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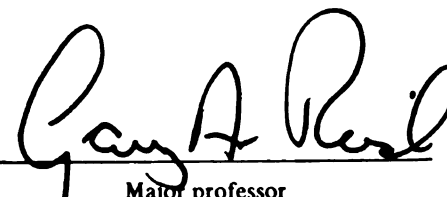University**

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COMPARATIVE AUDIENCE RESEARCH METHODS AND AN APPLIED
CASE STUDY FOR WDBM-FM

presented by

Lindsay E. Peters

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of the requirements for

_____M.A._____ degree in Telecommunication

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COMPARATIVE RADIO RESEARCH METHODS AND AN APPLIED CASE
STUDY FOR WDBM-FM

By

Lindsay E. Peters

A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Telecommunication

2001

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ABSTRACT

COMPARATIVE RADIO RESEARCH METHODS AND AN APPLIED CASE
STUDY FOR WDBM-FM

By

Lindsay E. Peters

In today's competitive radio marketplace, ratings are proving to be
even more important than in the past. Arbitron, the nationwide leader in
quantitative radio audience research, is useful in providing a measurement of
a radio audience. It does not, however, provide qualitative audience research
data to be used by radio program directors. Radio audiences are very
dynamic and often hard to study. This thesis looks at the range of audience
research possibilities. A web based qualitative study for WDBM-FM is
compared and contrasted with Arbitron data to offer a broad based view of
audience research methods. In addition, this thesis illustrates the importance
of examining both qualitative and quantitative methods to achieve the clearest
picture of a radio station's performance.

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Figure 87: Non-Co

Figure 88: Arbitror
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INTRODUCTION

Commercial radio is a business, and every commercial radio station exists to make money. Radio also exists to satisfy the needs of a particular audience. To attain a profit and to cater to a group of listeners, stations must to be in touch with their audience. The only way to really understand a radio audience is to research it. Radio audiences are challenging to study though. Radio is available everywhere and at any time of the day. Listening intensity can vary from active (a teenager waiting by the phone to call a station to win concert tickets) to passive (someone who turned the radio on for background noise), and listening can take place alone or with a group.

Since the Telecommunications Act of 1996, consolidation of radio station ownership has significantly changed the radio industry. The initial fear was that competition would decrease through consolidation, but radio today really has more competition than it ever had in the past. Before the Act, it was common for individuals to own one or two stations. It was also becoming common for stations to not make a profit or even break even. Now, companies such as Clear Channel Communications and Infinity Broadcasting Corporation own hundreds to thousands of stations as well as concert promotions companies and other media outlets. Since these huge corporations have been competing to buy U.S. radio stations in the past few years, the price of radio stations has skyrocketed. In July 2001, the price of U.S. radio stations ranged from $15,000 to $60 million. And the price of the most desirable radio stations can exceed $100 million. In the week of July

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30, 2001 alone, $70.9 million changed hands in the acquisition of AM and FM stations in the United States. As of July 30, 2001, 115 stations and $365,117, 555 changed hands in 2001 (Rathburn). Radio stations are not only profitable today, but some of their parent companies are now worth billions of dollars.

Commercial radio stations make this money through the sale of advertising. Advertisements are sold by sales managers and sales staffs. These people are in touch with the makeup and tastes of listeners of a radio station to find appropriate customers to advertise on their station(s). Sales managers and sales staff gain this information through qualitative and quantitative data. A program director analyzes much of this data for a radio station.

Programming a radio station is more work than people may think it is. In addition to carrying out and analyzing research, a program director selects the musical and non-musical programming to be aired on a radio station. Program directors must also critique on-air staff members' performance to continually help improve the overall sound of the station. In addition, they work closely with the station manager as well as the sales, marketing, promotion, production and music directors.

A program director is not a researcher. But in order to be effective, he or she needs to take research into consideration, instead of just intuition. Dependence on listener mail or phone requests can also lead to biased results because the kind of people who interact with a radio station generally make up no more than one to two percent of the audience. Disc jockeys

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seem as though they are in good touch with the music played on radio stations. But focusing on their own musical preferences can be too narrow. Likewise, record sales do not reflect how a radio station should sound. Also, every single radio market in the United States has unique characteristics and listeners with different needs, expectations and musical tastes. Today, many people just take radio for granted. Even in today's competitive environment, some program directors still make decisions based on intuition. But the most successful radio stations today conduct audience research on a regular basis.

There are many different styles of valid audience research, and all have strengths and weaknesses. By using both quantitative and qualitative methods, programmers can get a clearer picture of their audience. Quantitative methods are those that involve a large enough sample to generalize the results to a larger population. Qualitative methods are those that are an analysis of a phenomenon and do not depend on the measurement of variables. They generally have smaller samples. Quantitative data, such as the data provided by Arbitron, can give information on what programming was the most successful on a radio station, as well as what demographic group made up the listening audience. Other quantitative methods, such as call-out research and auditorium tests, tell program directors the musical tastes of a population. And qualitative research methods, such as focus groups, can give a program director information on a population's opinions on types of music, specific radio stations or just radio in general.

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There are new options that the Internet and E-mail now provide for radio research in the 21st century. By looking for fresh ways to understand what his or her audience expects from the radio, a program director may gain an advantage over his or her competitors. It is important to be in touch with a radio station's target audience, regardless of how large or small a market is. A target audience is a specific group of people a radio station aims to reach. No matter whether radio listening is online, in the car, at home or at work, there are common factors for a program director to keep in mind: audience listening habits, general image of a station, favorite songs and favorite personalities.

No research method is perfect. Sample sizes may not be large enough to provide statistically significant results, and response rates can be poor. Thus samples will not be representative of the radio listening audience. Sometimes participants' responses are confusing. In addition, ratings diaries and other forms of measurement often present poor recall of station information. Most importantly, some forms of audience research methods just do not give a program directors enough significant information to provide any assistance in improving a radio station's programming. Research alone does not make radio stations successful, but can help improve them. Because each audience research method has strengths and weaknesses, the more types of research a program director uses, the clearer the picture will become. Experimenting with the effectiveness of newer audience research methods may be a way to become more competitive as well.

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Exhibiting great attention to detail when researching is the most effective way to have successful results. Walter McDowell, Ph.D., spent over 20 years in television broadcasting. He is the author of a book entitled, Troubleshooting Audience Research: Detecting Problems in Design, Execution and Interpretation. He said, "Quick and dirty short cuts will usually result in bad information and therefore bad management decisions" (12). Every study must be credible. Taking the appropriate precautions in designing, planning, executing and interpreting will minimize error.

The purpose of this study is to review and apply audience research in a practical way as a basis for recommendation for future research that program directors could conduct themselves. This thesis is divided among the following topics: why it is important to analyze audience research methods; current issues for the radio industry; ratings; auditorium music tests; call-out music research; focus group research; perceptual studies; new online research methods; a web survey for WDBM-FM; and a conclusion.

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CHAPTER 1
WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO ANYLYZE AUDIENCE RESEARCH METHODS

James Webster, Patricia Phalen and Lawrence Lichty are authors of a book entitled, <u>Ratings Analysis: The Theory and Practice of Audience Research</u>. In their book, they stated, "Radio, television and Internet audiences are elusive commodities. Dispersed over vast geographic areas, they remain unseen by the media and their advertisers. It is only through audience research that they become visible" (1).

There are three things every radio station strives to do:

-Maintain an audience,
-Increase the current audience's time spent listening and,
-Attract new listeners.

In addition to using intuition, some commercial radio program directors conduct the same types of audience research over and over again, even methods that do not seem to significantly improve the overall sound and/or overall ratings of a station. Like many people, some programmers resist change. Programmers accept the limitations that many traditional research methods have because of the cost of higher quality data. Program directors are increasingly in charge of more than one radio station, so even the time spent on the flawed methods is decreased. Conducting traditional research methods again and again is generally easier than trying new, progressive ideas. Continual consolidation in the radio world and the increased price of radio stations has caused profit margins to become more important than ever before. Industry changes demand radio professionals to work harder. Part of that process is finding fresh ways to study audiences.

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For some time, non-commercial radio programmers resisted audience research altogether. Alan G. Stavitsky, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor at the University of Oregon in the School of Journalism and Communication. In an article he wrote in the Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media, he said, "For many years, public radio managers widely resisted the conduct and application of audience research as marking the ascendance of market considerations over public broadcasting's social and cultural imperatives. Today audience research is extensively utilized by public radio managers, both network and station based, when making decisions about programming and fundraising" (177). Research is even important for stations that are non-profit organizations. There is no other way to know how to please an audience.

As stated, many accepted audience research methods are somewhat inadequate. This thesis will examine current and traditional methods of audience research. It will cover their strengths and weaknesses in relation to what a program director should get out of them. This thesis will also examine new ways for program directors to explore the tastes and habits of a listening audience through online methods.

College radio is also an outlet where program directors make many intuitive decisions. It is rare to find a station that does research on a regular basis. WDBM-FM is the focus of the survey conducted for and analyzed in this paper. WDBM is a student-run, non-commercial radio station on the campus of Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan. Though

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WDBM receives its operating funds from students, currently there are no funds in the budget to conduct audience research on a regular basis. Being a non-commercial radio station, WDBM does not necessarily have to worry about ratings to survive, but audience research methods such as surveys, ratings and call-out research could certainly help the station. In addition to the monetary issues, WDBM simply does not have enough staff to handle the time involved with analysis of audience research. With the exception of the Professional General Manager, Gary Reid, everyone at WDBM is a college student, and almost all that are involved are volunteers.

As is the case for any commercial radio station, it is important for WDBM to find out what its listeners want. Non-commercial and commercial radio stations alike serve to satisfy their audience. Those preferences are uncovered through audience research. The goal of the WDBM study is to attempt to inventory the thoughts of listeners.

Instead of trying traditional methods, an Internet survey was created for the WDBM web site. It is essentially a qualitative study with some quantitative questions to provide further insight into the listening audience. This was one way to begin studying a station that has had minimal research over the 12 years it has been on the FM dial. Qualitative studies are a great way to begin studying an audience. They can give a snapshot of an audience and help create topics and questions for future audience research. The WDBM study also serves as a guide in finding out the effectiveness of research conducted online.

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The purpose of this thesis is to review and apply audience research in a practical way as a basis for recommendation for future research that program directors could conduct themselves. This paper will not discuss specific ways to increase station revenue through improving time spent listening or increase the cumulative audience. This thesis is meant to help program directors specifically. But if a program director learns to effectively research his or her audience, it is likely that the station will attract more listeners, the time spent listening to a station will increase and an increase in revenue may follow.

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CHAPTER 2
CURRENT ISSUES FOR THE RADIO INDUSTRY

In 2001, consolidation of ownership of radio stations in the United States has affected the way radio stations research their audiences. Many radio companies own up to seven radio stations in one market. All those stations must still compete against one another and all must make money. A web site is maintained for Mark Kassoff & Co. at www.kassoff.com. Mark Kassoff & Co. conduct audience research, market research, format research, perceptual studies, focus groups and auditorium music tests. On the web site, Kassoff said that radio sales people now require their stations' combined share of the audience in order to sell advertising time in packages across all stations. Today, program directors want to take fewer chances in musical choices, because so much more money is now on the line.

Program directors are very much affected by radio ownership consolidation. With the abundance of niche formats such as Alternative and Adult Album Alternative, Active Rock and Classic Rock, radio audiences may be smaller than in the past, but have become more specific groups. Serving their needs takes considerably more work than in the past because there are simply more choices on the dial. In addition to fragmentation caused by niche formats, program directors have to deal with the fact that their audiences are fragmented because of other media such as the Internet, CDs, broadcast television, cable television, satellite radio and even cell phones. These issues force program directors to target a more specific audience than in the past.

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Another issue for radio today is the issue of homogenization. Some people, inside and outside of radio, argue that consolidation has homogenized the sound of radio. Former Federal Communications Commission Chairman William Kennard said, "As more and more licenses get concentrated in fewer and fewer hands, it means less opportunity for new voices, fresh formats, experimental formats to come to the airwaves" (Baxter and Hochman 28). For example, in May 1999, 40 percent of the top ten songs were all played on Alternative formatted radio stations, regardless of the market (Baxter and Hochman 24).

Greg Kot published an article in Rolling Stone in August 2001. He spoke with several people in the radio and music industries. He said, "The days of local radio breaking new records, taking chances on unknown acts and responding to its audience's interest have all but disappeared. National playlists are in the hands of corporate programmers, who are influenced by big-label money funneled into the station by independent radio promoters" (25). Miles Copeland, chairman of an independent record label, agreed. He said, "The airwaves are a public trust, but we have given that up and let one small group of people heist all the country's programming decisions (Kot 25)."

In order to get a song considered on commercial radio, Kot said that a record label must put up a large amount of money. This may sound like a great way to get non-traditional revenue for a radio station. Seeing the larger picture may better help program directors though. The short-term answer to revenue may not produce a long-term profit. If radio stations continue to

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decrease their playlists, Ratings may decrease and radio stations will not be able to charge as much for advertising, which is by far their primary source of revenue. Kot noted the latest Arbitron ratings figures. The total audience for radio has remained steady, but time spent listening has gone down 13 percent. Additionally, there has been a 10 percent decline in listening for teens and eight percent decline for people ages 18 to 24 (Kot 25). Many people between these ages store music on their computer that they downloaded from the Internet. Programs such as LimeWire and Napster may have become their way to find out about music.

Additionally Kot noted that 30,000 CDs are released every year. That averages out to about 536 CDs a week. If an average CD has 12 songs on it, than an average of 6,432 songs come out every week. A certain amount of those musical pieces will not be appropriate for radio, but Kot noted that in one recent week the 40 top Alternative radio stations only added a total of 16 new songs. The largest Contemporary Hit Radio stations, originally known as Top 40 stations, added a total of 20 (Kot 25). It is surprising to see that the Alternative stations, once known to play new music first, added fewer songs than Contemporary Hit Radio stations which are still today known to be repetitive by nature of the format. Either way, 16 to 20 new songs is a very small number being exposed to listeners, based on the quantity of CDs released weekly. Program directors may be better off programming their station(s) based on audience research, not based on record company suggestions.

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Another factor program directors face in the 21st century is Internet development. Edison Media Research is a market research firm based in Somerville, New Jersey, which serves clients in the radio and record industries, as well as conducts exit polls for politicians. Additionally, Edison conducts online surveys and mail-back surveys. Edison also works with other radio companies to release studies on radio and the Internet. Edison acknowledged that the number of Americans who have listened to radio stations online has increased from just six percent of Americans in 1998 to 52 percent as of July 2001 (www.edisonmediaresearch.com). This indicates that radio stations have the potential to maintain current listeners and gain a significant amount of new listeners through web development and online streaming. With the advent of the Internet, it has become possible to encode a radio signal to air it over the Internet. This is called streaming. Some radio stations air their AM or FM signal. Others have found that unique online niche or genre-specific programming is popular among listeners. Whatever choice is made, developing web initiatives may further help a radio station survive in the 21st century. Some radio stations today are hiring Internet directors to create and maintain a web site and possibly handle streaming.

Having these new programming outlets on the Internet requires more audience research. When do listeners listen online? Where do they do it—at work or at home? How long do they listen? These are a few of the questions that have risen for program directors today.

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Money spent online has increased with overall time spent online. An article by Don Jeffrey published in Billboard in July 1999 examined a survey of music and the Internet by Xceed Intelligence. Xceed Intelligence is a research and analysis group specializing in online business strategies. It is based in New York City. Xceed Intelligence estimated that $2.53 billion will be spent on music online by 2003. The survey entitled "Music and the Internet: The Digital Revolution," stated that the Internet is the fastest growing mass medium ever (Jeffrey 59). Morgan Stanley said that it took radio 38 years to reach 50 million users, it took television 13 years and it took the Internet only five years (Jeffrey 59). Program directors who embrace the new technology may be more successful than those who are afraid of it. There is money to be made and listeners to be gained on the Internet.

Today, thinking about programming to a global audience when streaming online is also a good idea. Anyone in the world with a computer can listen to a streamed station. If a station simulcasts the FM or AM signal, no immediate programming changes need to be made. But if streaming a unique radio station online, issues such as local news become less important when broadcasting to the entire world. Other factors come into play, such as choosing an appropriate language or number of languages to use for the broadcast. This certainly makes a programmer's job a little more stressful than before. One might even argue that a second program director is needed at a radio station—one for the FM or AM station, and one for the Internet station.

