manager Jane’s experience working for Credit Suisse in Sydney. This was accompanied by photos and an article in Credit Suisse’s interactive online staff magazine, and which had a completely different tone and composition to the content produced for the corporate communications website open to the public.

This case study provided an excellent opportunity to focus on intranets (as distinct from the internet) as sites for niche audiovisual markets and new business opportunities for independent producers. No matter what the size an organisation is, it more than likely needs to communicate with its staff. A niche in-house audiovisual channel broadcast on an organisations' Internet is an efficient and clear way for an organisation to directly communicate and inspire a workforce. This is because no matter where employees are, they can be interconnected cost-effectively and resourcefully as long as they have access to the organisations network and/or the Internet. There is less need to send out group or individual emails, hold large meetings or assemblies to disseminate information to a large amount of people. An organisation that has an ultra-niche television network can enlist a corporate audio-visual producer to create an in-house television channel for their staff (like Credit Suisse did). This opens up additional commercial opportunities for niche audio-visual produces as organisations may require two separate in-house television networks, one for the staff with the main purpose of community engagement and communication, as well as an external audience facing network with the purpose of marketing and consumer knowledge. This is just another one of the multifaceted sets of inter-related issues that are important for independent commercial audio-visual producers, to keep in mind when responding to issues of the proliferation of media platforms and fragmenting media markets.
In Project 1, theories and ideas on the relationships of programming and switching present in affordable technology, platform integration, online and YouTube distribution, collaboration, social media marketing, integrated brand identity, sponsorship and branded content leading to monetisation were tested in order to discover how ultra-niche broadcasting models can bring network-making power to small actors.

In Project 2 the opportunity to qualify and examine aspects important to the critique of existing power relations that are represented by the network, including how ultra-niche broadcasting models can bring network-making power to small actors and how ultra-niche broadcasting networks connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action in different ways than in Project 1.

The projects undertaken for this dissertation provided opportunities for cumulative learning about ultra-niche marketing through practice-led research. Therefore, the following chapter will discuss the capstone Project 3 and will examine all the practice-led research that has been completed to answer if, due to technological advances in content distribution, production and the Long Tail, programmers and switchers are able to be kept under control in an ultra-niche video network model. Ultimately this study seeks to answer whether such a model can be seen as a proxy of networked power for independent corporate producers.
CHAPTER 6 PROJECT 3 – RMIT OR ULTRA-NICHE NETWORK PROPOSAL

Project 3, the RMIT ultra-niche network proposal locates, consolidates, brings together, and articulates the ideas and questions that have been discovered in the first two projects. Although, the RMIT proposal differed from the other two in that it is a pitch for the establishment of a niche audiovisual service, rather than an actual production project. This project was generally concerned with the challenges and opportunities for producing branded content in a university context, although the proposal could be retrofitted to any organisation. Through the process of creating Project 3, this study presents and determines a series of recommendations, economic analyses, technical specifications, measures, structures and concepts that independent commercial audio-visual producers, might use in response to the fragmentation of media markets. The expression of counter power in project 3 was again principally limited to the ability for non-established media organisations to create/commission content as well as act as its own network/broadcaster.

This chapter further evaluates the skills, knowledge, and network-making capacities commercial audio-visual producers need to explore ultra-niche opportunities as well as extends on existing knowledge in the fields of digital media and marketing communications.

As an independent corporate audiovisual producer reflecting on Projects 1 and 2, it was evident that there was a link, and that the knowledge gained from producing Inspiration and corporate branded content could be amalgamated into a concise model. When I started out on this journey, I set out to create an audiovisual platform (Inspiration) funded through different sponsorships agreements and the use of product placement, as I had done in my previous independent audiovisual project Luxe Shanghai. Initially it was very difficult to educate small business people that we connected with on the value of paying for branded content as they did not have the knowledge of branded content and in many cases they put us in contact with their PR person (if they had one)-- expecting to be included in our show for no fee. As I mentioned above, it was an educational process to teach some of the small businesses we contacted about the value of paying for a segment that could be used as an advertising tool for them as well as to connect with our audience online and on community television. They could also use the video content/segment on their own website. That is why
broadcasting on free to air television was an advantage to us at the time. Five years on, the media landscape is extremely different; in my experience organisations now understand and have increased knowledge of targeted media production and distribution. Again from my research as an independent corporate producer, I found that organisations small or big (such as Credit Suisse) now have more of an understanding of ultra-niche content and their ability to upload it to a video aggregation sites such as YouTube or Vimeo. This was an example where my research and commercial backgrounds was beneficial; I could see as an audio-visual producer working with clients that communication and marketing managers were starting to take notice of niche networking. In general organisations were beginning to realise that they do not necessarily need to pay to be included within an already existing platform they can just create an ultra-niche network on their own with the help of a production company. That is one of the reasons why I initially contacted RMIT with regard to creating a RMIT TV Channel that aggregated all of their existing content, daily newly produced content as well as live streaming. This RMIT proposal, although not taken up by RMIT, was an evolution and amalgamation of niche sponsored audiovisual content production and branded platform development that was created in the first two projects. Independent corporate audiovisual produces can use the proposal as a guide to pitch the creation of an audiovisual network for any organisation.

With this in mind, I created a proposal outlining how to implement and produce an ultra-targeted content network, using RMIT as an example. I created this proposal with the understanding that it could be used as a framework that gives network-making power to independent corporate audiovisual producers who wish to produce a ultra niche video content network (the RMIT proposal has since been modified for a number of different organisations, see Appendices 11 and 12).

The following section will review, expand and contextualise the practical, technological, technical and theoretical issues that were observed and resolved through the creation of the first three projects and resolved in the RMIT long tail video content network proposal (see Appendix 10).

The Programming and Switching Power of Digital Distribution
By applying theories on slivercasting, ultra-niche networking, and long-tail marketing- the long tail thesis, as popularised by Anderson and by exploring the different methods of distribution used in the first two projects it was crucial to advocate for a cloud and YouTube (or similar aggregator) based multichannel distribution method that RMIT would host. The ultra-niche network described in the proposal can then be viewed via mobile phone, tablet, a primary online channel, as well as via an internal Intranet platform and a dedicated sponsorship platform. In addition to this and in the interest of reaching a wider and larger student audience, the RMIT marketing team and I discussed the possibility of using the existing LED screens installed throughout RMIT University to distribute the network. Through these lengthy dialogues it was noted that digital out-of-home screen technology is also able to build and nurture a core audience base as long as there are resources available to run the LED screen system, and the project objectives are met. Digital out-of-home screen technology is a noteworthy distribution method as tablets and smartphones do not always have Internet access, are too small or are not always the most suitable platform or display method for long tail video content in a crowd setting. As outlined in Chapter 2, an increasing number of LED screens and HDTV display networks are being installed (almost anywhere and everywhere). LED screens and online cloud technology are making it easier for targeted video content producers to create and broadcast targeted pre-produced or live content on the spot to an ultra-niche audience that is present, enthusiastic and interested in the content being produced. This shows that ultra-targeted video content networks for niche audiences can be successfully disseminated through a number of different out-of-home platforms and that it is essential to think about which channel is more flexible or interactive and which is more personal or able to be shared. Another significant issue for independent audiovisual producers to consider when determining ultra-niche networking strategies was, if an audience would prefer to watch long-form video content on broadcast television or short form on a mobile device. It was also essential that the platform selection be based upon revenue opportunities, cost of production and delivery, viral and social media possibilities, ease of lifestyle incorporation, relevance, and the acceptance of a platform, as well as a particular launch schedule. Finally, the most suitable distribution method for an ultra-targeted video platform is ultimately dependent on the production model, resources available and content objectives. Although I suspect that most independent audiovisual producers will choose an online multichannel distribution method.
The Programming and Switching Costs Involved in Creating Ultra-Niche Network Models

Because technology is both cheap and easy to use, even small companies can deliver great content solutions to a targeted customer base. (J. Pulizzi & Barrett, 2009 p. 16)

Even though each ultra-niche video content network has its own unique costs and budget, generally ultra-niche networks need to factor in similar costs, albeit on a smaller or larger scale. Furthermore, a budget (a checklist with the production costs) is vitally important in ensuring that ultra-niche networks have the available funds needed to carry out the objectives. The following text will address cost factors involved in producing an ultra-niche network. This knowledge was outlined and answered in the series of recommendations included within the proposal for an ultra-niche network model or RMIT TV proposal (see Appendix 10).

By bringing together knowledge gained through the process of budgeting and costing Projects 1 and 2, I have determined that costs such as staff, equipment and insurance are all incurred during the production of ultra-niche video networks and are similar to the costs of producing any video content. The main difference is the implementation, not the costs. Figure 8 illustrates the costs and phases involved in producing an ultra-niche television network that any independent audiovisual producer could use as a model in order to create an ultra-targeted network for a hospital, real estate agency, manufacturing business or a media company, for example. It is important to note that some of the fixed production costs can be offset. For example, RMIT University already has a lot of production hardware and software that could be used to create a long tail network, space that could be set aside for a production team, equipment and an editing suite. In addition to this, it was agreed in meetings with the RMIT marketing department that RMIT would pay the infrastructure expenses such as building and utility costs, and, therefore, these costs were not included as part of the fixed and variable network costs. On a smaller scale, perhaps only limited training courses, a small camcorder and editing software would need to be purchased, as the rest of the costs of producing a ultra-niche network would be negligible.
Nevertheless, once the initial programming and switching setup costs of production and production consultancy, insurance and production equipment, such as a laptop, lapel microphones, boom pole, cameras, and perhaps even a sound recorder and lights (see Appendix 10), have been accounted for, the ongoing costs are relatively low and predominantly consist of the cost of labour. Whether there is one freelance cameraperson and editor who films, edits and produces 10 minutes of content per month or, as illustrated in the RMIT TV proposal, a team of full-time staff including an executive producer, director, camera crew, sound recordist and animators, it is important to invest in the creation of a dedicated internal or external team that understands how to create targeted content. Even if an organisation does not have internal editorial talent, any independent audio-visual producer such as myself will be pleased to put their talents into working on niche video content network. The initial start-up cost of producing a RMIT TV includes a consultancy fee from Tiszai Productions (my independent audiovisual production company). These consultancy fees include executive production and intellectual property, including the know-how and system for creating an ultra-targeted video content network, hiring and training production staff, project management, the aggregation of existing staff, students and resources, implementation and creative direction, appointment of sales agents, the development of a media kit, and quality assurance. In order to replicate and create an ultra-targeted video content network for any organisation, large or small, it was important to initially have outside help from a professional production company or consultant who understands how to produce long tail video content. In some cases this consultancy support could be a couple of days of training and implementation or, as with RMIT, a 21-month secondment. Therefore, organisations should expect to include some consultancy fees and training packages within their budgets. Pulizzi and Barrett (2009) state it is not about the money, saying,

“It’s not the money. It’s the content marketing mindset that counts. Big ideas can trump big bucks (J. Pulizzi & Barrett, 2009 p.19).”

By using integrated outcomes gained by budgeting Projects 1 and 2, and through the formulation of the cost breakdown in Project 3, it became evident that with any production it was also important to factor in indirect costs, like legal or accounting fees, business registration fees, insurance, taxes and a contingency sum that covers unexpected costs that may arise. To account for these indirect costs in the budget, one option was to charge a mark-
up fee, which was a percentage added to the costs in order to cover office and operating overheads.

Larger ultra-niche network projects tended to have budgets extensive enough to require dedicated budgeting software and spreadsheets; smaller projects might only need a page or two to keep track of the costs, as I found by doing the budgeting for Projects 1 and 2 and through calculating the cost breakdown in Project 3. As an independent audiovisual producer, it was important to keep track of daily costs and the overall budget so that it did not become out of control and that there was enough resources to continue the network. When doing a cost analysis for a ultra-niche video network it was important to use a clear and simple one-page spread sheet that outlines each cost directly, and simply showing each production cost involved and when this cost will occur in the process of creation (see Figure 3 for an example).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approximate In-House Operating Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phase 1</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Set-Up)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Editing Suite</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iMacs x3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Cut Pro X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adobe CS6 Master Collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Forge Pro 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (Office supplies etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equipment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 HD Camera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 DSLR's and lenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Tripods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Equipment (PortaBrace)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting Equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salaries</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Full-time Cameraman/Videographer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Freelance Camera Assistants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Full-time Editor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Freelance Assistant Editors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Full-time Sound Engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Full-time Graphic/Website Designer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship Media Account Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presenter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tiszai Services</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiring and Training of Production Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggregation of Staff and Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation and Creative Direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial System Set-Up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointment and Management of Sales Agents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of the Media Kit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Assurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Insurance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Liability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi Risk - Props, Sets, Costumes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi Risk - Camera, Lighting, Equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Others</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed Captioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8 the approximate in-house operating costs for setting up and running a RMIT television network for the first 21 months
The table above illustrates and incorporates the approximate costs of producing and setting up the first four stages of development for a long tail network (phase 1 the setup, phase 2 the network goes live, phase 3 expansion, and the final phase the fully fledged network).

By analysing and working out the best way of demonstrating the costs involved in producing Project 3, it became evident that a clear, easy way the for stakeholders, such as RMIT University, to understand and to know exactly how much a ultra niche network is going to cost and when the appropriate resources need to be available. A simple method of costing is necessary as the decision-makers and stakeholders involved in deciding whether or not to setup a network will unlikely be video content producers themselves, and they may not understand or have reference to terms such as pre-production, production, post-production, above the line or below the line. In short, all a clients need to know are what the costs are, when they need to be paid and when they are going to break even.

Through the practice of creating Projects 1 and 2, the biggest costs were time and labour, although with a team of creative and inexpensive graduates as well as the involvement of RMIT’s own media students, content could be highly engaging, well produced as well as relatively affordable. As referenced above in the chapter on Inspiration, working with a team of passionate interns that are ‘hungry for experience’ can be a very rewarding experience for both parties involved. This was especially significant when talking about the production of RMITV, as RMIT already teaches filmmaking, media, and audiovisual production the mutual benefit of the involvement of interns would be magnified. RMIT students would have the added benefit of real-life work/production experience while they were studying and RMIT would have an endless supply of interns/labour, therefore the involvement of interns is a fantastic ‘selling point’ when producing RMITV. This may also give RMIT a competitive advantage, as student may choose to study media at RMIT rather than another institution due to that fact the RMIT offers ‘on the job training’ as part of their curriculum.

In addition, having a comprehensive system and good communication skills are also highly significant issues to consider. As I explained in the capstone RMIT TV proposal, large amounts of footage could be produced very cheaply with a small editing suite consisting of a couple of computers with Final Cut Premiere Pro software downloaded, after effects software, music and sound development software are required. In addition, an editor and
cameramen with the ability to set up two cameras, direct and work the sound equipment is all that is required to produce high-quality video content on a very low budget.

By bringing together all of the answers to issues on costs, expenses and budgets, I found that independent corporate audio-visual producers can use the skills, knowledge and network-making capacities that I have outlined to interact with networked users, create their own culture, and connect with networks in a shared process of network making. In addition to a detailed cost analysis, next I answer how an ultra-niche video content network can be financially sustainable, used as a promotional tool and build a sense of community.

The Programming and Switching Power of Monetisation, Sponsorship and Branded Content

Today, organisations can be the media. Organisations can harness the programming and switching power of Internet distribution and affordable technology to produce ultra-niche networks to create their own marketing and promotional tools. Producers can harness this power to create a niche network that is similar to a traditional television broadcast network that sells advertising and sponsorship to marketers who would like to connect and sell to their niche audience. As O'Donnell states:

The common wisdom in television is that its primary role is to deliver consumers to advertisers as advertising/sponsorship income is what pays for television programs that are broadcast on commercial networks. (V. O'Donnell, 2007 P. 22)

The same could also be said for ultra-targeted video content either online or on commercial location LED screens. For ultra-niche networks to be sustainable, targeted content requires monetisation. This is outlined and answered in the series of recommendations integrated within the proposal for a RMIT TV ultra-niche video content network (see Appendix 10).

By applying and using Castell’s theory of “networked power” as a guide to act in a comparatively narrower field of independent/corporate audiovisual production, and through the processes and methods used to monetise Inspiration and Corporate Branded Content, I determined that there are a number of different options for monetisation. Either the
organisation that produces the branded ultra-targeted video content foots the bill entirely, or it pays the production costs completely without sponsorship or revenue from viewers. Through the process of monetising Project 2, I found that the latter financial model works for organisations with considerable budgets, a robust commitment to produce ultra-targeted video content networks long term, and who want to use their long-tail video content network as a promotional tool solely for them to sell and endorse their own brand or service. The video content that was produced as part of Project 2 was created and paid for independently in order for the network to showcase the charities and organisations that the organisation sponsors and are associated with positively. They did not have any other brands advertising within their content as they did not want any other brand promoting their business, as this may have diluted their brand image and could have taken the emphasis away from them and the work that were doing within the community engagement sphere. This was not the case in the development of the RMIT proposal, due to the fact that large organisations such as universities have an extensive and valuable customer base that can be cross-promoted to without diluting the hosts’ brand. For example, a student travel or health insurance brand that sponsors a segment to on an ultra-niche university network does not take away market share or weaken a university’s brand image.

Sponsorship

Sponsorship of niche video networks can often offer stronger integration with content and an enhanced connection with the audience. Morrissey explains that recently several big brands have struck deals endorsing ultra-niche web networks, stating that:

Niche web-video producers and big brands looking to connect with consumers beyond mass-market video destinations hope says Brian, that the comparatively high CPMs paid for small audiences combined with the time needed to create the programs will pay off with a brand impact deeper and more lasting than just plopping a pre-roll ad in front of a piece of content. (Morrissey, 2008)

While these deals can include standard in-stream ads, they can also provide personal touches, for example, ‘shout outs’ thanking the brand for making the series possible (Morrissey, 2008).
“Such deals give small video productions a leg up on the mass-produced fare offered by big media companies”, said Chas Edwards, publisher and Chief venue Officer of Federated Media (Morrisey, 2008).

The framework favoured by niche video producers comes with benefits that advertisers are unlikely to find with larger entities, as hosts of programs are able to incorporate advertisers into their shows more easily and in many ways. Explaining offers to viewers for example can give a low-tech form of advertising greater power than standard placements, continues Morrissey (Morrisey, 2008). Furthermore, even if a brand is reaching 200,000 viewers, they are reaching them with far more impact. Therein lies the conundrum for advertisers. While all want interesting, innovative programs that skilfully weave their brands into content, striking deals with tiny programmers, even if they have loyal followings, is challenging.

“It often makes more sense for an advertiser to create its own content than piggy-backing on a Web program with less than 500,000 viewers”, said Brian Monahan, global lead for social media at Universal McCann (Morrisey, 2008).

To diminish this risk, many ultra-niche web programs are joining with distribution and advertising networks. Nevertheless advertisers found that partnering with smaller, hungrier independent audiovisual producers that started in the video space were more fortunate as they inherently understand what the advertisers were trying to do and that their audience can be the bullseye that the sponsor was looking for (Morrisey, 2008).

There are also added benefits that come with such deals since small web video creators tend to get excited by their sponsorships:

Puma felt this effect when it struck a deal with Blip.tv to advertise its shoes on an overlay running across several programs. Two programs’ hosts will soon wear Puma gear during shows. You can’t get that with traditional online buys, said K-Yun Steele, media director at Moxie Interactive, the agency that handled the buy for Puma. (Morrisey, 2008)

Morrisey (2008) concludes that despite advertisers’ love of the ultra-niche, agencies only have a finite amount of time to deal with properties and measuring success is difficult with traditional metrics. Clicks are not ideal, while gauging only impressions makes the series look hopelessly inefficient compared to bigger programming options.
“It will feel niche,” said Ian Schafer, CEO of Deep Focus, which has run campaigns on small-scale web programming (Morrisey, 2008). “These things feel a little small and a little too much work to deal with. Yet, the small outweighs the big,” he added. “A lot of the beauty happens on the small side of things.” (Morrisey, 2008)

Undoubtedly sponsorship is one of the major sources of income for ultra-niche video content producers. It is also important to have a number of sponsorship opportunities for advertisers at varying different levels of obligation and budget.

Ultimately, the factors affecting the amount of money sponsors are prepared to pay for sponsorship is dependent on the size of the viewing community; how engaged they are and how important a demographic this group is for the sponsor. Sponsorship is an appealing model for ultra-targeted video content networks for niche providers and the most effective way to produce sustainable content for ultra-niche audiences. Even if content is on a new network or the numbers to a site are not significant enough to warrant advertising as with *Inspiration*. Sponsorship may provide an income by targeting a highly engaged niche audience that a sponsor is keen to engage with, as, traditionally, companies measure their sponsorship in terms of what it can do for its brand and its business and if a particular alliance talks directly to their target market, no matter how small. An organisation may also want to sponsor an ultra-targeted video content network for niche audiences network produced by a brand that it would like to be aligned with.

