

CRTC Public Hearing 2006-1

May 15, 2006

Presentation of

National Campus and Community Radio Association

L'Association nationale des radios étudiantes et communautaires

NCRA/ANREC



“I was working at CJLY, watching it become a hub of community dialogue, bringing people together – hundreds of people from all parts of the community coming in and out to be interviewed and participate in panel discussions, acting as experts or concerned citizens, or producers or technicians, bringing their kids with them, and dropping in before work at the law office or city hall with their suits and ties on, and hitchhiking in from the valley wearing wool ponchos, and mill workers showing up after work with dirt on their faces wearing coveralls - all there to talk about building art galleries and hockey rinks, recycling initiatives, municipal elections, gardening, parenting, local businesses, chemtrails, political struggles in South American, African culture, the local gun club, breastfeeding, cuts to hospital & ferry services, the wine tasting festival, the opera company's new production – generally contributing to making the community more sustainable and better for all, or sharing their knowledge about issues or other parts of the world.”

-- Freya Zaltz, NCRA/ANREC Vice President

Presentation by the NCRA/ANREC to the CRTC

A Review Of The Commission's Commercial Radio Policy

Public Hearing

17 May 2006

1. Good day, members of the Commission. My name is Melissa Kaestner and I am the National Coordinator for the NCRA. Here with me to present our submission is Tristis Ward, NCRA Advisory Board member and CHSR Fredericton's Station Manager; John Harris Stevenson, NCRA Advisory Board member and CHUO Ottawa Board of Directors; and Chad Saunders, NCRA Treasurer and CJSW Calgary's Station Manager. We are pleased to have this opportunity to address the Commission to outline our comments regarding the Commercial Radio Review, Public Notice 2006-1.

2. The National Campus and Community Radio Association/l'Association nationale des radios étudiantes et communautaires is the not-for-profit national association of organizations and individuals committed to volunteer-based, community-oriented radio broadcasting. We are dedicated to advancing the role and increasing the effectiveness of campus and community radio in Canada.

3. Our membership consists of 27 community-based campus stations, 7 community stations, one each of Native, Internet, and closed circuit stations, 3 stations-in-development, and one association. Ranging from 5 to 18,200 watts, these stations are staffed by approximately 160 paid employees and more than 4,500 volunteers. The total revenue of our member stations in 2005 was \$4.1 million. Individual station revenue ranges from \$300 to \$415,000, with average station revenue of approximately \$110,000. (See Appendix A: Membership Revenue Statistics)

4. The NCRA sees this Commercial Radio Review as an excellent opportunity for the Commission to examine the importance of community broadcasters and ensure our participation in improving and enhancing Canadian radio in partnership with the commercial radio sector. Our proposal is one that will become an integral part of the strategic development of third sector radio.

5. We are contributing to this the review because we believe that decisions made here will impact our sector directly and profoundly. We believe that regulation and policy resulting from this review – in such areas as emerging technologies, Low Power FM, Canadian Content, support for emerging artists, and Canadian Talent Development – will impact our sector in the future.

6. We support the notion that commercial radio should enhance the access that Canadians have to Canadian music and other programming reflecting their communities and their country. We believe all sectors of broadcasting should work together to explore and develop these opportunities. The long term viability and sustainability of the Canadian broadcasting system depends on the interaction and cooperation of all sectors of radio, including a healthy community radio sector. Canadian radio is no longer a broadcasting system made up of discreet components; it is a inter-connected network of private and public broadcasters, dependant on each other to maintain the diversity that exists across this country.

7. We also believe it is evolving into something more, perhaps an ecosystem that contains not just broadcasters but the music and other media industries; an ecosystem that needs community and grassroots media as much as it does mainstream, mass audience commercial media.

8. Canada's community radio faces many more challenges than our peers in the private and public sector as we attempt to participate in the various discussions of the radio broadcasting industry. When given the opportunity to comment on the same issues that our commercial counterparts have, our sector has to do so with considerably fewer resources. Our active participation in such issues as spectrum scarcity and the de-

localization of radio in Canada could be supported by acknowledging that our sector requires far more resources than can be gathered by not-for-profit entities, and therefore, needs the assistance of the commercial radio sector and the support of the CRTC.

9. We were taken aback by some of the questions that l'ARCQ and ARC du Canada were asked yesterday because of their focus on commercial media metrics, in the form of profits and advertising revenue, as a measure of success. These generally do not apply to community radio, particularly in English Canada. The social and cultural benefits of community radio are sometimes difficult to quantify in monetary or economic terms, and comparison to commercial services is inappropriate. We ask that the Commission refer to a recent study we have completed, "A Review of the Available Studies on the Impact on Community Radio on its Community" (*Jim Riva, 2006*).

10. The partnerships that community radio makes with our supporters are between independent groups and organizations that rely on our sector to get the word out. Local musicians, theatre groups, festivals, dance groups, charities, and many other non-profit organizations depend on our support. But instead of innovating and participating in these exciting community activities, limited resources are utilized simply to cover core operational costs.

