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Quiroga Sergio Ricardo.

Cita:

Quiroga Sergio Ricardo (2020). *Charms and disappointments of state public radio*. *Radiofonias*, 11 (01), 211-225.

Dirección estable: <https://www.aacademica.org/sergio.ricardo.quiroga/186>

ARK: <https://n2t.net/ark:/13683/pgPS/WuV>



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Charms and disappointments of state public radio

Encantos e decepções do rádio público estatal

Encantos y decepciones de la radio pública estatal

Sergio Ricardo Quiroga

Abstract

This paper seeks to examine the constitution, programming, audiences and social dialogue of two state radios stations in the province of San Luis: Radio Universidad in Villa Mercedes (San Luis, Argentina) - FM 97.9 and Radio Municipalidad de la Punta 87.7 in La Punta (San Luis, Argentina). The two public radio seek to differentiate themselves from commercial radios with a grid that has content appropriate to their perception of the audience. Both media strive to have an alternative programming, not traditional in its forms and its aesthetics since the so-called public media must have a wide variety of voices and nuances and have a diversity of opinions programming with contents aimed at a heterogeneous audience. University Radio in Villa Mercedes (San Luis, Argentina) - FM 97.9 was created in June 2015 and Radio Municipalidad de la Punta 87.7 on October 19, 2016. Both stations are financed by public funds, in the first case by two faculties (FCJES) and (FICA) of the National University of San Luis in the city of Villa Mercedes and the second by a budget of the Municipality of La Punta (SL).

Keywords: public radios, contents, audiences, interactions

>> Additional information:

Recived on: 10/3rd/2018 | Approved on: 02/05/2019

>> How to cite:

QUIROGA, Sergio Ricardo. Charms and disappointments of state public radio. **Ra-diofonias — Journal of Sound Media Studies**, Mariana-MG, v. 11, n. 01, p. 210-225, jan./abr. 2020.

About the author

Sérgio Ricardo Quiroga
sergioricardoquiroga@gmail.com

Journalist and writer, Sergio Ricaro Quiroga is a professor at the Universidad de San Luis, in La Punta, Argentina. Researcher-Coordinator of ICAES (Instituto Cultural Argentino de Educación Superior). Member of the Participatory Communication Section of IAMCR (International Association for Media and Communication Research). His research areas involve public communication, culture, media and technology. Creator of the blog periodismoencuotas.blogspot.com.ar.

Resumo

Este artigo procura examinar a constituição, programação, audiências e diálogo social de duas estações de rádios estaduais na província de San Luis: Radio Universidad em Villa Mercedes (San Luis, Argentina) - FM 97.9 e Radio Municipalidad de la Punta 87.7 em La Punta (San Luis, Argentina). As duas rádios públicas buscam se diferenciar das rádios comerciais com uma grade que possui conteúdo adequado à sua percepção do público. Ambas se esforçam para ter uma programação alternativa, não tradicional em sua forma e estética, uma vez que a chamada mídia pública deve ter uma grande variedade de vozes e nuances e ter uma diversidade de opiniões trabalhando com conteúdos destinados a um público heterogêneo. Rádio universitária em Villa Mercedes (San Luis, Argentina) - A FM 97.9 foi criada em junho de 2015 e a Rádio Municipalidad de la Punta 87.7 em 19 de outubro de 2016. Ambas as estações são financiadas por recursos públicos, no primeiro caso por duas faculdades (FCJES) e (FICA) da Universidade Nacional de San Luis, na cidade de Villa Mercedes, e a segunda por um orçamento do município de La Punta (SL).

Palavras-chave: rádios públicas, conteúdo, audiências, interações.

Resumen

El propósito de este artículo es comparar las características de los podcasts más populares en Brasil y Estados Unidos en 2019. Para esto, creamos una lista de los veinte podcasts más escuchados o descargados en cada país, utilizando la información de agregadores de podcasts. Luego, analizamos sus formatos, periodicidad, los temas que tratan y cómo se financian, entre otros aspectos. Con eso pudimos identificar qué buscan los oyentes al escuchar podcasts y observar algunas diferencias y similitudes en los mercados de América del Norte y Brasil. Entre los hallazgos preliminares, destacamos el éxito de los programas de debate en Brasil y las narrativas policiales en los Estados Unidos; la influencia de los formatos periodísticos estadounidenses en los brasileños; el dominio de la periodicidad semanal en ambos países; la publicidad y el crowdfunding como principales formatos de monetización; y la fuerte presencia de grandes corporaciones de comunicación en estos mercados.

