



# CAREERS GUIDE



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# What is ACETA?



**Australian Commercial & Entertainment  
Technologies Association**

ACETA is the Australian Commercial and Entertainment Technology Association, the industry body representing broadcast, pro sound, lighting and staging.

This guide is produced by ACETA to help show the career options our industry can offer.

## **ACETA**

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# Why this industry?

The creative industries in Australia are worth around \$31 billion<sup>1</sup> and growing fast. It's a dynamic and exciting place to be, offering a wide range of careers across a huge spectrum of skills areas.

The commercial and entertainment technologies industry is what's called an 'enabler', meaning that it enables an industry to exist. The music, performing arts, meetings and conventions, tourism and broadcast industries are all heavily dependent on the commercial and entertainment technologies industry.

Commercial and entertainment technologies includes:

- **Broadcast**
- **Pro sound**
- **Audio visual integration**
- **Lighting**
- **Staging**

This could mean working as a rigger or on an audio desk, through to designing and manufacturing products, sales or product management, live production or general management.

Companies working in this sector range from tiny start-ups through to major multinationals.

Careers can be based in one city or town, move you around Australia or take you overseas.

Because the industry requires a specific set of technical skills as a base level for almost all employees it can be hard to find good people when you need them. This doesn't mean the industry is awash with vacancies, but it does mean that people with good skills are in demand when vacancies do occur. This guide is intended to show you what roles exist in the industry, what qualifications and experience are generally required for those roles, and how you can build a skill set that will be attractive to employers, and will help you sustain a satisfying and rewarding career in commercial and entertainment technology.

<sup>1</sup> Department of Regional Australia, Local Government and the Arts - National Policy (2011)



# About the industry

## Our place in the world

The entertainment and commercial technologies industry is part of a much larger industry: the creative industries.

**The creative industries comprise a number of related activities including:**

- Broadcast (radio and TV)
- Music
- Performing arts
- Advertising
- Visual art and design
- Fashion
- Publishing
- Software
- Video games and film
- Architecture

The creative industries are recognised as amongst the most vibrant and fastest growing of all sectors. Here in Australia the creative industries are valued at more than \$31 billion<sup>1</sup> while globally that figure is a massive \$425 billion and, according to the United Nations, growing at more than 6% per annum<sup>2</sup>.

The products and services provided by the entertainment and commercial technologies industry are at the centre of this growth enabling, as they do, much of the creative industry's economic value.

## Enabling technologies

The entertainment and commercial technologies industry plays an important role in all our daily lives. They are so familiar to us they often can go unnoticed but these products and services enable Australians to entertain and to be entertained, to be creative and to engage in cultural activities, they help keep us healthy and safe, and they provide the means to communicate, educate and inform.

**Some of the industries using these technologies include:**

- Broadcasting (TV, radio)
- Film and cinema
- Live performance (music & the performing arts)
- Tourism
- Education
- Meetings and conventions
- Fitness
- Advertising and promotions
- Building and construction
- Emergency services

In short there are few areas of daily life that our products and services do not touch in some way.

As a result the activities involving entertainment and commercial technologies are many and varied, as are the range of roles and opportunities within the industry.

<sup>1</sup> Department of Regional Australia, Local Government and the Arts - National Policy (2011)

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Creative Economy Report 2008



## The demand for skills

The commercial and entertainment technologies industry needs people with skills across a wide range of disciplines. In many instances the skills are technical and creative.

### For instance:

- People who can design, construct and run productions or events
- People who have experience in acoustics, electronics or in a number of engineering fields

In addition, like every other industry it needs skills in areas such as sales and marketing, warehousing and logistics, human resources, accountancy and general management.

## Passport to the world

The commercial and entertainment technologies industry could be your passport to the world.

This is an increasingly global marketplace. It is also one where Australians have a great reputation in a range of fields for their technical expertise and creative flair.

### As you read this Australians are adding their skills and experience to:

- The staging of major international events and productions
- The design of state-of-the-art equipment and new technologies
- The building and construction of highly sought after products that are in demand throughout the world over

As likely as not, your passport to the world will start here in Australia working with one of our industry members.



