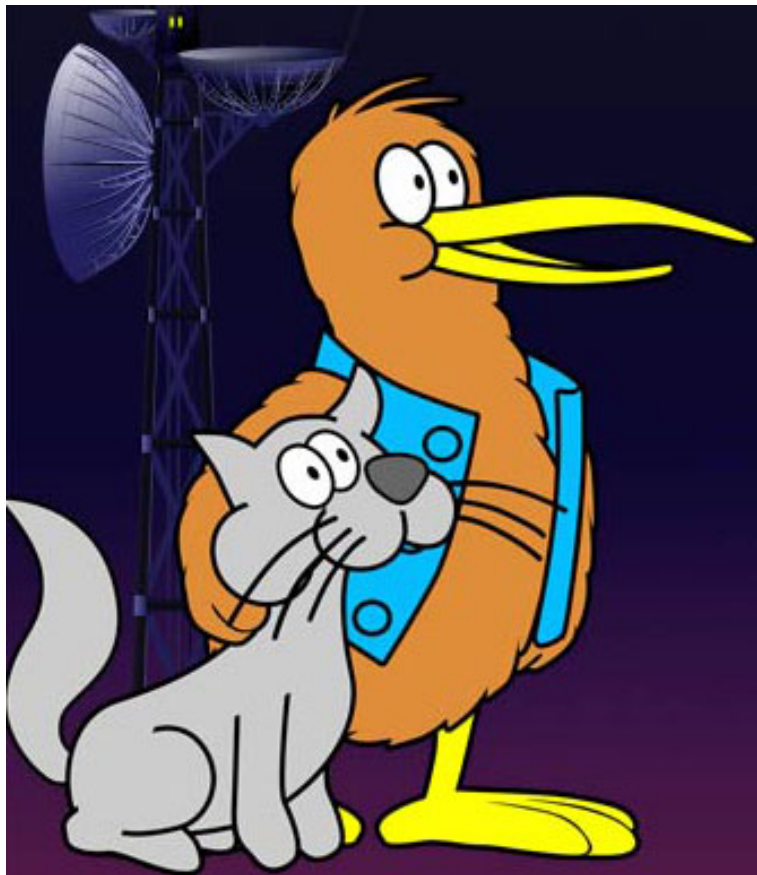


Proposal: A Digital Home for Kiwi Kids

AIM: to develop and launch a trusted online home for local screen content for kids



From the Goodnight Kiwi

“Imagine a trusted online home for kiwi kids that celebrates their place in the world, gives them exciting new local content, curates diverse and rich international content, and allows them to explore this world and interact with it.”

Janette Howe - Chair Kidsonscreen

Kiwi.Kids Online

There is no doubt that we value our stories and our unique place in the world. As children lead the way onto new digital platforms and into new ways of viewing and interacting with content, we need to ensure that our stories are there for them to access and enjoy.

New Zealand has an opportunity to create a home for local screen content that parents and children value and that is not bound to a traditional broadcast platform. We can be nimble and creative in our solution.

We envisage an online home with curated, and increasingly interactive, local children's content that is visible in a crowded online ecosystem.



The online home would be a special place that parents would look for and trust for safe and engaging local content. It would aim to be a place that kids love because it is theirs, where they can see their stories on screen and they can interact and engage with the content in a meaningful way.

We could take a leaf out of the Nordic media world **“Our content needs to be entertaining on one hand, but also help the kids to evolve in different ways.”** Says one Nordic producer. **“Our strategy is to offer content on the platforms the children use,** and aim at offering easy-to-use entry points into our content.”

The content would become part of a trusted brand that can also be found or shared however kids are accessing and viewing content online, whether this is clips on YouTube, downloaded via an app, shared on Instagram or Twitter, liked on Facebook, or seen on a traditional broadcast channel. It has a recognisable “stamp” eg “Kiwi.Kids” that means that this is quality, engaging local content.

Features:

- a niche home for curated New Zealand audiovisual content (animation/drama/docos/science/news/games) made for Kiwi kids
- flows to the best of kids' international content
- interactivity and social sharing
- reaching across platforms
- spreadable – kiwi content reaching the world
- social and cultural aims (children's rights)
- accessible for all children from any device
- a safe place to be online

As an independent non-profit charity, The NZ Children's Screen Trust is well positioned to lead the setting up of a panel charged with creating and managing this home that would include stakeholders from NZOA, the wider Screen Industry (including IT innovators), Education, Health and parents. A children's advisory board, with input from children's audience researchers, would be a key step in ensuring that children's voices are heard.

This panel would be charged with **raising funds** and **developing a model** that would future proof kids' local content online. This would include the best of children's productions served top down, as well as opportunities for children to create their own narratives, apps and communities.

"This is a fundamental shift for the entertainment industry but the reality is the audience has evolved into storytellers. They are now their own little media companies able to push-button publish for the world to see." – Lance Weiller

<http://kidscreen.com/2015/05/13/lance-weillers-must-read-story-about-the-future-of-storytelling/#ixzz3dkFYbUUN>

Why is it needed?

Young people mine the media for ways of being 'grown-up' in Aotearoa/New Zealand. It gives them answers to important questions:

What is possible? What is not?

Who is valued? Who is not?

Our children need a local space in which to explore these matters – not the versions of the world forged in production focus groups serving American and European children.