Palabras llave: podcast; audiencia; consumo de podcast.

Introduction

This paper seeks to examine the programming, audiences and social dialogue of the media with its public, from two state and public radio stations in the province of San Luis: Radio Universidad in Villa Mercedes (San Luis, Argentina) - FM 97.9 and the Radio Municipalidad de la Punta 87.7 in La Punta (San Luis, Argentina).

Both are radios that depend on state public bodies, since both national universities are autonomous public institutions financed by the national budget and municipalities

are democracy organizations created by the political system. These media companies are not for profit, since their operation is ensured by the resources that citizens contribute to public organizations through taxes.

Studies on public media in Argentina have exposed some of the characteristics of these media in recent years after the approval of the Audiovisual Services Law in 2009, such as those formulated by Zanotti (2015), Quiroga (2016), Arroyo, Becerra and others, (2013) and Marino, Becerra, and Mastrini, (2010).

Studies of public media in recent years, have focused mainly on public policies (ZANOTTI, 2015), where academic reflections have addressed these media in the region addressed from a prescriptive sense of what the media should be or represent for the acquisition of a public service character (ARROYO, BECERRA and OTHERS, 2013). There have been contributions that indicate broad consensus on the nature of public media such as political and economic autonomy, the provision of a non-governmental service, the control of a power or public body over the media, the defense of plurality, diversity and the possibility of reaching broad social sectors (ARROYO, BECERRA and OTHERS, 2013).

The public and alternative media in Argentina have the possibility and the challenge of having a different programming, alternative and different contents aimed at particular audiences and at the service of citizenship and institutional transparency. These media can generate different agendas and opposed to private media and focus their attention on issues that generate attention and concerns of citizens from a different point of view. The approval of Law 26,522 on Audiovisual Communication Services in 2009 and other political measures on communication favored a progressive opening of the field of media actors (private for-profit, private non-profit and public).

Undoubtedly, the programming, attraction and retention of audiences are topics that are beginning to interest the management of state and public radio stations that seek to survive in an adverse context and that depend on public governmental organizations. Although, the public media play a relevant role in democracy by diversifying themes and agendas, exposing different points of view, the changes came with the development of communication technologies, new media and the transformation of their narratives and the appearance of errant and diverse audiences.

Public media can't be classified as alternative. Alternative media, in this research, are those that face power in a conjunction between audiences (active listeners) and media, favoring social dialogues and improving the conditions and quality of life of the inhabitants.

In Argentina, in the decade of the 80 the first experiences of community radios appear, that will survive on the basis of the private effort or the voluntary work since the effective legislation did not allow its existence. Many media disappeared on the way and others survived by resisting the former Federal Broadcasting Committee (COMFER), an organization that represented the State. These media began to grow clandestinely and disorganized in the mid-eighties when a law of the military dictatorship governed that did not allow the possibility that non-governmental organizations (NGOs), universities or social organizations had their own means. The first measures adopted by the Argentine democracy in the period of President Menem allowed the concentration of media and the birth of the first media conglomerates.

The Law Nº 26.522 of Audiovisual Communication Services that governed since 2009 in the Argentine democracy allowed non-governmental organizations (NGOs), universities and municipal and provincial states to have and manage their media. According to what the current law defines, the public sector is made up of state media, Radio and Television Argentina (RTA SE) and that corresponds to the provinces, municipalities, public universities and educational and non-state institutions and native peoples. With its virtues and shortcomings, the discussion of the law expanded the understanding of the place that the state provides to the media, but it did not solve the problem of technological convergence between audiovisual, telecommunications and Internet and the possibilities of expanding the democratization agenda of communications (MARINO, BECERRA and MASTRINI, 2010).

Before this norm, it governed a decree-law of the military dictatorship of 1980 that restricted and limited the possibility of creation of means and was not adapted to the new context. Before its annulment by Law 26,522, in 1999 President Carlos Menem modified by Decree 1005 of "necessity and urgency", some key elements of the law of broadcasting. The regulation authorized that any individual or commercial company be the holder of up to twenty-four radio or television licenses throughout the country, modifying the limit of four admitted by law 22,285, enabling the formation of radio and TV channels and authorizing the transfer of licenses, which was prohibited. These modifications allowed the constitution of multimedia in Argentina, since the most powerful media began to acquire the smallest initiating the media concentration in Argentina.