# Career pathways...

## There are six main activity areas within the industry:

### Production

- Stage crew or production assistant
- Audio or lighting operator
- AV operator (including camera operator)
- Stage, production or tour manager
- Audio or recording engineer
- Rigger
- Driver
- Production designer for audio, lights or staging
- Creative director
- Production manager

### Audio visual integration

- Installer
- Programmer
- Systems designer
- Technician

### Design, research and development

- Technician
- Engineer (electrical, mechanical/structural, radio)
- Draftsman
- CAD specialist
- Acoustician
- Department manager

### Manufacturing

- Fabricator, generally working in metal, plastics and wood
- CAD specialists
- Production manager
- Warehouse hand
- Distribution hand
- Distribution or logistics manager
- Warehouse manager
- Purchasing manager
- Department manager

### Sales, marketing and product management

- Technical specialists
- Sales executive
- Sales assistant
- Marketing assisting sales manager
- Product or category manager
- Marketing manager

### General management, operations and administration

- Accounts assistant
- Office manager
- Finance manager
- Administration manager
- Distribution manager
- Service and/or installation manager
- Managing director or chief executive officer



## Production

Production activities take place anywhere and everywhere. Some production activities are fixed venues such as theatres, TV, recording or radio studios while other activities are more temporary with events being set up and pulled down in a wide variety of places, both indoors and outdoors.

The role of the production staff is to design, construct and run the equipment needed to deliver a high quality, safe, on-time and on-budget production or event.

### Usual entry point

Stage crew or production assistant

### What would help get a job

Written and verbal communication skills

Mathematical aptitude

Experience in working with sound or lighting equipment perhaps through a school or community production

An interest in technology

Attention to detail

A flexible approach to working hours and locations

### What type of work

The work is as varied as the activity. Initial roles in the industry usually involve the planning, set up and operation of equipment under direction of a production manager or creative director. This usually involves a mix of physical and non-physical activity.

### What type of training

A Certificate III or Certificate IV in Music Technical Production or Entertainment Training would assist applicants looking to commence their careers within the industry

Diploma or degree qualifications in music, audio production, event management, logistics or engineering would assist applicants applying for more senior roles.

### Career opportunities

As a global industry employment opportunities exist throughout Australia and across the world.

Opportunities also exist within the other areas of industry activity such as manufacturing, design, research, in industry education and training and in product sales and marketing.



# A career in....

## Audio visual integration

Audio visual integration is one of the major growth sectors within the industry. AV integration, as it is known, marries video, audio and often some interactivity through the use of computer technologies to create seamless channels of communication and sharing.

### Usual entry point

Installer or assistant technician

### What would help get a job

Mathematical aptitude

Written and verbal communication skills

Some experience with audio and video equipment

Some experience working with computer and IP protocols

An interest in technology

Attention to detail

### What type of work

The work can be quite varied but there are two major streams: system design and installation. System design takes the individual components and plans their integration into a space such as a boardroom, lecture theatre or venue to meet

the needs of the operators and maximising the performance of the equipment. The installation process take place on site, installing, testing and tuning the equipment

### What type of training

A starting point might be a certificate in music technical production, multimedia or computing. More advanced qualifications in each of these areas at either diploma or degree level will assist applicants in securing more senior roles, especially if you have a focus on system development and design.

### Career opportunities

Until recently AV integration was often only the domain of big corporations or universities. However, with the advent of high speed broadband and more modestly priced products and technologies integrated AV systems can be found in many households and businesses across the country. Increasingly AV integration is playing an important role in education, health, communications and entertainment as well as many other commercial and community activities.



## Design, research and development

Australia and Australians have a history of developing new products and approaches within the industry that have gone on to be adopted worldwide.

Activities in this area of the industry can include product, concept, creative or architectural design, the research into and development of new technologies or the implementation of new technologies, concepts or ideas into industry practice.

### Usual entry point

Technical assistant

### What would help get a job

Written and verbal communication skills

Mathematical aptitude

An interest in technology

Advanced computer skills

Attention to detail

### What type of work

The nature of this work is highly technical often requiring the use of Computer Aided Design, the creation of specific computer language code or the fabrication of specialist parts for prototypes. The work will be desk or bench based and the use of computers is extensive.