11. It is unfortunate that we can produce examples of stations that have closed their doors due to lack of financing. In recent years, three stations – CIMN in Charlottetown, PEI; CCRS in Sudbury, Ontario; and CKIC in Wolfville, Nova Scotia – have closed because of a lack of financing. CFBU in St. Catherines, Ontario was forced to downsize due to underfunding. CKUT in Montreal, Quebec faced a challenge to their funding this past spring. And CKXU in Lethbridge, Alberta continues to pay off large debts owed to their Students' Union. Coast-to-coast, many communities struggle to find appropriate funding to start up a community radio station. When even one community station becomes marginalized by financial crisis, the ripple is felt throughout the sector. We are at risk of being reduced to a series of campus radio clubs, and this is a direction we want to avoid.

12. We have the *Broadcasting Act* in mind in our proposal for a community radio levy. In section 3(2), the *Act* states “the Canadian broadcast system constitutes a single system”, and, as noted in section 3(1)(d)(iv), it expects that system to be “adaptable to technological change”. Of the three sectors of the system mentioned in section 3(1)(b), only the not for-profit community sector has not been given the ability to do so. Private radio is permitted to receive revenue through its use of the public airwaves, and funding for the public sector is provided to the CBC by taxpayers.

13. We have a proven track record in diversity. Everyone at the table today understands the principle arguments regarding what constitutes diversity in programming and how forcing real diversity onto the private sector is impossible because it is not commercially viable. Public radio – the CBC – attempts it, but lacks a vital element that the community sector already has: the invested participation of the listener as producer.

14. As long as Canada is lacking an adequately supported community sector, we are limiting diversity, and just as importantly, limiting our citizens’ ability to exercise their right to make use of their airwaves themselves. In a prior appearance before the commission we compared the public airwaves with the public highways. If the government departments in charge of highways failed to allow for the public to drive on them – if citizens were expected to raise their own money to build on-ramps to access them – if people were expected to accept the limits of being able to purchase goods transported along them or ride the CBC bus, the need and the solution would become as obvious as ours is today.

15. The *Broadcasting Act* charges the CRTC with the management of the entire broadcast system. You have been enabled to create a levy for the commercial sector to support the public’s right to access and use the airwaves. And a levy to support that system is legitimate and needed.

16. We want to speak briefly about funding levels. The funding goals we have identified in our submission are the result of several months of research, and several years of consultation and experience with our members. In our submission, we outline the need to

establish a Community Radio Fund of Canada, the CRFC. The goal of the CRFC will be to provide not-for-profit community radio with support for existing local programming and other core activities while supporting the development of the sector. Support from this Fund will focus on areas that are both essential and often difficult to support from other sources. We have listened to our 134 stations and the needs that they have identified to us, outlining programs into four themes with clear objectives - Sustainability and Capacity-Building, Local Community News, Community Music and Expression and Emerging Distribution Technologies. (See *Community Radio Fund Appendices B and C* "Program Priorities and Governance & Fund Administration")

17. These four areas will focus on bringing the necessary skills and knowledge central to the ability of community radio stations to effectively serve their local communities through a variety of initiatives. Initiatives can vary from the establishment of programs and support services to help the development of community radio in areas underserved by existing media, such as rural areas, to initiatives focusing on improving community access and outreach programming, including support for production of local news and community affairs programs and programming and projects that highlight and promote local music and musicians of all genres. This CRFC proposal will fill the programming gap between the commercial radio sector and the CBC, and reincorporate the importance of the community radio sector.

18. Canada is one of the few major industrialized nations without a funding program for community radio. We have identified such programs in Australia, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Ireland, the Netherlands, France, the United States, and other countries. We found that funding is typically targeted and specific, and our proposal has attempted to reflect best practices in other jurisdictions. We would be happy to forward a summary of our research to the Commission by May 29.

19. We also looked to Canadian models, such as the Canadian Television Fund, and the Policy framework for community-based media, found in Broadcasting Public Notice CRTC 2002-61, both of which mandate support for the broadcasting system from broadcasters and distributors.

20. As the Commission might recall, we raised serious concerns about the future of community radio at the 2004 hearing on subscription radio. We asked that support for our sector be made a condition of licence for the new services. Chairman Dalfen and Commissioner Langford asked the subscription radio applicants if they would support community radio if the CRTC did not make such support a condition of licence. Satellite radio enthusiastically committed to doing so.

21. We do not know if satellite radio ever intended to follow through with the commitments they made at the hearing. We do know, however, that our numerous telephone calls, letters, and emails over several months were never returned.

22. We approached Chairman Dalfen about this situation, and you and the Commission staff were good enough to give them a nudge, which we very much appreciate. We subsequently received an indication that some sort of support might be coming from one of the services, but have still not heard from the other, 18 months after the hearing, and five months after their launch.

23. The licences of the satellite radio services expire in 2011. It will be many years before we will have a chance to call them to account. So we are here, today, to tell the Commission that the continuing existence and vitality of community radio in Canada cannot depend on charity from commercial broadcasters. We have been charged by the Commission -- by you -- to play an important and difficult public service role, a responsibility we cannot continue without support from within the broadcast system. Core funding for community radio should be a matter of regulation, and made a condition of licence.