By monetising and budgeting Projects 1 and 2, and by formulating Project 3, I recognised that it is advantageous for audiovisual producers to get title sponsors or associate sponsors on board at the inception of a network. This is because, once title sponsorship has been obtained other sponsors are more likely to jump on board and pay for segments and branded content. After many discussions with sponsors and potential advertisers when selling *Inspiration*, I found that this is because advertisers like to be associated with content that has sponsorship attached to it, as sponsors and advertisers like to risk manage and prefer not to be involved in something that does not already have sponsorship attached.

Again, by combining knowledge gained by monetising and planning Project 1 and by working out Project 3, I determined that is also very important to get title sponsorship upfront
because if it is acquired before the commencement of production, the producer will be able to have more of an idea of the production budget and resources that will be available to create the content. As if most of financing for the production costs come from title sponsorship, any other revenue derived from product placement, sponsorship of segments or the acquisition of a segment within a TV network, are supplementary and will help expand and develop the network further, adding to the likelihood that it will become sustainable. Therefore in an ideal world it is advisable that producers sell or appoint sales agents to sell title sponsorship before any production starts. Sales are one of the most important factors that determine the sustainability of a self-sustaining ultra-targeted video content network. Once it is known how much money, or potentially how much money, can be generated from the network through sponsorship, the break-even analysis can then be done more accurately and a plan can be made for when the network will begin to pay for itself, and therefore become sustainable. This can help organisations have a clear idea of the resources needed for the initial stages of development and how long until the network will become sustainable. In order to acquire sponsorship before the commencement of a network it was decided (by the RMIT marketing department and by me the audiovisual producer) that RMIT would offer potential advertisers two introductory sponsorship deals: Title Sponsorship - $120,000 for the first 6 months; and Associate Segment Sponsorship - $10,000 a month for the first 3 months (see Appendix 10 - the RMIT Television network proposal).

Once the network went live, producers would be able to calculate the initial number of viewers and can begin to formulate and finalise ongoing sponsorship packages for the network. Potentially they could charge more money, as the exact number viewers tuning in will be known. In the meantime, to create the sponsorship price list within the RMIT proposal the market rate for advertising within in house TV networks and the estimated potential audience of the network was multiplied.

The cost of digital advertising is A$100 per 1000 viewers for a 30-second sponsorship advertisement or billboard shown before each intergraded view on demand segment. David Kruse, a media buying, and planning practitioner from the media sales agency Kruse Media provided me with these figures on 8 October 2012.

The potential viewing numbers were estimated from RMIT’s student population of about 74,000 students- this figure was taken from the RMIT website. Based on this figure, a
conservative estimate might be that segments on RMIT TV could attract around 5000 viewers per day multiplied with the estimated market rate for digital advertising online of A$100 per 1000 viewers per 30-second sponsorship billboard, I proposed that RMIT could start off by charging sponsors $15,000 per segment per month. Undoubtedly when the ‘true’ audience figures emerge then the fees can be set accordingly as Victoria O’Donnell explains below:

   Ratings determine how much advertisers will pay for sponsorship opportunities and not surprisingly, the larger the desired audience, the higher the cost of sponsorship. (V. O'Donnell, 2012 p. 28)

As the RMIT proposal is contingent upon sponsorship revenue, necessary audience targets of around 5000 viewers per day and reliable measurement methods will be required (once the correct audience figures are available) to secure ongoing sponsorship. In fact, ultra-niche content produced for university audiences is more likely to attract sponsors, even if the exact audience figures are not yet known. This is because content that appeals to users between the ages of 14 and 34 is more likely to be sponsored than content that targets viewers 55 years and over states Wilson (2009). In fact the most desired audience for advertisers tends to be the 18 to 49 year old consumers with disposable income (O'Donnell, 2007). This is because, generally, young people are comfortable in the digital environment (Wilson 2009). Also, very young children might not have easy access to the Internet or mobile phones, and, when they do, their parents may facilitate what they watch. That said, the percentage of older and younger people online is growing rapidly and the 45+ demographic is actually larger than the 13-18 demographic. Whatever the case, if content is appealing then people will find it and engage with it no matter what age they are (Wilson, 2009).

Compelling content attracts and maintains an audience. Throughout the processes of generating Projects 1 and 2, it became evident that monetisation relies heavily on the nature of the content broadcasted and a deep understanding of the target market it is produced for. Consequently, if an ultra-niche audiovisual producer has a robust understanding of the market and a strong view of the things they like and don’t like, attaining sponsorship is more achievable. It is essential to know as much as possible about the target market that the ultra-niche network is produced for and is aimed at, and to do as much research on how and why this target market watches the content.
Surveying and questioning the target market extensively can achieve this. It was also important to have an extensive understanding of the type of stories, segments, tips and products the audience would like to have more information on or would find entertaining. This was because the more that is known about the audience or target market the more the content can be tailor made for their needs. In addition, it was more likely a brand would like to be associated with the content and, ultimately, the more successful and sustainable the network will be in the long run. This may sound simple, but from my experience it was important to target the audience, as they are the viewers after all.

Content marketing is the art of understanding exactly what your customers need to know and delivering it to them in a relevant and compelling way. This new way to connect with your customers extends way beyond the offering of product information and into the realm of best practices, case studies and success stories. (J. Pulizzi & Barrett, 2009 p.26)

Ultimately, the use of advertising, sponsorship and content marketing as monetisation methods brings programming and switching power together, as independent corporate producers can create a self-sustaining ultra-niche video content network for niche audiences that are commercially successful.

**Break-Even Analyses and Ultra-niche Video Content Networks**

Theories on break-even analysis were also important issues to address in order to consider how independent commercial audio-visual producers, might respond to proliferating media platforms and fragmenting media markets. Through the process of budgeting and planning Projects 1, 2 and 3, I determined that a thorough breakeven analysis is the programming tool that can empower smaller actors to create an ultra-niche network. As well as the programming power to know when and if a network will be able to pay for itself and therefore make a profit.

Once all the costs are accounted for, the total costs are then compared with revenue or projected revenue in order to determine the level of sales volume or revenue. This is the point at which the production makes neither a profit nor a loss - the break-even point. By calculating a break-even analysis as part of Project 3, it became clear that the break even point can accurately forecast costs and sales by conducting a simple calculation. A project
breaks even when its total sales or revenues equal its total expenses. At the breakeven point, no profit has been made, nor have any losses been incurred. If more sales are made, then the production will make a profit; however, if sales are below the break-even point, the production will make a loss. As an independent commercial audio-visual producer budgeting for all three projects, I recognised that this is a critical calculation to conduct, as the break-even point is the lower limit of profit when determining margins. Once calculated, the break-even point is then compared with forecasted demand to determine if proceeding with a project will be economically viable. The break-even point can be calculated using a simple equation or can be planned within a table, as was done for the RMIT TV proposal (see Appendix 10). The breakeven point for an ultra-targeted video content network is the point where total revenue received equals the total costs associated with the sale of the product (as in sales derived from sponsorship and advertising).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RMIT TV Break-Even Analysis</th>
<th>Phase 1</th>
<th>Phase 2</th>
<th>Phase 3</th>
<th>Phase 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>9 months</td>
<td>15 months</td>
<td>21 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising and Sponsorship Revenue</td>
<td>$420,000</td>
<td>$870,000</td>
<td>$1,250,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution Margin</td>
<td>$238,254</td>
<td>$224,774</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution Margin Ratio</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>49.27%</td>
<td>74.10%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable and Fixed Expenses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editing Suite</td>
<td>$7,754</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>$8,200</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>$184,000</td>
<td>$249,000</td>
<td>$309,000</td>
<td>$309,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Services</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$82,200</td>
<td>$82,200</td>
<td>$82,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>$1,800</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Fixed and Variable Expenses</td>
<td>$238,254</td>
<td>$406,020</td>
<td>$408,020</td>
<td>$387,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Fixed and Variable Expenses Ratio</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
<td>96.79%</td>
<td>46.90%</td>
<td>81.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break-Even Sales</td>
<td>$939,434</td>
<td>$550,160</td>
<td>$387,700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break-Even %</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>223.67%</td>
<td>68.24%</td>
<td>81.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating Profit</td>
<td>$-238,254</td>
<td>$-224,774</td>
<td>$237,206</td>
<td>$842,300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 9 Break-even analysis table broken down into four phases of development for the creation of an ultra-niche network (see Appendix 10, page 17 of the RMIT proposal).

A break-even point is typically calculated in order for independent commercial audio-visual producers to determine if it would be viable to create an ultra-niche network at all. By doing a break-even analysis as part of the RMIT TV proposal (see Appendix 10), I found that with
significant sponsorship, ultra-niche video content could be highly sustainable and profitable within the first 21 months of operation, and thereafter break even and make a profit (see Appendix 10, page 18). The steps that were taken to calculate the breakeven point can be seen in the ultra-niche network proposal (see Appendix 10). These calculations can easily be used and substituted to determine when or if an ultra-niche video content network would break even. Consequently, a break-even analysis is one of the programming strategies that independent audiovisual producers can use to explore ultra-niche networking opportunities.

The Implementation Phases of a Ultra-niche Network

By reflecting on theories and observations made throughout this study and as part of the process of creating Project 3, a schedule explaining the possible set of programming (creating) and switching (the controllers and collaborators) phases that could be followed to bring network-making power to small actors was developed.

This project schedule illustrates the possible stages of development and is an example of the developmental phases that go into creating ultra-targeted content. The resulting figures and phases are taken from the recommendations that were made in the interchangeable proposal for the RMIT TV network (see Appendix 10) and can be used as an example of how an ultra-niche broadcasting model can bring network-making power to small actors.

By establishing this schedule as part of Project 3 (with the knowledge gained in Projects 1 and 2), I determined that phases could be broken down into four developmental stages each with its own timeframe and costs. Although, the timeframe and costs will differ depending on the size of the project, the resources available, and the goals and expectations of the organisation producing the ultra-niche video content.

Outlined below are the possible stages:

Phase 1: Initial System Set-Up (3 months)
Phase 2: Ultra-targeted video content network ‘Goes Live’ (6 months)
Phase 3: The expansion phase (6 months)
Phase 4: A fully developed ultra-targeted video content network (6 months).
Figure 5 clarifies further the possible time frame for each phase.

**Phase 1: The initial set up, development and creation of the ultra-targeted video content network (3 months)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Activity</th>
<th>Months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1: Initial System Set Up: RMIT TV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2: RMIT TV - Video on demand TV Network</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 3: The Expansion of RMIT TV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 4: A full-fledged RMIT TV Network</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 10 Time frame- project schedule for RMIT TV (see Appendix 10, page 13 of the RMIT TV proposal)

The first three-month set up stage, as the name suggests, is when a video content marketing network is established. In RMIT’s case, this initial set up phase included the aggregation of all of RMIT’s existing resources and content as RMIT University already produces video content including student films, RMIT TV, Newsline, among others that was created and broadcast on campus, on community Channel 31 and on the RMIT University YouTube channel. This content required amalgamation so that it could be included and viewed on a central TV network.

Ultra-niche content makers that have no previously produced video content would not need to follow the aggregation of existing contact step. Although all new and pre-recorded segments need to be produced and collected to be included within the network when it launches in phase two, along with any pre-existing content to be included in the ultra-targeted video content TV network to create one central identity.

In order to set up the initial ultra-niche system it is necessary to work closely with web developers, graphic designers, media, and marketing teams to create and integrate all content. Teamwork and close collaboration with existing staff is a must when developing the formats, graphics, animation, and logos for each television segment. Cooperation is also extremely important when creating uniformed layouts and animation for existing content (when pre-existing content exists).
At the same time, it is essential to organise and oversee the purchase of any necessary production equipment as well as set up an editing suite or on a smaller project assign a computer and/or hard drive that can be used for editing content long term.

Once the format and segments have been developed, recruitment and training of the production team needs to be done. Next, filming of the daily segments that are going to be broadcast when the network goes live in phase two can start.

In order to save resources in the long run, it is advisable that an organisation invest in capital equipment or use existing equipment to set up a designated area where the production team can work, no matter how big or small the production team is. Once the infrastructure is set up, the network will be able to run smoothly and efficiently.

Alternatively, an independent/corporate audiovisual production company can utilise its own equipment, production staff and editing suite to produce and edit the segments for the network.

At this stage it is also critical to recruit and train staff, students or professional presenters and production teams. All this will need to be completed before the network goes live; concurrently, if required, the appointment of media sales agents who will be in charge of selling sponsorship to provide revenue and the profit required to run the network long term are required. For a smaller company without the resources to engage a media agency, using one of their existing team members (preferably someone with sales experience) to sell sponsorship opportunities may be a more economical option. The media and sponsorship team or person should use this time to get initial sponsors on board and ought to be building awareness of the imminent launch of the network.

When the initial system for the network has been established and developed, including the overall look and image, the format of the segments, animation, the appointment of the sales agents, production teams and the video production has commenced, it is time to move on to phase two.

**Phase 2: The ultra-niche video content network ‘Goes Live’ (6 months)**
Phase 2 is when the network starts to operate; for a large scale network such as RMIT TV, this will only be possible if an initial title and segment sponsors are in place (in order for the network to remain sustainable). At this stage of development, new segments will continue to be produced and pre-recorded segments that have been created during Phase 1 will be drip-fed onto the network and broadcast. For example, in the RMIT TV proposal, aggregated content taken from existing RMIT material will be incorporated and uploaded. To begin with, RMIT TV, for example, will air and upload between 10-20 30-second to 5-minute segments a week (the length and number of segments created and broadcast per week will depend on the resources available, the size of the organisation and the network), and will start off with the online circulation of two exclusively produced segments a day from Monday to Friday, and one on Saturday, including the daily ‘What’s on RMIT TV Today’ segment, intros, outros, transitions, live events, exhibitions, lectures and pre-recorded segments.

The ‘What’s On RMIT TV Today’ segment, for example, is a presented (hosted by a presenter) segment that outlines the segments that will be broadcast on a particular day, letting viewers know the content that they can expect to watch on the network that day. This will hopefully encourage viewers to revisit the site to watch a segment they find interesting.

A similar segment could be produced on a small or large scale for a network of any size and available resources, once a week, monthly or yearly, if desired. This style of introduction segment assists in creating cohesiveness in the channel which encourages people to revisit the network and the website throughout the day, week or month to watch the videos that have been uploaded. Take the RMIT TV proposal for example, the ‘What’s on RMIT TV Today’ segment will also be screened on LED screens around RMIT campuses to promote and drive traffic to the RMIT TV website.

Again, in the case of RMIT, the RMIT TV section of the RMIT website will be created in such a way that as soon as a person clicks through to the RMIT TV link, they will be redirected to the RMIT TV homepage where the daily highlight segment will start playing, outlining the latest videos and what will be broadcast that day.

As each segment is uploaded, the newest segment will automatically appear at the top of the list of recently uploaded videos, whereas past segments can easily be found and viewed by segment topic, such as What’s On at RMIT This Week, Who’s Who at RMIT and Weekly Topic: Have Your Say on RMIT TV. A similar website with similar features can be created
by an independent/corporate audiovisual producer on a lesser or greater scale for a network of any size no matter the resources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>What's On RMIT TV: Highlight</th>
<th>What's on at RMIT this week!</th>
<th>Student Vlog</th>
<th>Self-Made: RMIT Inspired</th>
<th>Coming Up Next on RMIT!</th>
<th>RMIT Vietnam</th>
<th>Research Focus Area</th>
<th>Future Students</th>
<th>About RMIT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>What's On RMIT TV: Highlight</td>
<td>Weekly topic: Have Your Say on RMIT TV</td>
<td>Student Vlog</td>
<td>I Am the Author of My Own Story</td>
<td>Coming Up Next on RMIT!</td>
<td>3-Minute Thesis</td>
<td>Capital Works</td>
<td>Student Services</td>
<td>RMIT Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>What's On RMIT TV: Highlight</td>
<td>RMIT Talk of the week!</td>
<td>Student Vlog</td>
<td>Student Showcase</td>
<td>Coming Up Next on RMIT!</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>Campus Tour</td>
<td>Vice Chancellor’s Research Fellowships</td>
<td>Alumni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>What’s On RMIT TV: Highlight</td>
<td>Spotlight on... at RMIT</td>
<td>Student Vlog</td>
<td>Newsline</td>
<td>Coming Up Next on RMIT!</td>
<td>Dunlop Campus</td>
<td>RMIT Gallery</td>
<td>RMIT Business</td>
<td>Student Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>Best of the Week on RMIT TV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 11 Sample program schedule for phase 2 (page 13 of the RMIT TV proposal Appendix 10)

Phase 3

The expansion Phase (6 months)

In phase 3 content will double in size to four exclusively produced segments per day from Monday to Friday.

As with any ultra-targeted video content network, once the exact number of viewers and the sort of programming that is the most popular is known, more targeted content can be produced and with this more sponsors will hopefully jump on board to sponsor more segments, as they will know the exact viewership statistics. Using RMIT TV as an example again, live streaming of RMIT events, such as interesting seminars, graduations, fashion parades and presentations will also be able to be featured, which will provide the friends and family of international students who cannot attend a chance to watch them live online. This should help the international community feel engaged and connected.

At the same time, it is essential that new video content is continually pre-recorded and produced for the following phases and, in the case of RMIT TV, to integrate student vlogs (video blogs/message) and films. At this stage of development, the ultra-niche network should be ramped up slowly, gradually broadcasting more and more footage each day. As the network expands and comes into full form, more segments can progressively be produced on the go and on the spot and as the production team becomes more experienced and the
templates for more segments are developed further, branded content segments can start to be included so that more revenue can be gained.

The appointment and the training of staff will need to continue. Any issues that may have arisen in the previous phases will need to be ironed out and management of the network will need to be precise to ensure the project is successful.

**Phase 4: A full-fledged ultra-targeted video content network for a niche audience network (6 months)**

When the initial ultra-niche system has been established into a fully developed network it is in the final stages of creation. A ultra-niche network should now have a regular and growing viewership with segments, branded content and advertisements uploading throughout the day, week and month (depending on the size of the network), title sponsors should be supplementing and promoting each program, and the network should be running efficiently. Ultimately independent corporate audio-visual producers can use the network-making phases outlined above as an example to explore and develop ultra-niche opportunities themselves.

---

**Figure 12 A flow chart showing the development phases and costs required to create a ultra-niche network for RMIT University (page 17 of the RMIT TV proposal (Appendix 10))**
Niche Audience Aggregation

In order to explore ultra-niche network opportunities in detail independent corporate producers must discover how audiences can be aggregated and connected with. In fact video production, distribution, and consumption have changed in ways that now make aggregation essential to the mission of almost any ultra-niche content producer.

Nevertheless, by broadcasting niche content online throughout this study, I established that audience aggregation and connection was much easier said than done, especially when broadcasting on the Internet. This was because the greatest advantage of the Internet is also its biggest disadvantage. In fact, with relatively limited resources independent producers have the programming and switching power to upload and create their own ultra-niche network accessible to millions of viewers worldwide (so can everybody else). Therefore standing out becomes very important if network-making power is to be distributed to small actors. With hundreds of thousands of video content sites continually being created, it is important to understand how to steer viewers to a particular ultra-niche video content channel. Most digital media agencies can help ultra-niche video content makers build an online presence and audience for a fee. Though it can be just as successful and cost-effective for corporate audio-visual producers to do this in-house themselves. In fact aggregating audiences by creating an online presence through social media is one of the most obvious methods: writing a blog, tweeting and creating profiles on Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube and LinkedIn, for example. The opportunity to connect with audiences online from all over
the world is endless, as social networking continuously creates new concepts and forms of community.

That said, aggregation of a large global audience and community in a short period of time is relatively easy in the case of big universities such as RMIT. Since RMIT already has a large number of students, potential students, parents, academics and staff visiting their website every day to access the library, forms, information and services. This, for want of a better description, is a ‘ready-made audience’ that can easily be directed to the dedicated RMIT TV website. Similarly with Inspiration, whenever the show was broadcast on community television to a potential audience of 2 million viewers, the production team would constantly direct viewers to the website, Facebook page and Twitter account to aggregate and gain more online viewers as well as keep connected with our traditional broadcast audience. Through engaging with viewers via social media sites, independent corporate audio-visual producers are able to leverage contacts to generate interest in their ultra-niche video content.