### What type of training

It is likely that a diploma or degree qualification is required to work in this area of the industry. Studies in engineering (electrical, structural, radio or computer) would be highly desired by an employer.

### Career opportunities

As a global industry employment opportunities exist throughout Australia and across the world. Opportunities also exist within the other areas of industry activity such as manufacturing, design, research, in industry education and training, and in product sales and marketing.



# A career in...

## Manufacturing

There is a vibrant manufacturing sector here in Australia with over 150 companies involved in the manufacture of specialist audio, lighting and staging products that are used in the entertainment and commercial technologies industry.

### Usual entry point

Production assistant or fabricator

### What would help get a job

Written and verbal communication skills

Mathematical aptitude

Experience or interest in manufacturing or working with metal, timber or plastics

### What type of work

Initially the roles in manufacturing involve the creation or assembly of components into finished goods. This would usually include some physical activity. More senior roles might include involvement in Computer Aided Design (CAD), production management or in the development of new, customised or prototype products.

### What type of training

A technical training course such as a Certificate III or IV in Manufacturing (MSA07) would be a good starting point. More advanced diploma or degree qualifications in manufacturing, engineering, computing or product design would be desirable amongst many employers.

### Career opportunities

The originality of Australian design and the quality of Australian products are highly regarded across the world. Opportunities also exist within the other areas of entertainment and commercial technologies industry activity such as design, research, in industry education and training and in product sales and marketing.

Of course manufacturing skills and experience are highly valued assets across a wide range of sectors.



## Sales and marketing

The marketing and sales of entertainment and commercial technologies products to a wide range of customers is an important part of the industry. In addition to our own manufacturing base we have a significant number of distributors who promote and sell these specialist products to consumers in broadcast, recording, live sound and production, education, tourism and hospitality to name just some of the many customer applications where these products are used.

### Usual entry point

Sales, marketing or administration assistant

### What would help get a job

Written and verbal communication skills

Mathematical aptitude

Computer skills

An interest in technology

Attention to detail

### What type of work

Initial roles in this area of the industry are usually working in support of the key sales, marketing or management staff. With experience employees can often progress to managing their own sales or marketing programs.

Some roles are highly technical and require specialist knowledge in areas such as wireless audio, sound, lighting, staging or engineering, and mechanics.



# A career in...

## General management

Like any business there is also a number of general management roles in areas such as:

- Finance
- Human resources
- Logistics and warehousing
- IT and information systems
- Legal and compliance
- Senior and executive management

## Usual entry point

Many of these roles will include the words assistant, officer or co-ordinator in any job title when you are first starting out. For example, a newly qualified accountant might be an assistant accountant or a person starting in an accounts payable/receivable role might be known as an accounts officer or accounts co-ordinator.

## What would help get a job

- Written and verbal communication skills
- Mathematical aptitude
- Computer skills
- Attention to detail
- Specialist training or skills in one of the disciplines above

## What type of work

These roles typically support the specialist areas of activity that are undertaken by the business. The hours are more likely to be confined to normal business hours and will be office based

Each of these disciplines have their own training and education programs. These can be

accessed through a range of courses available from universities and TAFE colleges throughout the country.

## What type of training

As a beginning a Certificate III/IV in Music Technical Production (CUS09) or Entertainment Training (CUE03) would assist applicants with an interest in the industry. These can generally be studied while still at school.

Thereafter a range of courses that offer training in more specific skills in all the areas and disciplines mentioned in this guide are available at diploma or degree level from a wide range of higher education providers across the country.

To find a course near you visit the ACETA website at [www.aceta.org.au](http://www.aceta.org.au) for a list of some of those courses offering specialist training in sound, broadcast, event management engineering and other specialist areas.

Or do a Google search in your area using the key words such as "audio production Melbourne" or "electronic engineering Brisbane".

You can do the same for specialist qualifications in business, finance, HR, marketing and logistics, and so on.

## Career opportunities

Many international brands have offices in Australia. Of course given the diverse nature of the commercial and entertainment technologies industry the skills learned and experience gained here are transferable to a wide range of other industries.