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Radio's strength certainly lies in serving a local audience, but stations also have the ability to gain new listeners and revenue through an imaginative online programming strategy. Some advertisers could display banner ads on a radio station's web site instead of, or in addition to, over-the-air advertisements. Examples might be national advertisements aimed at a larger, less local group of people through large international companies such as Pepsi or McDonald's. Again, to achieve that audience, research must be completed. Conducting this research online is a good idea because the research will pertain to the habits of people using the Internet.

Computer penetration is not even among all Americans. This also affects how programmers will make decisions pertaining to online content. The Xceed Intelligence survey found that while 48 percent of the United States is male, 58 percent of Internet users are male. In addition, 24 percent of Americans are college graduates, but 50 percent of Internet users are college graduates. Likewise, the average U.S. household income is around $34,000, but it is $61,500 for Internet households. Also mentioned is that the average age in the U.S. is 35, but online it is between 21 and 30. Finally, though America is 72.1 percent white, 88.3 percent of online users are white (Jeffrey 59). These demographic factors must be understood when determining an effective online programming strategy.

Across the border in Canada, Internet usage is up as well. John Harding is a writer for Marketing Magazine. In an article published in July 2000, he discussed Internet use among Canadians aged 18 or older. Usage

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increased from 40 percent in 1999 to 55 percent in 2000. Fifteen percent of

those people made purchases online. Time spent listening to radio is

unaffected by Internet usage, which is good news for program directors. He

said, "Given radio's passive nature and how listening allows one to carry on

parallel activities, this finding is not surprising" (11).

Broadband is helping more and more people use streaming media

such as online radio stations. The number of streaming media users jumped

38 percent between January and July of 2000. This could become a blessing

or a curse for radio stations, depending on whether or not they stream their

broadcast signal. Sherman Fridman is a writer for Newsbytes. Newsbytes

News Network is a division of The Washington Post Newspaper. It is a news

service focusing solely on information technology. It was founded in 1983 and

is based in Arlington, Virginia. Fridman said that Broadband and even

satellite-delivered content could pose a challenge and opportunity for

traditional media providers. He added, "This competition will force local

stations and other media providers to shift their focus onto the Internet and

develop original online content"

(http://www.newsbytes.com/news/00/150445.html).

In October 2000, the American Federation of Television and Radio

Announcers (AFTRA) came to an agreement that requires any AFTRA

member to receive compensation for any of his or her commercials or

promotional spots that are played online. The compensation is 300 percent of

his or her session fee and that compensation covers a one year period. After

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that, an additional 300 percent is due to renew usage for nine months (Currents Online-August 2001: www.beradio.com). In order to prevent paying the significant fees, some radio stations have inserted new promotional spots or other non-AFTRA member commercials on the online audio signal. Others have stopped webcasting altogether. Whatever the stations choose, commercials are now at a huge disadvantage due to this ruling.

Another roadblock for radio stations was put up in August 2001. The court ruling on August 3, 2001 forces radio stations that stream to pay royalties to musicians. This ruling confirms that the Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998 applies to radio broadcasters. This ruling could severely hurt the growth of radio station streaming initiatives. No rate has been set for the royalty fees, but all the fees will be retroactive to the time that each radio station began streaming (Currents Online-August 2001: www.beradio.com). Due to the AFTRA fees and musician royalty fees, many radio stations across the U.S. have completely ceased their streaming efforts.

Satellite radio is also a new competitor for traditional radio listeners. XM and Sirius are the two companies who are both launching satellite radio channels that transmit digitally. Satellite delivered radio will provide about 100 radio channels that can be listened to anywhere in the entire United States. There is a monthly fee of between $10 and $12, which could be absorbed into a monthly lease for receivers in cars. XM has a budget of $100 million to advertise the service and major investors include Clear Channel Communications, DirecTV and General Motors. Sirius has raised $1 billion

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and has partnerships with Ford, BMW, and DaimlerChrysler. Most channels will be very specific niche formats, such as News, Talk, Reggae, Alternative and Latin. Some of the stations will be non-commercial, making them even more tempting to consumers. XM expects the complete roll out of its services to happen by November 2001 (Alleyne 8). Sirius has delayed the launch of its service until 2002.

Even given the increase in potential competition from the Internet and satellite delivered radio, traditional AM and FM radio are not going to disappear. Paragon Research is a research and consulting firm that specializes in traditional media, emerging media, and entertainment. Paragon provides strategies for media companies to increase market share. The company is based in Denver, and has offices New Hampshire, California and the U.K. Paragon Research released a study about Alternative music in March of 2000. Paragon surveyed 704 self-identified Alternative music listeners ages 15 to 39, with a 60/40 ratio of males to females. Paragon stated that Alternative music listeners use traditional radio as their primary source for Alternative music. The breakdown is as follows:

Sex/Age source	Percent who state radio as their primary Alternative music
F, 15-24	79
F, 25-34	63
F, 35-39	77
M, 15-24	71
M, 25-34	78
M, 35-39	78
Total Female	73
Total Male	75

Table 1: _National Alternative Study,_ Paragon Research, March 2000.

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The above figures illustrate that Alternative music listeners in many age groups continue to listen to the radio to hear the music they like. The average person also spent a considerable amount of time with radio. The average person in the year 2000 spent more than 9 hours a day consuming media, with nearly 80 percent of their time spent with radio or some form of television (Webster, Phalen and Lichty 11). Napster and Lime Wire are free computer programs that enable Internet users to locate and share media files such as songs or videos with anyone else who downloads Napster or Lime Wire onto their computer. Downloading means to load a file from the Internet onto a personal computer. These programs allow users to download music for free and create their own playlists. Based on the numbers from the Webster, Phalen and Lichty, the average person is still spending such a large amount of time with radio or TV daily. So music software sharing services such as Napster and Lime Wire may not be a horrible threat to music based radio stations. New technology does not always replace old technology. Traditional radio stations that embrace new technology may be able to fight the competition coming from file sharing Internet programs.

As mentioned, file sharing programs such as Napster and Lime Wire are new forms of competition for radio. As more and more of these music outlets pop up, it could mean less and less time spent with radio. To maintain time spent with radio, or better yet to increase it, it is necessary for radio stations to work harder. To get on a level playing field with file sharing services, radio stations can use their clout with record companies to capitalize

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on the appeal of downloading music. By working with the major record companies that radio stations know so well, stations can offer their own exclusive music downloads on their web site.

Another issue in radio today is the success of talk and AM radio. Talk and AM radio, long considered dead, are doing extremely well. In Fall 2000, News/Talk radio stations had the highest listenership of any radio format. The largest gains were from adult listeners between the ages of 35 and 64. The music formatted radio stations that might take a hit from losing listeners to talk and AM radio are Oldies and Album Oriented Rock (Bachman 16). Programmers at those formats have the task of finding ways to get their listeners back. More news and local information may be the key. Again audience research is important to find the best way to attract listeners to a radio station.

Finally, one other issue for the radio industry today is that much of radio listening is secondary. Today most people do not gather around their radio at night, like in the past before TV was invented. Robert Balon is the CEO of The Benchmark Company, a broadcast research and consulting firm based in Austin, Texas. Balon has conducted research in every radio format. He also has done a considerable amount of work with talk radio stations and networks. He noted in his book, <u>The New Rules of the Ratings Game</u>, that only five percent of radio listening is primary (10). The other 95 percent of listening is secondary, such as in the car, at work, while doing housework or in the morning while getting ready for work or school. Listeners may be able

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to better recall what he or she was *doing* when listening, rather than what he

or she *heard*. This makes the job of a program director more complex.

Instead of just playing what music has tested well and coordinating

promotions that are appropriate for the target audience, programmers must

also be in touch with exactly what the station's listeners are doing when they

are listening. Incorporating these sorts of lifestyle elements into the music log

may help disc jockeys communicate to listeners most effectively. Balon

explained, "The more one understands their lives and the rituals they create

for themselves throughout the day, the better one can market a station to a

group of listeners" (12). For example, some very successful radio stations

specifically target at work radio listeners.

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CHAPTER 3
RATINGS

Definition

The term "ratings" is a broad term for quantitative data compiled over time that measure audience size. Arbitron is a company that is the worldwide leader in compiling radio ratings. It is considered the standard in quantitative audience measurement for the radio industry. Radio stations, advertisers, advertising agencies, media buying services, national representative firms, radio networks, radio syndicators and other radio industry vendors use Arbitron almost exclusively.

The actual definition of a Rating is the percentage of households or people tuned to a particular radio station, out of the total population of people who have radios in a certain market. Arbitron defines a market. It is usually a city and its surrounding area, such as Lansing/East Lansing or Detroit. A Share is another common piece of data used by program directors. The definition of a Share is a percentage of households or people tuned to a particular radio station, out of all those people who had their radio on at a given period of time in a certain market.

According to Arbitron, a seven day diary is used to measure audiences in about 260 markets in the United States. Survey participants are selected by a pure random selection process and over one million people return diaries to Arbitron per year. In addition to local market ratings books, county and national reports are made to examine listening on a larger scale, as well as examine network and syndicated listening.

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Ratings and Shares are quantitative data. These figures answer "how many" but not "why." Ratings and Shares are the most common forms of data mentioned about radio stations. These figures are compiled into books for radio stations. Ratings books are put together once a year, twice a year, or every season, depending on market size. Each book contains twelve weeks of records that are divided into three month long trend periods. Basically, the higher the Ratings and Shares a station has, the more that station can charge advertisers. Higher Ratings equal more money.

An industry newsletter published by Arbitron biannually is called PD News. In the Spring 2001 newsletter, there was an explanation of how a radio station performs in a ratings period. Two things determine how a radio station fared: Cume and Average Quarter Hour (AQH) persons. Cume is an abbreviation for cumulative and expresses the total number of different listeners who tune in to a radio station in a given week. Average Quarter Hour persons is the average number of listeners tuned in to a radio station for at least five minutes in an average 15-minute block. The combination of Cume and time spent listening equal the Average Quarter Hour Ratings and Average Quarter Hour Shares. Many program directors, general managers and owners are not aware of this (PD News, Spring 2001).

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Webster, Phalen and Lichty said, "In order to sell commercial time, the electronic media must attract the audience that gives value to time. Broadly speaking, that is the job of a programmer. In the world of advertiser-supported media, the programmer sets the bait that lures the audience. To do this, he or she must know who comprises that audience" (35). Ratings are the guidelines to setting advertising rates and they are what delivers profit to radio stations. Ratings basically say <u>how many</u> people listened to a radio station. Additionally, Arbitron data shows advertisers what <u>type</u> of person (age and sex) listened at a certain time. Arbitron data also tells a programmer how often these people tune in and out and how long they listen. And, Arbitron data tells if a person listened in the car, at home or at work. This way an advertiser can decide on the best time to target a specific demographic audience. Again, increased audience size means increased value of advertising time.

Arbitron also supplies information on P1 and P2 listeners. P1 listeners are those who chose a given station as their favorite. P2 listeners are those who chose a given station as their second favorite. By examining this information, program directors can learn about the percentage of people who chose their station as their favorite and a breakdown of percentages for all the different stations they chose as their second favorite. Program directors can also see the percentage of their listeners that are P2 listeners and a breakdown with percentages of every station that is the first choice for them.

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This is a useful way to find out what stations are a radio station's main competitors.

Market and demographic information are included in Arbitron data. Examples include population size, ratio of men to women in a market and number of people from every race in the market. In addition, Arbitron details the age range that the largest percentage of listeners a radio station has.

Arbitron not only has information on where people in a market listened, but also on where listeners actually live and work. This is broken down by zip code and is presented with a percentage of listeners in each zip code for workplace and for home. This is a way for program directors to learn where they have many listeners and in what areas of a market they can work to attract new listeners.

Further, Arbitron can tell programmers in what programs and times of day the station is most successful. Arbitron has data on how a station performed in every daypart. A daypart is a block of time in the day such at 6 AM to 10 AM or 3 PM to 7 PM. A programmer can look at Ratings and Shares for a station for an entire week, a single day, or even a four hour block on a particular day of the week. Graphs are also available to illustrate how a station performs each hour in a day. There is even a breakdown based on age of how many quarter hours people spend with a radio station in a week.

Ratings books can help find the key to a problem a station may think it has with a particular radio program. For example, if a program's Ratings are lower than acceptable, it may be because fewer people in general listen to the

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radio at the time the program airs. Program directors can find out by looking at the above-mentioned graphs. Listeners may have tuned to another station and that will be reflected in higher Ratings figures for another station. Or Ratings for every station may decline, reflecting the choice to use another medium, such as television, at that time of day.

Listening trends can be carefully examined with Arbitron data. This is especially useful to program directors. It cannot tell a programmer *why* listening increased or decreased, but *when* it happened. After finding out the information, programmers can try to prevent tuneout in the future by making interpretive assumptions. These assumptions may suggest shifting the programming schedule or possibly canceling programming that is not getting the number of listeners wanted by a station.

In addition to looking at listening trends by hour and day, there is another effective way to examine listening trends. Program directors can look at figures that show what station a specific radio station's P1 listeners listened to most often six months prior to filling out the ratings diary. The list is basically a prior recall of diary keepers. Recall is the ability to remember some part of the name of a radio station. The percentage listed next to each radio station is the number of current P1 listeners who said they listened to that station six months ago. That number expresses the percentage of listeners a station lost to the programmer's own station. If a programmer's own station is listed, then that percentage is the number of people who have been listening for at least six months. Likewise, a program director can look

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at other stations' lists to see if he or she lost any of his or her listeners to other stations in the market.

Another useful type of information ratings books provide is a statistic called Exclusive Cume. This is the number of people who listen to just one particular radio station during a specific daypart (Webster, Phalen and Lichty 46). Exclusive Cume is a measure of station loyalty.

Cume duplication is also a useful piece of data found in ratings books. Cume duplication is the term for a statistic that lists all the combinations of stations that individuals heard, which is also a measure of station loyalty. Cume duplication is illustrated through a chart that lists every radio station in the market (or every format in a market) across a column and also across a row. At each intersection of each row and column, there is a number. The numbers represent a percentage of people who listen to each combination of individual stations or combination of formats.

In <u>Ratings Analysis: The Theory and Practice of Audience Research</u>, loyalty is said to be important to programmers for three reasons:

-It can give them a better feel for their audience and how they use programming.

-Audience loyalty is closely related to advertising concepts like reach and frequency, so it can have an impact on how the audience is sold.

-Loyalty can provide an important clue about how to build and maintain the current audience, often through effective use of promotions (Webster, Phalen and Lichty 44).

Ratings books usually measure another factor that illustrates listener loyalty called recycling. Recycling calculates the number of listeners who

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listened in both morning and afternoon drive time (Webster, Phalen and

Lichty 45). Morning and afternoon drive times are the times in the morning

and afternoon when many people tune in to radio stations in their car going to

and from work. Morning drive is generally considered 6 AM to 10 AM, and

afternoon drive is generally from 3 PM to 7 PM. People who listened to the

same radio station in the morning and afternoon are loyal listeners, and

perhaps as a captive audience, more attentive.

There is another worthwhile piece of information that comes from

Arbitron. Arbitron compiles all the ways diary respondents referred to every

radio station in a market. This is a test of diary keeper recall. A program

director can look at this list and see if his or her station is doing a satisfactory

job identifying itself. If there are only a few similar responses, such as the

correct station call letters, slogan or dial position, then the station is imaging

itself very well. But if there are many different responses and some are

incorrect, then a program director knows right away that the station may not

be identifying itself consistently enough. He or she will also know whether it

was the call letters, slogan and/or dial position that listeners identified

correctly or incorrectly.

As will be stressed again and again, research may help program

directors. It can take the guesswork out of the process. Program directors do

not have to compile ratings data themselves. Arbitron does that for them.

Program directors purchase the information and Arbitron will even help them

analyze it. Ratings should always be used in conjunction with qualitative

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research though. Qualitative data answers the "why" questions that Arbitron cannot.

Weaknesses

The first thing to know about Arbitron data is that it is all <u>estimates</u>. Second, this data can only partly help a program director. The main purpose of ratings data is to set advertising rates and make money for a radio station, <u>not</u> to aid a programmer in choosing the best songs or shows for his or her audience. Ratings tell the quantitative facts about people who listened to a certain station at a certain time. Ratings do not tell any qualitative data though, such as <u>why</u> people listened to radio stations at a specific time. The choice may have been because of convenience or preference, or could have been because the individual had no choice in what to listen to when they were at work or at the mall, for example. Ratings are most useful to station managers and sales managers. They see audiences as a commodity. Programmers generally do not. Knowing how many people listened is important, but also knowing why they listened is important to a program director. Ratings are of little help to a station in determining what their future will look like either. Ratings simply define what happened in the past. Only guesses about the future may be made from reviewing ratings data.