24. Community radio is more than a collection of stations. It is a model of communications based not on market share or profit, but on ideas and people and a passion for local community service. The proposal we and our partners have made during this hearing is not about what we have done, but about what our communities dream of us doing. Our

objectives are clear, and we promise that with whatever support we receive we will work with the Commission to accomplish a great deal.

25. We know that a Commission with vision will acknowledge and support the increasingly important role community media must play in a globalized society. We believe that the future of Canadian media depends on it.

26. Thank you very much. We welcome questions from the Commission.

Appendix A: Membership Revenue Statistics

NCRA/ANREC Membership Revenue Statistics

The following is information as given by a sampling of our member stations for the period of April 1, 2003 to March 31, 2004. While this list is primarily campus radio stations, it does include both community and Native stations.

Station	Province	Staff	Grant Staff	Volunteers	Total Revenue	Students and/or University Support	Fundraising, Donations and Merchandise	Advertising and Sponsorships	Equipment and/or Studio Rentals	Events and Activities	Membership Fees	Grants (Unrestricted)	Program Distribution	Other
Station A	BC	0	0	12	871		300	571						
Station B	NU	2	1	8	19,127		603			18,404	120			
Station C	BC	1	0	100	20,595		1,600	5,300			2,795	10,900		
Station D	NB	1	1	60	22,800	20,000	2,000	800						
Station E	ON	5	0	2	23,110	23,110								
Station F	NS	5	1	30	24,455	24,000	305	150						
Station G	BC	4	0	400	27,107		9,813	3,269	880	1,145		12,000		
Station H	BC	1	0	50	31,506	30,214		1,292						
Station I	NB	2	0	150	58,509	52,159	1,700	4,650						
Station J	BC	2	0	80	78,375	73,095	2,485	2,795						
Station K	ON	3	0	60	97,301	96,161	80	1,060						
Station L	ON	5	5	150	120,000	110,000	6,000	4,000						
Station M	BC	2	4	300	125,500	115,000	2,500		1,500		6,500			
Station N	NB	3	3	160	127,000	112,000	15,000							
Station O	BC	3	0	200	134,692	117,823	6,040	2,072	496	3,245	5,016			
Station P	MB	6	0	150	137,500	87,500	35,600	12,000			2,400			
Station Q	MB	2	0	260	139,091	121,989	4,082	13,020						
Station R	BC	4	0	175	160,500	160,000	500							
Station S	ON	5	0	100	168,785	162,788	4,293	360	614				730	
Station T	NS	5	0	200	172,763	119,427	31,152	22,184						
Station U	AB	6	0	200	217,542	86,400	91,574	37,842	1,726					
Station V	ON	7	0	125	225,752	208,953	11,731	4,000	1,068					
Station W	QC	9	6	300	399,405	164,799	68,609	95,664	59,528	2,693	869	774	6,469	
Station X	AB	4	6	250	415,000	225,000	160,000	30,000						
Totals					2,947,286	2,110,418	455,967	241,029	65,812	25,487	17,700	12,000	11,674	7,199

Appendix B

Community Radio Fund of Canada: Program Priorities

The goal of the Community Radio Fund of Canada (CRFC) will be to provide not-for-profit community radio with support for local programming and other core activities, as well as for the development of the sector as a whole.

Support from the CRFC will focus on areas that are both essential and often difficult to fund from other sources. The needs of community radio stations will change over time; what follows are examples of current needs, prioritized by the CRFC Steering Committee:

1. Sustainability and Capacity-Building

Skills and knowledge central to the ability of community radio stations to effectively serve their local communities.

- Station staff education, and assistance to stations in crisis, in areas of core competency including governance, management, programming, volunteer support, community relations, technical infrastructure, and development.
- Assistance to national community radio associations to provide key support services and resources to local stations.
- Development of community radio in areas underserved by existing media, particularly rural areas.

2. Local Community News and Access

Local news, public affairs, arts, and community access and outreach programming, including training and production.

- Support for production of local news and community affairs programs, and assistance to community news production staff at the local level.
- Assistance to stations to digitize and distribute spoken word and news programming to other with campus and community radio stations.

3. Community Music and Expression

Programming and projects that highlight and promote local and emerging music and musicians of all genres, and community expression of all types.

- Support to stations for local artist outreach, music acquisition, and music libraries.
- Assistance to stations to record, digitize and distribute recordings from local artists to other with campus and community radio stations.
- Support for programming focusing on local music, including live events, and sharing of this programming with other community radios.

4. Emerging Distribution Technologies

Planning and implementation of systems to support new program delivery technologies, including digital, satellite, Internet, and WiMAX distribution.

- Study of digital distribution techniques appropriate for community radio content.
- Support for essential station computer technology and connectivity.