# Finding your dream job...

Like most businesses, the businesses involved in the entertainment and commercial technologies industry are on the lookout for good people with the skills (or potential) to contribute to that business.

Finding your dream job is therefore a process that begins with you matching your skills and experience to the needs of your preferred employers. Create a match and that dream job could be yours.

## Where to start?

Here are four activities that will get you started.

**Do a skills check.** The key question is whether you have the right skills and experience for the industry or a particular role. There are ways to find out.

- Talk to potential employers – ask them what skills you need to get into the industry
- Visit websites - like careerone, seek and mycareer and search for the roles you are looking for. Many prospective employers will detail the kinds of skills and experience they are looking for through these ads. Also look at specialist online services like ArtsHub or The Loop. These are sites that specifically serve the arts and creative industries.
- Seek out internships – many employers ask for experience, and how can you get that when you are starting out? A short internship is a good option.
- Talk to training providers – many of them will have connections to industry and can provide advice on the kinds of roles their graduates are securing when they have finished their studies

Don't forget your experience might not always be formal, you might have a past time or a hobby, like working in amateur theatre or doing audio for a band, that might help you get that dream job. Don't forget to include that on your resumé.

The key thing is to be realistic. If your research tells you that to be employed in the role you are looking for requires a particular qualification or experience then you need to either work to secure those qualifications or experience, or re-focus your expectations.

Research the market. There is a lot that can be learned about the industry and the employers from the internet and trade media. These are good places to start:

**[www.juliusmedia.com](http://www.juliusmedia.com) for CX magazine**

**[www.proaudio-central](http://www.proaudio-central)**

**[www.audiotechnology.com.au](http://www.audiotechnology.com.au)**

Some of them are also on Facebook, Google+ or Twitter.

Include in your research:

- Information on the companies you think you would like to work for
- Understand as best you can what it is they do
- Learn where they fit into the market and industry overall
- Learn about their products and services



## Finding your dream job...

The knowledge you gain through research like this will be invaluable when you do get the opportunity to talk to a prospective employer.

**Create a resume and introductory letter.** These are both important tools to help you get noticed by prospective employers and to ultimately get that job. Your letter and resumé tell an employer a lot about you and not just what you've studied and your experience. Make sure they are well produced, with no spelling or grammatical errors, and are logical and easy to read. A good tip is to have someone else read it before you send it. It is important to explain in your letter why they should hire you. This is where you can put the knowledge you have gained through your research into good use. You're the one doing the selling at this point.

**Be proactive but not annoying.** Many job vacancies are never advertised so don't just rely on employment services or the employment websites. Once you have done your skills check and your research start mailing your introductory letters and making phone calls. One idea might be to find out the name of someone in the area you are targeting at a company and see if they have ten minutes for a chat. Explain you're just

starting out and are researching the market and would appreciate it if they could talk to you about what sort of person their company looks for. At the end, you can say something like 'that sounds really great, where do you advertise your vacancies?' Or ask if they can give you the name of who in the company you could send your resumé to, in case there might be work in the future. If you can impress them in that ten minutes it's likely they'll remember you when they do have work. And don't be annoying. So many times people will say 'be persistent' and that's true, but only up to a point. Sometimes no really does mean no, and to keep on pushing will just annoy the potential employer. Try to be sensitive to that. If the person says no, ask if you can keep in touch with them or if they have a list you can put your name on for when they may have a vacancy. Or ask where they usually advertise so you can make sure to look out for it. Show that you're professional about not getting what you had hoped for. Handling rejection positively is really important, and helps keep your energy up as you continue your search.



## Education and training

The nature of the entertainment and commercial technologies industry means that appropriate skills and knowledge are highly valued by employers.

Most of these skills can, as a starting point at least, be gained through either Vocational Education and Training (VET) or Higher Education training and study. The VET system offers a series of certificate level courses, some of which can be commenced while still at school such as a Certificate I, II or III. Higher education diplomas and degree courses are available throughout Australia in all the disciplines required by our industry and typically take 2-3 years to complete.

### Specialist courses

Here are some of the more specialist education and training options to consider that have currency within the entertainment and commercial technologies industry.