The next thing to keep in mind is that the average diary keeper is not the average radio listener. Robert Balon found that as radio listenership increases, so too does the likelihood of accepting a diary if a phone call is made to that household. On the other hand, Balon said that "because an

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individual accepts a diary does not make him or her the authority on radio or any more likely to accurately record listening better than anyone else." So even though diary keepers listen to the radio more than the typical radio listener does, they still are not as accurate as program directors would like them to be (109).

Further, there is no linear relationship between the addition and/or subtraction of music and subsequent audience reaction (Balon 103). Knowing this, no program director can assume that increased time spent listening, Ratings or Shares occurred because he or she added a new song into the musical rotation, for example. Balon said, "Tweaking a station by adding a song or two, changing a record or moving a commercial stop set around, by and large is not going to have any huge impact on the radio audience" (103). Balon also noted that broadcasters constantly make the assumption that no matter how miniscule a change they make, so too will there be a move in ratings. He says this is wishful thinking.

Time spent listening is also an estimate, but what is worse is that it is really only listener perception (Balon 103). Even the most loyal diary keeper is not going to have exact times for how long he or she listened to a particular station in an entire week. But regardless of the recorded time spent listening, Arbitron only requires diary keepers to record five minutes of any quarter hour to get counted for the entire fifteen minutes. This may initially sound great to radio stations, but the more estimating that occurs, the less accurate the numbers become.

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Another problem with time spent listening is that Arbitron relies on listener recall. Arbitron does not supply station call letters, slogans or dial positions. If a particular ratings book showed lower numbers for a radio station, the reason for the dip in numbers could be low listener recall, not actually less time spent listening. Most people cannot fill out their diary while they are actually listening. It is pretty difficult to fill out a diary in the car, at the mall, or even at work. The problem here is that there is no way to prove that poor recall was the reason for lower numbers. Participants may write down that they listened to something other than what they actually listened to. This could be the product of peer pressure or embarrassment. They may even forget all the stations they tuned in to on a particular day. And, of course, it is possible for a listener to tune in to one station for 8 hours a day, 5 days a week, and simply not remember its name.

In addition, Robert Balon found that diary keepers are typically like a slice of "Middle America." They have a lower to middle class income. He said that as income rises, the inclination to fill out a diary declines (111). Formats like classical or public radio with generally an older, more upper class target audience could be disadvantaged.

It is equally important to note that data can easily be inconsistent from one ratings book to another. Balon acknowledges three main reasons for this to happen. The first is obvious: listeners made a conscious decision not to listen. Second, a disproportionate number of listeners did not get a diary, received one and did not return it or refused the phone interview asking them

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to participate. The third option is that the station's listeners were contacted by a survey company and participated in the process, but were unable to recall the amount of listening they did to the station or the call letters or the dial position with any degree of accuracy (113). There is absolutely nothing a station can do to prevent ratings inconsistency because it is too hard to tell what one or more of the three reasons caused the numbers to increase or decrease.

Another problem is with the distribution of diaries. No person living in any type of communal living quarters, such as a college dormitory, will receive a diary. So college campuses are never included in Arbitron's samples. This can be a huge disadvantage to a radio station such as WDBM in East Lansing, Michigan, which has a target audience of college students.

Lastly, Arbitron uses a practice called sample balancing (Balon 30). This process employs a statistical weighting process to adjust numbers up or down to better match population estimates for a particular demographic category.

Interpretation

Arbitron suggests looking at trends of three to five books to understand Cume. If a station's current Cume is the same or down, a station may need to work on attracting more listeners. Arbitron suggests that marketing is the easiest solution. If there is not enough money to do the appropriate amount of marketing, it is a good idea to check with other stations owned by the same company as the station that needs improved Cume. Radio stations can now

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swap promotions with each other at no cost. By looking at Cume duplication, a radio station can find out what other stations its listeners also listen to in a week (PD News, Spring 2001).

To understand time spent listening, a program director has to first realize that today people cannot listen to the radio as much as they did in the past. Arbitron suggests the use of benchmarks such as "appointment listening" at certain times (8 a.m., noon, 5 p.m., etc.) to remind people to come back to a radio station many times during the day. The more a listener comes back (and records it in his or her diary), the better chance a station has of getting more credit for time spent listening. This is referred to as "time spent listening per occasion" (PD News, Spring 2001). One essential part of a radio station's web site is the program schedule, in which primary function is to enable appointment listening.

In addition to using benchmarks, radio stations that have catchy slogans and creative programming may make a radio station more memorable and keep listeners tuned in for longer periods of time. Doing so may help a diary keeper become more accurate. Instead of only relying on numbers in a ratings book, program directors that also rely on themselves and other forms of research may be able to better find out how to increase time spent listening.

Investing in ratings books gives a program director much worthwhile information. Ratings used in conjunction with qualitative research and other quantitative audience research methods can help give the clearest picture of

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a radio audience. Ratings alone will not help a programmer decide what songs to play or not to play. Nor will they determine why certain things happened. They will however, examine listening trends that vary among by hour, day, age and sex, as well as other important demographic variances. A radio station may have great ratings and a large profit, but if the station does not utilize other types of research in addition to Arbitron data, the station will probably not have a clear picture of whether or not it satisfies the wants and needs of its target audience.

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CHAPTER 4
AUDITORIUM MUSIC TESTS

Definition

An auditorium music test is a quantitative research method that allows a radio station to test a large number of songs in a short period of time with the control of a moderator. Auditorium music tests are often used to test libraries of familiar music (MacFarland 150). Program directors conduct auditorium tests to find out specific song preferences of listeners. Listeners do not always enjoy hearing their favorite songs. Removal of some songs and additions of others can freshen up the overall sound of a radio station. The results of an auditorium music test will basically reflect what a station's freshened up playlist could look like in a dynamic sense over a period of time.

A market research firm recruits a group of participants based on strict requirements made up by the radio station and/or consulting firm. Requirements could be a specific demographic or a specific kind of listener of a particular radio station. A neutral, local location such as a hotel banquet room or a movie auditorium is also rented out for an approximately three-hour period for the testing to take place. Participants listen to song snippets called "hooks" that are played back to back for about one and a half hours at a time. As the hooks are played, participants rate the songs on a scale of strongly dislike to strongly like, and also may add if they are unfamiliar with the song or if they are tired of hearing it. Tom Kelly is President of Kelly Music Research, Inc. based in Philadelphia. He has specialized in music listener surveys since 1991. He has experience as a disc jockey, program director,

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consultant and researcher. In his book, <u>Music Research: The Silver Bullet to</u> <u>Eternal Success</u>, he said that the goal of auditorium music testing it to project the opinions of listeners that can impact ratings (71).

Jacobs Media is a radio consulting firm based in Southfield, Michigan. Jacob Media has clients at radio stations across the U.S. ranging from Rock stations to Public Radio stations. Jacobs had a client that was a Cleveland Classic Rock station that hired Jacobs to conduct an auditorium test for them. The job assigned to Jacobs was to conduct a mini-perceptual study and an auditorium test for 600 songs. A perceptual study is a survey questionnaire given to a random sample of a population, usually done over the phone. A later chapter will be devoted to perceptual studies.

Including a mini-perceptual study at an auditorium test is smart for several reasons. First, the sample size for a survey is significant enough, with approximately 100 people attending. Second, the sample population is very specific: the radio station's P1 listeners and a few P2 and P3 listeners as well. P1 listeners are those who say that a specific station is their favorite. P2 and P3 listeners are those who choose that station as their 2nd and 3rd choices. Third, a mini-perceptual study is a nice compliment to go along side an auditorium music test as a backup, or as further insight into a specific population of listeners. Mike Henry works for Paragon Research and published an article entitled, "Programming To Win" at the Paragon Research web site. He made a valid point when he said, "just because they like it doesn't mean that they want to hear it on your station" (www.paragon-

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research.com/index_radio.html). A mini-perceptual test might uncover what other kinds of music and formats of radio stations the participants enjoy. Then if any "control" songs (songs included even though they are not in the same format as the other songs in the auditorium test) get high scores, hopefully the mini-perceptual can explain why they did.

The market research firm successfully recruited a sample not only consisting of a good range of ages, but also a sufficient amount of P1 listeners. The participants' ages ranged from 32 to 47 and 88 percent of the people said they listened to classic rock on a frequent basis, with 12 percent listening occasionally. These numbers show that everyone at the auditorium music test liked the genre of music they were going to rate.

Strengths

Tom Kelly said, "The listener is the fuel that propels the money rocket. A common mistake many operators make is to forget the importance of music. They become so occupied with all the other aspects of the station—jocks, promotions, marketing—that they forget the listener's priority" (15). In radio formats targeting a more tightly defined niche, such as Alternative Rock, listener interests change all the time. "Without a broad base audience to fall back on, staying on top of trends and music styles is an absolute necessary," Kelly also stated (24). Dave Richards is Program Director at WKQX-FM. WKQX is a commercial Alternative station in Chicago. He pointed out that "music changes so rapidly that six months after your last test, there can be a whole genre of music or a few clusters that have just

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We have to use it" (Kelly 24). Burn factor and unfamiliarity are two major

tuneout factors (Kelly 105). Burn factor is the amount of tiredness of a song.

A song may be well liked by an audience, but the audience may be tired of

hearing it. If that is the case, it will have a high burn factor. Unfamiliar songs

are often undesirable as well. Auditorium music tests measure for those two

things and can be extremely helpful in playlist adjustment.

The major strength of auditorium music test is that a huge number of

songs can be tested in one sitting in a controlled environment. Also, the

participants are handpicked to allow for a significant sample for a station.

Mike Henry said that a programmer should "let the listeners decide what your

station's music boundaries should be, then build a great sounding format

within those boundaries" (www.paragon-research.com/index_radio.html).

Through auditorium test, stations can find out their listeners' decisions on

music:

-What songs their listeners need a break from,

-What songs they have not helped their listeners become familiar enough with
yet, and

-What songs they like and dislike.

This data helps a program director keep the station's rotation fresh by

providing the highest testing songs that would work on a radio station's

playlist and the lowest testing songs that should be scrapped (temporarily or

permanently) from the station's rotation. 600 songs were tested in a 3-hour

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window. Participants were paid $50 for their time, which is about the average price to pay for this kind of study.

Weaknesses

There are many weaknesses of auditorium music tests. It is very hard for a recruiting firm to get in touch with suitable participants, because invitations to participate are given over the phone. As a result of increasing amounts of Tele-marketers, more people have caller I.D. on their phones or just will not talk to people they do not know. Many phone numbers are unlisted. If a recruiting firm cannot get through to people to ask them to participate, more calls will have to be made and the larger the radio station's bill will become.

Next, the huge number of songs tested, even being just snippets, will cause a large amount of fatigue for the study participants. Knowing that, scores for the first half of the songs could easily be much higher than the second half just because participants got tired, <u>not</u> because they did not like a particular song. It has been tested and proven that as long as auditorium music tests are no longer than two hours and no more than 500 songs are tested, fatigue is not an issue (www.kasoff.com). Radio stations do not always follow that model though. At the Cleveland auditorium test, 600 hooks were tested and the whole test lasted about three hours. What order should the songs be put in? Since the test can only be administered once, there is no way to mix up the songs to account for possible low scores based on fatigue.

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Moreover, the song snippets can be way too short for some music formats. For Classic Rock stations, which typically play many very well known songs, the hook length is probably appropriate. For a format like Alternative or Rock that would likely test songs that will not all sound familiar, the hook length is way too short. Unless participants hear longer snippets, it is very hard to form their true opinion of the songs.

In addition, what part of the song best represents the whole song? Generally it is the chorus, but there is no hard and fast formula to get a perfect sample of a song. Music is more of an art than a science, and finding a five to six second representation of a three to seven minute song is not that simple.

Another weakness of auditorium music tests is the fact that regardless of pre-planning, very often things can go wrong. The Cleveland auditorium test was no exception. Even though a classroom-style room was requested, no tables were set up. This was a necessity, since participants have to score the songs on a Scan Tron sheet. Technical problems may occur as well. The radio station engineers who brought the cassette player for the auditorium test joked that it only cost $7. Fortunately, it was functional. The machine even produced a decent sound, which was in itself luck. A common problem at auditorium music tests is terrible-sounding audio equipment, which can skew results.

Other possible problems include: power outages, lack of refreshments for participants, broken and/or not enough pencils and room temperatures

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that are comfortable for some but uncomfortable for others. There is also the issue of an unnatural listening environment at auditorium music tests. The environments can often be too crowded. Participants are not apt to score the songs the same way they would at home, at work or in their car (places where they actually listen to the radio). They also may not pay attention to the rules. This may occur because they tune out or they forget what they are supposed to do after a long period of sitting. Auditorium tests require a large amount of busy work, so participants may get bored and fill in random responses instead of recording their true thoughts. This fatigue or boredom can even cause people to leave during a break.

Even though market research firms are able to screen participants according to a very specific chosen demographic, those who participate may be more of a "research hog" than be a real P1, P2 or P3 listener. A "research hog" is like a professional test-taker that enjoys having his or her opinion heard and/or wants some extra cash. Participants who come in to the study without any pre-conceived notions about they are taking part in will give better results because they will be less biased. As mentioned, it is hard for market research firms to get a hold of people over the phone. If too many "research hogs" are recruited, the results may not actually represent the appropriate demographic. Also, there is a problem with getting a sample of people from all over the entire radio market. In large markets, the listening region could cover many counties. It is very difficult to get people to come to an auditorium test from all over a geographic region. The sample can be more heavily

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weighted toward one area of town, which also adds to the task of a trying to achieve statistically valid sample. According to Tom Kelly, the sample can only be drawn from a geographic area no more than a 15-minute drive from the test location (51). Lastly, regardless of who is chosen, bad weather can affect the amount of participants who show up.

Another problem with auditorium tests is that they are expensive for a station to carry out. First, a hook company must be hired to compile the hooks for the 600+ songs onto tape, which costs around a dollar a hook. Next, the hotel room must be booked. Fortunately, this is usually done on trade. Trade is the same as barter: goods are exchanged instead of cash. For example, a hotel or theater that offers a free room for an auditorium test to a radio station will receive free advertising for the hotel or theater on the radio station. But there are more fees. The market research company is paid an incentive of approximately $60 per person to recruit and $50 goes to each participant. In addition, there is the need for a software program such as *Radio Computing Services Song Track* to process all the data. This type of software program not only must be purchased, but also has a licensing fee each time it is used for a new auditorium music test. Additionally, stations must pay either a research company or consultant for their services, which can range from $1,500 to $25,000, depending on the firm.

Further, there is much busy work on the research company or consultant's end. The perceptual questions and possible responses all have to be entered into a software program such as *Radio Computing Services*

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Song Track. Next, all the perceptual tests and all the song scores must be manually fed through a Scan Tron machine that works with *Radio Computing Services Song Track*. There were 3 sheets per person for the study (1 page for perceptual test and 2 for the 600 songs with 2 sides per sheet), totaling 5 sides per person, or 500 feeds through the machine. Next, the data must be reviewed for any errors. Finally, the consultant or research company must decide on a breakdown of ways to view the data such as average score, score by alphabetical order, fatigue, unfamiliar, and favorites of each type of participant (by age, favorite station, etc.).

Moreover, auditorium tests alone can only measure the past. They cannot predict the future. No brand new songs can be tested because song hooks at auditorium tests are too short to test totally unfamiliar songs that are not on the radio yet. Auditorium tests cannot track music trends either. Generally, auditorium tests are done once or twice a year. Call-out research, which happens as often as weekly, is the appropriate method for examining music trends over time.

Finally, the most important weakness to note is that auditorium research only tests people who already listen to a particular radio station. They focus on a very specific target. This "super serving" of an audience will not bring in any new listeners. Time spent listening may increase among current listeners, but the Cume probably will not.

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Interpretation

When in need of a fast response, programmers can settle for the traditional auditorium test at a hotel or theater. To get the best results and minimize fatigue, the environment should be positive and participants should feel important, and most importantly have some fun. Reducing boredom in every possible way may also improve overall results.