Years later during the presidency of Macri, Decree No. 267 of December 29, 2015 caused an important change in the institutional design of media and telecommunications in Argentina. The new Decree of Necessity and Urgency (DNU) eliminated the Federal Au-

thority of Audiovisual Communication Services (AFSCA, created by the SCA Law) and the Federal Authority of Information and Communications Technologies (AFTIC, created by the so-called Argentine Digital Law No. 27,078).

The Argentine government published in January 2016 in the Official Gazette the DNU that modified the media and telecommunications laws and created a new National Communications Agency (ENACOM). The new measure changes the article No. 41 of the Media Law established in the government of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner that prohibited the sale of audiovisual media. The changes allow the integration of private radio and television channels, which was restricted. The most important modification is on Article 45 of that regulation that establishes that there will be no limits to the number of cities in which cable companies that previously were 24 could operate, and that they are governed by the telecommunications law. In addition, the restrictions on cross-ownership of cable television and radio and open TV were eliminated and current TV and radio licensees could request the extension of the license term for 10 years, regardless of when it is currently due.

The rules of the game established by President Macri, initiated a different stage in the structuring of the media sector, where government officials seem to defend freedom of expression as the survival of the most concentrated media groups. The changes to the Argentine SCA Law were made through presidential decrees, norms that were not passed by Congress. The government has used to produce these modifications an exceptional mechanism foreseen in the National Constitution called Decree of Necessity and Urgency (DNU).

Analysis methodology

In order to know the characteristics of Radio Universidad in Villa Mercedes (San Luis, Argentina) - FM 97.9 and Radio Municipalidad de la Punta 87.7 in La Punta (San Luis, Argentina) their full broadcasts were heard in the months of March, April, May, and June of 2017, the available information that the media issued through its website or press information was analyzed, and the media were visited by formulating a survey of the executives to know the levels of dialogue with society. In the survey, the suggestions made by BUCCI, CHIARETTI AND FIORINI (2013: 27) on Quality indicators of Public Radio stations. Contemporary evaluation, were used to know the level of interaction of the medium with the public.

Political context of the Province of San Luis

San Luis is an Argentine province located in the Cuyo Region, which borders the province of La Rioja to the north, Córdoba to the east, La Pampa to the south, Mendoza to the west and San Juan to the northwest, and is hegemonically governed by the Justicialist Party, since the arrival of democracy in Argentina in December 1983. The Justicialist Party led by the brothers Rodríguez Saá, Adolfo (former president of Argentina in 2002) and Alberto, who have been repeatedly governors of the province and have exposed with the Peronist Party, its electoral power for more than thirty years. Some of the characteristics of the sanluiseña administration that governs from December of 1983 without interruptions, have been certain limitations of the freedom of expression in the exercise of the journalism and certain discretion in the distribution of the official guideline (publicity), that have worked like a tool of control and domestication of media and journalists with their discretionary and partisan use.

On the other hand, a democracy where the division of powers is merely formal, where there is practically no division of powers and a party with economic and organizational resources is the center of social assistance to citizens promoting a culture of populism in its most important forms extreme, can be considered an opaque democracy.

Law on Audiovisual Communication Services

After the irruption of the military in Argentina and the breakdown of the democratic continuity in Argentina, the law N ° 22.285 of the Military Dictatorship was enforced until 2009. Law Nº 26.522 of Audiovisual Communication Services was enacted and enacted on October 10, 2009. In this context, an Argentine state agency was created, such as the Federal Audiovisual Communication Services Authority (AFSCA) in charge of the application of the new Law on Audiovisual Communication Services. Audiovisual Communication Services N ° 26,522 (Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, 2009).

Later, a few months after the inauguration of President Mauricio Macri, a decree of necessity and urgency was issued on 267/2015, ordering the dissolution of the organization and its merger with the AFTIC into a new body called the National Communications Agency (ENACOM). . In spite of the filing of two precautionary measures on January 11, the dissolution was temporarily annulled, for violating the current media law, although precautionary measures were later revoked, creating a new body that was called the National Communications Agency (ENACOM).

Freedom of Expression of Thought and Information Law No. I-0735-2010

In the field of public communication policies in San Luis, it is highlighted that on November 3, 2010, when the Audiovisual Communication Services Law was in force, the Provincial Senate and the Chamber of Deputies sanctioned the Law on Freedom of Expression of Thought and Information Act No. I-0735-2010

Some aspects of the standard established the following guidelines:

The Article No. 1 says that:

“The province of San Luis, in accordance with the powers established by Articles 32 and 121 of the National Constitution and Article 21 of the Provincial Constitution, guarantees Freedom of Thought, Expression, Knowledge, Information and Ideas throughout its territory as essential attribute of every person. No Law or authority can restrict the free expression and dissemination of them.”