Independent corporate audio-visual producers may well have access to more and better data than traditional media partners. Targeting already existing databases with focused content makes for a more cost-effective way to reach and interact with the most important audience to an organisation, thus eliminating wasted distribution and allowing for the creation of a precise content marketing campaign for a well-defined audience.

By the same token, online media audiences are fast to respond to content both positively and negatively. Content providers can just as easily have their products damned as praised and can go from high to low in the matter of a few hours. The online audience is able to let producers know what they think of the contact almost immediately. For example, when Inspiration’s Facebook followers commented on segments of the show, they were almost always positive, although they were occasionally negative. When this occurs it is paramount that feedback is given in a timely and appropriate manner in order to maintain a positive image in the minds of the audience. Again, to connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action, it is of paramount importance to create content that appeals to the target market, as misjudgements can be costly in terms of lost credibility and increased difficulty in mobilising the same audience again.

To make further observations on how ultra-niche broadcasting networks can connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action, it was essential to answer what
type of content would attract and maintain viewership in a university environment. To answer this question and other issues below, empirical research in the form of an online survey was created that also became part of the ultra-niche video content RMIT TV proposal - Project 3. This anonymous online survey was conducted through online survey website www.surveymonkey.com. The 50 international current and previous University students and participants were contacted and recruited via Facebook or emailed via friends, students, and staff attending RMIT.

The main aim of this anonymous online survey was to test if ultra-niche networks have the programming and switching power to help build and connect with communities, to discover if an ultra-niche broadcast network would be watched and to find out what type of video content has the programming power to attract students’ attention. We were also interested in discovering what the participants felt was relevant to them and what would encourage viewership of a University TV network or ultra-niche broadcast network featuring videos and programs made exclusively for students and teaching staff shown on indoor and outdoor screens and on the Internet, to provide a more vibrant and interactive study environment. A copy of the survey questions can be seen in Appendix 4.

The survey found that 85 per cent of participants either think that a tertiary institution needs an ultra-niche TV network and do not reject the idea of a university having one. This is significant, as it proves that current and ex-students are positive towards and may consider an ultra-niche content network as an asset and would potentially tune-in to watch.

The survey also found that 28 per cent of participants preferred to hear about the segments on and about a university TV (ultra-niche) network via social media marketing followed closely by email, website, word of mouth and SMS (25%, 24%, 15% and 8% respectively).
These results reiterate what has previously been outlined above audience aggregation, in that it is of paramount importance to promote content through social media marketing by creating online identities. Social media offers great opportunities for ultra-niche networks, because it is likely to dominate over the course of the next decade. There are two reasons for this; firstly social media is becoming the predominant channel for accessing content of any kind. Secondly, the social media environment supports highly targeted and measurable marketing campaigns.

As leading marketing blogger Lee Odden articulates:

A combination of content as well as social networking, link networking, public relations, and gaining editorial visibility as well as viral and individual link solicitations will all work together synergistically. Building a community of viewers of your content as well as relationships with the media in your industry is the distribution network necessary to gain the most link value out of creating great content. (J. Pulizzi & Barrett, 2009 p.24)
For a ultra-niche network to have the programming and switching power to attract and influence an audience, it is vital that programmers (the creators of the program) and switchers (the controllers and collaborators - i.e. the network makers) heavily promote the network through a primary website and via social media portals, as well as by sending emails and newsletters out to the networks database on a regular basis.

Word of mouth marketing intertwined with social media as it is highly sought after and statistics on the phenomenon of ‘buzz’ indicate that one highly motivated individual will influence up to 75 others. Therefore getting viewers talking about your content is significant. The holy grail of marketing, word of mouth co-opt the audience into the marketing effort. Research from Finnish social monetisation specialists Xtract (www.xtract.com) shows that 75 per cent of decisions are based on peer recommendations. (Wilson, 2009 p. 18)

According for an ultra-niche network to have the programming and switching power to attract and influence an audience, independent corporate audio-visual producers must create content that viewers want to pass on to their friends via social media. The RMIT TV proposal illustrates that competitions are a good way of raising awareness. These competitions could include, but are not limited to, segments such as, ‘Who’s the next RMIT Top Presenter?’, ‘RMIT Idol’, ‘RMIT Short Film Festival’, and ‘Club or Society of the Week’. These competitions will not only increase and promote student engagement with the they will also provide the added benefit of allowing students to have real life experience as filmmakers and presenters.

The pie chart in Figure 14 below shows that in order for an ultra-niche network to have the programming and switching power to attract and influence an audience, regular updated content, useful and relevant information about tertiary life, engaging entertainment, and short and snappy content is equally as effective, as shown by the similar percentages (28%, 23%, 26% and 23% respectively).
The results on the evenly distributed pie chart below denote that viewers prefer multidimensional content that includes information, interviews, reports, discounts and offers, how to segments as well as fictional and academic content. This signifies that diversity is the key to programming for a university television channel that has many different viewers with different needs and requirements. In fact, once an organisation/university has delivered relevant content, the content provider becomes a trusted resource. Content marketing enables companies/universities to build a level of trust among their viewers that makes it easy for those customers to buy. (J. Pulizzi & Barrett, 2009)
Reflecting on observations made above, in order for a ultra-niche network to have the programming and switching power to attract and influence an audience while maintaining their scope of action, it is vital that independent corporate audio-visual producers harness existing connections as well as build a strong online presence through social media marketing by the creation of online identities as well as by creating and broadcasting relevant content that keeps audiences engaged.

Community Building

In order to build on and question how independent ultra-niche broadcasting models can connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action, it was important to answer how a ultra-niche broadcast network can help build a community as well as manage the interface between two or more networks. Subsequently, the RMIT proposal (see Appendix 10) outlines how niche network producers can facilitate staff, alumni and students to be informed about what is happening on campus on a regular basis, and can also serve as a connection and communication tool that encourages a greater sense of belonging and unity amongst the students and staff.
The RMIT proposal states that by watching and engaging with a ultra-niche network, international students have the opportunity to connect with their peers as well as with local students and staff even when they are back in their home country on term breaks. Through circulating ultra-targeted video content for niche audiences online, students who study online or by correspondence will also be able to feel part of the community without physically being on campus. This will enable a closer-knit community since international, online and correspondence students will have the chance to actively participate in student life by viewing and interacting with the network remotely.

Relevant blueprints for RMITV include the ultra-niche TV networks set up by The University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Australia and University of California in the United States of America.

These universities have been effectively using the programming and switching power of ultra-niche networks to build solid communities. Since developing University TV Networks, UNSW and University of California have enhanced their international profile and reputation, and have substantially built a more cohesive community atmosphere amongst staff and students.

Rosenberg (2012) reports:

UNSW Media says its presence on UNSWTV and YouTube put the university in the top 10 educational websites on the server since 2007, and the only university outside the US to rate in the top 50. (Rosenberg, 2012 p.16)

Through an extensive examination of the University of NSW specifically, it became clear that by developing ‘UNSWTV’ (their online television network) the University of NSW has successfully showcased UNSW to a new global audience. According to the UNSW’s 2011 Annual Report, UNSWTV has increased its viewing statistics and subscribers. UNSWTV consistently ranks in the top channels worldwide on YouTube EDU and one of YouTube Australia’s most popular partner channels. With combined channel views now more than 9,076,816 (as of 26 July 2015), making them the only non-American university to rank alongside MIT, Stanford, Berkeley and Harvard, with 10,000 subscribers to their e-learning channel and 8,000 to their outreach channels (Wales, 2011).
This is not surprising considering that Dr Tisdell's online video segments, broadcast on the UNSW YouTube channel and UNSWTV (UNSW TV Networks) have 5000 subscribers who follow his University of NSW mathematics lectures; and in April 2012, views hit the 1 million mark (Rosenberg, 2012).

Due to the global power of the Internet, Dr Tisdell not only attracts local viewers and establishes a university community, he also builds an international community, as his main audience is in the United States and India, and not all are students:

I had an email the other day from an 86-year-old saying, 'I'm in an old folks home and I enjoy revisiting things that I learned when I was a student’. (Rosenberg, 2012 p.16)

Despite the fact that his broadcasts are unsophisticated and long, some segments run for up to an hour, they attract thousands of hits (Rosenberg, 2012). This is significant as it backs up the idea that if video content is targeted to its audience and resonates strongly with its community, then ultra-niche broadcasting models can bring network-making to independent corporate producers. To clarify this point and to provide further reading to the RMIT marketing department, I included articles on branded content within the Appendix of the RMITV proposal (Appendix 10 page 22). These articles help articulate the fact that specialised targeted branded content developed within the context of a broader marketing strategy can connect with viewers and consequently increase the value of a brand.

In order to discover whether ultra-targeted broadcast networks for niche communities have the network-making power to connect with and build communities while maintaining their scope of action, the participants of the anonymous survey were asked the following question: Do you think having a University TV network will improve community engagement and cohesiveness amongst students and staff? The overwhelming response was a positive 58 per cent saying yes they do think an in house television network would build a greater sense of community.
The participants were also asked the following two questions to determine the role and importance of a university TV network in building a closer global community:

(1) What would encourage you to actively watch a program on a university TV network?

Examples of participant responses:

- “Engaging information and entertainment”
- “Social information relevant to institution, opportunity to engage with other faculties”
- “Display of list of opportunities or events that I could've missed”
- “Frequent updates”
- “Better understanding of what is happening on campus”
- “Video clips that are short yet meaningful”
- “Added value to university services”
- “Useful info and updating events”
- “Platform for uni folk to air views on current issues”
- “An opportunity to see what other faculties and students are working on”
- “An outlet for exhibitions, achievements and campus news”

(2) In your opinion, how would a university TV Network improve your tertiary life?

Examples of student responses:
“Entertaining access to information about events that would otherwise fly under the radar”
“Indulge more in university activities and improve personal connection”
“A higher visibility on what is happening around the campus and not just ugly stickers being stuck everywhere”
“Keeps me updated and be in the loop of tertiary life, constantly feel like a part of the larger university community”
“I would feel myself being part of the community”
“It would consolidate many themes and topics relevant to students and it would add to the university's solidarity as an active community”
“Useful entertainment during breaks, a place to gather, accessible communication tool”
“It will provide a channel for students to engage and communicate”

The data above demonstrates that relevant ultra-niche video content has the networking power to generate an active community both online, on screen and in person. Therefore, highly focused, intrinsically valuable content that helps audiences study, do their jobs more effectively or pursue their hobbies with more skill, builds communities.

Consequently, ultra-niche broadcasting models can be seen as a proxy of networked power for independent corporate producers. This is due to the fact that even small companies can build a community by offering their audiences a rich experience, with lots of content that is relevant to their particular interest. As illustrated above, this can be done by understanding exactly who the audience is and what they need to know, and then providing them with content that leaves them smarter and more knowledgeable.

Measurement of Ultra-Niche Broadcast Networks

Ultimately, in order to gauge the success of an ultra-niche platform within the framework of a fragmenting media market, it was imperative to develop a system measurement. It was also paramount to create a plan and method of monitoring trends and growth within the narrower field of independent/corporate audiovisual production as a whole.
In order to measure content marketing it is imperative for an organisation to have a clear understanding of the strategic communication objectives they would like to achieve. Consequently a good way to judge the effectiveness of an ultra-niche network is to analyse ‘return on objective’ (ROO) (J. Pulizzi & Barrett, 2009). In fact, (ROO) must lead directly back to the organisations main goals (J. Pulizzi & Barrett, 2009) and organisations/ niche content producers should raise questions such as: did the creation of an ultra-niche network achieve the goals that were set out at the outset of the project?

Below is the ‘return on objectives’/main goals outlined in the RMIT proposal (see Appendix 10, page 3):

1. The creation of an ongoing ‘on-campus’ and ‘online’ RMIT Television presence that offers compelling programming to provide a continuous income stream to RMIT.
2. Boosting student enrolments and improving retention rates.
3. Increasing the reputation and awareness of RMIT globally, by building and nurturing a core audience base of viewers.
4. Instigating a greater sense of community, thus bridging the gap between local/international students and staff.
5. Transforming the RMITV website into the most engaging and visited university website in Australia.

Ultimately, measurement of an ultra-targeted network should be linked directly to goals. In the case of a university such as RMIT, the goals of an ultra-niche broadcast network are to help increase student enrolments and improve retention rates. That said, independent corporate producers broadcasting on their own website, such as Inspiration, can use a number of web analytics reporting tools to measure web traffic. One useful tool that is also free is Google Analytics, which can be accessed at [www.google.com/analytics](http://www.google.com/analytics). Google Analytics is easy to use and install (just add code into the header or footer of your website after your account is created). Once installed, Google Analytics keeps track of some of the detailed information on the site and some of the more useful information tracked includes the number of visits, the bounce rate (the percentage of guests to your site who navigate away or visit another website directly after visiting your website), average time spent on a site, popular pages or blog posts, and the types of browsing devices used, such as tablets and mobile.
technology. This is just a superficial list that touches on what can be tracked using Google Analytics, or similar analytics software.

Google Analytics can supply insights into what is going on with the content on an ultra-niche network website. By keeping track of these facts and figures, networks can get a handle on what type of content viewers respond to the most and the time of day they generally like to connect with the ultra-niche network. These can be useful to know in order to grow a network.

The measurement of the amount of engagement created by an ultra-niche video content’s YouTube channel is relatively easy to track through the Insight section on every YouTube account. This Insight section includes trends and information on the total number of video views made in a day; daily and weekly, as well as those for the last month; and the 10 most popular videos, basic demographics, and a popularity world map showing how popular videos are relative to those of other content providers. The Insight section also reveals percentages of the number of times people share, rate, favourite or comment on a video within YouTube as well as the people currently subscribed.

Alternatively, another suggested example of a measurement method evident within the RMIT proposal (see Appendix 10) was to create and send out a targeted and detailed survey and questionnaire to all views. This was suggested in order have a greater understanding of the number viewers who frequently watching the network either on LED screens or online and therefore determine if the ultra-niche network is reaching its long and short-term goals.

A method for counting the number of indoor and outdoor LED screen viewers who watch an organisation’s ultra-targeted video content network was also suggested within the RMIT TV proposal (see Appendix 10). This technique involved producers hiring and organising staff with clipboards to walk around the institution to count the number of viewers who watch or engage with the screens. If possible, producers can also create a targeted and detailed survey with questions regarding the network to be sent out to viewers and staff of the ultra-niche network, in order to have a better understanding of the reception and to track how many viewers are frequently watching the network either on the LED screens or online.
Sponsorship revenue is another way of measuring the success of ultra-niche networks, as ultimately the more viewers the network has, the more revenue the network can gain from sponsorship.

In the end, ultra-niche video content is measured on its ability to reach its objectives, whether those objectives are to promote a service and build an audience, such as with Project 2, corporate branded content, or to create revenue, build a sense of community and increase attrition rates, as was the case with the RMIT proposal. No matter what the objectives are, as long as they are being met, then an ultra-niche broadcast network has the networking power to display a legitimate form of counter power.

By creating three projects, informed by a reflective action research method, I was able to show that due to technological advances in content distribution, production expertise and, in conjunction with Hansel’s slivercasting and Anderson’s ultra-niche video theories, programmers (the creators of the program) and switchers (the controllers and collaborators) can be kept under control. This suggests that independent corporate producers are able to set up and manage the programs on the network, attract and influence an audience, manage monetisation, as well as manage the interface between two or more networks. Thus creating a networking making counter power, as organisations are able to reach their constituencies and target audiences through decisive switching multimedia communication networks.

As stated above, this was built on and is contrary to Castells’ idea that no unified elite power is capable of keeping both the programming and switching operations of the all-important networks under their control, because they are too big to be able to control the power (Castells, 2011). Usually, Castells says, for these power relationships to be asserted, the programs of the dominant networks of society need to set compatible goals between these networks, and they must be able, through the switching processes, be able to communicate with each other, inducing synergy and limiting contradiction, which is very difficult to do as a major power (Castells, 2011). Typically in the realm of mass media, states Castells, programmers have decision making power to set up and manage the programs on the network. Although this power is specific, as it is geared to ensure the fulfilment of the goals of the network, the primary objective is to attract an audience regardless of whether it is to maximize profits or influence (Castells, 2011). Therefore, the overarching goal of network management by the networked power of programmers is to constitute the programmed (Castells, 2011). In this case,
management of the communication network operates under the conditions of a meta-program that has been created by someone else from outside the network. This mysterious someone else is the subject of the most determining form of power - network-making power (Castells, 2011). In the case of the ultra-niche video content network model, there is no need for this someone else, as switching and programming can be brought together as organisations can interact with networked users, create their own culture and interact with networks in a shared process of network making.

If mass media equals power, as Castells suggests, then ultra-niche broadcasting networks equal counter power, thus assigning power to smaller actors, i.e. the ultra-niche of network makers or independent audiovisual producers that sit in between mass media and prosumers. Consequently, giving independent audiovisual producers the programming and switching power to create and measure ultra-targeted content created on inexpensive digital equipment broadcast reasonably cheaply if not freely to a global audience of many, or a very, very few.
RESULTS

In considering how independent commercial audio-visual producers might respond to burgeoning media platforms and fragmenting media markets, this study has examined and discovered that alternative strategies for marketing audio-visual content production can build on and re-contextualise network theorist Manuel Castells’ idea of a new kind of future that is most assuredly networked. Moreover, this model can be seen as proxy of networked power for independent corporate producers by applying and implementing the theory of "networked power" as a guide to action in a comparatively narrower (but nonetheless large) field of action (independent/corporate audiovisual production).

Ultimately, through the presentation of three research projects, ideas, practices and concepts of ultra-niche video content and slivercasting, this study has determined that an ultra-niche video network model can be seen as a proxy of networked power for independent corporate producers. That said the social and economic relations of networked production couldn’t be reduced to an either/or argument about conglomerates and small actors. The projects included in the study show that the ‘counter power’ of small actors often dependent upon the material support, technological capabilities and network affordances of larger actors, whether they be video aggregators (e.g. YouTube), clients (e.g. Credit Suisse), social media, or institutional backers (universities). The evidence generated through this practice-led research suggests that the interactions between small actors (independent producers) and large actors are extremely complex. Although their involvement is qualitatively different and much less significant to the pre-digital global media conglomerate, new global media conglomerates are still somewhat important to independent producers working in ultra-niche markets however they do not exclusively hold all the networking ‘power’ as they once did.

To understand how independent commercial audio-visual producers, might respond to proliferating media platforms and dividing media markets through the process of producing a 16-episode community women’s television program named Inspiration, this study determined that affordable technology can be harnessed and used as a form programming and switching power to create, edit and shoot ultra-niche video content. The use of YouTube and platform integration as distribution methods brings programming and switching power together in that it allows commercial audio-visual producers such as myself to connect with
and build a sense of community as well as increase website traffic. Furthermore, this study presents information on how collaboration with sponsors, affinity marketing enables small-scale ultra-niche producers to have the switching and programming power to create profitable niche content. Also, this study demonstrated how small scale producers such as myself can use the switching power of social media practices and principles to help brand awareness and audience expansion in order to assist companies and organisations to create an ongoing in-store and online television presence. In addition, this study determined that notions of brand identity could be used as a programming power to increase awareness. Although not always straightforward, this study verified that the programming power of integrated sponsorship and branded content provide a continuous income stream that enables ultra-targeted video content networks to be monetised. This study also showed how content and affiliate marketing is an efficient switching power that enable the aggregation of viewers in order to gain revenue from shared sponsors.

Incorporating the issues answered, resolved and questioned through the process of planning, acting, producing, observing and reflecting on Project 1 - *Inspiration*, Project 2 endeavoured to revisit Castells’ call for forming separate networks or reforming existing networks by re-assessing, expanding and solving key issues.

Through the process of producing Project 2, corporate branded content, this study again used the action research cycle to test and identify how producers, brand and marketing managers could use the programming and switching power of ultra-niche video content to increase the amount of clicks they receive for their corporate content. Through the practical development of corporate branded content, this study was able to discover the skills, knowledge, and network-making capacities niche independent corporate producers need to merge programming and switching powers. Through this process the study was able to use programming power to create compelling and profitable online video content that stands out in an over saturated marketplace. Through this method the results of this study also increased knowledge on the programming power of sponsorship and branded content and were able to provide a continuous income stream for a targeted niche video content network.