Dr Ruth Zanker – media researcher

Characters and stories about how the world works provide a toolbox for children. What they view and hear teaches children how (and if) they fit into the world, and what ways they may fit into the world later as adults.

“A strong sense of identity is a pre-requisite for creativity of the highest order. The relevance of stories to our own experiences enhances our sense of who we are. Our mental health depends on a belief that we have an identity and a place.” – Dr Ian Hassall ¹

BUT IN AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND

- Children’s media in New Zealand is currently delivered in a commercial broadcast environment. There is clear market failure in delivering quality and diverse audio-visual content to our kids.²
- Overseas content, and imported consumer values, dominates their media experiences
- Children learn to become followers and copiers of imported fads
- Local content delivered online in the absence of a “home” is hard to find (and does not have the resources to find its audience alone) meaning that it is often not reaching its intended audience

HOW CAN WE MAKE THINGS BETTER?

- We need a platform that offers content for children and young people that tell *local* success stories and provide *local* role models
- We need it to be where they are engaged – online and accessible however they are viewing – via mobile and touchscreen
- We need to ensure it is allowing our stories to grow with evolving technology, such as immersive, interactive experiences

Background

Children’s media use is changing:

- UK Childwise (2015) On research on children’s media use ‘ More kids know how to upload a picture to the internet than can boil and egg’.
- OFCOM Children’s Media Lives Study – http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/media-literacy/childrens-media-lives-year-1/childrens_media_lives_report_FINAL1.pdf

Kidscreen: [Key findings summarised](#)

¹ Dr Ian Hassall, July 2013. Dr Hassall is a New Zealand paediatrician and children's advocate. He was New Zealand's first Commissioner for Children from 1989 to 1994. His career has entailed working for children and their families as clinician, strategist, researcher and advocate. He was awarded the Aldo Farina Award by UNICEF in 2010 for his dedication to improving child welfare. Since 2002 he has been a Senior Researcher at the Institute of Public Policy at AUT University in Auckland. He is part of the Every Child Counts campaign to place children's interests at the centre of government. He is a trustee of the New Zealand Children’s Screen Trust.

² Ruth Zanker in the [NZOA Evaluative Study](#)

- NZOA Children’s Media Use Survey – “TV is still the dominant screen in New Zealand children's lives, but tablets and smartphones are now in daily use and Youtube has become one of their main sources of content.” – NZ On Air
<http://www.nzonair.govt.nz/document-library/childrens-media-use-study-2015/>
- Research shows NZ children are on screens [Growing Up NZ Study, University of Auckland](#)
- Children have a right to diverse local media that reflects their culture [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
- Children want to watch content made for them [Child's Play Study Australia](#)
- There is clear market failure in delivery quality local content to children in the current commercial broadcast model <http://ripeat.org/2012/Zanker>
- The UK’s CBeebies, Australia’s ABC4Kids and Canadian’s KidsCBC all have online sites that have quality local content for their kids. So do many smaller and poorer nations. It is a matter of choice.
- Kids are increasingly accessing content via mobiles, so it is important to have New Zealand content where they are watching
<https://www.commonsemmedia.org/zero-to-eight-2013-infographic>

“The questions facing us is ‘how do we enable families to access spaces that are not just ad driven on places like YouTube...and how do we enable kiwi content to be popular and spread within the playground of global popular culture?’”

– Dr Ruth Zanker

We have done it before:

Locally *The-HUB.TV* (Taylormade Media) launched in April 2007, supporting 'Studio 2'. By the time the site closed down in August 2012 it was a stand-alone site, it had 54,933 members, who had posted 231,098 times on the HubTalk forums. Over that time the-hub.tv received 5,769,947 unique visitors. As well as content from the TV show and kid-friendly content sourced internationally, kids were able to participate in forums, upload content and participated in moderated, safe social networking.

Impact/Sustainability

In addition to NZOA as key content funders we envisage partnerships with health, education and social providers to deliver outcomes consistent with the aims of Kiwi.Kids. Partnerships with non-profits and institutions such as museums, zoos, universities and schools would enhance content opportunities, e.g. live streams from Kiwi nesting sites, museum or art collections, school media productions.

A commercial-free, safe, online environment would develop Kiwi.Kids as a trusted brand. It would be the screen *where every New Zealand child can see themselves and the world from a Kiwi point of view.*

The development of ongoing partnerships, the ability to package content for pay and develop 'add-ons' such as apps, and a growing archive of content will contribute to the sustainability of such a project.

This is a creative, cost-effective opportunity showing commitment to kids and their needs as digitally-able New Zealanders: "It could do more to re-connect kids to the society in which they live than a hundred government schemes and initiatives"³.

ACTION:

A KIWI.KIDS PANEL IS CONVENED OCT/NOV 2015 FOLLOWING THE KIDS CONTENT FORUM WITH THE AIM OF DEVELOPING THE PROPOSAL AND TIMELINE

³ The demise of quality indigenous media for kids...It's a failure of care...We are failing to engage them as citizens and failing to empower them as individuals if we distance their media from their experience... the money for new programmes, widely disseminated and powerfully engaging , would be extremely well spent as an educational resource. It could do more to re-connect kids to the society in which they live than a hundred government schemes and initiatives. (MM Davies p. 62)