The Article 2º he affirmed that:

“Corresponds to the province of San Luis the jurisdiction of all matters relating to broadcasting services that include: Broadcasting, open and cable television, writings and any other that takes place within its territorial limits.”

The Article N ° 3 indicated that:

“All citizens have the right to truthful information and to freely choose the services they want to receive, without the private interests and public powers interfering with or replacing their decisions. Pluralism in communication is an essential condition for the fulfillment of freedom of expression, information and communication, and guarantees the free formation of public opinion, diversity and social cohesion. The provision of communication services must be based on respect for and protection of the principles, values and fundamental rights recognized in the Constitution, especially the right to honor, the right to privacy and the right to self-image.”

The article No. 4 of the standard specified that:

“For the purposes set forth in the preceding Articles, the province of San Luis will keep a Public Registry Book of available radio spectrum frequencies and will grant, through the Freedom of Expression Advisory Board, the pertinent authorization for the purpose of providing communication services, with the limitation of the effective availability of frequencies”.

National State against the State of San Luis

According to a May 2012 report from the Judicial Information Center (CIJ), the Court ordered a precautionary measure in a case promoted by AFSCA against the province of San Luis, which raised the unconstitutionality of a local law in one case, but in another of

them, he admitted the legitimacy of the Government of San Luis to question the constitutionality of Law No. 26,522

The Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation finally resolved to admit its original jurisdiction in case A. 1140 XLVI, promoted by the Federal Audiovisual Communication Services Authority against the province of San Luis, in order to obtain a declaration of nullity due to unconstitutionality of the provincial law I-0735-2010 according to the information provided by the CIJ, by virtue of which the province of San Luis would claim jurisdiction over all matters relating to broadcasting, television and cable television services they lend within their limits and that would imply an interference of the local government in the area of competence of the federal authority. (CIJ, May, 2012).

The Court admitted the precautionary measure requested by the Federal Audiovisual Communication Services Authority and ordered that the Province of San Luis refrain from applying the I-0735-2010 law, and to specify any other act related to broadcasting that requires compliance. of the national authority and do not count on it.

Meanwhile, in the case S.779 XLV, promoted by the Province of San Luis against the National State, the Court decided to admit the legitimacy of that to question the constitutionality of the aforementioned Law 26522, of Audiovisual Communication Services, given its condition of owner of the station LV 90 TV Channel 13 (JUDICIAL INFORMATION CENTER, 2012).

Media Context of the Province of San Luis

The media context of the province of San Luis, Argentina, is characterized by the existence of more than 150 media outlets, most of them located in the two most important cities of the province: San Luis and Villa Mercedes. The majority of the media are private. Even so, the exercise of journalism is still incipient, artisan and voluntary and in general, the media of San Luis, in general are not interested in hiring in their companies the graduates of journalism and communication of the National University of San Luis.

The government media group is made up of, among others, Channel 13 San Luis (provincial state television), the San Luis News Agency (ANSL) (digital medium of the provincial state) and the Diario de la República, the only private graphic media provincial coverage) and also Planet Xillium - FM Lafinur FM 90.9 (<http://www.planetxillum.net/rlasp/index.asp>) where Dr. Alberto Rodríguez Saá served as journalist and driver since leaving the governorship of San Luis in the year 2011, until he took over again in December 2015.

Despite the increasingly prominent presence of journalists and communicators in the province of San Luis with university training, there are few means that employ these professionals and even less those who offer a fair compensation for the services they provide. Under these conditions, journalistic and informative work is provided by unskilled workers, in most cases with scarce rewards for their work. In this context of full difficulties, the media of the province of San Luis are developing, in a clear divorce between these and the university communication professionals.

Public radios

The two public radios object of this study, have tried to differentiate themselves from the commercial radios with a programming and with contents according to what they perceive as their audiences. However, these media do not know exactly the characteristics of their audiences because of the lack of studies and research on it and the assembly of its programming and content is made based on a perception of it. The small medium public media aspire to have an alternative programming, not traditional in its forms and aesthetics. Ideally, public media should have a varied programming, breadth and diversity of opinions, and have content aimed at a heterogeneous audience.

