



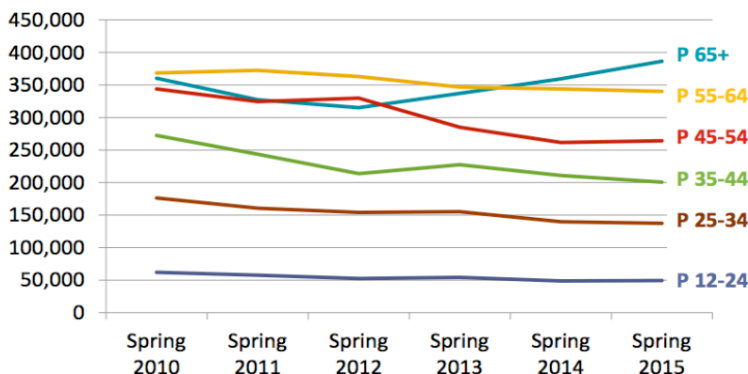
The Public Radio Program Directors Association (PRPD) recognizes that public radio is at a crossroads due to the major generational shift that the United States is experiencing. To effectively understand this shift, and to provide leadership for public radio, PRPD has designed The Millennial Project. With the funding help from fifteen public radio stations, including WNYC, WBUR, WGBH, KPCC, WBEZ and others, we have begun the first phase of research work necessary to truly understand the mindset and priorities of this important generation.

The need and rationale for this project is both straightforward and very complex. Like all media and all other organizations, public radio is facing a major generational shift. Public radio's existing content is rooted in a media tradition that conceives of public media as content developed and consumed by white, college-educated Baby Boomers. For them, the "radio" is a primary distribution source.

The existing national audience, dominated by Baby Boomers, is in decline and the prospects for revitalization and net audience growth, particularly among Millennials, are not encouraging. This scenario, with the pressures that will be placed on an already-challenged business model, presents an existential threat to the public radio system.

Declines in listening to Morning Edition among all ages under 65

Since 2010, all age groups under 55 have lost 20% of AQH listening



Source: Nielsen via NPR

All of the information available about the 76.6 million millennials is that while public radio has an appeal to some millennials, they are an entirely different

target audience. We know that they access content much differently than preceding generations and “radio” isn’t the primary distribution source. This generation is much more diverse with a different set of values and norms. We don’t know enough about their values, the types of content they appreciate, how they want to access content, what is the role of local information or if they will donate. We need this information to form the basis of an over all public media system strategy.

The Millennial Project is predicated on the idea that public radio, as it currently exists, does not have the knowledge, insight or relationships needed to create meaningful content for new, non-traditional audiences. The project is designed to provide local public radio stations with the tools and insight to make a dramatic, locally guided course correction.

PRPD has partnered with Jacobs Media to devise a research and analysis plan that will provide local public radio stations with immediately actionable information and insight that public media organizations can use to shape their workforce choices, evaluate and evolve local programming, guide engagement work and address the audience decline that is undermining local sustainability.

Phase One of the research will happen in two stages. There will be 24 one-on-one deep dive interviews that will examine their opinions and preferences in a setting where they will feel comfortable expressing opinions. These will be done in four cities with listeners and non-listeners. The one-on-one interviews will be followed by twelve ethnographic engagements in four cities. During these day-long engagements, researchers from Jacobs Media will record the subjects’ media activities on video as they get their day started, go to work, eat meals and socialize. At the end of each of these engagements each respondent will be interviewed about our observations, and help us understand the decisions and actions that were taken.

Once the Phase One work is completed, PRPD and Jacobs Media will present the findings to the stakeholder stations, which will include recommendations for implementation.

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