The final outcome of this study is the RMIT TV proposal or model that illustrates the major considerations required to reshape the boundaries of network-making power. Through the process of creating Project 3, this study brought together all of the knowledge gained through
the practice of developing the first two projects, plus discovering that it is possible to create a
new form of global network or content platform model and implementation system with new
kinds of actors that brings distribution control back into its control. Determining that an ultra-
niche broadcasting network model is able to bring switching and programming power
together. In addition, learning that by bringing switching and programming power together,
independent ultra-niche broadcasting models brings network-making power to smaller actors
to create the ultra-niche of network makers. This study discovered that ultra-niche or ultra-
niche broadcasting network models sit somewhere in between mass media and mass self-
communication or prosumer communication networks. Lastly, through the process of
developing the RMIT proposal, this study learnt that ultra-niche broadcasting network
models are able to connect with other power networks while maintaining their scope of action
through a fundamental mechanism of power making in the network society. Ultimately,
determining that the RMIT proposal can be seen as a proxy of networked power,

Answers imbedded within this proposal have the potential to be disruptive to existing
technologies, enterprises and power relations, and are primarily beneficial to independent
audiovisual producers and academics in the field of digital networks, media studies and
marketing communications. Moreover, this disruption, or the opening of new knowledge, can
also be applied in a commercial context to grow web traffic and to increase sales leads, and
can also perhaps be looked upon as a new model of monetising the ultra-niche networks.
CONCLUSION

‘We all sense that power is shifting in the world' (Heimans & Timms, 2014).

Once, keeping everything the same made people feel comfortable. Now we have become a disruption society, accommodating change in power in many different ways. In discussions of the power categories of Castells throughout this dissertation, this study has identified all the aspects that are essential in a discussion of networked (counter) power (programmers and switchers) in order to consider specific proxies of networked power for independent corporate producers. Offering an argument that suggests that it is here that there is some useful theoretical content to unpack that explains and exemplifies the kind of relations that have been examined.

In summary, this study has employed a practice-based methodology to revisit and establish practical incursions in online and networked media. This work has responded to questions and critiques of power and counter power, as read by Manuel Castells, and Chris Anderson in order to consider how are the social relations of video production, distribution and consumption changed by the technologies and networks of niche media, and slivercasting. This study has identified and answered through practice how roles and tools involved in the development of ultra-niche broadcasting impact upon existing models of content distribution, production, audience development, and commercialisation and what are the implications for independent corporate audio-visual producers? As well as what skills, knowledge, and network-making capacities they require to explore ultra-niche opportunities?

It light of these findings, the next challenge is to use the ultra-niche network model developed in this study to innovate, manage, and oversee the development and materialisation of a ‘ultra-niche video content network’ software application in a planned and structured process. This software development process will include research, sourcing appropriate team members, overseeing and managing timelines, budgets, prototyping, modification, re-engineering and maintenance. Through the development of this software it is hoped to be able to bring the networked (counter) power to more people and organisations.
Hyperion.
Random House.
from http://www.longtail.com/the_long_tail/2005/01/long_tail_tv.html
Hyperion.
Arnold, J. Becker, M., Dickinson, M., Lurie, I., & Marsten, E. (2012). Web Marketing All-in-
One For Dummies: John Wiley & Sons Inc
Web Based Communities, 6(3), 303-316. doi:10.1504/ijwbc.2010.033754
Barletta, M. (2002). Marketing to Women : How to Understand, Reach, and Increase Your
Share of the Largest Market Segment: Dearborn Trade Publishing
Communications of the AIS, 2(3es), 4.
Basney, B. (2014). Brands as publishers: Using content and paid media to fuel a brand
Berry, C., Harbord, J., & Moore, R. O. (2013). Public Space, Media Space Retrieved from
return on premium video. Streaming Media, 62+.
of Branded Content. The New York Observer, p. 0. Retrieved from
http://observer.com/2013/02/journalists-take-refuge-in-the-world-of-branded-content/ -ixzz3GZCjeTM1
Browne, S. E. (2013). High Definition Postproduction: Editing and Delivering HD Video:
Taylor & Francis.
International Australia Incorporating Culture and Policy: quarterly journal of media
research and resources(126).
Chronicle of Higher Education, 47(41), 031-A032.


Hujic, L. (2006), "My name is Lida and I am a Hoxtonite: The neighbourhood that gave us Brit Art has become a by word for fashion victimhood. But don't hate me because I'm hip", The Guardian (G2: Style), 31 March, p.22.


Resnik, D. (2001). What is Ethics in Research and Why is It Important. Carolina Department of Medical Humanities, The Brody School of Medicine, East Carolina University.


Appendices
Appendix 1 – E-mail from Mr Dion Workman.

Hi there Katrina

My name is Dion and I am in the marketing team here at Kmart. Guy has asked me to respond on his behalf.

Like most retailers we are constantly on the lookout for ways to enhance the customer experience in our stores.

The idea of a dedicated TV channel is indeed one of the ideas that has been reviewed in the past.

And while we agree in principle, the investment required for installation, maintenance and most importantly the content creation slows our appetite for this type of project.

During this critical time of our growth phase we are choosing to spend our resource on other aspects of our business.

If our priorities change I will be in touch. We are a retailer and not a media organisation so we will require assistance in this space!

Thank you so much for thinking about our business and taking the time to put forward your idea.

Have a great Christmas

Regards

Dion

General Manager Marketing | Kmart Australia
Appendix 2- Invitation to participate in a research project

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Investigators:
• Ms. Katrina A. Jojkity
  Katrinajojkity@hotmail.com

• Supervisor:
  Dr. Christopher Barker
  chris.barker@rmit.edu.au

Dear Participant,

You are kindly invited to participate in a research project being conducted by RMIT; please read the information below carefully and be confident that you understand its contents before deciding whether to participate. If you have any questions about the project, please ask one of the investigators.

My names is Katrina Jojkity and as a part of my practice-led PhD, supervised by Dr. Chris Barker, exploring strategies and knowhow for the production and delivery of targeted branded video content for niche audiences. I am conducting a very short online survey on in-house University TV networks.

This survey has been approved by the RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee and is anonymous, voluntary and will be used as a part of a proposal on University television networks and with my PhD.

The reason I am asking 50 past and or present university students who would like to volunteer to do this survey or pass this survey on to their friends or family who have attended University, is that I would like to get feedback on what students would like to see on a University TV network and if you think that a University TV network would be beneficial to students and to get an idea on how students would prefer to know about this network.

The procedure involves filling out a short online survey that will take approximately 5-10 minutes. Responses will be confidential and I will not collect identifying information such as your name, email address, or IP address. The results of survey will be analysed and illustrated in pie charts that will then be included in my Ph.D. exegesis as well as part of a proposal for University television network.
If you do decide to answer the questions on the survey there will be no direct benefit given to you. I am committed to ensuring that privacy is protected. All data is stored in a password protected electronic format.

Users should be aware that the World Wide Web is an insecure public network that gives rise to the potential risk that a user’s transactions are being viewed, intercepted or modified by third parties or that data which the user downloads may contain computer viruses or other defects.

Security of the data

This project will use an external site to create, collect and analyse data collected in a survey format. The site we are using is http://www.surveymonkey.com if you agree to participate in this survey, the responses you provide to the survey will be stored on a host server that is used by Katrina A. Jojkity, and No personal information will be collected in the survey so none will be stored as data. Once we have completed our data collection and analysis, we will import the data we collect to the RMIT server where it will be stored securely for five (5) years. The data on the http://www.surveymonkey.com server will then be deleted and expunged.”

Yours sincerely

Katrina A. Jojkity

If you have any complaints about your participation in this project please see the complaints procedure at http://www.rmit.edu.au/research/human-research-ethics
Appendix 3- Release Form for Media

Release Form for Media Recording

RE: ‘INSPIRATION’: Celebrating Successful Women

I, the undersigned, do hereby consent and agree that Tiszai and Red Orange Productions Pty Ltd (‘the production company’), its employees, or agents have the right to take photographs, videotape, or digital recordings of me beginning for use in any and all media, exclusively for the purpose of the ‘INSPIRATION’ series.

I further consent that my name and identity may be revealed therein or by descriptive text or commentary.

I waive any rights, claims, or interest I may have to control the use of my identity or likeness in whatever media used. I understand that there will be no financial or other remuneration for recording me, either for initial or subsequent transmission. I represent that I have read and understand the foregoing statement, and am competent to execute this agreement.

Name: ________________________________________________________ Date: __________________

Address: __________________________________________________________________________________________

Phone: _______________ __________________________________________________________________________

Signature: __________________________________________________________

Name (PRINT) ____________________
Appendix 4 – Survey Questions

As part of project 3- the RMIT TV proposal and to test if ultra-sliver content can help build communities, generate an audience, and to find out what type of video content would be popular. As well as to determine what type of content that was relevant and what would encourage viewership to a University TV network. I conducted an online survey through the online survey website http://www.surveymonkey.com. The survey was conducted on 50 current and/or previous University/tertiary students from within Australia and overseas to find out what type of content would attract and maintain viewership of a university TV network.

Participants of the survey were contacted and recruited via Facebook or e-mailed via friends, students and or staff at RMIT and were asked the following questions-

1. Do you currently attend a tertiary institution? (E.g. University, TAFE, College etc.)

If you are currently attending/have previously attended a tertiary institution, please specify which one: (E.g. RMIT University, Monash University etc)

2. A University TV Network features videos and programmes made exclusively for students and teaching staff that is shown on outdoor LED screens and on the Internet, aiming to provide a more vibrant and interactive study environment.

Do you think a tertiary institution needs a TV Network?

3. Would you watch the network on outdoor LED screens around the campus and/or on the Internet?

4. What factors would attract you to actively watch the network on outdoor LED screens around the campus?

5. If there were a TV network at your tertiary institution, what would you like to see the most?

6. If there were a TV network at your tertiary institution, how would you prefer to hear about it?
Website, Email, SMS, Social Networks. (Facebook, Twitter etc), Word of mouth, other (please specify)

7. What would encourage you to actively watch a programme on a university TV network? Please specify your reason. (E.g. Engaging and useful information on my university, better understanding of what is happening on campus etc)

8. Do you think having a university TV Network will improve community engagement and cohesiveness amongst students and staff?

9. In your opinion, how would a university TV Network improve your tertiary life?
I also posted a link to the survey on my production company, Tiszai production’s Facebook news-feed, and invited current and past RMIT students to post the link on their Facebook pages as well. Dr. Christopher Barker was also asked to send out an e-mail with a ‘Participant Information sheet’ attached explaining the procedure and anonymity of the survey.

A student that received this e-mail chose to participate in the survey if they felt comfortable and thought it was appropriate. Similarly the link posted on Facebook will be completely voluntary and students had a ‘Participant Information sheet’ attached (appendix 2) explaining the procedure and anonymity of the survey.
Appendix 5- ‘Inspiration’ Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes 18/05/10

Meeting held by: Productions
From 11.30 am to 1.30 pm.
Purpose of the meeting: Development of ‘Inspiration’

❖ The title:
  o The budget for the title is $300. We need to contact Stephen to get him to create a 30 second credit for the start of the show, as well as a look for the title and two 5 second titles, one to separate the segments, and another one to introduce the “Tip” section.
  o Keywords of the show that can appear in the credits: passion, strength, ‘Inspiration’, ambition, success, innovation, sophistication, style, and fashion.

❖ Content of the Show:
  o 1 short interview
  o 1 long interview
  o 1 tip
  o 10 minutes

❖ Themes:
  o How can women empower themselves in many ways (finances, business, real estate, fashion, body-mind-spirit, education...)

❖ Website:
  o Hosting server: Click and Go
  o We have to get the website up as soon as possible to start building the viewership and be able to count them so as to find sponsors and broadcasters.

❖ Next steps:
  o Build the website.
  o Build up the viewership: find women’s networks, groups, and websites...
  o Find sponsors.
  o Find broadcasters.
Appendix 6 - ‘Inspiration’ Plan of Action

**Inspiration Plan of Action**

1. Create Image, art work and documents for ‘Inspiration’-
   - Create a professional Logo, website and art work.
   - Information hardcopy and PDF/PPT document to distribute to media outlets.
   - A Media kit for sponsors and media agents. This should be done professionally and have a real wow factor!!! We need to employ a professional graphic designer who is affordable, has vision and can make changes as and when needed at a reasonable price or no extra. I think we need something that is of the same standard as your ‘Music for Change’ logo- the difference between Miles’s logo and the ‘Music for Change’ logo is huge.
   - Animation for the opening credits and for in-between the segments. We need to get an affordable yet creative animator to use the ‘Inspiration’ logo to create an appropriate and mind-blowing opener.

2. Create Pilot
   - Employ a creative, forward thinking, hardworking, affordable camera-operator/director/editor who has lights. Discuss the look and theme with this person to make sure we are all on the same creative page. I think it is best to use one person to do it all as then they know the overall look and feel, what they need to shoot and what’s needed to edit and hopefully save us money.
   - Shoot- interview famous, prominent women (hopefully Julia Gillard, visiting prominent women, Rachael Oakes Ash etc…). The interview should be a sit down interview with two cameras as well as action cut-away shots of the person doing what they are famous for. We should also include tips and a shorter light-hearted segment on fashion or art for example.
   - Music for show and opening.
   - Camera-operator/director/editor to edit incorporating animation and music.

3. Media platform – contact, meet and sell to media outlets and distributors. Put Pilot on website as a sales tool and concurrently promoting our website gaining awareness and hits.

4. SELL advertising and sponsorship at the same time through a media agent and on our own. We could also employ someone on commission basis to sell.
Appendix 7- ‘Inspiration’ running order and segments

‘Inspiration’ running order and segments

Animation opening titles (including title sponsors name and clip, it also may include associate sponsor names and clips) -30-45 seconds

Intro – 30 seconds

Introduction to the show, host and what is coming up this episode

‘Inspiration’ Animation – 15 seconds

Interview -5 to 7 minutes

A ‘sit-down’ interview with a women in business, the arts or fashion on how they became successful and what and who ‘Inspires’ them. (Advertorial)

‘Inspiration’ Animation – 15 seconds

Tip- 30 seconds to 2 minutes (depending on requirements)

An ‘Inspirational fashion, style, makeup, financial, health and/or cooking tip. (Advertorial) A chance for women to promote their business in an informative way which can showcase their products whilst building rapport with the audience

‘Inspiration’ Animation – 15 seconds

Feature Interview- 5 to 8 minutes

‘The main interview of the show’- a longer more in-depth interview featuring prominent, recognisable and ‘Inspirational women. (Editorial or advertorial)

‘Inspiration’ Animation – 15 seconds

30 second – 1 minute Tip -
(Advertorial) A chance for women to promote their business in an informative way which can showcase their products whilst building rapport with the audience
‘Inspiration’ Animation – 15 seconds

"Out and about" segment – 2 to 5 minutes
‘Inspiration’ goes out and about visiting inspiring women in their ‘element’ – reporting from her restaurant, fashion show, gallery/film or play opening, concert or sporting event.

Credits and closing animation
Appendix 8 - Media agent agreement

‘Inspirational Women TV

Dear

Please find outlined a letter of agreement between ……. and ‘Inspirational Women TV in regards to the television program ‘Inspiration’ and providing commercial services to the project. Under the agreement, is to provide commercial resources for the television production ‘Inspiration’ – Season 2. ‘Inspiration’ Season 2 is produced by ‘Inspirational Women TV, it is a 13 part series that airs on Foxtel on the Aurora Channel and WTV. Season 2 of the series production is scheduled to commence shooting in March, with the series commencing on air April/May 2012.

……..agrees to delivering 50% of the budget of plus GST by 21st April 2011 to guarantee funding to commence production of the second series in March/April 2012, with the remaining budget to be delivered by the end of May 2012.

‘Inspiration’/‘Inspirational Women TV agrees to produce a shorter series of 4, 6 or 8 episodes if ………. is able to obtain the commercial value required for production. This will be decided and agreed on a pro-rata basis of plus GST per episode – For example to produce 8 episodes ……….. needs 50% of plus GST being $plus GST by 21st April to proceed producing 8 episodes.

Commercial Agreement

1. …………………. to deliver a budget of $plus GST or pro-rata budget for 4, 6 or 8 episodes –according to what is agreed upon by Friday 21st April 2011 for production of ‘Inspiration’,

2. …………………. to receive 20% commission on sales, ‘Inspiration’ to receive 80% of sales.

3. On the basis that …………….. exceeds the budget of $……………… will receive 30% commission on sales in excess of $,

4. …………………. to provide 50% of budget ($plus GST) by the 21st of April 2012, or

5. Provision to provide 50% of pro-rata budget (4, 6 or 8 episodes –according to what is agreed upon) by Friday 21st April 2011.

Media agents Responsibilities

1. ……………. is responsible for selling commercial space within ‘Inspiration’ television program, this includes the following inventory:

Sponsorship of program, and branded content packages that include:

a) Branded content (interviews). May include interviews with company director, founder, employees, ambassadors

b) Tips (sponsored by)

c) TVC’s in ad breaks supplied by TV stations

d) Billboard in

e) Billboard out
f) Product placement/profile

g) Tickertape/Graphics on screen

h) Provision of video content to client for use on own online and social media platforms

i) Online – ‘Inspiration’ TV website

j) ‘Inspiration’ TV – Social Media campaigns via Facebook and Twitter

2. ……… to work collaboratively with ‘Inspiration’ to develop lead lists that are the appropriate fit for ‘Inspiration’ audience.

3. ……………to meet the deadline for providing 50% of the budget in order to proceed with production of Series 2 of ‘Inspiration’ TV (4, 6, 8, 13 episodes) by 21st of April.

‘Inspiration’ TV/ ‘Inspirational Women TV Responsibilities:
1. ‘Inspiration’ to refer, or collaborate with ………… in regards to commercial clients who are interested in sponsorship, advertising, product placement, branded content within the program,

2. ‘Inspiration’ TV to provide marketing support material including program and audience information including demographics, time slots, viewership, location, online (website), YouTube and social media statistics.

3. ‘Inspiration’ to collaborate with …………… to create marketing strategy in order to support …………… commercial and sales effort by growing audience numbers and viewership,

4. ‘Inspiration’ to collaborate with …………… in developing branded content and advertising inventory space,

5. ‘Inspiration’ to collaborate with …………… to grow revenue opportunities.

Revenue Breakdown
1. Budget for 13 episodes - $plus GST. $1 to be secured by 21st of April

2. Major Sponsorship – can be sold as any of the following variations:
   i. 13-week package
   ii. 2 x 6-week package (plus 1 episode)
   iii. 3 x 4 week package (plus 1 episode)
   iv. 1 show only (extra show)

3. Advertising inventory per episode to include:
   i. Major Sponsorship (value $ plus GST per episode)
   ii. Associate Sponsorship (value $plus GST per episode)
   iii. Interviews x 2 (value $ plus GST each)
   iv. Tips x 2 (value $ plus GST each)
v. TVC’s within program (value $each)

vi. Social media, product placement, tickertape/graphics and footage license included in each package.

4. Refer to attach draft budget for revenue breakdown per episode.

Schedule and Deadlines

1. …………… to commence selling week of 21 of February 2012 for an 8 to 10 week period.

2. …………… to provide 50% of budget or pro-rata budget on 21st April 2012.

3. Provided ‘Inspiration’ commit to production of ‘Inspiration’ Series 2, will continue to commercialize the program from 21st February to 30 June 2012.
Appendix 9- Reference Letter from Mr Stefan Behmer

Tiszai Productions
Attn: Ms Katrina A. Jojkity

BUSINESS REFERENCE
September 2012

It is with great pleasure that we issue this Business Reference to TISZAI PRODUCTIONS after this first, and certainly not last, year of cooperation. During this year, Katrina Jojkity and her highly capable team have produced around 15 films in the fields of Art, Culture, Music and Corporate Responsibility for Credit Suisse and some of its global sponsorship partners.

Highlights have included productions with and for the Sydney Symphony, The Credit Suisse Fellowship Program, a film about Jessica Cottis and the productions with and for the Cathy Freeman Foundation in Melbourne, Sydney and Palm Island.

Tiszai productions have absolutely fulfilled our needs outlined in the brief, in which we aimed to produce more engaging and modern video productions for all of our platforms. The films have also been very well received on social media platforms and compared to previous productions, have produced double or in some instances triple the amount of clicks when compared to previous films.

The collaboration with TISZAI PRODUCTIONS has far exceeded our expectations and future productions (2013) will include overseas projects such as the Singapore Art Biennale and productions with and for the Singapore Art Museum. We have great trust in the team and can safely recommend this company’s services and the team’s wide-ranging know-how.

I am also personally available for any queries by phone or email:

Stefan Behmer
Vice President
Corporate & Global Sponsorship Communications

Stefan Behmer
INSPIRATION

INSPIRATION is a magazine-style women’s info-tainment program series, including compelling interviews, lifestyle, travel and financial tips and enticing ‘Out and About’ segments, featuring talented and inspirational women around the world.