When in less of a hurry, a good suggestion to perfect this style of research is to change the setting to at-home. Some firms are doing the research by distributing a phone number for participants to call and do as many hooks at a time as they want. Others are distributing cassettes or CDs to participants so they may do the test at home and again at their own pace. Clearly, over the phone testing, like auditorium testing, is an unnatural setting. Additionally, the sound quality is bad. At home testing with a cassette or CD may just be the smartest way to test a large group of songs when program directors can wait a bit longer for results. At home testing will also allow a wider range of people to take part. Busy people may be more willing to get involved because they can take the test in several sittings as well as take the test wherever they wish. At home music tests also eliminate the necessity to recruit "research hogs."

There is some control lost in administering music tests at home. Who will actually take the test? Is it the actual person recruited? The more stringent demographics a programmer gives a recruiting firm to screen for an auditorium style music test, the higher the chance the firm might cheat

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anyway. Loss of control can happen in either case. Regardless, there are precautions built into the at-home test. Questions asked during the telephone screening process must be answered the same way on the survey form to ensure the correct person took the test, or it will be rejected (Kelly 70). Another positive aspect of at-home testing is that it is the most closely designed to the Arbitron Diary. The goal is always higher ratings. Kelly said that making the methodology similar to a diary will hopefully attract the same type of person that will fill out a ratings diary and get a station in line with the most important people to them (70).

Additionally, the sample chosen for an auditorium music test must have small age ranges, like 18-24, or 25-34, to get enough people in each group (Kelly 89). This will make the study statistically valid. Also, there always needs to be a mix of P1, P2 and P3 listeners in the sample (Kelly 87). Surveying them all helps a program director hear about his or her entire audience. Program directors who try to keep their P1s happy and also attempt to convert P2 and P3 listeners into a P1 listener are doing their job correctly. It is a balancing act for a program director to please his or her entire audience.

Whether at an auditorium or at home, stations that conduct music tests on a regular basis will have fresher sounding and less boring radio stations. Testing once a year is an appropriate amount for stations that do not play a large amount or any current music, such as classic rock or oldies. Testing two to four times a year is appropriate for current music based stations.

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CHAPTER 5
CALL-OUT RESEARCH

Definition

Call-out research was designed to target passive listeners who can influence ratings (Kelly 48). This style of research is similar to auditorium music tests. A market research company phones randomly chosen people in a population to rate approximately 20 songs along the same scale as auditorium tests: strongly dislike (generally with a "1") to strongly like (generally with a "5"), unfamiliarity and burn factor. There are many research companies across the U.S. that offer call-out services: Strategic Media Research, Core Call Out Research and Critical Mass Media, Inc. are a few examples. Some of these companies break the data down into many categories in addition to the song's number rating, familiarity and burn factors. Some companies will list the percentage of people who rated a song with a 4 or 5, as well as the percentage of people who rated the song with a 1 or 2. In addition, data is broken down further by age, sex and participant's radio station preferences.

This kind of research is very helpful to radio stations. It can be done on a yearly, monthly, bi-weekly or weekly basis. Most stations that use call-out research are those stations that play current musical releases. The stations that use call-out research generally get results weekly, every other week or once a month. From the results, charts are compiled. The charts that get compiled from call-out research are different from airplay charts.

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Airplay charts reveal radio exposure. Call-out charts reveal listener response (Kelly 40).

Strengths

The main strength of call-out research is that a statistically significant sample can be achieved on a very regular basis, and fewer songs are tested at a time. Specific P1 listeners and other demographic audiences (such as P2s, P3s and other stations' P1s) are usually included in call-out research results. This method offers comparisons to be made among different populations. Each population is gathered randomly, usually with random digit phone dialing. An additional strength of call-out research is that there are only about 20 songs to test and the songs played can be longer clips than the typical auditorium music test hooks. By playing fewer songs with longer clips, a respondent can get a much better feel for whether or not he or she would actually listen to it if it were on the radio.

In addition, call-out research is great for hit-oriented radio formats. At first glance, testing only a few songs looks like a weakness. But for hit formatted stations, this is in line perfect with them, since program directors at those stations do not add many new songs each week (MacFarland 150).

Call-out research can be worth the price. Call-out research prices range from $800 to $2000 a week. Call-out research companies conduct music tests almost every week of the year, excluding the end of the year when there are fewer music releases. Adding up the cost of call-out research for a year may sound like expensive, but call-out research is the fastest, most

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up to date way to find out what current songs a radio station's audiences likes and dislikes. There is no work on the radio station's part, minus reading through the weekly results. Time is money. Spending up to $100,000 a year on call-out research is certainly not inconceivable.

Weaknesses

The main weakness of call-out research is the sample. Sometimes the sample does not end up being truly random, although it is supposed to be. Occasionally a market research firm will use the same group of respondents twice, which also should never occur. Of course, another problem with call-out research is that it is done over the phone. Though each respondent is screened, it is hard to tell if they are actually the demographic asked for in the screening questions. The element of being on the phone can in itself be confusing, whether the responses are spoken or typed. There is poor audio quality over the phone too. And at home, there are many distractions like dinner cooking, children fighting and the television blaring.

The possibility of interviewer bias is also a weakness of call-out research. Tom Kelly stated that a radio station must be very careful in who they choose to carry out the calls (63). A young, passionate person may skew results based on their own opinions.

Additionally, call-out research mainly tests current music. This sounds appropriate for any station that plays new music, but it has the potential to cause skewed results. Often times there will be many "unfamiliar" and "tired" responses in this situation.

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"Music testing alone is not enough to win radio wars," Tom Kelly said (118). People listen to the radio for more reasons than to hear music. They want to be entertained, they want information and they want spontaneity. Programmers today who are aware that there are many other factors than music to concentrate on, such as station imaging and on-air promotion, will have a more successful radio station than programmers who are not aware of such factors. Incorporating more into the station's music logs than just music is a way to illustrate that knowledge. Today, many stations play the same songs as each other. Because of this crossover, the emphasis shifts to creating an image for a station with more than just music. A program director could almost be called an image director. His or her job is to make a radio station sound different than other radio stations. If there was any time in radio history that creative people were needed, it is now.

Interpretation

Making sure that all songs that are tested have been in rotation for a long enough period of time will increase the amount of familiarity to a good chunk of a station's audience. This could mean songs that have been played 100 or more times. This number will vary from format to format, but it is important to all stations. Call-out results that have all unfamiliar ratings next to each song will not be very helpful to a program director.

Radio stations that play current music will reflect the tastes of its audience by conducting call-out research. Call-out research will keep a playlist fresh, let programmers see the musical preferences of many different

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types of people and allow them to analyze musical trends. Call-out research

can also aid a programmer when he or she decides how often songs can be

played. Interviewer bias and inappropriate samples can be avoided by using

a reputable, trustworthy market research firm. People today are busy and will

not tolerate a long interview. Short calls are the only kind that will be

effective.

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CHAPTER 6
FOCUS GROUPS

Definition

The National Association of Broadcasters' Audience Research Sourcebook calls focus groups the "Tip of the Iceberg" research and suggest it is a good first step in creating a competitive edge (61). Focus groups are a form of qualitative audience research that involve a moderator and a group of people sized from 10 to 20 people in a conversation for about one hour. The participants are usually part of a radio station's target audience, such as 25-34 year old women or 18-24 year old men. Focus groups are often used to get reactions to promotion and marketing campaigns, station image, formats and programming elements (Audience Research Sourcebook, 23). They generally last between one and one and one half hours. A market research provides the venue for the focus groups to take place. The market research company screens and recruits the participants and provides the facility and refreshments. If done correctly, focus groups are conversations led by a moderator who asks questions that stir up the participant's interest enough to speak freely for an hour. The goal of focus groups is to help define in plain English what people think about a station, a style of music, or any other related topic. Mike Henry said, "What listeners think your station does is more important than what your station does" (www.paragon-research.com/index_radio.html).

A moderator who knows the radio industry inside and out, but is also extremely unbiased is the best person to conduct focus groups. Everyone on

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the radio station's management staff should be there to observe from the other side of the mirror. It is too hard to try to fill someone in on what they missed, when every response is important.

In spring 2001, Jacobs Media was hired to conduct two focus groups for a public radio client. Both focus groups were very favorable in responding to questions probed by Fred Jacobs. Jacobs' client had recently made a drastic change in it's programming and wanted to find out just what its listeners thought of the station and the change. Most of the reason that they were successful was because Fred Jacobs was the moderator. He has years of experience and asked the right questions. He was unbiased enough to ask appropriate "what if" kind of questions. Also part of the reason that the focus groups worked was because the participants were very passionate about the radio station being discussed.

Strengths

The strength of focus group studies is that they give a station a live critique from their listeners. A radio station can actually hear listeners' perceptions in *their own words*. This can sometimes be sobering, because many times listener recall is less than what the station had hoped. The results are immediate. Focus groups can give an idea of what is going on in the market and delve into how people feel about station programming and personalities, as well as how they feel about competing radio stations. Focus groups strive to provide a laid back environment so participants are able to speak their mind. Focus groups are also good at being precursors for other

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research. They may uncover a problem a station did not know it had and then help shape a perceptual study. Robert Balon said that it has been proven that "the more a listener can tell you about a radio station, the greater the likelihood he or she will write it in their diary or mention it in a telephone interview" (4).

Weaknesses

The weakness of focus groups is that the sample size is definitely not significant. With only 10-20 people per session, no generalizations about a population may be made. The research is really just a tiny snippet of information in the grand scheme of a research project. The comments of a few people cannot dictate how a station programs. Focus groups are more of an emotional check. Walter McDowell suggests, "The formal results should be long on concepts and short on statistics" (18).

Also on occasion, one individual may dominate the conversation, which can be troublesome. Or, some focus groups may barely talk at all. Either way, it is not a completely objective setting. With only one to one and a half hours to carry out the focus group, a large amount of money can be wasted if the group is unwilling to share their thoughts. In general, focus groups are expensive. The participants are paid approximately $50 per session to participate. In addition, the recruiting firm company charges approximately $50 to $100 per person recruited, $400 to $500 per session to provide the room and $100 to $400 for food for the client and study

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participants. Finally, the moderator must be paid, which can range from $5,000 to $10,000.

Interpretation

Coming up with an objective to conduct a focus group gives the research direction. What is the radio station trying to find out? How should the questions be phrased? Why are focus groups the best option? Are focus groups going to be a preliminary or complimentary form of research? The National Association of Broadcasters' Audience Research Sourcebook says focus groups might be done under these kinds of circumstances:

-A new station start up,
-A station is newly acquired,
-As a "check up" for an established station,
-A new competitor enters the market, or
-As a potential air talent/syndicated program evaluation method.

(<u>Audience Research Sourcebook</u>, 62.)

Make sure to call upon references before choosing a market research company. Jacobs Media used a list of acceptable groups based on whom they had been successful with in the past. If focus groups have never been used before, ask for references. If it is a reputable firm, they will have people who will say good things about them.

Like auditorium tests, focus groups can be successful if they have an element of fun mixed into them. And moderators who ask probing questions will get the most people talking. Doing so will enable both goals to be achieved: the group will enjoy themselves and the station will hear as much information as possible.

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No matter what the reason is for conducting a focus group, keeping an open mind AND keeping things in perspective will enable a program director to benefit most from the research. The results do not reflect a total audience. Broad ideas will be uncovered, not specific answers to problems. Also, keeping the sponsor's identity disclosed can prevent the "halo effect." The "halo effect" occurs when participants know who is putting on the study and become reluctant to say anything bad about it (McDowell 19).

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CHAPTER 7
PERCEPTUAL RESEARCH

Definition

A perceptual research study is a survey usually given to a random sample. Sometimes it is given to a specific demographic sample, but they are always randomly chosen, usually by random-digit dialing on the phone. It can be done right over the phone, or a survey can be sent out in the mail. Today, it can even be conducted on the Internet. It is a one-step research solution. Perceptual studies can be one of three types: market (demographic), format, or station-specific (www.paragon-research.com). Generally, the station-specific surveys ask questions about music preferences, station images, on-air personalities, as well as reasons why and when people listen to a particular radio station. Perceptual tests may also ask what radio stations a person has listened to less or more lately. They often ask people questions about how they identify stations with options such as "the station with the most community involvement" or "the station with the most commercials." The types of questions may be statistical or demographic, recall, behavioral and attitudinal (McDowell 19). Perceptual studies can reveal a radio station's own strengths and weaknesses and also that station's competitor's vulnerabilities (Kelly 86). This kind of study can provide the most in-depth information for a program director. It can be quantitative, qualitative, or both.

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Strengths

The strength of perceptual tests is that they tell a station what they are doing right and wrong. Radio stations all try to capitalize on a specific image, so perceptual tests help programmers find out if they are successful at station imaging. As Mike Henry stated, "Their perception, as in your listeners' perception, is definitely your reality. What your listeners think your station does is much more important what your station actually does." (www.paragon-research.com/index_radio.html). For example, at the Cleveland auditorium music test referred to earlier, the radio station quickly got a significant sample of their P1 listeners' view of their station with their mini-perceptual study. Of the 99 participants, 67 chose the Cleveland Classic Rock station that conducted the music test as their favorite station and the remaining 32 said they listened to it at least one hour a week. A recruiting firm is hired to find these very specific demographic profiles to participate in the study. Looking at the station's mini-perceptual test, questions focused on station images, personalities, listening habits, artists and also asked a few Internet questions, totaling about 50 questions. A few examples include:

-Which station does the most advertising for itself?

-Which station is most involved in the area concerts you care about?

-Which station do most of your friends listen to?

-Which station have you been listening to less lately?

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The questionnaire also asked participants' age, sex, and their thoughts on local radio stations, specific genres of music, specific morning show hosts and specific music artists/bands.

Another strength of perceptual tests (unlike ratings or focus groups) is that this style of research can help as a predictive tool. Questions can probe listeners about any ideas that a station may want to try. And the responses will be significant enough, since perceptual tests are distributed to a large sample of a population.

Perceptual tests can also gauge the most popular music styles of an audience. In a perceptual test, the names of musical artists and bands can be lumped together by style and survey participants can be asked to rate each group. Larry Johnson works for Paragon Research. He said, "Finding the most popular music styles is essential to maximizing your audience. You can use the metaphor that each style is a hill in a mountain range. You want to see which hills are the highest and which hills will stand with others (compatibility). If you can arrange the compatible and popular music hills (styles) into the best array, you'll have on of the highest possible mountain ranges, hence maximizing your audience" (paragon-research.com/index_radio.html).

Weaknesses

The main weakness of a perceptual study is that radio stations usually live and die by the results. Stations can change their format because of them. Further, perceptual tests are very expensive to carry out. A large, random

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sample must be found. That is a timely task and recruiting firms must be paid for their time.

Perceptual tests can be done as needed, which might be when a station is bought out, or when ratings are not where a station would like them to be. These studies can also be very time consuming for a station to analyze. Perceptual tests can also, like any research, have skewed results because of a bad research firm incorrectly screening participants in an attempt to get a random sample.

Like recruitment for auditorium music tests, it is very hard to get people to participate over the phone. It is just as hard to send a survey in the mail because of the advent of junk mail that increasing amounts of people throw away without even looking at it. Mail surveys are expensive as well. Addresses must be accurate. Addresses of mobile people like college students are often changing and will not be contained in databases (McDowell 25). Response rate is low and slow and, of course, it is hard to tell who actually filled the survey out.

Interpretation

The Lund Consultants is a multi-format custom programming and management consultant group based in San Francisco and has offices in St. Petersburg, FL and Chicago. They said that just like focus group preparation, programmers must have specific goals and targets for a perceptual study (http://www.danoday.com/articles/researchingyourlistnersl.shtml). The same kind of questions must be answered. What is the radio station trying to find

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out? How should the questions be phrased? How much should we know

about our competition? How long should the perceptual test be?

Survey questions must be written clearly and concisely to get

responses that actually answer the questions. The clearer the questions are,

the better the chance that the program director will understand the responses.

Having many different people thoroughly read over the questions can ensure

that the questions are worded correctly to ask the appropriate question.

Once the goals are decided, the questionnaire should be pre-tested.

This will determine the length of the test and find any word ambiguities or

other confusions (www.paragon-research.com).

The more random the sample of respondents is, the better the results

will be. Having a good mix of P1, P2 and P3 listeners that take a perceptual

survey will give a wider array of responses (Kelly 87). Surveying all different

types of listeners can help a program director learn about his or her entire

audience. Again, smart program directors always try to keep their P1s happy,

as well as attempt to convert P2 and P3 listeners into a P1 listener.

For a station that is just starting to do perceptual research or for a new

station, the questions may be altered. Instead of asking specific questions

about stations, the questions might ask about format preferences (Kelly 88).

This is wise because it will help the station best position itself within a market.