### Course of Study

### Training level

Audio Engineering/Sound production	Cert/Dip/Deg
Music	Cert/Dip/Deg
Music (specialising in audio technology)	Deg
Music industry (also called music business)	Dip/Deg
Events management	Dip/Deg
Creative industries management	Deg
Media arts and communication	Deg
Film and digital media	Deg
Broadcasting	Dip
Creative technologies	Deg
Screen and media	Dip
Venues and events	Dip
Electronic engineering	Deg
Electronic and communications engineering	Dip/Deg
Engineering technology	Dip/Deg
Audio visual technology	Cert
Live sound production	Cert
Electronic music production	Cert
Design science (audio and acoustics)	Deg
Information technology (multimedia)	Dip/Deg
Structural engineering	Dip/Deg

Most institutions offering courses such as those listed above can offer tuition assistance and funding packages, meaning that your study costs are paid for while studying, though will need repaying later.

A detailed list of course and institutions can be found on the ACETA website at [www.aceta.org.au](http://www.aceta.org.au)



# Finding your dream job...

## Business studies

Of course in addition to having staff with specialist skills the industry also requires people with skills in running a business, in particular, in the following areas:

- Finance
- Administration
- Sales and marketing
- Human resources
- Warehouse and logistics
- Manufacturing
- IT
- General management

Opportunities for study in these areas can be found at most universities, higher education providers or TAFE colleges around Australia.

## Industry accreditation

In addition there are some industry recognised courses of study such as:

**Infocomm** provides training and certification within the AV industry using the title of Certified Technology Specialist (CTS) with specialisations in design (CTS-D) and installation (CTS-I).

These are internationally recognised industry accreditations. For more information visit:

<http://www.infocomm.org/cps/rde/xchg/infocomm/hs.xsl/7104.htm>

## Professional development

There are regular professional development opportunities available. Many industry events include training and workshop opportunities. For more information search the web for these events:

- SMPTE
- ENTECH
- Integrate
- CEDIA

## Join an association

There are several organisations that provide professional development for their members including:

- AES  
The Audio Engineering Society.  
Each State has its own branch and website.
- ASSG  
Australian Screen Sound Guild.  
[www.assg.org.au](http://www.assg.org.au)

Many of the manufacturers and distributors also offer product training and other seminars from time to time. The best way to get informed about these is to get onto their email lists.

From time to time, universities, college and TAFE's will also hold seminars and workshops that the public can attend. Keep in touch with the various department updates and newsletters from these institutions.

# All the best

We trust this has helped outline some of the career opportunities in the commercial and entertainment technologies industry.

Perhaps it might be useful to make a few more general comments to help you on your journey.

Think about what sort of life you want to lead. Do you want an office-based, nine to five job with regular hours or are you happy to work outside normal business hours and in all sorts of venues? For example, product management would be more office based, with more predictable hours and would likely be permanent employment, but a lighting engineer for a theatre production would be working out of business hours and may be a contractor for the period of the production's run. Which suits your style? Make sure your dream job fits with the sort of life you want to lead.

Internships: these are a hot topic because sometimes keen young people can be exploited by unscrupulous people. But it doesn't have to be that way and many people started in the industry by taking an internship. So think about whether you're prepared to work for free for a limited period to get experience or a foot in the door of a company you really want to work for. An internship is a short period of usually unpaid work. It can be as little as a week or as much as three months. If you are prepared to do this then you will need to behave as if you were really working there, which means turning up on time and taking it seriously. Your objective is real world experience and a great reference at the least and, at the best, they may find they have a vacancy and think of you. Make sure before you start the internship that you are clear about what is required of you, and that the employer knows you want a reference and that you'd like to be considered for any suitable vacancies. Talk with the employer about how long you and they expect you to intern for. In short, have an open conversation about what each of you want from the internship, and make sure that it's a deal for both of you. We wish you all the best as you embark on your career.

This is a great industry and we trust you will find it provides you with a satisfying and rewarding life.

<sup>1</sup> Department of Regional Australia, Local Government and the Arts – National Cultural Policy (2011)

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) 2009



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