FM 97.9 - Radio Universidad was created in June 2015 and Radio Municipalidad de la Punta FM 87.7 was born on October 19, 2016. Both stations are financed by public funds, in the first case by two faculties (FCJES) and (FICA) of the National University of San Luis in the city of Villa Mercedes and the second by a budget of the Municipality of La Punta (SL) - FM 97.9 - Radio Universidad states that its programming is aimed at the university community in Special, with all the information of the Faculties of the National University of San Luis, located in Villa Mercedes (SL) and also formed for a general audience with programs that deal with various topics.

Regarding the Radio Municipalidad de la Punta FM 87,7, the municipal authorities themselves expressed that the new radio would promote that both neighbors, NGOs, associations and all political expressions have voices and spaces in the station. The two new public radio stations since the creation, are not on the Internet, although Radio Municipalidad de La Punta these steps are advanced. (<http://radiomunicipalapunta.com>).

FM Radio University Villa Mercedes 97.9

Since June 2015 Radio Universidad (FM 97.9) in Villa Mercedes (San Luis, Argentina) has placed its new programming on the air. The contents are addressed to the

university community in particular, with information from the Faculties that make up the National University of San Luis (Argentina) and also to a general audience with programs of various themes. As highlighted by Zanotti (2015), young people constitute a dynamic segment of university life and are perceived as more open to media and communication technologies.

Radio Universidad at Villa Mercedes during 2014 has incorporated new equipment that has allowed it to improve its transmission quality and its reach. Later, three new announcers / journalists have joined the station's team. The medium has a live program with broadcast from studios and outdoors from 07:00 to 20:00 from Monday to Friday. After that time, from 8:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and weekends, the program features a package of recorded content and music transmitted directly from the computer. Info 60 "is a radio proposal characterized as a university newsletter that has news from the Faculties and the UNSL and interviews to researchers and teachers who tell how their work is carried out within the university.

The music of the station (broadcasts of March, April, May and June of the 2017) does not appear too varied and in the emissions they emphasize the pops rhythms and the progressive rock or alternative and international. Not all the spaces of the radio are covered with "programs" and when there is no radio program, only music is broadcast.

The workers of FM University of Villa Mercedes are not employees of the permanent university plant. That is, they bill the organization that has hired them monthly as providers of the institution.

Radio Municipalidad de La Punta 87.7

The station that has a slogan "a new air", was inaugurated on October 19, 2016 by the mayor of La Punta, Martin Olivero and is located in the commercial battery "A", on Boulevard Tobar Garcia and 30 East Street. From that moment, seven people who would not have university training but experience in media make up the station's plant, and also are not municipal employees.

At the time of the inauguration, Mayor Olivero expressed that "the microphone will be open for any type of opinion, provided it is done with respect", and proposed that the medium should have a critical vision on all aspects of reality of the country, the province and the city of La Punta (El Punteño, 2016). Olivero added that "journalism has to be critical if not propaganda, and what is happening lately in Argentina and in other parts of the world is that journalism has ceased to be ..." (EL PUNTEÑO, 2016).

Programming

In the early hours of the day, the brand new radio uses and retransmits the services of Radio Nacional, the Argentine public broadcaster of national scope administered by the state. From the 8 o'clock in the morning and until 11 o'clock from Monday to Friday, the "Con vos en la ciudad" magazine is developed by Graciela Ulibarrie, Oscar Fagotti and Flavio Torres. For three hours, the residents of La Punta and the area of influence can with this program have information and the possibility of interacting with the drivers in a pleasant and cordial way.

Punto de Encuentro, is another of the proposed programs run by Gustavo González, Gladys Aguilar and Gerardo Funes Rúa, and which forms a radial proposal that begins at 14, and extends for an hour, providing updated information. The station seeks to distinguish itself by varied music and entertaining programming by speakers and journalists. That menu promises the new means to complete the programming grid of the new municipal radio: amplitude of opinions and a varied programming promise at the time of the inauguration.

The music of the station is diverse that reflects varied and different rhythms. Not all the spaces of the radio are covered with "programs" and when no proposal exists, only music is broadcast or the services of Radio Nacional Buenos Aires are retransmitted.

Although the two public media constitute a contribution to the plurality of San Luis society's voices, there is not yet a differentiated programming and new aesthetics that attract the attention of listeners and allow the construction of greater bridges with citizens. The logic of these media is private-commercial. This is how we characterize radios managed by private companies, with a commercial imprint and with a strong advertising sale that allows their development and obtaining profits for their owners.

