

Commercial Radio Australia appoints Ford Ennals as new CEO

13 March 2022

Commercial Radio Australia Chairman and SCA CEO Grant Blackley today announced the appointment of **Ford Ennals**, currently CEO of Digital Radio UK, as the peak industry body's new CEO, replacing Joan Warner who steps down at the end of March.

Ennals has deep experience in media transformation and digitisation from his time as founding CEO of Digital UK and most recently as CEO of Digital Radio UK. Digital UK was a consortium of British commercial and public service broadcasters including the BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel Five where Ennals was responsible for working with broadcasters and the UK Government to successfully convert UK homes to digital TV.

At Digital Radio UK, Ennals has led the UK radio industry's transition to digital listening, working with the BBC, Global, Bauer and Arqiva, as well as with the automotive and tech organisations the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders and techUK, the UK Government, and media regulator Ofcom. During his tenure digital listening has trebled to almost two thirds of all radio listening, helping to maintain overall levels of radio listening.

Previously Ennals had a distinguished marketing and brand pedigree working with global brands in C-suite positions in both the UK and the US. He has worked as Brands Director for Mars, Vice-President Worldwide Marketing for Reebok, and President of Global Commerce for Nike's luxury division in the US. In the UK Ennals was Chief Marketing Officer at Lloyds Banking Group and CEO of Universal Music's direct division.

CRA Chairman Grant Blackley said the radio industry has entered a new era where digital platforms are driving audience engagement, increased listening and revenue growth opportunities.

"Ford brings a unique combination of skills and experience to the role having worked with major global brands with a deep understanding of marketing and customers, and leading both the television and radio sectors into the digital age in the UK with great success. He is an entrepreneurial change agent and leader in digital transformation, both of which will be valuable skills at CRA as the audio industry is well on its way to digital transformation. After a rigorous global search for our new CEO, we are delighted to have someone of Ford's calibre joining the Australian industry at a very exciting time," Blackley said.

"I would also like to pay tribute to Joan Warner for an outstanding tenure at CRA, her dynamic leadership over the past 21 years has been instrumental in the growth of commercial radio in Australia. Joan has guided the organisation through the development of several important projects including the industry-wide ad buying platform RadioMATRIX, the development of podcasting and voice tech initiatives, the launch of DAB broadcasts, the launch of our industry app, and the move to a new audience measurement system. CRA is well positioned to embrace its digital future."

Commenting on his new role, Ennals said: “Australia is one of the most advanced and dynamic radio and audio markets in the world and I am truly excited to be joining the Australian radio sector at what is an inflection point in its history. It’s an honour to be appointed to the role of CEO of Commercial Radio Australia and I look forward to working with the radio industry and all stakeholders to ensure radio, podcasting, and the broader audio ecosystem continues to thrive and achieve its potential with both listeners and brands.”

Ennals has Australian family and will relocate from London to Sydney to take up the role on April 4, 2022.

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About Commercial Radio Australia

Commercial Radio Australia is the peak industry body representing the interests of commercial radio broadcasters throughout Australia. CRA manages industry codes and standards, regulatory and legislative matters, metropolitan and regional audience measurement surveys, revenue reporting, industry innovation including the automated trading platform RadioMatrix, RadioApp, the Australian Podcast Ranker, consumer research, marketing and industry training and development programs. CRA also hosts the Australian Commercial Radio Awards and the Siren Creative Awards.

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