*Inspiration* offers an accessible, affordable promotional opportunity on national television and mobile internet platforms for businesses in beauty, fashion, financial services, travel, accommodation and restaurants to target women (who account for 85 per cent of all consumer purchases) via a stylishly presented, info-tainment TV programme series.

*Inspiration* will be filming series 2 in March 2012 to coincide with International Women’s Day. *Inspiration* is a 13-episode series featuring inspirational women targeting successful, motivated and intelligent women.

*Inspiration* can help you reach your customers through a variety of integrated sponsorship and advertising solutions – both on-air and online.

**AUDIENCE**

Gain exposure and reach a targeted audience of 2 million-plus people per month across Australia, New Zealand.

*Inspiration* is seen by a targeted, educated consumer audience on the Aurora channel on FOXTEL, Channel 31 in Victoria and WTV in Western Australia.

**PARTNERSHIPS**

At *Inspiration* we are committed to creating and maintaining win–win, long-term relationships with our advertising and sponsorship partners. We pride ourselves on offering affordable, forward-thinking and tailored packages that meet our partners’, individual marketing and sponsorship objectives.

Numerous partnership opportunities are available with a variety of integrated sponsorship and advertising solutions – both on-air and online.

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

*Inspiration* utilises social media networks, including YouTube, Facebook and Twitter, to broadcast segmented content in the show throughout the season. This generates maximum exposure and longevity, reaching a savvy online-sharing community.
EXCITING SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

1. TITLE SPONSORSHIP
Title sponsorship offers ownership, category exclusivity and brand alliance for the 13-week series including:
- Your company name integrated within the show’s name “(Sponsor’s name presents Inspiration)
- Prominent acknowledgement in all Inspiration marketing materials
- Brand presence and website link on www.inspirationalwomen.tv
- First priority to renew sponsorship for the 2013 broadcast season
- Promotion via social media channels
- Integration with feature interviews
- Integration with product placement
- Licence for use of video content on your own website and social media networks

2. ASSOCIATE SPONSORSHIP
Associate sponsorship offers brand alliance and category exclusivity for the 13-week series:
- Acknowledgement at the end of each episode in the form: “Inspiration brought to you in part by (list of all associate sponsors’ names, maximum of five category exclusive sponsors)”
- Acknowledgement in Inspiration marketing materials
- Brand presence and website link on www.inspirationalwomen.tv
- Promotion via Inspiration social media channels
- Integration with product placement
- Integration with feature interviews
- Licence for use of video content on your own website and social media networks

COSTS INVOLVED
Your company name integrated within the show’s name. “(Sponsor’s name) presents Inspiration”
- “Half-season and full-season title sponsorship are available
- Full season (13 episodes) $78,000 ex GST
- Half-season (6 episodes) $45,000 ex GST

COSTS INVOLVED
“Inspiration also brought to you by (list of all associate sponsors’ names)”
- Full season (13 episodes) $13,000 ex GST
- Half season (6 episodes) $7000 ex GST
BRANDED CONTENT OPPORTUNITIES

3. INSPIRATIONAL FEATURE INTERVIEW SEGMENT
Clients are able to acquire one of Inspiration’s segments of 5-7 minutes duration. Segments will be incorporated within the 25-minute TV program.

Be an Inspirational guest on our program and share your personal/business success story to inspire viewers and promote your business including:
- Professional production shoot
- Promotional link to your business site from www.inspirationalwomen.tv
- Segment footage licence for your own business use
- Your product/service will be integrated and stylised into content

**COSTS INVOLVED**
- $2450 ex GST

4. INSPIRATIONAL TIP SEGMENT
Promote your business in an informative segment, which can showcase your products while building rapport with your audience including:
- Professional production shoot
- Promotional link to your business site from www.inspirationalwomen.tv
- Segment footage licence for your own business use
- 2x60 second tips over two episodes
- Your product/service will be integrated and stylised into content

**COSTS INVOLVED**
- $1200 ex GST

5. ADVERTISING
Advertisements will be shown during Inspiration on the Aurora channel FOXTEL, Channel 31, Melbourne DTV 44 in Victoria and on WTV in Western Australia.

**COSTS INVOLVED**
- Prime-time advertising rate per 30-second spot within Inspiration
  - $650 per 30 seconds

To take advantage of this unique and inspiring opportunity to share your product with a potential national audience of more than 2 million viewers, please contact:

Tanya Fullarton
Inspiration TV – Commercial Manager
The Slattery Media Group
Phone: 03 9627 2600
Mobile: 0417 193071
Email: tanyaf@slatterymedia.com

BROADCAST

**AURORA**
Aurora 183 on FOXTEL, AUSTAR and OptusTV Digital Networks. Aurora is available to all digital subscription on the basic tier:
- Available to over 2.3 million households
- Australia-wide on Foxtel, Austar and Optus Digital
- Available to 3100 schools across Australia
- Monthly reach 1,287,982 people
- Average daily reach 116,287 people

**WTV PERTH**
- 840,000 viewers quarterly
- Viewers represent 45% of Perth’s population

**CHANNEL 31**
- Available to over 4.3 million households
- Victoria-wide Digital free to air TV
- Monthly reach 1,300,000 people
The following is what Tiszai Pty Ltd can do to help create RMIT TV, featuring highly profitable and exclusively student-centered interactive targeted branded segments shown globally on the RMIT website and on Youtube.
Summary

Objective

The goal is for Tiszai Productions to set up the initial system for RMIT TV. Once the initial system is developed, Tiszai Productions will continue to provide training, expertise and project management on a medium-term basis for the network to run continually and efficiently. This will build a closer RMIT University community as well as providing continuous revenue from increased student enrollment, branded content and advertising.

Anticipated Outcomes

1. The creation of an ongoing ‘on-campus’ and ‘online’ RMIT Television presence that offers compelling programming to provide a continuous income stream to RMIT.

2. Boosting student enrollments and improving retention rates.

3. Increasing the reputation and awareness of RMIT globally, by building and nurturing a vast audience base of viewers.

4. Instigating a greater sense of community, thus bridging the gap between local/international students and staff.

5. Transforming the RMIT TV website into the most engaging and visited university website in Australia.

Solution

The goal is for Tiszai Productions to set up RMIT TV on behalf of RMIT University.

Tiszai Productions’ role will be to create the system and manage RMIT TV project; initially aggregating all of RMIT’s existing resources and content, including student films, RMITV, Newsline, Channel 31 and YouTube, bringing them together into one central identity i.e. RMIT TV.

Within the first three months, Tiszai Productions will set up the initial system by working closely with RMIT’s web developers, graphic designers, media and marketing teams to create and integrate RMIT TV within RMIT’s existing website. Tiszai productions will collaborate closely with existing staff and students as well as using its own resources to develop the format of the network, graphics, animation and logo for each television segment.

Once the format and segments have been developed, Tiszai Productions will then begin to recruit and train the production team to start filming and creating daily content and segments to be shown on the RMIT TV Network. Concurrently Tiszai productions will appoint and liaise with media sales agents who will be in charge of selling sponsorship on the RMIT TV network, providing revenue to RMIT and the profit required to run the network long-term.
At Tiszai Pty Ltd we believe that once the initial system for the ‘RMIT TV’ brand has been established and developed - including, the overall look and image, the format of the segments, animation, the appointment of the sales agents and production teams; the cost of creating large amounts of content on a long term basis can be relatively low and, if desired, done independently by RMIT.

**Tiszai Productions will provide the following services:**

Aggregation of content  
Consultancy  
Creative Direction  
Project Management  
Recruitment  
Relationship building  
Quality Control  
Training
About RMIT TV

Description

RMIT TV will be a view on demand student-serving media outlet featuring programming from RMIT University, Australia’s largest tertiary institution made of three campuses in Melbourne, and two in Vietnam. As RMIT University enjoys an international reputation for excellence in practical education and outcome-oriented research, RMIT TV will be an apt representative featuring its brilliance and diversity by way of quality and innovative television programs that aim to enlighten, educate and enhance the lives of current and prospective RMIT students around the globe.

RMIT TV will create a broad range of educational programs for a general audience, including daily/biweekly/weekly/monthly segments, information and announcements for students and staff, on subjects such as science, health, public affairs, humanities, arts and music, media, business and education. Program formats include documentaries, faculty lectures, cutting-edge research symposia, artistic performances, and interviews featuring academic managers, lecturers, researchers as well as student projects, films and animation.

Tiszai Productions’ mission is to transform the RMIT TV website into the most engaging and visited university website in Australia, showcasing inspiring and interesting academics, visiting scholars combined with tailor-made content for students and staff with a unified look thus promoting RMIT website as the ‘go to’ portal for information within Australia.

Location

RMIT TV will reach its audience online, on the RMIT TV website and on YouTube to transport knowledge far beyond the campus borders and into the homes and lives of inquisitive students/viewers and prospective students around the globe.
Measures and Audience

Creating a ‘Global RMIT Community’

The success of a TV Network is measured by viewership and community engagement, as O’Donnell (2007:23) states, and the RMIT TV network will be no different.

The aggregation of a large global audience/community for RMIT TV is highly feasible in a relatively short period of time as RMIT has an immense student population of 74,000 including 30,000 international students, of whom more than 17,000 are taught offshore (almost 6,000 at RMIT Vietnam) as well as offering programs through partners in Singapore, Hong Kong, Mainland China, Malaysia, India and various countries in Europe.

RMIT’s Strategic Plan 2011–2015 ‘Transforming the Future’ imagines RMIT in 2020 as a university with a very strong global presence. As RMIT’s goal for the next 5 years is to unequivocally position RMIT amongst the most reputable institutions in the 2020 global education space, RMIT TV will serve as a strong asset in realizing this mission and will help RMIT University build on their already solid international foundation.

Universities such as UNSW in Australia and University of California in America have stated that producing a University TV Network, has enhanced their international profile, reputation and has substantially helped build a more cohesive community atmosphere amongst staff and students.

Dr. Tisdell’s channel on the file-sharing website has 5000 subscribers who follow his University of NSW mathematics lectures. In April, views hit the 1 million mark. Not all the viewers are local - his main audience is in the United States and India - and not all are students.

“I had an email the other day from an 86-year-old saying, ‘I’m in an old folks home and I enjoy revisiting things that I learned when I was a student,’” he said.

The University of NSW has a Partner in Education relationship with YouTube and Dr. Tisdell has had his own channel on the website since 2008. The broadcasts are unsophisticated. Some run for up to an hour, yet they attract thousands of hits.

“The idea of a lecture is to effectively communicate an idea and if you can’t do that then it’s essentially a waste of time,” he said. “I remember making lots of mistakes in lectures … my videos are not Hollywood blockbusters, they’re reality TV. It’s warts and all.”

The presentation of free online lectures through platforms such as YouTube EDU and the TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) website continues to soar. UNSW Media says its presence on UNSWTV and YouTube put the university in the top 10 educational websites on the server since 2007, and the only university outside the US to rate in the top 50.

(Derived from Sydney Herald Sun Online, 14/07/2012)
Having campuses scattered throughout the metropolitan area of Melbourne as well as in Ho Chi Minh City, RMIT TV will not only keep the staff and students informed about what is happening on campus on a regular basis, it will also serve as a connection tool thus encouraging a sense of belonging and unity amongst the students and personnel at RMIT.

Through engaging and viewing the TV network, international students at RMIT will have the opportunity to connect with their peers as well as with local students and staff even when they are back home on term breaks. Through circulating the network online, students who study online or by correspondence will also be able to feel part of the RMIT global community without physically being a part of the university campus.

International, online and correspondence students will have the chance to actively participate in student life by viewing and creating their own vlogs shared on the network, making RMIT a closer-knit international community.

Benefits to RMIT

Presently The University of NSW is one of the only universities within Australia that produces a tailor-made TV network. From reviewing their 2011 annual report it is clear that UNSWTV has successfully brought UNSW to a global audience as the following extract taken from UNSW’s 2011 Annual Report states:

‘UNSWTV increased its viewing statistics and subscribers, consistently ranking in the top channels worldwide on YouTube EDU and one of YouTube Australia’s most popular partner channels. Our combined channel views are now more than 5.3 million, making us the only non-American university to rank alongside MIT, Stanford, Berkeley and Harvard. We have 10,000 subscribers to our e-learning channel and 8,000 to our outreach channels.’

‘In 2011, UNSWTV built on content-sharing arrangements with the ABC, Slow TV, SMH, news.com.au, and Sky TV’s APAC channel.’

(Derived from UNSW’s 2011 Annual Report)

There is no reason why with a similar strategy, RMIT TV could not raise its awareness globally and increase revenue from boosted student enrollments, advertising and branded content.

As currently no other university in Victoria has a TV network, RMIT is in a unique position to be the first university to be able to introduce its ‘culture’, engage and entice prospective local and international students who may not be able to attend open days or visit RMIT in person through continuous targeted online video content.
Generating an Audience

The best way to appeal to today’s distracted, disinterested, disengaged, disenchanted and busy audiences is to focus on what they need and want to know, and to provide enough information to make your communication useful but not so much that the content overwhelms the audience.

(Brown and Davis, 2006)

As RMIT TV will focus on producing tailor-made content for the students and staff, Tiszai productions is confident that it will not be too difficult to attract audiences’ attention and maintain a consistent and growing viewership.

From a recent survey we conducted with 50 students from within Australia and overseas, we found that 28% of them prefer social media marketing followed closely by email, website, word of mouth and SMS (25%, 24%, 15% and 8% respectively).

Therefore it is vital that RMIT TV is promoted heavily throughout RMIT’s website via social media portals as well as email marketing.

Email Marketing
By working with RMIT’s ‘student services department’, we will send emails promoting RMIT TV to all RMIT staff and students on a regular basis.

Website Marketing
Once the RMIT TV website is created, the shows will constantly run and be advertised on the RMIT University website.

Word of Mouth Marketing
We will encourage all of RMIT’s teaching and support staff to publicize and encourage students to watch and participate in one of the diverse opportunities to get involved in the creation of RMIT TV.

Generating competitions to raise awareness
Competitions such as “Who’s the next RMIT Top Presenter?”, “RMIT Idol”, “RMIT Short Film Festival”, “Club and Society of the Week!” etc. will be produced to not only raise awareness but also to recruit student presenters and interns to work on the network as well as gaining a larger audience.

What would attract you to actively watch RMIT TV?

- Regularly updated content.
- Useful and relevant information about your tertiary life.
- Engaging entertainment.
- Short and snappy content.
As we can see from Figure 2 above, all four options i.e. regular updated content, useful and relevant information regarding tertiary life, ‘engaging entertainment’ as well as short and snappy content are desired and attractive to audiences.

Figure 3: What would you like to see the most on RMIT TV?

Do you think having a university TV Network will improve community engagement and cohesiveness amongst students and staff?

Figure 4: Do you think having a university TV Network will improve community engagement and cohesiveness amongst students and staff?
We also asked students the following two questions to determine the role and importance of RMIT TV in building a closer RMIT global community.

(1) What would encourage you to actively watch a program on a university TV network?

Examples of student responses:

- “Engaging info and entertainment”
- “Social information relevant to institution, opportunity to engage with other faculties”
- “Display of list of opportunities or events that I could’ve missed”
- “Frequent updates”
- “Better understanding of what is happening on campus”
- “Video clips that are short yet meaningful”
- “Added value to university services”
- “Useful info and updating events”
- “Platform for uni folk to air views on current issues”
- “An opportunity to see what other faculties and students are working on”
- “An outlet for exhibitions, achievements and campus news”

(2) In your opinion, how would a university TV Network improve your tertiary life?

Examples of student responses:

- “Entertaining access to information about events that would otherwise fly under the radar”
- “Indulge more in university activities and improve personal connection”
- “A higher visibility on what is happening around the campus and not just ugly stickers being stuck everywhere”
- “Keeps me updated and be in the loop of tertiary life, Constantly feel like a part of the larger university community”
- “I would feel myself being part of the community”
- “It would consolidate many themes and topics relevant to students and it would add to the university’s solidarity as an active community”
- “Useful entertainment during breaks, a place to gather, accessible communication tool”
- “It will provide a channel for students to engage and communicate”
Measures and Outcomes

Ratings determine how much the advertisers pay for commercials, the larger the desired audience, the higher the cost of commercials. The desired audience for advertising tends to be 18-to-49-year-old consumers with disposable income – thus television programs in general are geared to that segment of the population.

The common wisdom in television is that its primary role is to deliver consumers to advertisers. Advertising income is what pays for television programs that are broadcast on commercial networks.

(Derived from Chapter 2, Television Criticism by Victoria O’Donnell)

The success of RMIT TV will be measured in a number of different ways.

Firstly, it will be measured by the number of views, clicks and subscribers on the RMIT TV website and its YouTube channel.

By liaising with RMIT’s student services department, we will create and send out a targeted and detailed survey and questionnaire with regards to the TV network to all RMIT students and staff so that we can track and have a greater understanding of how many students and staff are frequently watching the network online.

As mentioned, as of 2011 UNSWTV has managed to achieve and maintain a viewership of more than 5.3 million. RMIT TV should have the potential to achieve an even bigger number of viewers over time since RMIT is a global university with various campuses around Victoria and overseas.

Furthermore, the success of RMIT TV will be measured by its advertising revenue. Ultimately the more viewers RMIT TV has, the more revenue RMIT can gain from advertising.

Attaining Revenue from Advertising and Promotion

RMIT TV will be able to derive revenue from sponsorship within its video content. Tiszai Productions will create a sponsorship rate card and media kit outlining the costs and benefits to sponsors as well as ensuring all advertisers are an appropriate fit.

RMIT TV branded content, sponsorship and advertisements can be sold in the following ways:

Spots
These are ‘advertisements’ shown at the start video content and can be 15 or 30 seconds in length.

Billboards
These can appear at the top and/or tail of each program acknowledging sponsors. For example “RMIT News” is proudly brought to you by ‘Computers Now’. Billboards can be a maximum of 15 seconds combined top and tail.
Title Sponsorship
Title sponsorship offers ownership and brand alliance for a minimum of 6 months including:

• A sponsors name integrated within the show’s name “(Sponsor’s name presents RMIT TV)
• A sponsors name will be integrated into the animation, logo and graphics
• Prominent acknowledgement in all marketing material
• Brand presence and website link on the RMIT TV website
• First priority to renew sponsorship for the next 6 month broadcast period
• Promotion via social media channels
• Integration with feature interviews
• Integration with product placement
• Authorization to use video content on sponsors own website and social media networks
• Company name will be included within all segments shown on RMIT TV

Associate Segment Sponsorship
Associate sponsorship offers brand alliance for each individual segment category. For example, “RMIT Lectures is brought to you by Sponsor’s name”.

• Acknowledgement at the start of each individual segment
• Acknowledgement in all marketing materials
• Brand presence and website link on RMIT TV
• Promotion via social media channels
• Integration with product placement
• Integration with feature interviews
• Licence for use of video content on sponsors own website and social media networks

To offset some of the set-up costs and to get sponsors on board at the inception of the network, we will offer potential advertisers two introductory sponsorship deals -

The market rate for advertising within in-house TV networks is:

**AUD$100 per 1000 viewers for a 30-second sponsorship advertisement or billboard shown before each intergraded view on demand segment**

For example, based on the following conservative estimate that segments on RMIT TV attract around 3300 viewers per day and the market rate for digital advertising online is $100 per 1000 viewers for a 30-second sponsorship billboard, RMIT can start off by charging advertisers $10,000 to sponsor a segment per month.

Title Sponsorship - $120,000 for the first 6 months
Associate Segment Sponsorship - $60,000 for the first 6 months

Once we have gone live and can calculate the initial number of viewers, we can begin to formulate and finalize on-going advertising and sponsorship packages for the network.
Set-Up, Development and Creation of The RMIT TV- Video on demand TV Network

Within the first three month set up phase, Tiszai Productions’ will create the system and manage the set up of RMIT TV; initially aggregating all of RMIT’s existing resources and content, including student films, RMITV, Newsline, Channel 31 and YouTube, as well as creating new and pre-recorded segments to be included on the network when it launches in Phase 2, bringing them together into one central identity i.e. RMIT TV

Tiszai Productions will set up the initial system by working closely with RMIT’s web developers, graphic designers, media and marketing teams to create and integrate RMIT TV within RMIT’s existing website. Tiszai productions will collaborate closely with existing staff and students as well as using its own resources to film and develop the format of the network, graphics, animation and logo for each television segment and transition as well as create uniformed layout and animation for existing content.

