

Organisational culture of Public Service Media (PSM): people, values and processes

The continuing convergence of media, communications, and other creative forms calls for new alliances and partnerships in the digital age. Fluctuating socio-economic conditions and digital production practices require new adaptive institutional structures and processes. The public service project is not isolated from these developments and has to adjust to the requirements of the convergent environment.

To answer the question ‘what people, values and processes’ should Public Service Media (PSM) embody going forward, Michał Głowacki and Lizzie Jackson investigated the internal organisational cultures of ten successful high technology clusters and public service media in North America and Europe to identify strategies and organisational culture to support the evolution of public service media worldwide. Four media clusters were located in North America: Austin (Texas), Boston/Cambridge (Massachusetts), Detroit (Michigan) and Toronto (Canada). European clusters included London (UK), Warsaw (Poland), Copenhagen (Denmark), Brussels (Belgium), Tallinn (Estonia), and Vienna (Austria). On the basis of in-depth exploration Głowacki and Jackson found there is an urgent need for adaptation. Without internal change there is likely to be a decline in the ability of PSM to survive within the fast-evolving contemporary media and communications production and distribution landscape.

One hundred and fifty interviews and 500 photographs from ‘walkabouts’ produced the following future-oriented findings:

- High Technology clusters are aggregations of large, medium and small firms with associated university departments in proximity. Small firms are often located in co-working spaces that may also offer acceleration and incubation facilities. All firms and facilities promote intense knowledge-sharing in contrast to PSM outlets which are largely internally-focused.
- There is a lack of entrepreneurialism in PSM, in contrast to all the successful high technology firms. Small to medium-sized businesses situated within co-working spaces could assist the growth of an entrepreneurial culture within PSM. The formal structure of a Corporation as found in most PSM is counter to agile working.
- The most important person within co-working spaces and larger firms who foreground partnership working is the Community Manager. Their task is to run networking evenings, working breakfasts and lunches, and to schedule training.
- The more successful co-working spaces found in high technology clusters have developed a social science approach to the workplace. Each area on each floor has been carefully designed

to support a specific activity such as a café or bar, a reconfigurable desk and project spaces, communication booths, roof gardens, bicycle parks, or ‘chill-out’ spaces.

– Successful high technology clusters are likely to have access to cheap transport, fast Internet, and industrial-age warehouse buildings. Advanced relationships with in-proximity University research departments amplify the ability to adapt to changing market conditions. Pro-active stimulation by City Hall via the creation of Creative Corridors, Creative Districts, and Media Cities can also assist the PSM growth.

In conclusion Głowacki and Jackson propose organisational and cultural models they have found within either the high technology clusters or in-proximity locations. Bearing in mind the importance of public service media in democratic society, they believe that their findings and a set of policy recommendations will contribute to knowledge-exchange between media, scholars and newer creative agents to assist swift change in PSM.

Compiled by Media 21 Foundation (2019) from
<https://www.creativemediaclusters.com/project>.