Appendix C

Community Radio Fund of Canada: Governance and Fund Administration

The goal of the Community Radio Fund of Canada will be to bring about significant improvement to the community radio sector within five years of establishment through the distribution of targeted support on a station-by-station basis. Support from the CRFC will be open to Canadian radio stations licensed by the CRTC as Community or Community-based Campus, and associations or groups of such stations. The estimated number of potential beneficiaries in 2006 is approximately 133 stations.

Governance

A Community Radio Fund of Canada Steering Committee has been formed by the National Campus and Community Radio Association, l'Alliance des radios communautaires du Canada, and l'Association des radiodiffuseurs communautaires du Québec.

The governance structure and functioning of the Community Radio Fund of Canada will be determined by its three founding associations in consultation with the CRTC and relevant government departments. The CRFC will be an independent organisation governed by its own Board of Directors. The directors of the CRFC will represent the full geographic, cultural, and linguistic diversity of community broadcasting in Canada.

Program Administration and Accountability

Reporting of CRFC activities will include full outside auditing of accounts and regular reporting on individual funding programs. The next CRTC reviews of campus and community radio policies will provide an opportunity to review the medium-term effectiveness of the CRFC as a whole.

The Fund will be administered by full-time Program Administrators who will manage the application process and evaluate projects. Program Administrators will not be employees of any community radio association or station.

Administration expenditures for the CRFC will be comparable to such costs for other similar funding organizations, and will vary depending on the Fund's level of support. This expense line will include Board process, office costs, salaries for Program Administrators, financial administration, and auditing.

The Fund will conduct its activities in both of Canada's official languages.



A Review of the Available Studies
On the Impact of Community Radio
On its Community

Jim Riva
Research Consultant
Almonte, Ontario

March 29, 2006

“Wireless broadcasting, which is universally recognized to be one of the most powerful instruments at our disposal for the transmission of idea, must not be regarded simply as a medium for the spreading of news and information; it must also be made to play its part in the raising of the standard of general culture, cooperating in the intellectual, artistic and moral training of the public mind for whose benefit the daily programs are planned.”

International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, 1935

Acknowledgements

In a three to four week research project there is little time to go back and follow-up. My thanks go to all those who responded to requests and provided information, in particular:

Special gratitude goes to Melissa Kaestner, NCRA/ANREC National Coordinator, who has been my contact and community radio sector advisor. Melissa was able to provide me with considerable background information and data sources. Thanks also go to John Harris Stevenson, NCRA/ANREC Advisory Board, who was able to define for me the realistic scope of this project.

Jim MacLeod, President of BBM, was gracious, accessible and able to coordinate the production of some data for me in a very short period of time.

Lotfi Chahdi kindly provided some data from Statistics Canada.

RFA, for directing me to information on their website.

The community radio station managers and their teams who responded to the emails and calls and took the time to email their stories.

Randy Geling (CFUV Victoria), Daniel Vandervoort (CKLN Ryerson), and Brian Heinrich (CKUL, now CKXU Lethbridge) for digging up, faxing, and couriering the surveys.

David Teasdale for permitting me to add his impact information as an appendix.

Janice Dupuis who dropped other commitments to assist me with the follow-up calls.

Introduction

“Instead of an authorial voice, preferably efficient administration, concentration of power, and the production of a standardized product, those who work at CIUT [University of Toronto Community Radio Inc.] value volunteerism, mutualism, and the equitable distribution of power and resources within the organization. One consequence is occasional turmoil and only slow deliberate change is possible in most cases, but another more important consequence is the creation of a range and dynamic of conversation and cultural exploration that is unrealizable within any existing media system.” (Fairchild, 267)

I was forewarned at the beginning of this brief research project that I may have difficulties finding adequate quantitative data to examine a balance of major, medium, and small markets. I did receive access to some BBM data and CRTC and Statistics Canada data. As well, I received a handful of campus/community station surveys. As the above statement from Charles Fairchild suggests, it is the qualitative information that provides the most significant community impact statements - the stories I received from the stations. Moreover, academic literature on the value of community radio to its local community is supported by these stories.

The following is an overview of the types of information and data I have reviewed. It identifies areas where impact on community can be better understood. I also suggest a process toward the preparation of a Canada wide survey.

Finding valid data for the community and community campus radio sector

“During our search for secondary research, we discovered that there is a lack of qualitative and quantitative research in the radio community, especially in the post-secondary market.” (CKXU, University of Lethbridge Student Listener Survey, 2005)

The challenge with finding meaningful quantitative data for the community and campus based sector lies much in the nature and essence of community radio.

Community radio in English Canada consists of mainly volunteers who organize, schedule, create programs, interview local people of interest, become local roving journalists – particularly in times of community crisis, create discourse where anyone can participate and contribute, and provides local musicians and artists an avenue for self-expression and growth. They are a training ground for journalistic, musical, artistic, and political expression, all of which helps define local culture and enhance issues of social justice. Charles Fairchild, in his book *Community Radio and Public Culture*, argues that “without question community radio stations in North America are structurally,

operationally, and ideologically marginal institutions.” (p.4) Its alternative programming, typically small budgets, community reach, and small audience numbers will always be reflected in community radio. It has been argued that community radio exists for the marginal portion of society who dismisses the mainstream in music, artistic and political expression. This is the nature of community radio and this is its strength.