The survey can find a void in the market and fill it. A question that perceptual

tests could ask is, "When do you listen to (or like to listen to) the radio the

most?" This style of question goes along great when asking participants

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about what kind of radio shows appeal to them. Together, the answers can tell a program director when to schedule radio shows to achieve the largest amount of listeners. It can also give a programmer an idea of what *type* of programming to offer.

There are two things to keep in mind. First, the sample should have an even amount of males and females (even if the target audience is one or the other) to help achieve better overall balance as well as variance of answers. Second, like auditorium music tests, the sample must have small age ranges, like 18-24, or 25-34, to get enough people in each group (Kelly 89). This will make the study statistically valid.

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CHAPTER 8
NEW ONLINE METHODS OF RESEARCH: A LOOK AT INTERNET BASED AUDIENCE RESEARCH COMPANIES AND STUDIES ON INTERNET USAGE

Definition

There are two main types of audience research that now take place online. The first type is an e-mail survey and the second type is a web site survey. Online research methods ask basically the same questions as the traditional methods examined in Chapters 3 through 7, but are conducted by distributing e-mails or by displaying a survey or music test on a web site.

Strengths

There are a few great reasons to research a radio audience online. First, it is convenient for a radio station because it is inexpensive. It is also convenient for a listener because it is less confusing than punching numbers in over the phone and less work than returning a mail survey. Second, it is not intrusive like a phone call or inconvenient like an auditorium music test (Kelly 108). Third, people are spending more time online, so program directors can try to target listeners where they spend some of their time. Fourth, online content can be very personalized. Finally, possibly the most important reason is certain people who might not get asked to or may not want to participate in traditional audience research methods may want to take an e-mail or web survey.

Dan Vallie is the President of Vallie/Richards Consulting. Before consulting, Vallie programmed stations in New Orleans, Pittsburgh, Miami and Richmond. He said, "The Internet is a paradigm shift. It is inevitable that

practically every station will do tests via the Internet. The Internet will continue to weave into the very fabric of our daily lives to the point that it is natural and we don't give it a second thought" (Kelly 108). Kelly agreed with Vallie. He said that perceptual questionnaires, such as the WDBM study used in this thesis, answered on the Internet seem to be producing responses that align with expectations which gives hope to the notion of online testing (109).

As mentioned early on, many programmers and station owners resist change. They stick with research methods they have always used and shy away from new methods. Doing the same research over and over will simply give the same results. There is no real benefit in that kind of practice. Gary Fisher and Phil Giordano own stations WAYV/WZXL and KBFM/KTEX respectively. They tried out new research approaches and their Ratings increased between 40 to 50 percent (Kelly 115). Instead of fearing for their jobs, they became aggressive competitors. New styles of research, like online research, can sometimes provide new answers to common questions. For smaller markets with less cash flow, such as Lansing/East Lansing where WDBM is located, online research may be a viable alternative to traditional methods because it is essentially free to conduct. Dave Gariano is President of Super Spots and Calibre Communications. He started in radio in 1972, worked as a research director and is currently a station owner. He laid it out plain and simple when he said, "If you want to be the best, then you better ask listeners for their opinions" (Kelly 116).

There are several major companies that come to mind when thinking about online research. Mediabase Research, a division of Premier Radio Networks, has a web site called www.ratethemusic.com ("Rate The Music"). "Rate The Music" is owned by Clear Channel Communications. Additionally, Alan Burns Consulting, a U.S. radio consulting firm, has a site entitled www.pickthehits.com ("Pick The Hits"). Both web sites generate data on a regular basis that is distributed to radio and music industry professionals.

The contents of "Rate The Music" follow:

About Us

"RateTheMusic.com is a national music survey company operating out of Orlando, Florida. The idea was conceived by three of the nations most respected radio professionals with over 70 years of combined radio experience. RateTheMusic.com is powered by Access Orlando and is a product of Mediabase 24/7.

RateTheMusic.com's mission, utilizing the power of the web, is to relay *listener's* feelings, likes, and dislikes concerning music, to radio stations and record companies, ultimately influencing the music that is sold in stores and played on radio stations."

Figure 1: Front page of www.ratethemusic.com

This web site works the same way as call-out research does, but is not meant to replace call-out data. Participants are screened on the Internet. Once they pass the screening, they receive e-mail invitations to take part in music tests based on the music preference they stated in the screening process. Songs are rated on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 equaling "dislike very much" and 5 equaling "like very much." Burn and familiarity are also tested.

Next are the contents of www.pickthehits.com.

About Us

"Pick the Hits was created by radio and music industry professionals to help give greater exposure to new music and new artists. Sometimes good songs and CDs slip through the cracks because radio stations either won't play them or don't get reliable feedback. Record companies often lose confidence when this happens and abandon the project. Pick the Hits hopes to solve this problem by providing record companies and radio stations with reliable feedback about new music."

Figure 2: Front page of www.pickthehits.com

This company does not send out e-mail notifications to get participants to take their music tests. The tests are all listed on the front page of the web site and are divided up by music style. To participate, a login and password are needed. There are no restrictions, other than age. 12-44 year olds are welcome to participate. Each person is allowed one vote per song.

This web site was developed because Alan Burns and Jeff Johnson realized that pre-testing of music could benefit music labels and artists. Therefore, their client base is record labels, artists and those in music management. Through the service, they have successfully been able to select hit songs. A couple of examples of hits predicted by Pick The Hits are "All Or Nothing" by O-Town and "It's My Life" by Bon Jovi (Cummings 10).

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These two types of online research are different from focus groups, auditorium, call-out research and perceptual tests in that the latter are considered custom research. Custom research will never be seen by anyone outside a radio station. These online methods, as well as ratings, are considered syndicated research because people can subscribe to receive the results (Webster, Phalen and Lichty 5). Right now, record companies are using both web sites more so than program directors, but "Pick The Hits" sends out weekly research findings to many programmers who may be interested in them. "Rate The Music" sends out weekly faxes to radio professionals. In the faxes are the weekly music charts for each radio formats based on respondents aged 12 and up. The fax shows the charts for this week, last week, two weeks ago and three weeks ago, as well as familiarity and burn data. The fax states that the charts merely serve as ancillary data not meant to replace a radio station's call-out data. Since both companies are based on helping choose hit records, hit based formats like Contemporary Hit Radio (CHR) and Hot Adult Contemporary (Hot AC) can benefit the most from seeing their research results. Overall though, these web sites are less tailored to help programmers than they are to help record company executives.

Weaknesses

There are several weaknesses that exist when conducting audience research online. Just like in office and/or home mailboxes, junk mail continues to increase in e-mail inboxes. Therefore, as junk mail increases, the likelihood of e-mail surveys being deleted before a response is sent increases. Additionally, the price of purchasing e-mail addresses can be very expensive, depending on how many need to be bought. More than the required amount of responses must be purchased, since it is certain that some surveys will not be returned.

Web surveys also have their share of weaknesses. The most significant weakness is that a considerable amount of control is lost when surveys are open for anyone to take. Even those surveys that require a password and login can potentially be taken by someone other than the intended recipient. Due to this loss of control, the sample may not be reflective of the population being surveyed.

Additionally, though inexpensive, web surveys can take long periods of time to get the desired amount of responses. And even if a large number of responses are received and they seem to be reflective of a population, they cannot truly be reflective until 100 percent of a population is online.

Lastly, because e-mail and web research is conducted electronically, there is always the possibility of a technical error. E-mail addresses may be outdated or incorrect and get returned. Survey recipients may respond to an

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e-mail, but send it to the wrong e-mail address. Web servers can crash.

Surveys can be lost.

Interpretation

Program directors who have very busy schedules may benefit from

conducting e-mail or web surveys. They do not take a terrible amount of

effort to put together, and do not require much maintenance either. Once an

e-mail survey is written, it simply must be sent out to a list of e-mail

addresses. Once a web survey is written, it simply must be placed on a web

site and announcements must be made to ask for participants.

Asking a few questions to screen participants may help to get a

sample that is reflective of a certain population. Regardless of the sample,

online research is an acceptable form of preliminary research because if a

sample does not turn out to be large enough or diverse enough, the data can

be treated the same way as focus group data. The data can serve as a guide

for future audience research. Also, looking at research about the behavior of

Internet users can be helpful to program directors. Next is an examination of

a few recent studies.

INTERNET V, VI and VII

Edison Media Research and Arbitron sponsor studies every six months that focus on radio and the Internet. The most recent three studies are entitled "Internet V: Startling New Insights about the Internet and Streaming," "Internet VI: Streaming at a Crossroads," and "Internet VII: The Internet & Streaming: What Consumers Want Next." These studies contain recent and relevant statistics for all program directors to analyze. These are all available online for no cost at:

www.edisonmediaresearch.com and www.arbitron.com.

With the advent of streaming technology today, concentrating on programming online radio station content in addition to on-air content is a good way for program directors to help ward off competition. Understanding who is online, when they are online and how much time they spend online is also important to today's programmers.

The Edison/Arbitron Internet studies were completed in July 2000, January 2001 and July 2001. Edison and Arbitron conducted 3,005 telephone interviews from a national random sample of Fall 2000 Arbitron diary keepers ages 12 and up for Internet V and VI. They interviewed 2,507 people for Internet VII. Interviews were also conducted with web site visitors and streaming media executives. The goals of the studies are to track changes in the Internet, assess impact of Internet streaming media on traditional radio and create information to allow radio managers to develop profitable Internet initiatives.

Findings of Internet V, VI and VII

Overall access to the Internet continues to increase, but slowly.

As of July 2000, 60 percent of all Americans had access to the Internet. Access simply means that the user has a computer and phone line to use to get online. As of January 2001, access grew to 62 percent. And in July 2001, the percentage of Americans with Internet access at home, work or school was 66 percent. This overall number is unlike most college campuses such as Michigan State University, where web access is at 100 percent. The percentage of Americans with Internet access is growing slowly. With the economic slowdown in the U.S. in the later part of 2001, access will probably continue to increase very slowly. Regardless, access will be able to continue to increase because computers are decreasing in price.

Fewer newcomers are getting online as the Internet matures.

Forty five percent of those surveyed in January 2001 said they first accessed the Internet over three years ago. Thirty five percent accessed it one to three years ago. And 19 percent accessed it for the first time in the last year. This could mean that the excitement over using the Internet has waned, or that people cannot afford a computer and/or the phone bills. Another possibility is that those who are not already online are not computer literate. With two thirds of Americans online, Arbitron and Edison think it is likely that future growth of those accessing the Internet will be incremental. It already seems to be that way, looking at the slow increase of just 6 percent from July 2000 to July 2001.

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Access to the Internet is up, but time spent online is down.

In January 2001, an average of 7 hours and 8 minutes a week was spent online. That number is down from an average of 7 hours, 49 minutes a week in July 2000 and 8 hours, 1 minute in January 2000. This is still a significant amount of time to be online though. Assuming that most online usage takes place Monday through Friday, people are spending on average more than an hour a day on the Internet. Additionally, 79 percent of those surveyed in July 2001 said that they use it habitually, logging on every week. Considering what Internet users want in a radio station web site may increase their time at those sites. Here are the features of a radio station web site participants said they want (from January 2001):

Option	Percent
- Ability to listen to the station	64
- Information about local concerts	61
-Titles of songs and artists	60
-To enter contests	53
-Listings of fun/interesting places	48
-Local weather	45
-Vote on songs	45
-Schedule of programming	45
-Local news	44
-Information on and pictures of disc jockeys	43

Table 2: Interest in Features of a Radio Station Web Site, Internet VI

Consumers expect to spend more time listening to radio stations online.

In July 2000, Internet V said that monthly and weekly online radio listening was growing. At that time, 7.9 percent (or approximately 20.5 million Americans) listened to a radio station online in the last month and 3.2 percent (or approximately 8.3 million Americans) had listened in the last week. In January 2000, the numbers grew to 21 percent (approximately 54.6 million

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people) for listening in the last month and 10 percent (approximately 26 million people) for listening in the last week. In July 2001, only one year after Internet V, the numbers more than tripled to 25 percent (approximately 65 million people) for listening in the last month and quadrupled to 12 percent (approximately 31.2 million people) for listening in the last week.

Thirty four percent of people surveyed in January 2001 expect to spend more time with radio and 30 percent expect to spend more time with the Internet. As Edison/Arbitron said, overall growth may be slowing, but the Internet is still becoming vital to a huge percentage of households. Findings from July 2001 confirm this. Those surveyed for Internet VII said they are spending less time with traditional media due to the Internet. The statistics:

Activity	Percent less time they are spending
Watching TV	33
Reading magazines	25
Reading newspapers	23
Listening to the radio	16

Table 3: Americans Spend Less Time with Traditional Media Due to the Internet, Internet VII.

It is good news for radio that it had the smallest decrease in usage. Radio is a medium that can be used while doing other things. A person who is using the Internet or checking e-mail can certainly listen to the radio at the same time. In July 2000, almost half of the respondents of Internet V said they are most likely to listen to the radio while accessing the Internet. Additionally, more radio listening takes place during the morning and daytime, whereas peak Internet usage is at night. That might explain why the largest percentage of people said they are watching less TV, since the peak time for

watching TV is also at night. In the future, online or over-the-air listening may increase in the evening when many people are choosing to surf the Internet and not watch TV.

Internet VII confirms that most consumers (62 percent) who listen to the radio online do so in addition to the time they spend listening to a station over the airwaves. At the same time though, 23 percent say their time spent listening to a radio station over the air is down. Nine percent said the time spent listening has not changed. The remaining 6 percent did not know if their time spent listening had increased or decreased.

The amount of time spent listening to radio stations online could quickly decrease or completely end, due to the AFTRA and web royalty court rulings. Now radio stations that air commercials with AFTRA actors in them have to pay the actors large fees. And any radio station that plays music will have to pay royalties to record companies for the music played on each station. The Recording Industry of America (RIAA) has not yet set the royalty rates, but not only will they be retroactive to the first date that a radio station started streaming, but the royalties are very likely to amount to a significant amount of money. Because of this, many radio stations and other webcasters have completely ceased streaming. If the royalty fees turn out to be too high, streaming could end altogether unless broadcasters charge a subscription fee to listen.

Internet VII asked participants if they were interested in paying a subscription fee for certain online audio events. Here are the statistics.

Audio event & Percent "very interested" if required to pay a small subscription fee
Songs and albums from your favorite artists-27%
Concerts-24%
NFL football games-11%
NBA basketball games-8%
Radio programs too risqué or controversial for over-the-air broadcast-7%
NCAA basketball games -6%
NCAA football games -5%
Table 4: Most Popular Internet Video Subscription Models, Internet VII.

Internet VII also asked participants about their thoughts on what might cause them to listen more online. Here are percentages for each possibility:

Option & Percent of audio "streamies" who said they would listen more
Get the audio programming you want on-demand when you want it-79%
Easier to find the types of streaming audio you want-78%
Able to listen on a device that was as easy to use as a regular radio-74%
Better online directories of available streaming audio programming-70%
More radio stations available to listen to over the Internet-62%
Could listen to streaming audio in the car-61%
Listen to streaming audio on a portable device-55%
Personalities such as Howard Stern or Rush Limbaugh on the Internet-31%
Table 5: Things That Would Cause Audio Streamies To Listen More, Internet VII.

The Internet is more important than TV to a large segment.

Thirty three percent of those surveyed in January 2001 said they would give up all their televisions in their home before they would give up their Internet access. That number jumped up to 67 percent by July 2001. This is a really surprising statistic. This statistic shows that the Internet is not just for information anymore. It has become an entertainment medium as well. Combining a traditional medium like radio and the Internet is very smart. The January 2001 survey says 12 to 24-year olds are almost evenly split on whether they could live without TV or the Internet. That seems fairly appropriate. That group of people has lived with the Internet from a much

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younger age and has come to depend on the web like older generations depend on radio and television.

What will Broadband bring?

As of January 2001, 82 percent of all Internet users did not have Broadband access. Eighteen percent had it at home or work or school. Sixty nine percent of those surveyed do not plan to get Broadband in the next year. This is probably because of two factors: it is too expensive and/or it is too difficult to install Broadband in their home or workplace. But in July 2001, only six months later, the number of people surveyed who have Broadband at home increased from 12 percent to 16 percent. Additionally, of those who have dial up Internet access, 14 percent plan to buy Broadband within the next year.

Arbitron and Edison state that Broadband is the catalyst for consumer use of streaming media. In July 2001, the difference in streaming media usage between dial up Internet users and Broadband Internet users was pretty significant.

