



Radio through the internet - for Adult Learners Week

by Tony Ryan

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Interested in lifelong learning? Try some adult education for yourself in early September, by learning to access a radio program through the internet, and joining in the discussion. Consider the educational uses of the medium of radio (an old technology?) in conjunction with the internet.

Lifelong Learning is the major focus for the Adult Learners Week conference in Adelaide. This conference will build on national and international initiatives to understand and promote acceptance of the importance of lifelong learning.

A special one hour live to air radio program will be broadcast from Adelaide on Friday 8 September as part of this conference. The broadcast for Adelaide listeners will be heard through *5UV Radio Adelaide* (531 on the AM band) Yet no matter where you are in Australia, or indeed the world, you can join in.

5UV broadcasts live on the internet, so you can listen and participate (see below for how). Worldwide there are hundreds of radio stations with continuous internet access. This means that from my office or home in Adelaide, I can listen to radio programs from Europe, Asia or the Americas. Radio *5UV* receives an increasing flow of emails from our listeners from all quarters of the globe.

This is fine for general programming. But does radio still have a role to play in education? The first educational radio programs in Australia were trialed in the late 1920s.

The fledgling Australian Broadcasting Commission commenced regular educational programming in 1933. For the next 50 years the prevailing paradigm was that an ABC education program broadcast on radio (and later on TV) was *specifically directed at young people in schools*. These programs complemented a curriculum and provided teachers with a classroom resource, supported by an extensive range of publications for students and teachers

A different form of educational broadcasting has been undertaken by *5UV* since its inception in 1972: not for schools, but for listeners who – whether they knew the term or not – were lifelong learners. The format of these programs has changed, from those first very formal and earnest series on *5UV*, such as *Effective*

Management, or *Advanced German*. The printing and mailing of comprehensive background notes, and the enrolment requirements, were all labour intensive and costly.

Several current *5UV* series are educational in the very best sense of the word. *The Law Spot* (20 programs) *The Federation Files* (50 programs) and the as yet unnamed 10-part Gambling series are good practice examples of educational programming. A special one hour program on gambling will be widely publicised in Europe and North America through specialist email networks, to bring this topic to the attention of listeners Australia-wide and worldwide. *5UV* is very proud of this initiative.

With most Australians still committed to the medium of radio, the future for radio is possibly very secure, in spite of the new technologies. What are its advantages?

- Radio is a daily companion – we listen at home, in the car, in the garden shed on a Saturday afternoon, or whilst exercising.
- Radio can be complemented by the provision of program details on the internet, without the cost of printing and postage. As an example, see *5UV*'s website for details of the fifty radio programs in the series *The Federation Files*.
- The local - and usually ephemeral - nature of radio is being overcome. Internet radio services such as *audio on demand* are becoming more common for key programs. Whether or not for a fee, selected programs can be downloaded weeks or months after broadcast. The educational applications are only just beginning to be identified.

It is becoming accepted that learning occurs throughout life. ABC Education programming is no longer just for schools. We can re-examine radio as an educational medium – for all ages - in this age of cyber communications. It means that educational programming – whether *about* education, or *with content structured and presented with the needs of adult learners in mind* – has a new dimension.

I hope that you will take the opportunity to extend your own thinking about the medium of radio – by using the internet to join in *5UV*'s special radio program about adult learning, and email this commentary to your friends worldwide.

LIVE TO AIR during ADULT LEARNERS WEEK 2000

PUTTING LEARNING COMMUNITIES UNDER THE MICROPHONE:

an international program on lifelong learning.

Friday 8 September 2000
12noon Central (GMT + 8.5)
12.30pm EST

Tune in at
<www.adelaide.edu.au/5UV>
(requires RealAudio <www.real.com>)

HOW TO JOIN

Email your questions to <tony.ryan@adelaide.edu.au> before the broadcast

OR

Telephone +61 - 8 - 8303 - 5000 during the program from anywhere in the world.

Your comments on this initiative would be appreciated