When it comes to measuring the ‘impact’ of community radio in terms of commercial media indicators such as market share and revenues, community and campus radio will seldom register in any meaningful way. As long as community and campus based radio stations are fulfilling their prescribed roles, this will continue to be the case. Understanding the purpose and value of community radio must be ever present in order to collect the correct type of data to demonstrate its value to the local community.

There are very few statistically valid station-run surveys in the campus/community sector. The anecdotal reasons for this range from a desire for data but serious lack of funding to complete a professional survey, as one explained, a lack of interest in obtaining quantitative data because the resulting information would not be viewed as useful to the station’s goals and objectives. Simple listenership surveys do occur at many stations, however, they are ‘station centric,’ seldom statistically valid and not deemed meaningful by their owners beyond the stations’ intended purview.

Measurement tools

“Compared to film and television, radio is hardly noticed in academic literature and as a practice is mostly taught in a vocational context as a preparation for journalism. As a result, radio practices and policy lacks a language for critical reflection and analysis.”
(Lewis: *The Invisible Medium*, 1990)

BBM Canada performs a critical role in measuring market share of listenership primarily for commercial radio purposes. They supply radio and television audience rating services to the Canadian broadcast advertising industry. The data collected by BBM for the non-profit community radio sector is generally a by-product of their main client focus. A few stations within the community radio sector are subscribed BBM associates, however, most stations cannot afford or do not recognize a cost benefit to subscription. If the community station is not in a major centre of BBM survey activity, the results could also be misleading – e.g., a small BBM survey sample in smaller markets and effective for the commercial stations is often too small to accurately measure the community stations. Small data returns are generally suppressed from the BBM measurement surveys.

BBM data tells us that in 2004 1.2 percent of radio listeners tuned into 78 community/campus and travel/tourism stations in the English language format while 4.9 percent (47 stations) of the same categories tuned into the French language format (CRTC BPMR 2005). We know that some of the community/campus stations do not receive a single count on BBM surveys.

Jim MacLeod, President of BBM, kindly coordinated the collection of some data on 57 community/campus/Native radio stations situated in Canadian cities ranging from large, medium, and small populations. All but a few of these stations registered such low samples that the BBM software

automatically suppressed the data. By grouping multiple community stations' data by city, numbers became large enough to be identified and from which to draw general conclusions - but with serious caution as to its reliability. In fact, 11 stations of the 57 listed received no tuning over an eight-week period from September 5 to October 30, 2005. This data indicates that the station reach to the community surveyed is small, ranging from 1.1 to 8.2 percent. The data also confirms that the overall percentage of listenership is very small, ranging from 0.1 percent in St. John's (1 station represented) to as high as 3.5 percent in Edmonton (up to 4 stations represented) over this eight-week period.

By the very nature of community and campus radio listenership, BBM data is not going to provide meaningful 'impact' data. However, the results from the data noted above, given some measure of validity, does beg analysis to understand why one city captures a significant larger audience percentage than another. Understanding the available BBM data is an important element for an NCRA/ANREC review and survey of community/campus stations' listenership. In particular, individual cume (the unduplicated number of people tuned one or more times to a station in a given period of time) data will provide a base point for comparative research completed by individual stations and can validate BBM data on its ability to identify listenership size for the small community radio stations. To know that 1.2 percent of English speaking listenership tune into community radio is less meaningful than to understand that perhaps two or more hundred thousand people (as an example, number was not calculated) tune into community radio programming each week. The community radio sector may play a large role in the "Cultural Creative" (Ray and Anderson) in our society.

I recommended that the NCRA/ANREC make the necessary arrangements to access BBM data and to work closely with BBM to identify the data that is available for individual community radio stations, and understand how to interpret this data in terms meaningful to the mandate of the community/campus sector.

The **CRTC**, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, responsible for regulating Canada's broadcasting and telecommunications systems, collects financial information from its annual station returns that do permit a look at the broad source of revenues and expenditures for campus/community radio. CRTC revenue breakdown is in terms of local and national time sales, syndication productions, etc. However, a more detailed breakdown of revenue is required to complete a truly meaningful comparison of revenue sources by individual station or groups of stations for community/campus radio. For example, an NCRA/ANREC September 12, 2005 communiqué to Industry Canada provided a revenue breakdown for some of their members into categories such as student/university support, fundraising donations, advertising and sponsorship, events, etc. This more relevant information can become one valuable measurement or indicator in understanding how community stations are funded in relationship to the value they bring to their community. It is also an excellent example of how to look at information differently to make it meaningful for community radio. By adding relevancy to this data, the rate and timeliness of these returns from community radio stations could improve.

I recommend that as part of its survey, the NCRA/ANREC collect revenue data in categories that will indicate a station's relationship with its community and can be reconciled with the CRTC revenue totals.