Comparisons

-53 percent of dial up households have ever listened vs. 69 percent of Broadband users

-23 percent of dial up households used streaming media last month vs. 44 percent of Broadband users

-10 percent of dial up households used streaming media last week vs. 28 percent of Broadband users

Table 6: Broadband Accelerates Use of Streaming Media, Internet VII.

Understanding the streaming audience

Out of the 62 percent of Americans online, only 21 percent were "streamies" as of December 2000. The definition of a "streamie" is someone who has ever viewed or listened to audio or viewed a video on the Internet. As of January 2001, more than 25 percent of Americans were "streamies." By July 2001, that number passed the 50 percent mark for the first time. This is especially notable, since a large amount of American commercial radio stations stopped streaming due to digital copyright issues and other fees now applying to online radio stations. Companies such as America Online, who are not in the radio business but have the money to pay royalties, are jumping on the bandwagon to stream online.

"Streamies" are different from Internet users who do not consume streamed audio or video online. They pay much more attention to banner ads and spend much more time on the Internet. They are also more likely to shop online. Arbitron and Edison call "streamies" "media junkies."

Even the most active "streamies" spend a limited amount of time with Internet audio and video. As of July 2001, "streamies" who have tuned in online in the past week say they spend approximately 3.5 hours with streaming audio each week. Arbitron and Edison note that these relatively small numbers further illustrate that broadcasting on the Internet is still a new phenomenon.

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Types of programming "streamies" listen to

In January 2001, Internet VI asked "streamies" what they listen to

online. Their responses were:

Programming	Percent
Music	44%
Radio stations	25%
News reports	24%
Music from Napster	24%
MP3 audio	22%
News & information found on local radio	22%
Music not found on local radio	22%

Table 7: Types of Programming Streamies Listen to, Internet VI.

Where radio and streaming media meet

As mentioned, online listening is up significantly. Internet VII reported

the most listened to formats online in January 2001 were Alternative, Rock

and Hip Hop/Rap. In addition, the most listened to radio stations online were

local stations. This proves that streaming is not just for niche formats. Local

stations have proved that audiences want local information and entertainment

that is relevant to them. What is more important is that streaming seems to

add to total station listening, not take away from it.

"Streamies" would be upset if they couldn't listen to radio online.

This is very important. Sixty eight percent of participants who said they

listened online in the last week said they would be upset if they could not

listen, and 53 percent of those who ever listened to an online signal would be

upset. Arbitron and Coleman found that listeners are not loyal to discontinued

streams. When one stream is gone, they find another. This illustrates the

importance of keeping an audio stream available, even if it means more work

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for a station to remove commercials to avoid AFTRA fees. "Streamies" spend more time listening to radio at work.

The range of time spent listening between "audio streamies" and "active streamies" in a week is between 5 and 1/2 hours and 7 hours, 50 minutes. "Audio streamies" are people who have ever listened to streaming audio. "Active streamies" are people who have consumed streaming media in the last week or last month. That range could be greatly increased though. Seven hours and 50 minutes looks like a significant amount of time at first glance. But since most people work 40+ hours a week, they really are not doing as much online listening as radio stations would like. This is where streaming the broadcast signal and streaming side channels can become effective. With more choices within one site, listeners can choose what they want to hear, but the content still comes from one station. At work listening is very important to radio stations because the potential time spent listening is so high. Generally, radio listening is secondary. At work time spent listening has the potential to be at least eight hours a day.

Side Channels

Side channels are meant to complement or extend a station's over-the-air brand. Examples of side channels might include a local music channel for an Alternative radio station web site, or an All-Rap channel for an Urban radio station web site. Not many "streamies" are listening to them yet because there are few of these channels available. In January 2001, a large amount of people, 43 percent, said they are somewhat interested in hearing side

channels, and a significant amount, 30 percent, are very interested in side channels. This proves that there is great potential to increase time spent listening online if the content is original and different than what listeners can find on the airwaves.

Are radio stations talking less about their web sites?

Thirteen percent fewer people surveyed in January 2001 said they heard a radio station talk about their web site than those surveyed in July 2000. In turn, between July 2000 and January 2001, six percent fewer people visited a station's web site. Over-the-air promotion correlates with web site visits. The more a station mentions all the valuable aspects of their web site, the more listeners with Internet access will visit. Listeners are engaged in many other things when the radio is on and need many chances to actually hear a message.

The same goes for radio advertisements for web sites. Internet VI stated that a decrease in the number of banner ads on a web site and fewer mentions of a web sites by disc jockeys result in fewer web site visits and clicks on banner ads. Banner ads are advertisements placed on web sites, generally in a square or rectangle shape, resembling a banner. Fewer banner ads and fewer web site mentions resulted in the amount of people who visited a web site, which decreased from 49 percent in July 2000 to 39 percent in January 2001.

Important Points of Internet V, VI and VII

Despite a slowdown in online advertising spending, radio stations that maintain their web site initiatives will be at an advantage against those who do not. Maintaining the initiative means continuing to talk about all the things a radio station's web site has to offer and continuing to update and improve the web site. The Internet is a very important informational and entertainment outlet to many people, so radio stations that find a way to continue streaming may be more successful than those who do not.

To get more web site traffic, Arbitron and Edison say it is in the best interest of program directors and Internet directors to provide unique and compelling content on their web site. This could be artist/song information, concert dates, song downloads, exclusive prizes, etc. The majority of people who visit a radio station web site are P1 listeners. These are the most important people to a radio station. It is easier to listen to audio online than it is to watch video online, so radio stations have an advantage against TV stations. Programming high-quality content on the over-the-air signal is the most important thing for a programmer to do, and programming worthwhile web content is a close second.

Time spent listening to online radio stations is slightly down. Programmers may ask a few questions. Why are people online less? Are people just too busy, or has the quality of content decreased? Are there more exciting entertainment/informational outlets available?

Even though people are spending less time online, there are still many ways for radio stations to grab their attention when they are there. Offering more promotions and giveaways online is a simple way to get listeners to a radio station web site. Concert information, music news, local news and local sports are just a few other good ways to attract the attention of listeners. Additionally, a programming schedule is important to have on a web site to encourage appointment listening. Appointment listening is when a person makes a mental note to tune in to a radio station. Targeting at work online listeners is also smart because this type of listener has the potential to spend more time online than other listeners. Program directors and promotion directors who remember that it is nearly impossible to burn out a slogan or promotion have the power to make an unforgettable radio station and web site. Reminding disc jockeys to be patient with promotions to ensure listeners catch on is also smart.

Streaming audio and/or video is also a very good way to make a web site unforgettable. Maximizing listeners' time at a radio station web site can be done in an attempt to get listeners to depend on and learn about a radio station by offering beneficial information on the web site and worthwhile programming on the air. Form should follow function. Content is the most important thing on a web site because it is what will bring people back. A pretty web site without any valid information is worthless to users. In addition, streaming seems to add to total station listening, not take away from it. This suggests that not only do disc jockeys have to sell the web site successfully,

but also the web site has to sell the radio station effectively. The more a station is on the mind of the listener, the better the chance of that person recalling the station in a diary or a survey. Stations who do not fear the Internet will come out above those are afraid of it.

Broadband can help keep listeners at a web site longer and relevant content can help bring people back. Radio stations that team up with Broadband providers will give their listeners better Internet connections for less money. Stations can participate in promotions with Broadband providers to give away things such as free installation and discounted rates for the first year of installation.

There are many reasons to get Broadband. The most important reason for a program director is Broadband will enable their listeners to access their site with more ease, as well as listen as long as they want without interruption. Another important point is that Broadband users are on the Internet as much as they watch television or listen to the radio. Broadband is more of an opportunity than a threat to radio stations. Time spent listening to either online or AM or FM radio broadcasts can greatly increase through Broadband technology. Broadband allows people to stay online longer and radio is a great media to use along with the Internet.

Even with the inevitable threat of Napster and other online music software-sharing programs, traditional radio still has an advantage that makes it special. Traditional AM and FM radio stations are local. They have the power to communicate with a local audience about local issues. They have

the power to play local music and interact with a local audience at places in the community. Radio station web sites can also be extremely relevant to their local audience. Local concert listings, local restaurant guides, as well as content such as spotlights on local bands, exclusive downloads from those local bands, and local concert venue information are a few examples of local content a radio station could provide on their web site.

Stations are beginning to team up with record companies to provide exclusive downloads of new songs on their site. The downloadable songs could either be songs that artists performed live at the station, songs by local artists or music not for sale yet. Instead of being afraid of this new technology, stations that embrace it and jump on the bandwagon while it is new and exciting may be a huge hit with listeners. They will also probably make money by either garnering new advertisers to place ads on the web site, charging a small fee to download exclusive songs, or both.

Radio stations may find success with side channels of audio streams. Side channels can be marketed as an extension of a radio station's best attributes. For example, an Alternative station could have a side channel for a sub-genre like metal bands, rap bands or local bands. "I-RIF," a side channel of WRIF-FM, an Active Rock radio station in Detroit, is an example of a station using a side channel to promote one style of rock music. Stations offering side channels may be able to increase their audience by targeting people who may not partake in much of the programming heard over the air. Seventy four percent of side channel listeners said that if a station did not

offer a streamed signal they would go elsewhere. Side channels allow radio stations to satisfy two audiences at a time.

Finally, 45 percent of the Internet VI survey participants said they are interested in giving feedback on songs. These are the people who may also be willing to take an Internet survey. Program directors may learn new information about their listeners through a web survey.

BROADBAND REVOLUTION 2

Arbitron teamed up with Coleman Research to produce a study entitled, "Broadband Revolution 2-The Media World of Speedies." This is another worthwhile study for program directors today. This is also available for free online, at www.arbitron.com and www.colemaninsights.com. This study was conducted by interviewing a segment of the Internet user population Arbitron and Coleman have entitled "Speedies." "Speedies" are people who have high-speed, Broadband access to the Internet at home, work or school. The national sample who the companies spoke to was approximately 2,000 respondents. Then Arbitron and Coleman conducted in-depth phone interviews with 800 "Speedies" aged 12 and older in May 2001. On top of that, a small supplementary group of interviews were conducted with residential Broadband users. The questions in the telephone interviews were derived from focus groups that took place in April 2001. There are some useful findings from this study.

Nearly a third of American Internet users have Broadband access, with the workplace being the most common source of those connections.

Approximately 60 percent of all Americans are online, so Broadband users make up almost a fifth of American consumers. Additionally, Broadband penetration correlates with age. The older a person is, the less likely he or she has Broadband. Two thirds of Broadband users are between 25 and 54 years old. Only 11 percent of Broadband users are over 65.

Out of all Broadband users, 64 percent have access at work. Thirty-seven percent have it at home and 22 percent consists of college Broadband users. The figures add up to more than 100 percent because some people have Broadband access in more than one place. College and workplace users are the people that programmers can benefit most from targeting. Radio stations can benefit from at work listening because it has the potential to last from the time a person goes into work until they leave. This is similar for college students who have fast Internet connections like Broadband or Ethernet. They can listen as long as they want without tying up a phone line. Broadband or Ethernet connections are much quicker and more convenient than dial up Internet access, allowing people to surf the Internet generally without interruption. The more time a listener spends on a radio station web site, the more chances the station can sell itself to the listener through its audio stream, giveaways, playlists, program schedule, etc.

Those with Broadband access spend as much time using the Internet as they do with radio or television.

This means that the Internet has become as important to those who have Broadband as traditional media is for everyone else. Using Broadband allows users to surf the web at a very fast rate. Broadband enables web pages to load much faster than a dial-up connection. Broadband also enables audio streams and downloads to load much faster. On average, Broadband users use the television for 2 hours, 11 minutes a day, the radio for 2 hours, 18 minutes a day and the Internet for 2 hours, 16 minutes a day. The time spent online is the most for 18 to 24 year olds. They spend an average of 2 hours, 59 minutes a day online.

Although Broadband users spend a large amount of time online, only 18 percent of them consume streamed audio in a given week. As mentioned, many radio stations have discontinued their online stream because of royalty fees that commercial actors and record companies have demanded. And, those listeners who have encountered discontinued streams have easily found other sources of streaming that deliver similar programming. Commercial radio stations have much work ahead of them to produce an audio stream that excludes commercials. Arbitron and Coleman state that continuous music and variety are Internet audio's most wanted attributes.

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Media multitasking is common, but is more likely to involve a combination of online and offline media than multiple online media.

Internet usage is generally much higher among those Broadband users who consume a large amount of TV, radio and prerecorded music. Regardless of the medium, the more time spent with any of those media, the more time is spent online. The average Broadband user spends 2 hours, 16 minutes a day online. But, heavy TV viewers use the Internet for 2 hours, 38 minutes a day. Heavy radio listeners are online 2 hours, 32 minutes a day. And heavy pre-recorded music listeners spend 3 hours, 24 minutes a day online. This is good news for any traditional AM or FM radio station that ever worried about losing its audience to the Internet. The Internet and radio go together well, because both allow people to consume more than one while using the other.

Entertainment, and not just speed, can potentially fuel future resident Broadband adoption.

Seventy percent of at work Broadband users have no plans for getting Broadband at home. This will prove to be a marketing challenge. Offering promotions for free Broadband installation and reduced cost or free access to the service for a period of time can be a great way for radio stations to give listeners a way to get to their web site easier. Twenty-seven percent of college Broadband users said it is "extremely likely" and 38 percent say it is "very likely" that they will buy residential service. Only 11 percent said that it was "not at all likely."

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The Internet is most commonly thought of as an informational medium for many Broadband users. Seventy five percent of Broadband users think of the Internet as an information based medium and only 14 percent think of it as an entertainment based medium. This statistic illustrates that "fluff" promotions and pictures of disc jockeys will not make a web site worthwhile. The majority of Internet users surf the web looking for information. Entertainment only serves as a part of the purpose of a web site.

College Broadband users again differ from the average Broadband user. They are more likely to look for entertainment on the Internet. This suggests that radio stations and Broadband companies should promote content and high-speed access when marketing to potential college Broadband users. The speed of Broadband connections is what allows users to use entertainment like streaming audio and video so conveniently. Streaming and downloading are more difficult without Broadband. Arbitron and Coleman suggest that higher awareness, stronger branding, greater ease of use and more compelling content will help increase streaming media usage.

Streaming media show little potential for hurting traditional broadcast media and will more likely compliment radio and television.

Audio "streamies" indicated that the most common kind of radio listened to online is local AM and FM stations. This probably has changed significantly since the decision in favor of commercial actors and record companies. Very few Broadband users are overwhelmed by audio streaming choices, so those radio stations continuing to stream today have yet another

advantage. Additionally, over half-53 percent-of all Internet users (those with and without Broadband) who listen to audio streams find the quality of the audio to be acceptable.

Heavy streaming users use more traditional radio and television. Heavy "streamies" average 3 hours, 16 minutes listening to AM or FM signals every day, compared to 2 hours, 11 minutes a day by those who have never listened to streaming audio. Streaming audio is additive to traditional AM or FM listening. Six percent of audio "streamies" say their usage has replaced a large amount of their AM or FM listening. Twenty percent say it has replaced a small portion. And 67 percent say the usage is in addition to their normal AM or FM listening.

Downloaded music and streaming audio usage is motivated by very different factors and represents two significantly different media.

"Streamies" share much in common with heavy radio users and those who download music are more like heavy consumers of prerecorded music. Those who download are younger (mostly 12-24 years old) and prefer newer radio formats like Alternative. These people define themselves as "among the first" to be aware of new music. "Streamies" are generally older than people who download music. Demographics of "streamies" range from 12-17, 25-34 and 45-54. "Streamies" tend to prefer older radio formats like Classic Rock. They are less aware of new music than heavy users of downloaded material. Understanding "streamies" helps to understand heavy radio listeners. Understanding users of downloaded audio helps to understand people who are among the first to be aware of new music.

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Important Points of Broadband 2

Programmers who recognize and exploit the potential of Broadband and at work listening mayistening, Ratings, Shares and Cume. Most people that have their Broadband access have it at work and are there up to 8 or more hours a day. Arbitron and Coleman say, "hit them where they are." Rewarding listeners at work is a good attempt to get them to listen longer. Not only should radio stations *sound* better, but also their web sites should *work* better. An audio stream may bring listeners in to a web site, and on air reminders of the web site's original content may make them come back.

Programmers who acknowledge the attributes of heavy listeners of downloaded audio will also better understand their audience. These people exhibit a great deal of passion for music and hearing it first. Responding to this passion by offering audio downloads of new releases and/or in-studio exclusive performances may make a radio audience more loyal. Arbitron and Coleman also suggest that radio stations sell concert tickets and music memorabilia on their web sites.