Concurrently Tiszai Productions will organize and oversee the purchase of any necessary production equipment and will also set up an editing suite for the long-term on-going production of RMIT TV. To save resources in the long run, it is advisable that RMIT University invest in capital equipment (or use existing equipment) and set up a designated editing suite where the RMIT TV team can work. Once the infrastructure for RMIT TV is set up, we believe the network will be able to run smoothly and efficiently. In the initial stages of development if RMIT University prefers to take a slower approach, Tiszai Productions is more than happy to utilise its own equipment, production staff and editing suite to produce and edit the segments for the network.

The recruitment of student presenters, new production teams as well as working with existing RMIT personnel such as Mr. Dan Murphy, the Multimedia Project Officer and Ms. Roberta Mascitti, the Marketing and Events Coordinator will also take place simultaneously.

Before RMIT TV goes live, we will work closely with RMIT’s media and sponsorship team to get initial sponsors on board and build awareness of the imminent launch of the network.

---

**Phase 1**

Initial System Set-Up - Setting Up RMIT TV (3 months)

**Set-Up, Development and Creation of The RMIT TV- Video on demand TV Network**

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Activity</th>
<th>Months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial System Set-Up: RMIT TV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMIT TV - Video on demand TV Network Goes Live</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Expansion of RMIT TV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A full-fledged RMIT TV Network</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 5: Time frame - Project Schedule for RMIT TV**

---

© 2012 Tiszai Pty Ltd

218
Phase 2

RMIT TV - Video on demand TV Network; Goes Live (6 months)

In this phase, RMIT TV goes live online with an initial title sponsor in place as well as title sponsorship for each segment.

We will drip-feed pre-recorded segments that have been created during Phase 1 and continually produce new segments as well as uploading aggregated content taken from existing RMIT resources.

To begin with RMIT TV will air/download between 10-20 segments a week, and will start off with the online circulation of 2 exclusively produced segments a day from Monday to Friday, and 1 on Saturday including the daily ‘What’s on RMIT TV Today’ video, intrors, outros, transitions, live events, exhibitions, lectures, and pre-recorded segments.

The What’s on ‘RMIT TV Today’ segment is a ‘presented’ segment that will outline the segments that will be downloaded on a particular day. It will help make RMIT TV a cohesive channel and encourage people to revisit the network and the website throughout the day to watch the videos that have been uploaded. The What’s on ‘RMIT TV Today’ segment will also be screened on LED screens around RMIT campuses to promote and drive traffic to the RMIT TV website.

The RMIT TV section of the RMIT website will be created in such a way that as soon as one clicks through to the RMIT TV link, they will be redirected to the RMIT TV homepage where the daily highlight segment will start playing immediately outlining the latest videos and what will be uploaded that day.

As each segment is uploaded, the newest segment will automatically appear at the top of the list of recently uploaded videos, whereas past segments can easily be found and viewed by segment topic, such as What’s On at RMIT This Week, Who’s Who at RMIT and Weekly Topic: Have Your Say on RMIT TV.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>What’s On RMIT TV: Highlight</th>
<th>What’s on at RMIT TV: Student Vlog</th>
<th>Student Showcase</th>
<th>Coming Up Next on RMITTV</th>
<th>RMIT Vietnam</th>
<th>Research Focus Area</th>
<th>Future Students</th>
<th>About RMIT Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>What’s On RMIT TV: Highlight</td>
<td>Weekly topic: Have Your Say on RMIT TV</td>
<td>Student Vlog</td>
<td>I Am The Author of My Own Story</td>
<td>Coming Up Next on RMITTV</td>
<td>3-Minute Thesis</td>
<td>Capital Works</td>
<td>Student Services: Wellbeing Advisory Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>What’s On RMIT TV: Highlight</td>
<td>RMIT Talk of the week!</td>
<td>Student Vlog</td>
<td>Student Showcase</td>
<td>Coming Up Next on RMITTV</td>
<td>International Campus Tour</td>
<td>Vice Chancellor’s Research Fellowships</td>
<td>Alumni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>What’s On RMIT TV: Highlight</td>
<td>Who’s who at RMIT!</td>
<td>Student Vlog</td>
<td>How Things Work?</td>
<td>Coming Up Next on RMITTV</td>
<td>My First Year Get Involved</td>
<td>Research Partnerships with China</td>
<td>Brunswick Campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>What’s On RMIT TV: Highlight</td>
<td>Spotlight on... at RMIT</td>
<td>Student Vlog</td>
<td>Newsline</td>
<td>Coming Up Next on RMITTV</td>
<td>Bundamba Campus RMIT Gallery</td>
<td>RMIT Business</td>
<td>Student Interviews</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6: Sample Program Schedule for Phase 2: RMIT TV
Phase 3
The expansion of RMIT TV (6 months)

Content will be double to 4 exclusively produced segments a day from Monday to Friday. Once the exact number of viewers and the sort of programming that is the most popular is known, RMIT will begin to add more videos to its repertoire. Live streaming of RMIT events such as interesting seminars, graduations, parades and presentations will also be featured on RMIT TV to give friends and families of international students who cannot attend a chance to watch them live online. This will help the international community feel engaged and connected.

At the same time, new videos will be continually pre-recorded and produced for the following phases as well as integrated student vlogs and films. We will ramp it up slowly, gradually downloading more and more footage each day. As RMIT TV expands and comes into full form, we will progressively have more segments that can be produced on the go and on the spot and as the team becomes more experienced and the templates for more segments are developed further, we can start to include branded content segments for advertisers to gain more revenue.

Tiszai Productions will continue to appoint and train staff as well as iron out issues that may arise and manage the project as the network grows progressively.

Final Phase
A full-fledged RMIT TV Network (6 months)

As RMIT TV is fully developed and has a regular and growing viewership, we can then produce and publish hours of footage everyday. Segments and branded content advertisements will be uploaded throughout the day, with title sponsors supplementing and promoting each program.

Tiszai Productions will then be working on a retainer basis, providing consulting/project management services to RMIT TV to ensure that the network runs efficiently.

Costs
The costs that RMIT will incur include the following:

- Equipment
- Editing Suite
- Salaries
- Tiszai Services
- Insurance
- Closed Captioning
# Estimated Ongoing Video Production Costs for RMIT TV: Expenses

## Approximate In-House Operating Costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Phase 1 (Set-Up)</th>
<th>Phase 2 (Go Live)</th>
<th>Phase 3 (Expansion)</th>
<th>Phase 4 (Final)</th>
<th>Totals</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Editing Suite</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iMacs x3</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Cut Pro X</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>300</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adobe CS6 Master Collection</td>
<td>879</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>879</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Forge Pro 10</td>
<td>375</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>375</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (Office supplies etc.)</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 HD Camera</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 DSLRS and lenses</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Tripods</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Equipment (PortaBrace)</td>
<td>700</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>700</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting Equipment</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessories</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Manager</td>
<td>17,500</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>122,500</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Assistant</td>
<td>12,500</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>87,500</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>12,500</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>87,500</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Full-time Cameraman/Videographer</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>112,000</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Freelance Camera Assistants</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>70,000</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Full-time Editor</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>112,000</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Freelance Assistant Editors</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>87,500</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Full-time Sound Engineer</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>105,000</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Full-time Graphic/Website Designer</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>105,000</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship Media Account Manager</td>
<td>17,500</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>122,500</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presenter</td>
<td>12,500</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>87,500</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiszai Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Production</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>82,320</td>
<td>82,320</td>
<td>60,000</td>
<td>274,640</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Property</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiring and Training of Production Staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggregation of Staff and Resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation and Creative Direction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial System Set-Up</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointment and Management of Sales Agents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of the Media Kit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Assurance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Liability</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>42,000</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi Risk - Props, Sets, Costumes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi Risk - Camera, Lighting, Equipment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed Captioning</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>14,300</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$238,254</strong></td>
<td><strong>$406,520</strong></td>
<td><strong>$408,020</strong></td>
<td><strong>$387,700</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,440,494</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7: Approximate In-House Operating Costs for RMIT TV
Develop, set-up system, and pre-record segments

Phase 1: Set-Up RMIT TV (3 Months)

Set-up costs: $238,254

Develop 11 new segments + other RMIT content uploaded weekly

Phase 2: RMIT TV Goes Live (9 Months)

-$224,774 (loss)

17 new segments + other RMIT content uploaded weekly

Phase 3: RMIT TV Expands (15 Months)

$237,206 profit

22 new segments + other RMIT content uploaded weekly

Phase 4: A Full-fledged RMIT TV Network (21 Months)

$842,300 profit

### RMIT TV Break-Even Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Phase 1</th>
<th>Phase 2</th>
<th>Phase 3</th>
<th>Phase 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>9 months</td>
<td>15 months</td>
<td>21 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advertising and Sponsorship Revenue</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$420,000</td>
<td>$870,000</td>
<td>$1,230,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Less</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carried over Set-up Fixed Expenses/Losses</td>
<td>$238,254</td>
<td>$224,774</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contribution Margin</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>181,746</td>
<td>645,226</td>
<td>1,230,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contribution Margin Ratio</strong></td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>43.27%</td>
<td>74.16%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Variable and Fixed Expenses</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editing Suite</td>
<td>$7,754</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>$18,200</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>$154,500</td>
<td>$309,000</td>
<td>$309,000</td>
<td>$309,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiszai Services</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td>$82,320</td>
<td>$82,320</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>$1,800</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Fixed and Variable Expenses</td>
<td>238,254</td>
<td>406,520</td>
<td>408,020</td>
<td>387,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Fixed and Variable Expenses Ratio</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>96.79%</td>
<td>46.90%</td>
<td>31.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break-Even Sales</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>939,434</td>
<td>550,160</td>
<td>387,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break-Even %</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>223.67%</td>
<td>63.24%</td>
<td>31.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operating Profit</strong></td>
<td>-238,254</td>
<td>-224,774</td>
<td>237,206</td>
<td>842,300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Break-Even Analysis

RMIT TV will begin to obtain revenue as soon as it goes live in Phase 2 and Tiszai Productions has based the break-even analysis above using the following conservative income projections.

RMIT TV Title Sponsorship for 6 months (Including sponsorship of the Highlight and the Best of the Week segments): $120,000

6 associate segment sponsors for the new segments that will be made exclusively for RMIT TV in Phase 2:
$10,000 x 6 months = $60,000
$60,000 x 5 = $300,000

Total Sales in Phase 2: $120,000 + $300,000 = $420,000

Turnover for the first 6 months broadcast (phase 2):

(Total Sales) $420,000 – $644,774 (Expenses) = -$224,774 (loss)

Tiszai productions estimates that as RMIT TV moves into Phase 3 we will be able to obtain the exact number of viewers and can therefore increase sponsorship packages and will not only breakeven by the end of the first year on air but will make a profit of around $237,206.

We have calculated the following sponsorship and advertising revenue on the digital advertising market rate of $100 per 1000 viewers and have estimated that segments on RMIT TV will draw around 120,000 views on average per month (based on each RMIT student visiting each segment category on the website 1.6 times per month):

RMIT TV Title Sponsorship for 6 months (Including sponsorship of the Highlight and the Best of the Week segments): $150,000

Segment Title Sponsorship including an advertisement at the start of each segment:

4000 viewers x 30 (a month) = 120,000 viewers on average per month
120,000 viewers/1000 viewers = 120 x $100 = $12,000 per sponsorship add/billboard per month.

$12,000 x 6 months = $72,000 x 10 = $720,000

Total sales in phase 3 (not including pay per view advertising sales): $150,000 + $720,000 = $870,000

Turnover for the first 12 months broadcast (Phase 3):

(Total Sales) $870,000 – $632,794 (Expenses+ losses carried forward) = $237,206 profit

In the final development phase of RMIT TV, we will again increase the number segment categories produced thus increasing viewers and revenue.

RMIT TV Title Sponsorship for 6 months (Including sponsorship of the Highlight and the Best of the Week segments): $150,000

Segment Title Sponsorship:
$12,000 x 6 months = $72,000 x 15 (segment type) = $1,080,000

Total sales in the final phase: $150,000 + $1,080,000 = $1,230,000

Turnover for the first 18 months of broadcast (Phase 4):

(Total Sales) $1,230,000 – $387,700 (Expenses) = $842,300 profit

RMIT TV will continue to attain more revenue as the network keeps growing.
Tiszai Productions

Deliverables

• The overall image, graphics and logo;
• Sponsorship media kit for advertising and promotion;
• Creative direction;
• The music license and animation copyright for the opening and closing titles, as well as for the transitions between and within segments;
• The appointment of the presenter(s) and of the production team;
• The development of the format and content of each 30 second to 5 minute segment that will be included in each episode of RMIT TV to be shown weekly/biweekly/monthly depending on requirements;
• RMIT will have full copyright and ownership rights to all videos delivered.

• Segments may include but are not limited to–
  What’s on!
  Who’s who?
  University News Channel!
  RMIT Updates!
  A platform for students to display their work!
  RMIT short film festival!
  Discounts and offers!
  Interviews with Deans, Academics and Professors
  Top Ten Highlights this week!
  Enlightening Lectures/Seminars!
  And many more…
Tiszai Productions is an innovative global multimedia production company with a focus on television and film production. Our production company is made up of a highly skilled, creative and knowledgeable team in all areas of production.

Tiszai Productions employs a comprehensive team of television and film producers, creative writers, and marketing professionals that get results. Our business driven approach separates us from typical media/film production companies. We have built a reputation for creating positive returns on investments for our clients.

Our shows appear online, on TV and over commercial location media networks including airports, shopping centers and our international audiences are devoted to programs such as Hip Factor, Luxe Shanghai and Inspiration.

Tiszai Productions’ recent clients include Credit Suisse, the Cathy Freeman Foundation, the Sydney Symphony, Emma and Tom’s, Brand Meets Blog, Mishfit, Dior, Porsche, Lexus, Mont Blanc.

“Working with Tiszai Productions has been a pleasure from the very first contact. Katrina Jojkity is extremely well-connected in her industry and has delivered out-of-the-box ideas that have exceeded our expectations and led to high-level results. We were extremely pleased with the outcome of our collaboration and have already booked further productions in addition to the films she produced on the Sydney Symphony Fellowship Program sponsored by Credit Suisse and other of our commitments. Tiszai Productions will unquestionably feature as a partner and recommended supplier for future projects for Credit Suisse in Australia and in the APAC region thanks to the great results, professional manner, attention to detail and the great team involved.”

April 21, 2012

Stefan Hottinger-Behmer
Vice President of Corporate Communications | Manager Sponsorship Communications at Credit Suisse
Appendix

University TV Network - Case Studies

The University of New South Wales - UNSWTV

UNSWTV is the new digital media management system for the University of New South Wales. It allows staff and students to easily upload, publish and manage content, including videos, audio and PDFs.

A simple wizard upload system allows users to direct content to a variety of publishing outlets, including UNSW on You Tube and UNSW’s iTunesU channel.

Academics can send content only to a particular course cohort by setting up a collection into which students can post course work. The choice of publishing outlet is determined by what level of access users want to grant and what copyright they want to assign to the material.

The main channel content you see on the home page is produced by the UNSWTV team in the Media and Communications office. By making content public, material may be selected as one of the featured videos.

UNSWTV in media

Call out to students re Young Green Innovators

UNSWTV is aiming to produce a TV and online series called Young Green Innovators in association with the ABC’s Australia Network and the Chinese satellite TV network, Phoenix TV. It’s an environmental challenge involving teams from 15 top science and technology universities across Asia Pacific.

UNSWTV is filming a promotional reel for potential investors in the show and is seeking students who would be willing to appear in that video. They need three students who can deliver just one line each about a real or pretend innovation on environmental sustainability.

A sample script and much more detail can be provided to those interested. Filming would take a maximum of one hour in the UNSWTV studios opposite Civil Engineering (Goodsell basement). The team hopes to film in the next week or so.

Please email Executive Producer Mary O’Malley on m.omalley@unsw.edu.au or ring on 0438881124.

If you are a student with a real innovative environmental project, this is your chance to practice! UNSWTV will be calling for entries once the show is confirmed. Filming begins in 2013. Team entries are permitted.
**Online lessons add up for lecturer**

( Derived from Sydney Morning Herald, 14/07/2012)


WITH more than a million YouTube hits, Chris Tisdell is the equivalent of a best-selling author or chart-topping musician. And the unlikely subject of this mass popularity? University mathematics.

Dr Tisdell’s channel on the file-sharing website has 5000 subscribers who follow his University of NSW mathematics lectures. In April, views hit the 1 million mark.

Not all the viewers are local - his main audience is in the United States and India - and not all are students.

“I had an email the other day from an 86-year-old saying, ‘I’m in an old folks home and I enjoy revis-iting things that I learned when I was a student,” he said.

The University of NSW has a Partner in Education relationship with YouTube and Dr Tisdell has had his own channel on the website since 2008. The broadcasts are unsophisticated. Some run for up to an hour, yet they attract thousands of hits.

“The idea of a lecture is to effectively communicate an idea and if you can’t do that then it’s essen-tially a waste of time,” he said. “I remember making lots of mistakes in lectures ... my videos are not Hollywood blockbusters, they’re reality TV. It’s warts and all.”

The presentation of free online lectures through platforms such as YouTube EDU and the TED (Tech-nology, Entertainment, Design) website continues to soar. UNSW Media says its presence on UN-SWTV and YouTube put the university in the top 10 educational websites on the server since 2007, and the only university outside the US to rate in the top 50.

The next step for Dr Tisdell is a free electronic textbook to complement his other work. His first foray, Engineering Mathematics, is in the top five most downloaded texts on ebook publisher Bookboon’s website.

Authors receive a small royalty for a book that is published in PDF format that can be downloaded free from the site.
UCTV - The University of California

University of California Television (UCTV) is a public-serving media outlet featuring programming from throughout the University of California, the nation’s premier research university made of ten campuses, three national labs and affiliated institutions.

Launched in January 2000, this academic initiative embraces the core missions of the University of California - teaching, research, and public service - through quality, in-depth television that brings to life the tremendous range of knowledge, culture and dialogue generated on UC’s diverse campuses.

Reaching missions through cable, online, YouTube, iTunesU, roku, and mobile apps (coming soon), UCTV transports knowledge far beyond the campus borders and into the homes and lives of inquisitive viewers around the globe.

UCTV explores a broad spectrum of subjects for a general audience, including science, health and medicine, public affairs, humanities, arts and music, business, education, and agriculture. Program formats include documentaries, faculty lectures, cutting-edge research symposia, artistic performances and more.

UCTV also reaches out to specialized audiences, including K-12 teachers with its “Teachers P.E.T.” programming, health care professionals with “The Med Ed Hour,” and the academic community through its UCTV Seminars website.

In March 2012, UCTV launched UCTV Prime, a YouTube original channel and the first university-run channel to be included among YouTube’s new production partnerships with recognizable

( Derived from http://www.uctv.tv/about/)

UCTV in media

University of California launching UCTV Prime, a university-run YouTube original channel

( Derived from http://www.theverge.com/2012/2/15/2800788/university-of-california-UCTV-prime-youtube-channel)

Plenty of colleges and universities have their own YouTube channels, but the University of California is claiming its new channel UCTV Prime will be the first university-run YouTube original channel. When it launches on March 1st, UCTV Prime will offer 15 minutes of original programming every week — there will be 10-minute in-depth documentary-style content, as well as several different 5-minute segments. UCTV Prime: Vote will focus on election-year analysis, while UCTV Prime: Cuts will focus on research and events from the UC campuses. As for the mini-documentaries, the first is called “Naked Art” — it’ll be a four-part series that focuses on the university’s public art collections. UCTV Prime has a few trailers and promos available, but the first full content will be available both on YouTube and on the UCTV Prime home page in a few weeks. We’ll see if YouTube decides to line up any other universities with original channels if UCTV Prime finds an audience.
Bucks begins a new trend

Bucks New University has set up its own online TV channel to showcase the work of students and staff
(Derived from The Guardian, 31/07/2008 - http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2008/jul/31/university.tv)

Viewing video content on the web is almost as familiar to today’s students as sitting down to tea, toast and telly might have been in the old days.

Not all universities have caught up with the trend, but many host an assortment of videos made by or about them on their websites.

The revamped Bucks New University is, however, going one step further. It is the first to create a web TV site with several channels dedicated to the work of students and staff.

Bucks TV has been bedding in for a month or so, but it launches officially today. It will be the first university web TV service to offer customisable and scheduled streaming content over the internet.

Bucks’ web marketing manager, Cate Tollemache, first had the idea to create a television website in the days before YouTube. It has taken three years to develop.

Mike Hewett, Yohannes Blumel and Daniel Waziri, three final-year students at Bucks, designed the site and Twofour Digital helped set it up using some of the most advanced web technologies available.