If upon completion of an extensive survey, this categorization proves to be statistically meaningful, then *it should further be recommended that the NCRA/ANREC request of CRTC to include the revenue categorizations as part of revenue returns for community and campus radio stations if this is not currently the case, and publish data in this format for the community radio sector.*

Statistics Canada collects BBM data and CRTC information. Along with its own community demographic information, they have a communications section knowledgeable on the Canadian broadcasting regulations and its relevant data. Statistics Canada can assist in compiling useful reports to assist in learning more about community and campus listenership profiles.

Station surveys

Through an email request to all campus/community stations from the NCRA/ANREC and telephone/email follow-up to 71 stations by the consultant, four surveys were forthcoming from three stations and one of these stations provided BBM station data from 2002. Three other respondents indicated they were planning surveys over the next year. Some were hesitant to share their data, usually due to privacy concerns. Others could not respond within the short time frame available to them. All of the surveys received were from community-based campus stations including Ryerson campus in Toronto, the University of Victoria campus, and two from the University of Lethbridge campus. One focused on students on the campus, the others included students and the local community.

The purpose of these surveys included issues of station awareness, listening preferences and demographics of its donors, and the desire to improve fundraising and some advertising revenue. These surveys were successful in identifying levels of station awareness, programming and music preferences, gender and age variables, and favourite listening times among its listeners. Some identified average listening times while another compared the “conventional” ratio of music listening preferences to the alternative music at its campus station.

In general terms, the surveys provided meaningful information for the community stations. However, they do not provide an overall critical understanding of its constituents

Large, medium and small markets

The station surveys received from Toronto, Victoria, and Lethbridge do identify different values, each defined by its local culture and demographics.

CKXU Lethbridge, population 67,376 (Statistics Canada, 2001 census) attempts to reflect southern Alberta culture; the listenership survey suggests more Rock and Country music; the station struggles with brand identity on its own campus and looks for pragmatic marketing recommendations; the survey indicates that it is possible to increase its community listenership by several hundred people in the Lethbridge community over time.

CFUV Victoria, population 311,902 (ibid), rather than concerning itself with market share, wants to know more about the demographics of its listeners. CFUV listeners prefer Electric, Blues, Punk

and Jazz. The survey acknowledges that the diversity of its programs effect the breadth of listenership.

In 2002, CKLN Toronto, population 4,682,897 (ibid), boasted a 0.2 percent market share with a cume of 43,800 unique listeners. CKLN performs an annual survey to its donors. News and special programming appear to be of special interest to its constituency.

From this small example, it does appear that the interests among these communities vary in different cultural interests and organizational needs. A community station in a smaller population such as Lethbridge will still maintain a small percentage of market share, and therefore have a small listenership. A mid-size city, Victoria, is large enough to assume a following and can therefore entertain diverse programming with confidence. In Toronto, a community station has a miniscule market share that in real numbers reflects a significant following. However, the comparison does not provide the type or depth of information that provides clear insight into the impact and value of the stations on their communities.

Qualitative information – the literature

“If the public, as producer or audience, experiences his or her situation on many different levels simultaneously, the conflicts within the station reflect part of an external reality.’ Salter identifies the perspectives-in-conflict as three: those concerned with class, with participation and with process. ‘Each perspective represents a skeletal analysis of society, some commentary on the role of the media, and a prescription for Co-op programming and organizational structure.’” (Lewis and Booth p.130)

The books I reviewed for this study, while stressing different aspects of community radio and culture, also complemented each other by providing consistent common themes. The literature focuses clearly on community value, volunteerism, and democracy in action. Much of the literature reviewed analyses specific Canadian community radio stations for their studies. I found the literature to be a rich source for understanding the nature of individual stations. The literature that focuses on the development of community radio praises the Canadian government initiatives to support community radio, at the outset and through the development of meaningful policies. A short suggested reading list (see Bibliography) is suggested as preparation for developing an ‘impact’ survey.

Qualitative information – the stories

“The station happened to be broadcasting an historically significant hockey game at the time the budget announcement was made [by the student union to eliminate funding to the station to shut it down]. The news was promptly broadcast. By the next morning, twenty-six professors and hundreds of students had left voice-mail messages [in] the student union’s mailbox. The president of the university collected hundreds [of] email messages sent by concerned community members, students and alum. The response from the community and UNB provided a clear mandate to continue funding at appropriate levels.” (Email excerpt from CHSR- FM, Fredericton)

The stations unable to provide survey data were asked to provide a story that could best reflect the impact their station has on their community. Most of the stations contacted in person did take the time to provide an 'impact' story. It is through these stories that the passion of community and campus radio staff and volunteers is revealed. The stories colourfully cover the basics of this sector...volunteerism, exposure for local musicians and other local artists, focus on local news, especially during special events or crisis in the community, alternative points of view from mainstream media, protection of language rights and emphasis of language, culture and education on First Nation reserves. Some stations have 'bragging rights' as being the training grounds for prominent radio and television personalities in the public and private broadcasting sectors, particularly in news and journalism.