Finally, if a radio station streams an audio signal, making sure it is always in working order is essential to maintain and/or increase listenership. Listeners are not loyal to discontinued streams. Commercial radio stations that discontinued their stream can do two things. They can create side channels that do not include any commercials, or they can play station promotional announcements on the web stream over the commercials air on the AM or FM signal.

CHAPTER 9
CASE STUDY: WEB SURVEY FOR WDBM-FM

As with many radio stations, the staff at WDBM makes assumptions about its audience. The only way to find the validity in these assumptions is to conduct audience research. In addition to that research, it is important to review Arbitron ratings data to further study the validity of such assumptions.

Some common assumptions WDBM staff has made are:

-The main competition for WDBM is WWDX,

-WDBM has more listeners during the day than during the evening, overnights or weekends,

-WDBM has more female listeners than male,

-WDBM does not have any listeners over age 40, and

-WDBM listeners enjoy hearing new music.

The WDBM web survey and Arbitron information proved essentially every one of these assumptions to be wrong.

The survey prepared for www.impact89fm.org is essentially a perceptual study tailored for the Internet. The goal is to find out the preferences of WDBM listeners. This kind of survey is the least expensive and least time consuming method for a college radio station in the 117th largest U.S. radio market. It only took three staff members to make the survey happen. Face-to-face surveys would have been impossible to complete because they would take too long and take too many staff members to carry them out. Mail surveys would have been too expensive, and the rate of return is usually small. Telephone surveys might be acceptable, but they

have been done before, and they also require a large number of staff members. Most importantly, in addition to finding out information about WDBM listeners, the point of surveying online was to see how effective Internet research can be.

In markets where there is high Internet penetration, like a college campus with Ethernet access, more radio and music related experiments are being conducted (Kelly 110). Certainly, some may argue that not all of the WDBM listening population was able to take the WDBM survey because they were either a) computer illiterate or b) not online. But, the primary target audience for WDBM is 18-24 year old Michigan State University (MSU) students. Every MSU student has free access to the Internet, and the entire campus is equipped with high-speed, Ethernet access. All students had an equal chance to participate. The survey was on the web site for almost eight months. This is a long time to keep a survey open, but there was the time to do so while completing the rest of this paper. Programming remained consistent during this period.

WDBM developed its web site and began streaming in 1996. WDBM streams its audio signal 24 hours a day and has a concert calendar, music news, a message board, a program schedule, links to some of the station's genre based programs and general contact information. WDBM has also done a few Internet based promotions and had a decent amount of listener participation.

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The potential for streaming audio growth continues to be high for a non-commercial radio station like WDBM because it does not have to deal with commercial actors' royalties. WDBM can aggressively sell its uniqueness over the air to get people to the web site.

All WDBM listeners were invited by disc jockeys to take the surveys. WDBM generally garners other listeners than simply the college aged crowd. People in their late twenties and their forties are also a significant part of the WDBM audience even though the station does not necessarily target them. Disc jockeys announced the survey on a daily basis. There were two versions of a Public Service Announcement read by the disc jockeys. They read:

"So you're a big time Impact listener. You probably don't listen to ANY other station because you think we rock. Well, I agree. But in order to keep up our good work, we need your help. Right now is your chance to give us some feedback. Log onto impact89fm.org and complete our listener survey. WE NEED YOU! We aim to rock the airwaves, so be critical. We can take it; we're big kids. Again the web address is impact89fm.org. So log on soon, man!"

"So you're a big time Impact listener. You probably don't listen to ANY other station because you think we rock. Well, I agree. But in order to keep up our good work, we need your help, and their isn't much time left. Right now is your chance to give us some feedback. Log onto impact89fm.org and complete our listener survey. WE NEED YOU, but we can only take your input until Friday July 7th. We aim to rock the airwaves, so be critical. We can take it; we're big kids. Again the web address is impact89fm.org. So log on soon, man!"

A copy of the survey follows.

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Consent Form

"As technology continues to develop new ways to deliver radio signals around the world, the importance of what an audience wants out of a radio station increases significantly. You will be asked a series of questions in this survey. I am researching for my thesis in the Department of Telecommunication at Michigan State University. I am interested in your thoughts about how you feel about what you hear on the radio in the hope of improving radio research for radio program directors. Completion of this survey should take about 15 minutes.

You are being asked to freely participate in this study. Participation is voluntary and you can elect not to participate in this study. At any time during this study, you may discontinue your participation. You are eligible to submit one entry.

All results from this study will be treated with strict confidence. This means that your name will not be associated with the answers you provide to questions in any report of research findings. Your name is only requested as a reference when compiling data.

If you have any questions or concerns about your participation in this survey, please contact Gary Reid at reidg@msu.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as participants in a research experiment, you may contact David E. Wright, Ph.D., Chair of the University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects at 517-355-2180.

You indicate your voluntary agreement to participate by completing and returning this questionnaire.

Lindsay Peters, Program Director"

Survey

1. What time of day do you listen to The Impact the most?
____ overnight
____ mornings
____ midday
____ afternoons
____ evenings
____ weekends

2. What time of day do you listen least?
____ overnight
____ mornings
____ midday
____ afternoons
____ evenings
____ weekends

a) On an average day, how much time do you listen to The Impact?
____ less than an hour a day
____ 1 to 2 hours a day
____ 2 to 4 hours a day
____ 4 to 6 hours a day
____ 6 or more hours a day

4. Where do you listen to The Impact? Check all that apply.
____ In the car
____ At home
____ At work
____ At the gym
____ Walking/biking to class

5. How do you tune in to The Impact? Check all that apply.
____ on the radio at 88.9 FM
____ on Channel 12 on AT&T Cable
____ on the web via RealAudio streaming
____ on the web via Quicktime streaming

6. Who is your favorite artist played on The Impact?

7. Who is your least favorite?

8. Every evening, The Impact airs a variety of genre based shows. Please mark on a scale from 1 to 5 how often you tune in to the following shows. (1=never, 3=sometimes, 5=often).

____Global Sounds
____Reggae Sunsplash
____Two Tone Beat
____Sit or Spin
____Space Odyssey
____Jazz Spectrum
____Sneak Preview
____Progressive Torch and Twang
____The Accidental Blues
____The Basement
____Thee Hourz O Power
____Impact Flashback
____Mechanical Pulse
____The Cultural Vibe
____Impact Exposure

For the shows you listen to,
9. a) What do you like about them?

   b) What do you dislike, and why?

10. As a listener, what things keep you listening?

11. What things cause you to tune out?

12. If you could program The Impact for a day, what would you change? Check
all that apply:
____Add more familiar music.
____Add more unfamiliar music.
____Emphasize information about the Mid-Michigan area, in addition to Michigan State University.
____Have less talk from the DJs.
____Have more news and sports throughout the day.
____Have more information on music.
____Other _____

13. Would you like to hear more well known artists or genre-specific programming on The Impact? Or is the balance appropriate?

14. Please rate the following statements:
(1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=no opinion, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree)

_____The Impact has a wide variety of music.

_____The Impact could do a better job communicating to Michigan State University.

_____The Impact is consistently enjoyable to listen to throughout the day.

_____The Impact is consistently enjoyable to listen to throughout the evening.

_____The Impact does not cater to all music tastes.

_____The Impact has high-quality genre-specific shows.

_____The Impact could better inform listeners about new music.

_____The Impact has DJs that are worse than DJs on other radio stations.

_____The Impact has music for every taste.

_____The Impact plays music that many other radio stations play.

_____The Impact is not consistent sounding when listening during the day.

_____The Impact addresses the needs of the Michigan State University community.

_____The Impact is not always enjoyable to listen to in the evening.

_____The Impact has DJs that are better than DJs on other radio stations.

_____The Impact could improve its genre-specific shows.

_____The Impact has helped me learn a lot about new music.

15. Review the following lists of artists you can hear on The Impact. Rate them from most favorite to least favorite. (1=love, 5=hate)

_____Dave Matthews Band

_____Ani DiFranco

_____Travis

_____Sarah McLachlan

_____Troll For Trout

_____Billy Bragg

_____Barenaked Ladies

_____Wilco

_____19 Wheels

_____Old 97s

_____The Verve

_____Indigo Girls

_____Oasis

_____Domestic Problems

_____The Waterboys

_____Pavement

_____Flaming Lips

_____Knee Deep Shag

_____Our Lady Peace

_____Dinosaur Jr.

_____Angie Aparo

_____Blur

_____Echo and the Bunnymen

15. continued
____Reverend Horton Heat
____Peter Gabriel
____Tori Amos
____The Atomic Numbers
____Ben Harper
____Liz Phair
____R.E.M.

16. What gender of deejays do you prefer to listen to on The Impact? **(If no preference, skip to #18.)**
_____ male
_____ female

17. Why do you prefer one gender over the other?

18. What would you like to see on this web site?

19. Please write any other comments on The Impact here.

20. What is your age?

21. What is your gender?
_____ male
_____ female

22. What is your occupation? (If you are a student, please write what school, college or university you attend.)

23. Do you live on or off campus?

Figure 3: Front page of www.impact89fm.org showing advertisement for listener survey

Results from the survey, WDBM data from Arbitron and assumptions that can be made

There were 145 acceptable surveys. Fifty three were from females and ninety two were from males. There were 23 surveys that had to be thrown out because they were not fully completed. In Spring 2001, Arbitron reported that WDBM had 5200 P1 listeners a week. Due to the overall small response rate, this web survey should be treated the same as a focus group. It is merely an inventory of possible reactions to WDBM and its programming among a selected group of P1 listeners. These percentages are only for WDBM "super fans" that participated in the web survey. The percentages are there to show the relative magnitude of this small sample.

1. What time of day do you listen to The Impact the most?
(In order from most to least)
-Afternoons: 42 people (29%)
-Mornings: 35 people (24.1%)
-Midday: 30 people (20.7%)
-Evenings: 24 people (16.6%)
-Overnight: 12 people (8.28%)
-Weekends: 2 people (1.4%)
Table 8: Time Survey Respondents Said They Tuned in the Most
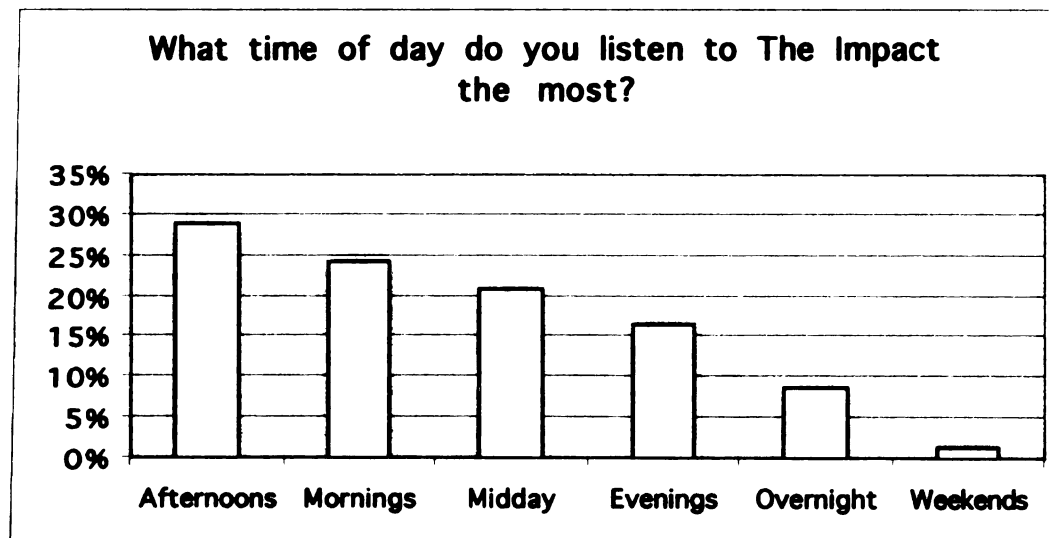
Figure 4: Time Survey Respondents Said They Tuned in the Most

These numbers did not come as a surprise. Afternoons and mornings are the times of the day that people in general listen to the radio the most. At these times, people are driving to and from work and the radio is usually on in their car. In addition, midday listening is when non-student WDBM listeners

tune in at work. Evenings are the time of day in which WDBM airs genre-specific programming. These shows are more narrowly targeted, so it is natural that the survey showed that there are fewer listeners in the evening. Finally, it is very natural that overnight and weekend listening is said to be listened to the least. Most people are asleep overnight, and most people are busier on the weekend and may not be able to tune in at regular times, like they might do during the week. Most people work on weekdays. Those who do not work on the weekend may not "schedule" radio listening in, because the routine of the weekend is generally less structured than during the week.

However, these numbers are not the same as the data compiled by Arbitron. After analyzing the information from Arbitron, the above numbers are really only accurate for P1 listeners. Arbitron surveys a statistically significant sample of the entire population of the Lansing/East Lansing radio market, and therefore has a sample of P1, P2, P3 and even P4 listeners. The Spring 2001 Arbitron survey period lasted from March 29 through June 20. According to the Arbitron numbers for Spring 2001, WDBM had the highest Shares for people 12 and older from 7 p.m. to midnight, Monday through Friday. So WDBM had the most Spring 2001 listeners during the time that genre based programs aired. Even Saturdays from 7 p.m. to midnight, followed by Saturdays from 3-7 p.m. had a larger Share than any of the weekday time slots between 6 a.m. and 7 p.m. As mentioned, Arbitron data can clear up assumptions program directors often make. Before listing many percentages for WDBM, it is worthwhile to note the population estimates for

the WDBM target audience in the Lansing/East Lansing tri-county (Eaton,

Ingham, and Clinton) area:

-Men, 18-24: 30,200
-Women, 18-24: 31,700

Spring 2001 Shares for Persons 12+
(in order from highest to smallest):
-Monday-Friday, 7 p.m.-midnight: 2.9%
-Saturday, 7 p.m.-midnight: 2.8%
-Saturday, 3-7 p.m.: 2.3%
-Monday-Friday, 1-5 a.m.: 1.3%
-Sunday, 3-7 p.m.: 1.2%
-Monday-Friday, 3-7 p.m.: 1.1%
-Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.: 1%
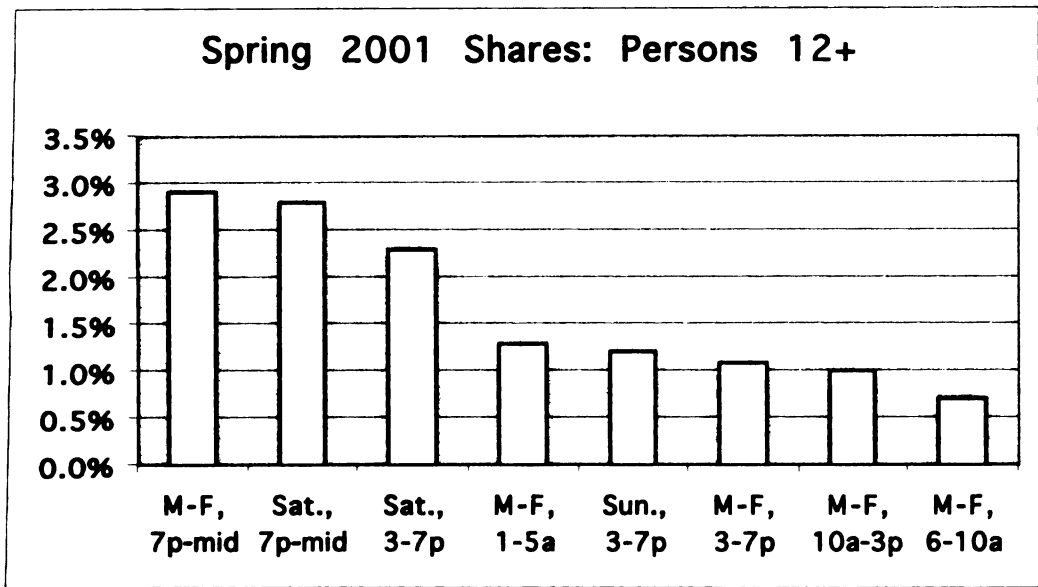-Monday-Friday, 6-10 a.m.: .7%
Table 9: Arbitron Spring 2001 Shares for 12+

Figure 5: Arbitron Spring 2001 Shares for 12+

Right off the bat, these numbers look extremely low. But, these

numbers are for all people ages 12+ in the market. Like most radio stations

today, WDBM does not target the entire market. It has a much more narrow

target market of Michigan State University students, ages 18-24. The closest

measurement Arbitron measured was people ages 18-34. The Shares for

that demographic were slightly higher.