“We put all the visual stuff together – the branding, layouts, navigation icons etc,” said Hewett. “What you can see on the website is just the start of it.”

The site hosts a news and events channel along with channels for music, film and animation and a live webcam feed from the building site of Bucks’ new campus. A total of 12 channels are planned so far, depending on how much content they get.

The aim is to promote students and their work to future employers, help them be more creative and recruit new students to the university. Visitors can view, comment on and download content, or link to it from their blog.

“Eventually you’ll be able to see what year people are in so you’ll be able to see the work and their stage in education and contact them through the site. Employers could scout for potential future talent and people for placements,” Hewett explained.

But he warned the university would have to be careful about how it sells the website to students when they return in September, or risk turning them off if it takes too much control over content.

Philip Haggar, Twofour Director, called the project a “delight”.

“The whole concept of this web TV platform is that Bucks New University should be free to do as they want. Free to choose video formats, free to choose design rather than being constrained by a ‘standard video player’, and free to choose what content to put on air when they want, as well as providing a full searchable video-on-demand library.”

Dr Ruth Farwell, Bucks’ vice-chancellor, said the site would be a “fantastic forum” for students to display their work publicly and share their creativity with their peers.

Tom Abbott is Warwick University’s online communications officer, and has been at the forefront of making and broadcasting popular films about research going on at the university.

He says the presentation of the BTV website is surprising and new – for a university – even if, in his opinion, the content isn’t particularly.

“They’re taking a new approach to presenting it, it’s very ‘MTV’ and focused on prospective students,” he said.

Internet TV was “more akin to the BBC’s iPlayer model [where the public can download programmes online they have missed on television] and the BTV website is streaming content at particular times so if you log in at nine o’clock or one o’clock, it’ll be different content. And you can download it.”

Southampton University’s computer science department also hosts podcasts of students’ work and what’s going on in their labs.

Aside from videos, the department’s website has a news service and occasionally streams lectures on the web, but not as a matter of course.

Marketing manager Joyce Lewis says it helps to get students talking and gives a truer picture of what university life is like there to interested existing and prospective students.

“We’re trying to attract computer science and electronics students. We know people are really interested in coming to our website and being able to do different things on it.

“Because of web 2.0 they can find out what other students think of the university and department. It’s a much more accurate, truthful and immediate way of speaking to people,” Lewis said.

“[Bucks TV] looks a really nice service and video is definitely the way everybody should be going. Others will soon catch up.”
Branded Content

OGILVY – ADVERTISERS MORE INTERESTED IN TARGETED DEMOGRAPHICS AND BRANDED CONTENT

(Derived from http://www.clearsketch.com/author/admin/page/2/)

An article on ReelSEO reveals that Ogilvy is seeing advertisers become more interested in targeted demographics and a more focused audience, and in creating branded content vs. just advertising alongside content.

This trend conjures up some interesting possibilities for both brands and media agencies, as marketers could possibly have another vehicle with which to engage their target audience beyond the traditional print ad or 30 second TV spot. Branded content could be far more powerful than print or TV spots, as it employs a pull strategy, where customers and clients are coming to the brands to view their content, versus being peppered with brand messaging and claims from the brand when they don’t necessarily want that kind of engagement. The effectiveness of this strategy, of course, lies in the quality of the content and how it’s used.

The questions marketers should ask are:

(1) Is my content congruous with my brand’s positioning?

(2) Is my content interesting enough that my target audience wants to watch it on their own accord?

(3) As I develop my content, how do I create a strong association between my brand and the brand position I’m trying to create without overdoing it?

(4) How do I leverage the content I’m developing within the context of my broader marketing strategy to amp up my brand value?

(and yes, social media marketing is a must to make video work for you)

An example of a company that does an amazing job at using branded content and answering these questions positively is Red Bull. They combine well-positioned and produced content, a prolific output and clever social media strategies to put video to work for them. The Red Bull brand name is virtually ubiquitous, and one would be hard-pressed to find anyone who hasn’t heard of them. Much of Red Bull’s success can be attributed to the media they produce and how cleverly they put it to use for them.

As the effectiveness of traditional TV ads are continually being threatened by DVRs and online video, and more and more ad dollars are shifting towards online video, there is an amazing opportunity for brands and companies to follow Red Bull’s lead and create targeted, branded content that their target audience wants to watch. The skillset required for doing so would be new to most marketers, but the opportunities for differentiation would be well worth the investment.
References


Beyerlein, S & Kennedy, H; Edited by Michael M. Beyerlein, 2009 Innovation through collaboration, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, Australia.


Castells, M 2009, Communication Power, Oxford University Press.


Resnik, D 2001, What is Ethics in Research and Why is it Important, Department of Medical Humanities, The Brody School of Medicine, East Carolina University.


The following is what Tiszai Pty Ltd can do to help create NMIT TV, featuring highly profitable and exclusively student-centered interactive targeted branded segments shown globally on the NMIT website, Youtube channel as well as on indoor and outdoor LED screens throughout campuses.

Table of Contents

Summary 3
Objective
Anticipated Outcomes
Solution

Creating a Tailor-Made TV Network 5
Description
Location

Measures and Audience 6
Creating a ‘Community’
Benefits
Generating an Audience
Measures and Outcomes
Attaining Revenue from Advertising and Promotion
Project Schedule: The Phases

Costs 15
Break-Even Analysis

Tiszai Productions 19
Deliverables
The Team

Appendix 21

References 26
Summary

Objective

The goal is for Tiszai Productions to set up the initial system for an in-house TV network. Once the initial system is developed, Tiszai Productions will continue to provide training, expertise and project management on a medium-term basis for the network to run continually and efficiently. This will build a closer community as well as providing continuous revenue from increased student enrollment, branded content and advertising.

Anticipated Outcomes

1. The creation of an ongoing ‘on-campus’ and ‘online’ television presence that offers compelling programming to provide a continuous income stream.
2. Boosting student enrollments and improving retention rates.
3. Increasing the reputation and awareness of the institution globally, by building and nurturing a vast audience base of viewers.
4. Instigating a greater sense of community, thus bridging the gap between local/international students and staff.
5. Transforming the in-house TV network website into the most engaging and visited university website in Australia.

Solution

The goal is for Tiszai Productions to set up an in-house TV network.

Tiszai Productions’ role will be to create the system and manage the project; initially aggregating all existing resources and content, bringing them together into one central identity.

Within the first three months, Tiszai Productions will set up the initial system by working closely with web developers, graphic designers, media and marketing teams to create and integrate the TV network within the institution’s existing website. Tiszai productions will collaborate closely with existing staff and students as well as using its own resources to develop the format of the network, graphics, animation and logo for each television segment.

Once the format and segments have been developed, Tiszai Productions will then begin to recruit and train the production team to start filming and creating daily/biweekly/weekly and monthly content and segments to be shown on the TV Network. Concurrently Tiszai productions will appoint and liaise with media sales agents who will be in charge of selling advertising on the TV network, providing revenue and profit required to run the network on a long-term basis.

At Tiszai Pty Ltd we believe that once the initial system for the TV network has been established and developed - including, the overall look and image, the format of the segments, animation, the appointment of the sales agents and production teams; the cost of creating large amounts of content on a long term basis can be relatively low and, if desired, done independently.

Tiszai Productions will provide the following services:

- Aggregation of content
- Consultancy
- Creative Direction
- Project Management
- Recruitment
- Relationship building
- Quality Control
- Training
Creating an Tailor-Made TV Network

Description

The in-house TV network will be a student-serving media outlet featuring programming from the institution. A TV Network is a fantastic way for educational organisations to showcase their brilliance and diversity by way of quality and innovative television programs that aim to enlighten, educate and enhance the lives of current and prospective students around the globe.

The TV network will create a broad range of educational programs for a general audience, including daily/biweekly/weekly/monthly segments, information and announcements for students and staff, on subjects such as science, health, public affairs, humanities, arts and music, media, business and education. Program formats include documentaries, faculty lectures, cutting-edge research symposia, artistic performances, and interviews featuring academic managers, lecturers, researchers as well as student projects, films and animation.

Tiszai Productions’ mission is to transform the TV network website into the most engaging and visited higher education institution website in Australia, showcasing inspiring and interesting academics, visiting scholars combined with tailor-made content for students and staff with a unified look.

Location

The TV network will reach its audience not only through indoor and outdoor LED screens around campus, on the TV network website and YouTube to transport knowledge far beyond the campus borders and into the homes and lives of inquisitive students/viewers and prospective students around the globe.

Measures and Audience

Creating a ‘Community’

The success of a TV Network is measured by viewership and community engagement, as O’Donnell (2007:23) states.

The aggregation of a large global audience/community for the TV network is highly feasible in a relatively short period of time as higher education institutions have existing students, alumni and staff that they can immediately tap into as potential viewers.

Universities such as UNSW in Australia and University of California in America have stated that producing a TV Network, has enhanced their international profile, reputation and has substantially helped build a more cohesive community atmosphere amongst staff, alumni and students.

Dr. Tisdell’s channel on the file-sharing website has 5000 subscribers who follow his University of NSW mathematics lectures. In April, views hit the 1 million mark. Not all the viewers are local - his main audience is in the United States and India - and not all are students.

“I had an email the other day from an 86-year-old saying, “I’m in an old folks home and I enjoy revisiting things that I learned when I was a student,” he said.

The University of NSW has a Partner in Education relationship with YouTube and Dr. Tisdell has had his own channel on the website since 2008. The broadcasts are unsophisticated. Some run for up to an hour, yet they attract thousands of hits.

“The idea of a lecture is to effectively communicate an idea and if you can’t do that then it’s essentially a waste of time,” he said. “I remember making lots of mistakes in lectures … my videos are not Hollywood blockbusters, they’re reality TV. It’s warts and all.”

The presentation of free online lectures through platforms such as YouTube EDU and the TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) website continues to soar. UNSW Media says its presence on UNSWTV and YouTube put the university in the top 10 educational websites on the server since 2007, and the only university outside the US to rate in the top 50.

(derived from Sydney Herald Sun Online, 14/07/2012)
The TV network will not only keep the staff, alumni and students informed about what is happening on campus on a regular basis, it will also serve as a connection tool thus encouraging a sense of belonging and unity amongst the students and personnel.

Through engaging and viewing the TV network, international students will have the opportunity to connect with their peers as well as with local students and staff even when they are back home on term breaks. Through circulating the network online, students who study online or by correspondence will also be able to feel part of the community without physically being on campus.

International, online and correspondence students will have the chance to actively participate in student life by viewing and creating their own vlogs shared on the network, creating a closer-knit community.

Benefits

Presently The University of NSW is one of the only universities within Australia that produces a tailor-made TV network. From reviewing their 2011 annual report it is clear that UNSWTV has successfully brought UNSW to a global audience as the following extract taken from UNSW’s 2011 Annual Report states:

‘UNSWTV increased its viewing statistics and subscribers, consistently ranking in the top channels worldwide on YouTube EDU and one of YouTube Australia’s most popular partner channels. Our combined channel views are now more than 5.3 million, making us the only non-American university to rank alongside MIT, Stanford, Berkeley and Harvard. We have 10,000 subscribers to our e-learning channel and 8,000 to our outreach channels.’

‘In 2011, UNSWTV built on content-sharing arrangements with the ABC, Slow TV, SMH, news.com.au, and Sky TV’s APAC channel.’

(Derived from UNSW’s 2011 Annual Report)

There is no reason why with a similar strategy, a tailor-made TV network could not raise awareness for any other higher educational institution globally and increase revenue from boosted student enrollments, advertising and branded content.

As currently no other university in Victoria has a TV network, it is a unique opportunity to be the first educational institution to be able to introduce its ‘culture’, engage and entice prospective local and international students who may not be able to attend open days or visit the campus in person through continuous targeted online video content.

Generating an Audience

The best way to appeal to today’s distracted, disinterested, disengaged and disenchanted busy audiences is to focus on what they need and want to know, and to provide enough information to make your communication useful but not so much that the content overwhelms the audience.

(Brown and Davis, 2006)

As the TV network will focus on producing tailor-made content for the students and staff, Tiszai Productions is confident that it will not be too difficult to attract audiences’ attention and maintain a consistent and growing viewership.

From a recent survey we conducted with 50 students from within Australia and overseas, we found that 28% of them prefer social media marketing followed closely by email, website, word of mouth and SMS (25%, 24%, 15% and 8% respectively).

Therefore it is vital that the TV network is promoted heavily throughout the website via social media portals as well as email marketing.

Generating competitions to raise awareness

Competitions such as “Who’s the next Top Presenter?”, “Campus Idol”, “Student Short Film Festival”, “Club and Society of the Week!” etc. will be produced to not only raise awareness but also to recruit student presenters and interns to work on the network.

Email Marketing

By working with the student services department, we will send emails promoting the TV network to all staff and students on a regular basis.

Website Marketing

Once the TV network website is created, the shows will constantly run and be advertised on the institution’s website.

Word of Mouth Marketing

We will encourage all teaching and support staff to publicize and encourage students to watch and participate in one of the diverse opportunities to get involved in the creation of the TV network.

Generating an Audience

The best way to appeal to today’s distracted, disinterested, disengaged and disenchanted busy audiences is to focus on what they need and want to know, and to provide enough information to make your communication useful but not so much that the content overwhelms the audience.

(Brown and Davis, 2006)

As the TV network will focus on producing tailor-made content for the students and staff, Tiszai Productions is confident that it will not be too difficult to attract audiences’ attention and maintain a consistent and growing viewership.

From a recent survey we conducted with 50 students from within Australia and overseas, we found that 28% of them prefer social media marketing followed closely by email, website, word of mouth and SMS (25%, 24%, 15% and 8% respectively).

Therefore it is vital that the TV network is promoted heavily throughout the website via social media portals as well as email marketing.

Generating competitions to raise awareness

Competitions such as “Who’s the next Top Presenter?”, “Campus Idol”, “Student Short Film Festival”, “Club and Society of the Week!” etc. will be produced to not only raise awareness but also to recruit student presenters and interns to work on the network as well as gaining a larger audience.
As we can see from Figure 2 above, all four options i.e. regular updated content, useful and relevant information regarding tertiary life, 'engaging entertainment' as well as short and snappy content are desired and attractive to audiences.

We also asked students the following two questions to determine the role and importance of a tailor-made TV network in building a closer community.

(1) What would encourage you to actively watch a program on a university TV network?

Examples of student responses:
- “Engaging info and entertainment”
- “Social information relevant to institution, opportunity to engage with other faculties”
- “Display of list of opportunities or events that I could’ve missed”
- “Frequent updates”
- “Better understanding of what is happening on campus”
- “Video clips that are short yet meaningful”
- “Added value to university services”
- “Useful info and updating events”
- “Platform for uni folk to air views on current issues”
- “An opportunity to see what other faculties and students are working on”
- “An outlet for exhibitions, achievements and campus news”

(2) In your opinion, how would a university TV Network improve your tertiary life?

Examples of student responses:
- “Entertaining access to information about events that would otherwise fly under the radar”
- “Indulge more in university activities and improve personal connection”
- “A higher visibility on what is happening around the campus and not just ugly stickers being stuck everywhere”
- “Keeps me updated and be in the loop of tertiary life, Constantly feel like a part of the larger university community”
- “I would feel myself being part of the community”
- “It would consolidate many themes and topics relevant to students and it would add to the university’s solidarity as an active community”
- “Useful entertainment during breaks, a place to gather, accessible communication tool”
- “It will provide a channel for students to engage and communicate”
Measures and Outcomes

Ratings determine how much the advertisers pay for commercials, the larger the desired audience, the higher the cost of commercials. The desired audience for advertising tends to be 18-to-49-year-old consumers with disposable income – thus television programs in general are geared to that segment of the population.

The common wisdom in television is that its primary role is to deliver consumers to advertisers. Advertising income is what pays for television programs that are broadcast on commercial networks.

(Derived from Chapter 2, Television Criticism by Victoria O’Donnell)

The success of the TV network will be measured in a number of different ways.

Firstly, it will be measured by the number of views, clicks and subscribers on the TV network website and its YouTube channel.

By liaising with the student services department, we will create and send out a targeted and detailed survey and questionnaire with regards to the TV network to all students and staff so that we can track and have a greater understanding of how many students and staff are frequently watching the network online.

As mentioned, as of 2011 UNSWTV has managed to achieve and maintain a viewership of more than 5.3 million. RMIT TV should have the potential to achieve an even bigger number of viewers over time since RMIT is a global university with various campuses around Victoria and overseas.

Furthermore, the success of the TV network will be measured by its advertising revenue. Ultimately the more viewers the network has, the more revenue the institution can gain from advertising.

Attaining Revenue from Advertising and Promotion

The TV Network will be able to derive revenue from sponsorship within its video content. Tiszai Productions will create a sponsorship rate card and media kit outlining the costs and benefits to sponsors as well as ensuring all advertisers are an appropriate fit.

Branded content, sponsorship and advertisements can be sold in the following ways:

Spots
These are ‘advertisements’ shown at the start video content and can be 15 or 30 seconds in length.

Billboards
These can appear at the top and/or tail of each program acknowledging sponsors. For example “Campus News” is proudly brought to you by ‘Computers Now’. Billboards can be a maximum of 15 seconds combined top and tail.

Title Sponsorship
Title sponsorship offers ownership and brand alliance for a minimum of 6 months including:

- A sponsors name integrated within the show’s name “(Sponsor’s name presents the TV Network)
- A sponsors name will be integrated into the animation, logo and graphics
- Prominent acknowledgement in all marketing material
- Brand presence and website link on the TV Network website
- First priority to renew sponsorship for the next 6 month broadcast period
- Promotion via social media channels
- Integration with feature interviews
- Integration with product placement
- Authorization to use video content on sponsors own website and social media networks
- Company name will be included within all segments shown on the TV network

Associate Segment Sponsorship
Associate sponsorship offers brand alliance for each individual segment category. For example, “Campus Lectures is brought to you by Sponsor’s name”.

- Acknowledgement at the start of each individual segment
- Acknowledgement in all marketing materials
- Brand presence and website link on the TV Network
- Promotion via social media channels
- Integration with product placement
- Integration with feature interviews
- Licence for use of video content on sponsors own website and social media networks

To offset some of the set-up costs and to get sponsors on board at the inception of the network, we will offer potential advertisers two introductory sponsorship deals -

The market rate for advertising within in-house TV networks is:

AUD$100 per 1000 viewers for a 30-second sponsorship advertisement or billboard shown before each intergraded view on demand segment

For example, based on the following conservative estimate that segments on the TV Network attract around 3300 viewers per day and the market rate for digital advertising online is $100 per 1000 viewers for a 30-second sponsorship billboard, the institution can start off by charging advertisers $10,000 to sponsor a segment per month.

Title Sponsorship - $120,000 for the first 6 months
Associate Segment Sponsorship - $60,000 for the first 6 months

Once we have gone live and can calculate the initial number of viewers, we can begin to formulate and finalize on-going advertising and sponsorship packages for the network.

Examples of Potential Advertisers
Set-Up, Development and Creation of The TV Network

Within the first three months, Tiszai Productions will create the system and manage the set up of the TV network; initially aggregating all existing resources and content as well as creating new and pre-recorded segments to be included on the network when it launches in Phase 2, bringing them together into one central identity.

Tiszai Productions will set up the initial system by working closely with web developers, graphic designers, media and marketing teams to create and integrate the TV network within the institution's existing website. Tiszai Productions will collaborate closely with existing staff and students as well as using its own resources to film and develop the format of the network, graphics, animation and logo for each television segment and transition as well as create uniformed layout and animation for existing content.

Concurrently, Tiszai Productions will organize and oversee the purchase of any necessary production equipment and will also set up an editing suite for the long-term on-going production of the TV network. To save resources in the long run, it is advisable that the institution invest in capital equipment (or use existing equipment) and set up a designated editing suite where the team can work. Once the infrastructure for the TV network is set up, we believe it will be able to run smoothly and efficiently. In the initial stages of development if the institution prefers to take a slower approach, Tiszai Productions is more than happy to utilise its own equipment, production staff and editing suite to produce and edit the segments for the network.

The recruitment of student presenters, new production teams as well as working with existing staff and students as well as using its own resources to film and develop the format of the network, graphics, animation and logo for each television segment and transition as well as create uniformed layout and animation for existing content.

As each segment is uploaded, the newest segment will automatically appear at the top of the list of recently uploaded videos, whereas past segments can easily be found and viewed by segment topic, such as ‘What's On at Campus This Week’, ‘Who’s Who’ and ‘Weekly Topic: Have Your Say on Campus TV’.