The stories and literature tell us that Native community stations perform a critical role regarding the survival of its languages, cultures, and health education. CICU, on the Eskasoni Indian Reserve, Nova Scotia, was developed in response to the wave of young people suicides in Big Cove, New Brunswick. The station manager of CICU has assisted with the development of three other Native radio stations on reserves, including CFTI in Big Cove. These stations focus on education as well as their First Nation traditions and languages.

Appendix A is a community impact statement from CJMQ 88.9 FM in Lennoxville, Quebec. It provides an excellent view into the diverse roles played by the community and campus radio sector and its impact on community across Canada.

The accessibility, diversity and alternate views required by community radio regulations come to life through the stories, which is fitting given that radio is an oral and aural communication medium. The challenge remains of how to quantify them in order to fully describe the impact of community and campus radio on its community in statistical terms.

Developing surveys

From what I have learned through this review, I recommend that multiple surveys be conducted that build upon each other. The gaps in understanding and accurately reflecting community radio from a quantitative point of view are great, yet I believe it is possible through a building-block information and learning process.

The literature suggests that a national survey to measure the impact of community radio on its community must begin with the stations' organization structures, management and levels of democracy (and therefore, conflict) in their decision making processes. If Fairchild is correct (and the other literature reviewed tends to corroborate that he is) in his thesis that the structure of organization and decision making in community radio is a microcosm of the community it represents, then this should be the beginning point. The initial survey should be structured in a manner that would categorize and measure the organization structures, the diversity of the people making the decisions and the level of democracy in the decision making process. Detailed revenue and expenditure data would be collected at this stage.

The second building block would consist of a survey that provides outcomes regarding the diverse

programming expected of community stations in terms, for example, of its distribution and diversity of spoken word programming (possible categories might include news, local issues of importance, nature of political discussions, diversity of interviews, and with educational programming, demographics of audience). The same process would occur for music selections and include access to local musicians and artists. Even alumni information for those who have made it a stepping-stone to occupations, vocations, and lifelong passions can become valid data regarding station impact to the local community and beyond. A correlation analysis between the first two studies would clarify the nature of organization structure in terms of its impact on community.

The third survey block would identify groups of selected stations that would best reflect the Canadian cultural mosaic (and CRTC categorizations of non-commercial and public radio). A listenership survey based on these groupings would provide extensive nation wide data. The survey would be built out of the knowledge gained from the first two surveys. A telephone survey may provide the most consistent and value added data. The outcomes from this study would provide the final elements for a complete picture of the impact that community radio stations have on their communities in Canada.

The fourth and final block would be to work with the CRTC, Statistics Canada, and BBM to develop measuring tools that would measure data appropriate and specific to community radio.

It is promising that the CRTC Broadcasting Policy Monitoring Report 2005, under the section of Social issues (p. 93), identify diversity and accessibility as two of its four social policy objectives. The report indicates that “the Commission put forward specific measures and objectives in order to...encourage broadcasting licensees to continue efforts to increase production and broadcast of regionally produced programs reflecting the realities of those communities...and recognize the special role of community radio stations.” (p. 96). Under Social issues section on diversity (pp. 96, 97), the Commission identifies “two clear objectives for the Canadian broadcasting system with respect to diversity: The broadcasting system should be a mirror in which all Canadians can see themselves...[and it] should be one in which producers, writers, technicians and artists from different cultural and social perspectives have the opportunity to create a variety of programming and to develop their skills.”

It is encouraging to note that CRTC continues to recognize the unique role of community radio stations. It is clear from this review that continued study to understand the significance of community radio on its community is required to fully appreciate its relation to the values of accessibility, diversity, education and training as well as democracy and social justice.

Summary

There is sufficient review of Canadian community radio stations through academic literature along with community radio stories that support the literature to draw a fairly clear picture of community radio in Canada. The traditional measuring tools for commercial radio are insufficient to indicate the impact and value of community radio to its community. The station surveys reviewed, while informative, tend to focus on typical marketing techniques that do not necessarily get to the essence of community impact. A careful strategy will be required to first understand the existing theories

on community radio, and second, to test those theories through strategically defined survey instruments.

*“These three models are more than an analytical system of differences: Politically and economically they are engaged in mutual struggle. The logic of the commercial system is to swallow up new markets and extend its frontiers to compete with, even undermine the public service domain. The logic of the public service is to defend national territories, industries and identities against such invasion. The logic of community radio is to defend human rights against the intrusion of both state and capital.” (Lewis, *The Invisible Medium* p. 10)*

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There were numerous web articles, emails, broadcasting regulations, letters etc. that I referred to in completing my research and have not documented below. These listing represent books, articles, reports, and surveys that became important sources for this study.

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Appendix A: A community impact statement (from Email)

From: David Teasdale, CJMQ, Lennoxville, Quebec
To: Jim Riva, Consultant
Date: Tue, March 21, 2006 1:10 pm

Hi, It was a pleasure to talk to you,

CJMQ is the only locally produced English Broadcaster in the Eastern Townships of Quebec.