State public radio is a sensible alternative for the dissemination of quality information, of programs that respond to cultural, social and political diversity and with contents fully linked to regional identities. In practice, not all public media achieve that desired horizon.

Survey: Level of dialogue with society

An adapted survey of Quality indicators of public radio stations. Contemporary evaluation extracted from Bucci, Chiaretti and Fiorini (2013, p. 27) was used to know the level of dialogue of public media with society. The questions to be investigated were the following:

- Can the public present criticisms and suggestions on the balance sheets, the budget and the administration of resources?
- Is the participation of citizens encouraged?
- How do the media receive the suggestions of the population?
- How does the institution respond to suggestions?
- Are there objective criteria for the participation of the population in the evaluation process?
- Are there questionnaires that the public can answer online if they want to participate?
- How is the viewer's participation absorbed and disseminated internally?
- Is there an ombudsman or public defender?
- Does that professional have a daily space in the program to comment on the public's criticism?
- Is there any form of interaction with the public in the news?
- Are sufficient resources available to perform this function efficiently?
- Are there files that record comments and letters from the public?
- Is the deadline for the answers satisfactory? Are there interactive communications with viewers or listeners who wish to talk about programming or editorial decisions?
- Does the station have a permanent presence on social networks?
- Does the station have its own pages on social networks?
- Do the programs on the grid have a page on social networks?

On the presentation of criticism on the balance sheets and the budget by the public, those responsible for the media affirmed that this possibility does not exist. Consulted on if the participation of the citizenship is stimulated the directors of the means said that there are not initiatives in that sense, neither in receiving suggestions of the population and much less that to do with them.

To the question of knowing if there are objective criteria for the participation of the population in the process of evaluation of the programming and of the contents, the representatives of the mass media affirmed that there are no questionnaires that the public can respond by Internet if they wish to participate, they do not have procedures for how public participation is disclosed internally and do not have an ombudsman or public defender.

There is no daily space in the programming to comment on the public's criticism, there is no form of interaction with the public in the news, there are not records that record the comments and letters of the public.

Broadcasters have a presence with some frequency in social networks, although they do not have their own pages in social networks and do not have the programs of the grid a page in social networks.

Perceptions of audience in the Media

The a priori media consider that their programming by virtue of the public organization that administers them must be alternative and differentiated from private media. Even so, the logic followed by these public media is broadly related to that of traditional commercial and private media. The distribution of the spaces and the organization of the programs of both stations is similar to that of private broadcasters.

Public broadcasting institutions must face the daily challenge of producing and disseminating quality content that responds to the real demand of their communities. It is a complex challenge, because there are no established, consolidated and rational ways to quantify, measure and know if, according to certain public parameters, if it is possible to respond to the challenges set.

Both broadcasters execute a program of general interest and not focused on a particular audience, such as the case of FM Universidad 97.9 of Villa Mercedes, with greater academic and scientific content and more information on university actions and transparency, and in the case of FM Radio Municipality of La Punta 87.7 with more information about the so-called city park of La Punta, the actions and the general performance of the Municipality, its works and the transparency of its budget and neighborhood news.

It can be perceived that both the Faculties (FICA) and (FCJES) of Villa Mercedes (San Luis), belonging to the National University of San Luis, on which depends the FM

radio Universidad 97.9 and the Municipality of La Punta that manages the municipal radio station FM 87.7, have probably not ranked the importance of having media that favor citizen dialogues. On the other hand, citizens do not perceive that these media communicate information of general interest about current public events and the development of their institutions.

Having your own and public means can generate a better dialogue, a higher quality of information and an amplitude and cultural diversity that favors the development of citizenship and contributes to expanding democracy. At the time of this inquiry we have not been able to perceive a clearly different aesthetic of these means that allow us to differentiate them from those of private and traditional radios.

These media have as characteristics the scarce production of their own and alternative contents, the scarce personnel and the weakness of the labor bonds and a programming that takes the form of private media. In the case of Radio Universidad, there is a clear lack of concern among the authorities about the medium and the role that it should play in the university context.

In this sense, the challenge of generating actions that promote a greater plurality of voices, greater hierarchy and quality of the proposals, cultural diversity, constant professional advice and training and the incorporation of different contents that allow the construction of alternative agendas, channels of promotion and dissemination of culture, regional cultural features and where users can participate more actively in the choice and discussion of "issues" that interest them through the use of new social media and high-quality devices connectivity.

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