The TV network section of the institution's website will be created in such a way that as soon as one clicks through to the TV network link, they will be redirected to the TV network homepage where the daily highlight segment will start playing immediately outlining the latest videos and what will be uploaded that day.

The ‘What's on Campus TV Today’ segment is a ‘presented’ segment that will outline the segments that will be uploaded on a particular day. It will help make the TV network a cohesive channel and encourage people to revisit the network and the website throughout the day to watch the videos that have been uploaded. The ‘What's on Campus TV Today’ segment will also be screened on LED screens around campus to promote and drive traffic to the TV network website.

In this phase, the TV network goes live online with an initial title sponsor in place as well as title sponsorship for each segment.

We will drip-feed pre-recorded segments that have been created during Phase 1 and continually produce new segments as well as uploading aggregated content taken from existing resources.

To begin with the TV network will air between 10-20 segments a week, and will start off with the online circulation of 2 exclusively produced segments a day from Monday to Friday, and 1 on Saturday including the daily ‘What's on Campus TV Today’ video, intros, outros, transitions, live events, exhibitions, lectures, and pre-recorded segments.

Project Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1</th>
<th>Months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial System Set Up: The TV Network</td>
<td>1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The TV Network Goes Live</td>
<td>4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Expansion of the TV Network</td>
<td>7-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Fully Tapped TV Network</td>
<td>10-12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phase 2

The TV Network Goes Live (6 months)

In this phase, the TV network goes live online with an initial title sponsor in place as well as title sponsorship for each segment.

We will drip-feed pre-recorded segments that have been created during Phase 1 and continually produce new segments as well as uploading aggregated content taken from existing resources.

To begin with the TV network will air between 10-20 segments a week, and will start off with the online circulation of 2 exclusively produced segments a day from Monday to Friday, and 1 on Saturday including the daily ‘What's on Campus TV Today’ video, intros, outros, transitions, live events, exhibitions, lectures, and pre-recorded segments.

The ‘What's on Campus TV Today’ segment is a ‘presented’ segment that will outline the segments that will be uploaded on a particular day. It will help make the TV network a cohesive channel and encourage people to revisit the network and the website throughout the day to watch the videos that have been uploaded. The ‘What's on Campus TV Today’ segment will also be screened on LED screens around campus to promote and drive traffic to the TV network website.

The TV network section of the institution's website will be created in such a way that as soon as one clicks through to the TV network link, they will be redirected to the TV network homepage where the daily highlight segment will start playing immediately outlining the latest videos and what will be uploaded that day.

As each segment is uploaded, the newest segment will automatically appear at the top of the list of recently uploaded videos, whereas past segments can easily be found and viewed by segment topic, such as ‘What's On at Campus This Week’, ‘Who’s Who’ and ‘Weekly Topic: Have Your Say on Campus TV’.
Phase 3
The expansion of the TV network (6 months)

Content will eventually be doubled to 4 exclusively produced segments a day from Monday to Friday. Once the exact number of viewers and the sort of programming that is the most popular is known, the institution will begin to add more videos to its repertoire. Live streaming of campus events such as interesting seminars, graduations, parades and presentations will also be featured on the TV network to give friends and families of international students who cannot attend a chance to watch them live online. This will help the international community feel engaged and connected.

At the same time, new videos will be continually pre-recorded and produced for the following phases as well as integrated student vlogs and films. We will ramp it up slowly, gradually downloading more and more footage each day. As the TV network expands and comes into full form, we will progressively have more segments that can be produced on the go and on the spot and as the team becomes more experienced and the templates for more segments are developed further, we can start to include branded content segments for advertisers to gain more revenue.

Tiszai Productions will continue to appoint and train staff as well as iron out issues that may arise and manage the project as the network grows progressively.

Final Phase
A full-fledged TV Network (6 months)

As the TV network is fully developed and has a regular and growing viewership, we can then produce and publish hours of footage everyday. Segments and branded content advertisements will be uploaded throughout the day, with title sponsors supplementing and promoting each program.

Tiszai Productions will then be working on a retainer basis, providing consulting/project management services to the TV network to ensure that it runs efficiently.

Costs

The costs that the institution will incur include the following:

- Equipment
- Editing Suite
- Salaries
- Tiszai Services
- Insurance
- Closed Captioning

Estimated Ongoing Video Production Costs for the TV network:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approximate In-House Operating Costs</th>
<th>Phase 1 (Set-Up)</th>
<th>Phase 2 (Go Live)</th>
<th>Phase 3 (Expansion)</th>
<th>Phase 4 (Final)</th>
<th>Totals</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>21 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editing Suite</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iMacs x3</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Cut Pro X</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>600</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adobe CS6 Master Collection</td>
<td>879</td>
<td>879</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,758</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Forge Pro 10</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>375</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>750</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (Office supplies etc.)</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 HD Camera</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 DSLRS and lenses</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Tripods</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Equipment (PortaBrace)</td>
<td>700</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>700</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting Equipment</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessories</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Manager</td>
<td>17,500</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>122,500</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Assistant</td>
<td>12,500</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>12,500</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Full-time Cameraman/Videographer</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>122,000</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Freelance Camera Assistants</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>70,000</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Full-time Editor</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td>112,000</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Freelance Assistant Editors</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>70,000</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Full-time Sound Engineer</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>105,000</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Full-time Graphic/Website Designer</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>105,000</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship Media Account Manager</td>
<td>17,500</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>122,500</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presenter</td>
<td>12,500</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiszai Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Production</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Property</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiring and Training of Production Staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggregation of Staff and Resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation and Creative Direction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial System Set-Up</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointment and Management of Sales Agents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of the Media Kit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Assurance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>42,000</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Liability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi Risk - Props, Sets, Costumes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi Risk - Camera, Lighting, Equipment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed Captioning</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>14,300</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$238,254</td>
<td>$406,520</td>
<td>$408,020</td>
<td>$387,700</td>
<td>$1,440,494</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6: Approximate In-House Operating Costs for the TV network
The TV Network: Break-Even Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1: Set-Up (3 Months)</th>
<th>Phase 2: Goes Live (9 Months)</th>
<th>Phase 3: The Expansion (15 Months)</th>
<th>Phase 4: A Full-fledged TV Network (21 Months)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop, set-up system, and pre-record segments</td>
<td>Set-up costs: $238,254</td>
<td>Develop 11 new segments + other existing content uploaded weekly</td>
<td>-$224,774 (loss)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 new segments + other existing content uploaded weekly</td>
<td>$237,206 profit</td>
<td>22 new segments + other existing content uploaded weekly</td>
<td>$842,300 profit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Break-Even Analysis**

The TV network will begin to obtain revenue as soon as it goes live in Phase 2 and Tiszai Productions has based the break-even analysis above using the following conservative income projections.

Title Sponsorship for 6 months (including sponsorship of the ‘What’s On at Campus This Week’ segments): $120,000

6 associate segment sponsors for the new segments that will be made exclusively for the TV network in Phase 2:

- $10,000 x 6 months = $60,000
- $60,000 x 5 = $300,000

Total Sales in Phase 2: $120,000 + $300,000 = $420,000

Turnover for the first 6 months broadcast (Phase 2):

(Total Sales) $420,000 – $644,774 (Expenses) = -$224,774 (loss)

Tiszai Productions estimates that as the TV network moves into Phase 3 we will be able to obtain the exact number of viewers and can therefore increase sponsorship packages and will not only break even by the end of the first year on air but will make a profit of around $237,206.

We have calculated the following sponsorship and advertising revenue on the digital advertising market rate of $100 per 1000 viewers and have estimated that segments on the TV network will draw around 120,000 views on average per month (based on each student visiting each segment category on the website 1.6 times per month):

Title Sponsorship for 6 months (Including sponsorship of the ‘What’s On at Campus This Week’ segments): $150,000

Segment Title Sponsorship including an advertisement at the start of each segment:

4000 viewers x 30 (a month) = 120,000 viewers on average per month

120,000 viewers/1000 viewers = 120 x $100 = $12,000 per sponsorship add/billboard per month.

$12,000 x 6 months = $72,000 x 10 = $720,000

Total sales in phase 3 (not including pay per view advertising sales): $150,000 + $720,000 = $870,000

Turnover for the first 12 months broadcast (Phase 3):

(Total Sales) $870,000 – $632,794 (Expenses+ losses carried forward) = $237,206 profit

In the final development phase of the TV, network we will again increase the number segment categories produced thus increasing viewers and revenue.

Title Sponsorship for 6 months (Including sponsorship of the ‘What’s On at Campus This Week’ segments): $150,000

Segment Title Sponsorship:

$12,000 x 6 months = $72,000 x 15 (segment type) = $1,080,000

Total sales in the final phase: $150,000 + $1,080,000 = $1,230,000

Turnover for the first 18 months broadcast (Phase 4):

(Total Sales) $1,230,000 – $387,700 (Expenses) = $842,300 profit

The TV network will continue to attain more revenue as the network keeps growing.
Tiszai Productions

Deliverables

- The overall image, graphics and logo;
- Sponsorship media kit for advertising and promotion;
- Creative direction;
- The music license and animation copyright for the opening and closing titles, as well as for the transitions between and within segments;
- The appointment of the presenter(s) and of the production team;
- The development of the format and content of each 30 second to 5 minute segment that will be included in each episode of the TV network to be shown weekly/biweekly/monthly depending on requirements;
- The institution will have full copyright and ownership rights to all videos delivered;
- Segments may include but are not limited to–
  - What's on!
  - Who's who?
  - Campus News Channel!
  - Updates!
  - A platform for students to display their work!
  - Short film festival!
  - Discounts and offers!
  - Interviews with Deans, Academics and Professors
  - Top Ten Highlights this week!
  - Enlightening Lectures/Seminars!
  - And many more…

The Team

Tiszai Productions is an innovative global multimedia production company with a focus on television and film production. Our production company is made up of a highly skilled, creative and knowledgeable team in all areas of production.

Tiszai Productions employs a comprehensive team of television and film producers, creative writers, and marketing professionals that get results. Our business driven approach separates us from typical media/film production companies. We have built a reputation for creating positive returns on investments for our clients.

Our shows appear online, on TV and over commercial location media networks including airports, shopping centers and our international audiences are devoted to programs such as Hip Factor, Luxe Shanghai and Inspiration.

Tiszai Productions’ recent clients include Credit Suisse, the Cathy Freeman Foundation, the Sydney Symphony, Emma and Tom’s, Brand Meets Blog, Mishfit, Dior, Porsche, Lexus, Mont Blanc.

“Working with Tiszai Productions has been a pleasure from the very first contact. Katrina Jojkity is extremely well-connected in her industry and has delivered out-of-the-box ideas that have exceeded our expectations and led to high-level results. We were extremely pleased with the outcome of our collaboration and have already booked further productions in addition to the films she produced on the Sydney Symphony Fellowship Program sponsored by Credit Suisse and other of our commitments. Tiszai Productions will unquestionably feature as a partner and recommended supplier for future projects for Credit Suisse in Australia and in the APAC region thanks to the great results, professional manner, attention to detail and the great team involved.”

April 21, 2012

Stefan Hottinger-Behmer
Vice President of Corporate Communications | Manager Sponsorship Communications at Credit Suisse
Appendix

University TV Network - Case Studies

The University of New South Wales - UNSWTV

UNSWTV is the new digital media management system for the University of New South Wales. It allows staff and students to easily upload, publish and manage content, including videos, audio and PDFs.

A simple wizard upload system allows users to direct content to a variety of publishing outlets, including UNSW on You Tube and UNSW's iTunesU channel.

Academics can send content only to a particular course cohort by setting up a collection into which students can post course work. The choice of publishing outlet is determined by what level of access users want to grant and what copyright they want to to assign to the material.

The main channel content you see on the home page is produced by the UNSWTV team in the Media and Communications office. By making content public, material may be selected as one of the featured videos.

UNSWTV in media

Call out to students re Young Green Innovators

UNSWTV is aiming to produce a TV and online series called Young Green Innovators in association with the ABC’s Australia Network and the Chinese satellite TV network, Phoenix TV. It’s an environmental challenge involving teams from 15 top science and technology universities across Asia Pacific.

UNSWTV is filming a promotional reel for potential investors in the show and is seeking students who would be willing to appear in that video. They need three students who can deliver just one line each about a real or pretend innovation on environmental sustainability.

A sample script and much more detail can be provided to those interested. Filming would take a maximum of one hour in the UNSWTV studios opposite Civil Engineering (Goodsell basement). The team hopes to film in the next week or so.

Please email Executive Producer Mary O’Malley on m.omalley@unsw.edu.au or ring on 0438881124.

If you an undergrad with a real innovative environmental project, this is your chance to practice! UNSWTV will be calling for entries once the show is confirmed. Filming begins in 2013. Team entries are permitted.

Online lessons add up for lecturer

UNSW Media says its presence on UNSWTV and YouTube put the university in the top 10 educational websites on the server since 2007, and the only university outside the US to rate in the top 50.

The next step for Dr Tisdell is a free electronic textbook to complement his other work. His first foray, Engineering Mathematics, is in the top five most downloaded texts on ebook publisher Bookboon’s website.

Authors receive a small royalty for a book that is published in PDF format that can be downloaded free from the site.
UCTV - The University of California

University of California Television (UCTV) is a public-serving media outlet featuring programming from throughout the University of California, the nation's premier research university made of ten campuses, three national labs and affiliated institutions.

Launched in January 2000, this academic initiative embraces the core missions of the University of California- teaching, research, and public service- through quality, in-depth television that brings to life the tremendous range of knowledge, culture and dialogue generated on UC's diverse campuses.

Reaching missions through cable, online, YouTube, iTunesU, roku, and mobile apps (coming soon), UCTV transports knowledge far beyond the campus borders and into the homes and lives of inquisitive viewers around the globe.

UCTV explores a broad spectrum of subjects for a general audience, including science, health and medicine, public affairs, humanities, arts and music, business, education, and agriculture. Program formats include documentaries, faculty lectures, cutting-edge research symposia, artistic performances and more.

UCTV also reaches out to specialized audiences, including K-12 teachers with it’s “Teachers P.E.T.” programming, health care professionals with “The Med Ed Hour,” and the academic community through its UCTV Seminars website.

In March 2012, UCTV launched UCTV Prime, a YouTube original channel and the first university-run channel to be included among YouTube’s new production partnerships with recognizable

UCTV in media

University of California launching UCTV Prime, a university-run YouTube original channel

Plenty of colleges and universities have their own YouTube channels, but the University of California is claiming its new channel UCTV Prime will be the first university-run YouTube original channel. When it launches on March 1st, UCTV Prime will offer 15 minutes of original programming every week — there will be 10-minute in-depth documentary-style content, as well as several different 5-minute segments. UCTV Prime: Vote will focus on election-year analysis, while UCTV Prime: Cuts will focus on research and events from the UC campuses. As for the mini-documentaries, the first is called “Naked Art” — it’ll be a four-part series that focuses on the university’s public art collections. UCTV Prime has a few trailers and promos available, but the first full content will be available both on YouTube and on the UCTV Prime home page in a few weeks. We’ll see if YouTube decides to line up any other universities with original channels if UCTV Prime finds an audience.

Bucks begins a new trend

Bucks New University has set up its own online TV channel to showcase the work of students and staff

Viewing video content on the web is almost as familiar to today’s students as sitting down to tea, toast and jelly might have been in the old days.

Not all universities have caught up with the trend, but many host an assortment of videos made by or about them on their websites. The revamped Bucks New University is, however, going one step further. It is the first to create a web TV site with several channels dedicated to the work of students and staff.

Bucks TV has been bedding in for a month or so, but it launches officially today. It will be the first university web TV service to offer customisable and scheduled streaming content over the internet.

Bucks' web marketing manager, Cate Tollemaache, first had the idea to create a television website in the days before YouTube. It has taken three years to develop.

Mike Hewett, Yohannes Blumel and Daniel Waziri, three final-year students at Bucks, designed the site and Twofour Digital helped set it up using some of the most advanced web technologies available.

“We put all the visual stuff together – the branding, layouts, navigation icons etc,” said Hewett. “What you can see on the website is just the start of it.”

The site hosts a news and events channel along with channels for music, film and animation and a live webcam feed from the building site of Bucks’ new campus. A total of 12 channels are planned so far, depending on how much content they get.

The aim is to promote students and their work to future employers, help them be more creative and recruit new students to the university. Visitors can view, comment on and download content, or link to it from their blog.

Eventually you’ll be able to see what year people are in so you’ll be able to see the work and their stage in education and contact them through the site. Employers could scout for potential future talent and people for placements,” Hewett explained.

But he warned the university would have to be careful about how it sets the website to students when they return in September, or risk turning them off if it takes too much control over content.

Philip Haggar, Twofour Director, called the project a “delight”.

“The whole concept of this web TV platform is that Bucks New University should be free to do as they want. Free to choose video formats, free to choose design rather than being constrained by a ‘standard video player’, and free to choose what content to put on air when they want, as well as providing a full searchable video-on-demand library.”

Dr Ruth Farwell, Bucks’ vice-chancellor, said the site would be a “fantastic forum” for students to display their work publicly and share their creativity with their peers.

Tom Abbott is Warwick University’s online communications officer, and has been at the forefront of making and broadcasting popular films about research going on at the university.

He says the presentation of the BTV website is surprising and new – for a university – even if, in his opinion, the content isn’t particularly.

“They’re taking a new approach to presenting it, it’s very ‘MTV’ and focused on prospective students,” he said.

Internet TV was “more akin to the BBC’s iPlayer model [where the public can download programmes online they have missed on television] and the BTV website is streaming content at particular times so if you log in at nine o’clock or one o’clock, it’ll be different content. And you can download it.”

Southampton University’s computer science department also hosts podcasts of students’ work and what’s going on in their labs.

Aside from videos, the department’s website has a news service and occasionally streams lectures on the web, but not as a matter of course.

Marketing manager Joyce Lewis says it helps to get students talking and gives a truer picture of what university life is like there to interested existing and prospective students.

“We’re trying to attract computer science and electronics students. We know people are really interested in coming to our website and being able to do different things on it.”

“Because of web 2.0 they can find out what other students think of the university and department. It’s a much more accurate, truthful and immediate way of speaking to people,” Lewis said.

“Bucks TV looks a really nice service and video is definitely the way everybody should be going. Others will soon catch up.”
Branded Content

OGILVY – ADVERTISERS MORE INTERESTED IN TARGETED DEMOGRAPHICS AND BRANDED CONTENT

(Derived from http://www.clearsketch.com/author/admin/page/2/)

An article on ReelSEO reveals that Ogilvy is seeing advertisers become more interested in targeted demographics and a more focused audience, and in creating branded content vs. just advertising alongside content.

This trend conjures up some interesting possibilities for both brands and media agencies, as marketers could possibly have another vehicle with which to engage their target audience beyond the traditional print ad or 30 second TV spot. Branded content could be far more powerful than print or TV spots, as it employs a pull strategy, where customers and clients are coming to the brands to view their content, versus being peppered with brand messaging and claims from the brand when they don’t necessarily want that kind of engagement. The effectiveness of this strategy, of course, lies in the quality of the content and how it’s used.

The questions marketers should ask are:

(1) Is my content congruous with my brand’s positioning?
(2) Is my content interesting enough that my target audience wants to watch it on their own accord?
(3) As I develop my content, how do I create a strong association between my brand and the brand position I’m trying to create without overdoing it?
(4) How do I leverage the content I’m developing within the context of my broader marketing strategy to amp up my brand value?

(And yes, social media marketing is a must to make video work for you)

An example of a company that does an amazing job at using branded content and answering these questions positively is Red Bull. They combine well-positioned and produced content, a prolific output and clever social media strategies to put video to work for them. The Red Bull brand name is virtually ubiquitous, and one would be hard-pressed to find anyone who hasn’t heard of them. Much of Red Bull’s success can be attributed to the media they produce and how cleverly they put it to use for them.

As the effectiveness of traditional TV ads are continually being threatened by DVRs and online video, and more and more ad dollars are shifting towards online video, there is an amazing opportunity for brands and companies to follow Red Bull’s lead and create targeted, branded content that their target audience wants to watch. The skillset required for doing so would be new to most marketers, but the opportunities for differentiation would be well worth the investment.

References


Beyerlein, S & Kennedy, H; Edited by Michael M. Beyerlein, 2009 Innovation through collaboration, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, Australia.


Castells, M 2009, Communication Power, Oxford University Press.


Resnik, D 2001, What is Ethics in Research and Why is it Important, Department of Medical Humanities, The Brody School of Medicine, East Carolina University.