There are 225,000 people in our broadcast zone.

It has been confirmed by two different sources that we have over 30,000 listeners.

CJMQ is part of the Emergency Broadcast System for our region. We work together with the local hospitals, Fire, Police departments as well as the local Amateur Radio Club. CJMQ was in fact one of the instigators of this effort.

The impact that we have on our community is faceted into the following spheres of activities.

We provide a voice to the English Community of the Townships that helps them to be a cohesive, lively, functioning community. The Eastern Townships is large and the English Community is spread out. The most effective way for us to keep in touch with what is going on in our community is through radio.

Radio is instant and readily available to all. Everyone already has the equipment required to listen to radio. The immediacy of radio has made it the first choice in emergency situations or disasters.

We announce all local events for non profit organizations for free. We give interviews that are not time limited to various groups touching on subjects that are important to all of us.

We are literally one phone call away, members of the community can call and know that we will be there in any type of situation.

Local commerce, especially those that are just starting out can't afford regular commercial rates for advertising so we give them advertising for a fraction of the cost and sometimes we advertise their commerce for free if necessary, until they can get on their feet. We know that if a local commerce succeeds it is likely that they will perhaps hire someone from opportunities for the members of the community.

Community radio offers an immediacy and a level of familiarity. The broadcasters heard on community radio are your neighbour, cousin, brother, son, daughter... people that you meet at the grocery store in essence they are you.

CJMQ is an all-volunteer organization, there are no paid positions at CJMQ.

Our transmitter and antenna used to be located on a tower that was poorly situated and perpetually for sale. The tower was not maintained by the owner and so no qualified technician would climb it.

We re-located to the Radio Canada tower, this move took us three years to accomplish, but that was mainly due to the paper work that had to be done with Industry Canada and the CRTC.

We were very lucky that the CBC assumed most of the cost of the physical transfer in order to correct an interference problem they were causing us with their CBC-2 transmissions. It turns out that the way to minimize the interference was for both antennas to be on the same tower. CBC was very helpful to us and even helped me to move the transmitter in the middle of a fierce snow blizzard that had ripped our coax off of our tower.

There used to be paid positions at CJMQ and virtually all of our money went into these salaries leaving nothing for equipment. All of our equipment was out of date, broken or not functioning to full capacity.

The move of the transmitter and antenna including engineering reports cost us about 20,000\$ the replacement of old equipment cost us 80,000\$ and we haven't even changed our aging, ailing transmitter yet. We estimate 70,000\$ for the change of the transmitter.

CJMQ impacts the community in other ways. We promote local talent by highlighting a different local band every week, producing a single for them and putting that single in our play rotation.

We started a Children's Story Telling Time, this involves community members coming to the station to read Children's stories which we then air every week.

We have received permission from many local authors to read their books on air so we pre-record their books and air them one chapter at a time.

We have another project where we take historical books of the region, and do the same thing with them. The first book we did was on Reginald Fessenden, Radio's First Voice, it was very appropriate that we do this book since Mr. Fessenden was crucial to the development of Radio and in fact without his invention radio and television would not be possible. Mr. Fessenden was born here in the Eastern Townships and attended Bishop's.

We are currently working on two books both written by C.M. Day in 1863, titled respectively "Pioneers of the Eastern Township" and "The History of the Eastern Townships".

Community members can become involved at all levels of the station. We teach them broadcasting, they can become members of our Board of Directors, or they can get hands on at the station and see what goes into operating a radio station.

We have set up a computer play list that plays whenever there is no live show on. This list is made up of songs by local, regional, provincial, and Canadian artists in that order, as well as classic rock hits. We take two songs and put them together using a computer and we add a voice announcing what the songs were and who the author was. We get many calls and letters from listeners complimenting us on the playlist.

We get several calls asking about these songs and where they can buy them, most of the time the callers are asking about new songs by local artists.

CJMQ attends local events and provides music for many of these events, including Friendship Day, Winter Fun Day, Townshippers Day and the local fairs.

CJMQ also covers local sports events and breaking news stories live. We have covered train derailments, major fires and flooding. People listening to CJMQ knew right away whether or not there were any toxic leaks from the train derailments, or if everyone got out of the apartment building that burned to the ground and was home to 40 students. We had parents call us after and thanked us for the coverage.

We have done interviews with the local hospitals, fire dept. police, juvi suicide prevention, the diabetic association etc. describing what services are available and whether or not they are available in English.

The radio station is the uniting force of the community especially given the geographically dispersed nature of our community.

When someone does an interview on community radio, we don't limit them to 30 seconds like commercial radio stations do. We also have less advertising so we have more time for content and music. Community radio tends to be more laid back and less stressful to listen to than commercial radio.

Commercial radio will never be able to cover stories the way community radio stations do because they have to answer to their owners and advertisers, that is why during the ice storm Montreal based stations stopped talking about conditions in the Townships or where citizens could go for services as soon as the power was back on in Montreal, in spite of the fact that some regions of the Townships were without power for three months.

Well I guess that is it for now, I'll probably think of more after.

David

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