<u>Spring 2001 Shares for 18-34 year olds</u>
(In order of highest to lowest)
-Saturday, 7 p.m.-midnight: 6.4%
-Saturday, 3-7 p.m.: 6.3%
-Monday-Friday, 7 p.m.-midnight: 3.5%
-Sunday, 3-7 p.m.: 2.8%
-Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.: 2.3%
-Sunday, 6-10 a.m.: 1.9%
-Monday-Friday, 6-10 a.m.: 1.8%
-Monday-Friday, 3-7 p.m.: 1.8%
Table 10: Arbitron Spring 2001 Shares for 18-34
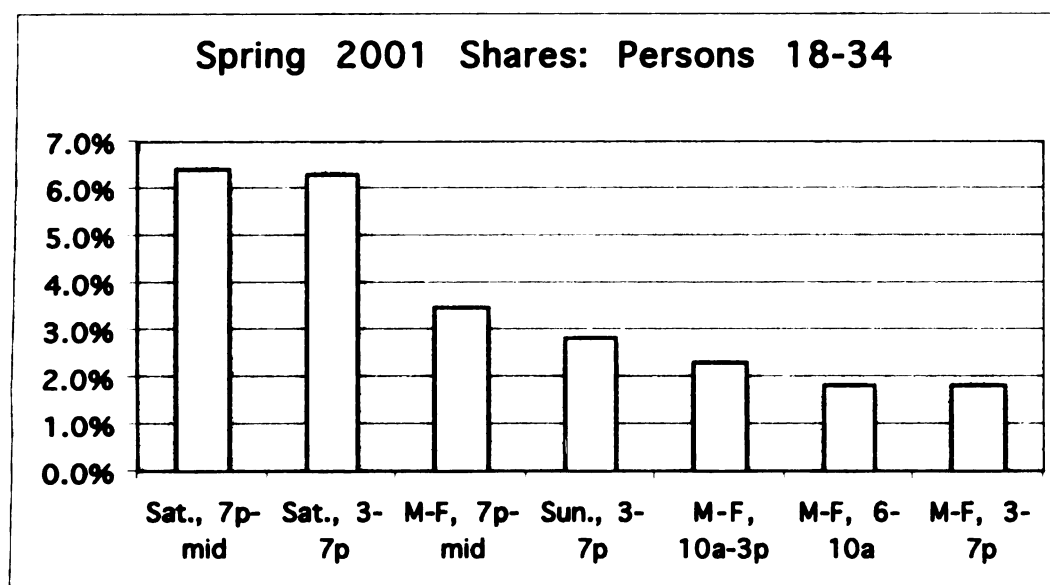
Figure 6: Arbitron Spring 2001 Shares for 18-34

It is also valuable to look at a radio station hour by hour. This kind of

data may illustrate weak and strong times during a typical day. It tracks

individual hour performance and can also show if an audience is gaining,

remaining steady or is declining throughout the day. Arbitron supplies data

for Average Quarter Hour persons, Share and market Average Quarter Hour

persons. It is also helpful to compare this data with prior ratings books. Here

is the data for WDBM Average Quarter Hour (AQH) persons 12+ hour by hour

for Spring 2000 and Spring 2001.

Monday-Friday	AQH Persons, Spring 2000	Spring 2001
12M-1A	100	400
1-2A	100	200
2-3A	0	0
3-4A	100	0
4-5A	100	0
5-6A	0	0
6-7A	600	0
7-8A	1200	500
8-9A	1400	900
9-10A	1500	700
10-11A	1600	700
11A-12N	1500	500
12N-1P	1900	800
1-2P	2100	800
2-3P	2300	600
3-4P	2600	500
4-5P	2400	600
5-6P	1600	800
6-7P	500	700
7-8P	300	600
8-9P	500	1000
9-10P	500	600
10-11P	500	900
11P-12M	400	800

Table 11: Average Quarter Hour Comparison for Monday-Friday

Saturday	AQH Persons, Spring 2000	Spring 2001
12M-1A	0	800
1-2A	0	800
2-3A	0	400
3-4A	0	400
4-5A	0	0
5-6A	0	100
6-7A	0	200
7-8A	0	0
8-9A	600	300
9-10A	400	0
10-11A	500	0
11A-12N	700	300
12N-1P	800	1100
1-2P	700	400
2-3P	700	400
3-4P	1000	900
4-5P	1000	1300
5-6P	500	1400
6-7P	400	800
7-8P	0	1200
8-9P	400	1200
9-10P	900	1100
10-11P	700	300
11P-12M	300	300

Table 12: Average Quarter Hour Comparison for Saturday

Sunday	AQH Persons for Spring 2000	Spring 2001
12M-1A	700	800
1-2A	700	800
2-3A	0	0
3-4A	0	0
4-5A	0	0
5-6A	0	0
6-7A	0	0
7-8A	100	0
8-9A	100	0
9-10A	400	400
10-11A	400	400
11A-12N	1000	0
12N-1P	1400	0
1-2P	700	0
2-3P	1800	400
3-4P	300	400
4-5P	100	400
5-6P	200	700
6-7P	0	200
7-8P	200	0
8-9P	300	100
9-10P	0	0
10-11P	0	200
11P-12M	0	0

Table 13: Average Quarter Hour Comparison for Sunday

In most cases, the numbers went down in Spring 2001. Instead of

getting discouraged, the program director at WDBM can simply look at the

times that have the highest numbers and schedule the strongest disc jockeys

in those time slots.

2. What time of day do you listen least?
(In order from least to most)
-Overnight: 78 people (53.8%)
-Mornings: 24 people (16.6%)
-Midday: 16 people (11%)
-Weekends: 13 people (8.9%)
-Evenings: 11 people (7.6%)
-Afternoons: 3 people (2%)
Table 14: Time Survey Respondents Said They Tuned in the Least

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When do you listen least?
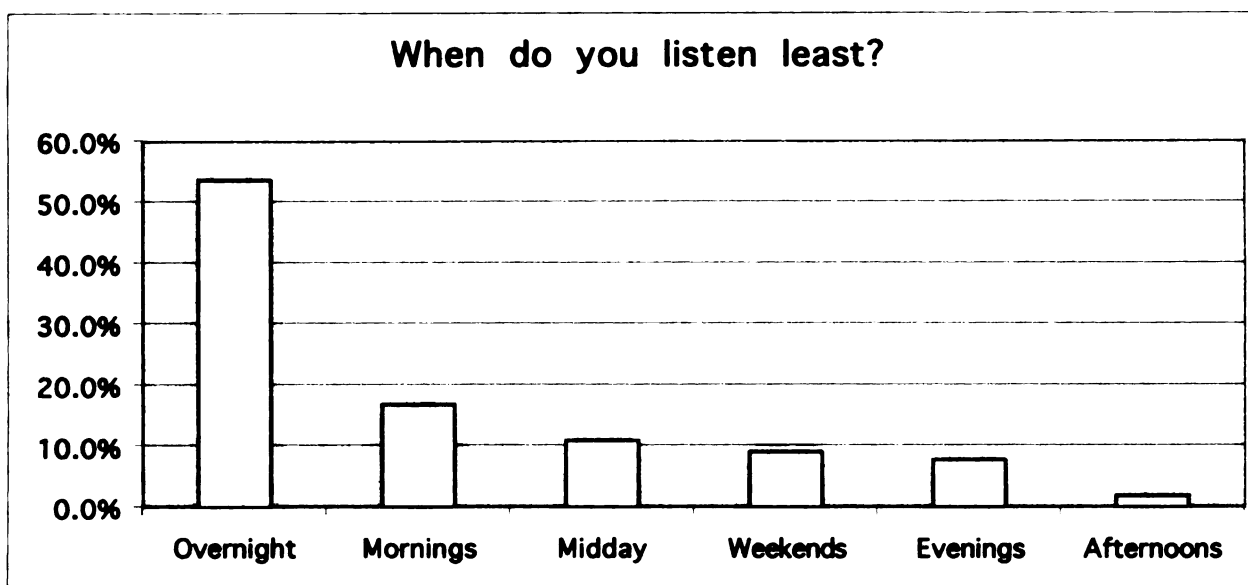
Figure 7: Time Survey Respondents said they tuned in the least

Again, it is no surprise that WDBM listeners said they tune in the least

amount of time overnight. Though Arbitron showed that the Share of listeners

ages 12+ who listened to WDBM in Spring 2001 is higher overnight than it

was during some of the daytime dayparts, the Average Quarter Hour estimate

for overnight hours was only 100 people. The Share was higher simply

because overall there are fewer people overall listening to the radio overnight.

But since the Arbitron data said WDBM did actually garner a larger Share

overnight than during the day in Spring 2001, it can be assumed that those

listeners only tune in at night, and were not the P1 listeners who took the web

survey.

Next, many P1 listeners said that they do not tune in to WDBM in the

morning. This could simply show that they are not awake yet to listen or it

could mean that most listeners are choosing another radio station in the

morning. Both the Arbitron Shares for ages 12+ and 18-34 are low for

mornings. Finally, many MSU students are in class during midday hours, so

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that is most likely why a few participants said they listen the least at that time.

And again, no student who lives on campus could be surveyed because

Arbitron does not send diaries to anyone in any kind of communal housing

such as dormitories. Here are the numbers for the lowest Shares in Spring

2001 for persons 18-34.

<u>Spring 2001 Shares for 18-34 year olds (dayparts with lowest Shares)</u>
Saturday, 6-10 a.m.: 1.1%
Sunday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.: 1.7%
Sunday, 7 p.m.-midnight: 1.7%
Monday-Friday, 6-10 a.m.: 1.8%
Monday-Friday, 3-7 p.m.: 1.8%
Sunday, 6-10 a.m.: 1.9%
Table 15: Lowest Arbitron Shares
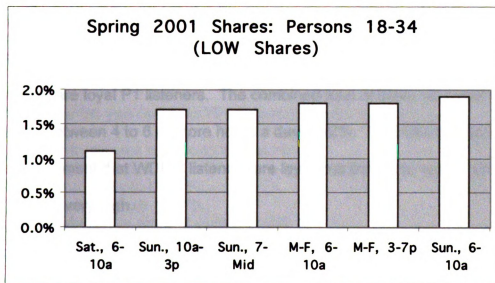
Figure 8: Lowest Arbitron Shares

3. On an average day, how much time do you listen to The Impact?
(In order of most common response)
-1 to 2 hours a day: 51 people (35.2%)
-2 to 4 hours a day: 47 people (32.4%)
-6 or more hours a day: 17 people (11.7%)
-4 to 6 hours a day: 15 people (10.3%)
-Less than an hour a day: 14 people (9.7%)
-(1 person did not respond)
Table 16: Amount of Time Survey Respondents Said They Listened
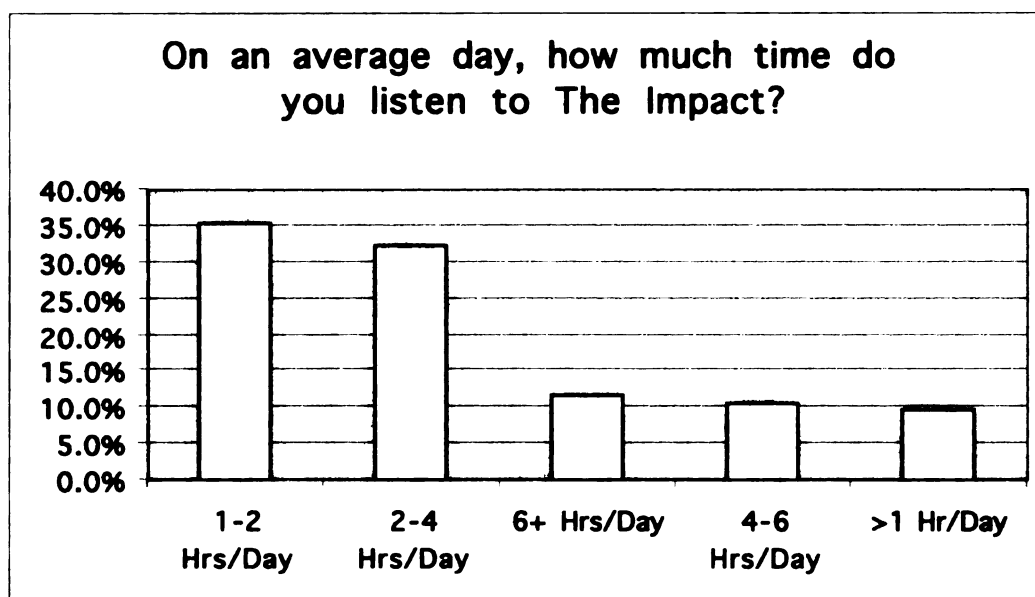
Figure 9: Amount of Time Survey Respondents Said They Listened

According to this group of people, WDBM has listeners with high time spent listening. The combined total of listeners who said they listen from 1 to 4 hours a day is 67.6%. That means that most of the people who took this survey are loyal P1 listeners. The combined total of those who said they listen between 4 to 6 or more hours a day is 22%. The Arbitron numbers are in agreement that WDBM listeners are loyal and their time spent listening (TSL) is very high.

Average time spent listening (in hours) for people 12+ for Spring 2001
(in order from most to least)
-Monday-Sunday, 6 a.m.-midnight: 5.1
-Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.- 3 p.m.: 3.4
-Monday-Friday, 7 p.m.-midnight: 2.9
-Saturday, 7 p.m.-midnight: 2.9
-Monday-Friday, 6-10 a.m.: 2.2
-Monday-Friday, 3-7 p.m.: 2
-Sunday, 3-7 p.m.: 2
-Saturday, 3-7 p.m.: 1.8
-Sunday, 10 am.-3 p.m.: 1.3
-Saturday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.: 1
Table 17: Arbitron Average Time Spent Listening for 12+
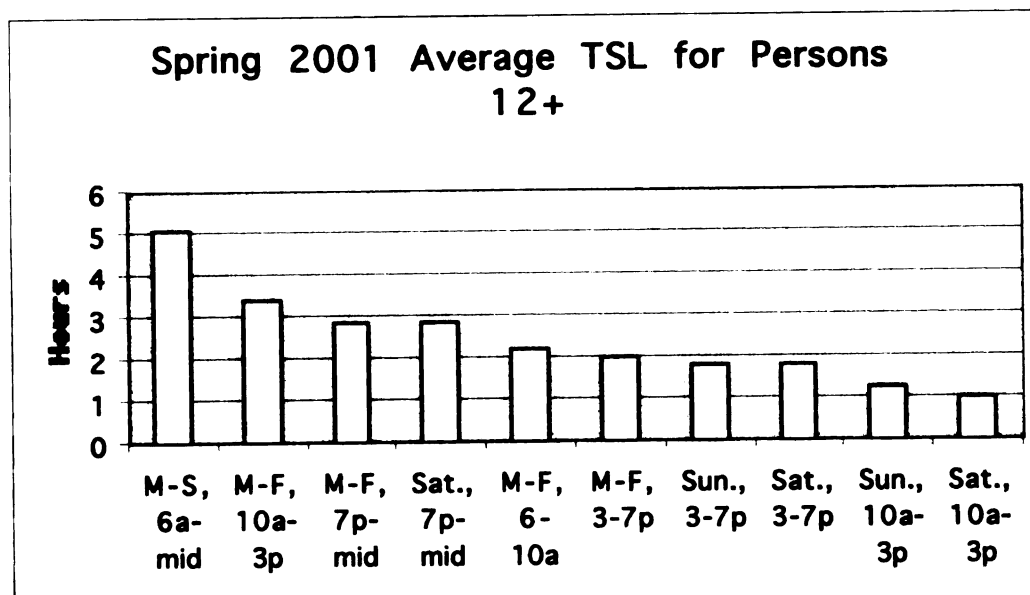
Figure 10: Arbitron Average Time Spent Listening for 12+

Other relevant information from Arbitron on P1 listeners for Monday-Sunday,
6 a.m. to midnight, Spring 2001
-P1 Time Spent Listening: 10 hours
-P1 Cume: 5200 people
-P1 Average Quarter Hours: 400
Table 18: P1 Listener Vital Signs

4. Where do you listen to The Impact? Check all that apply.

(In order from most common place to least)
-In the car: 65 people (44.8%)
-At work: 47 people (32.4%)
-At home: 30 people (20.7%)
-Walking/biking to class: 2 people (1.4%)
-At the gym: 1 person (less than 1%)
Table 19: Places Survey Respondents Said They Listened
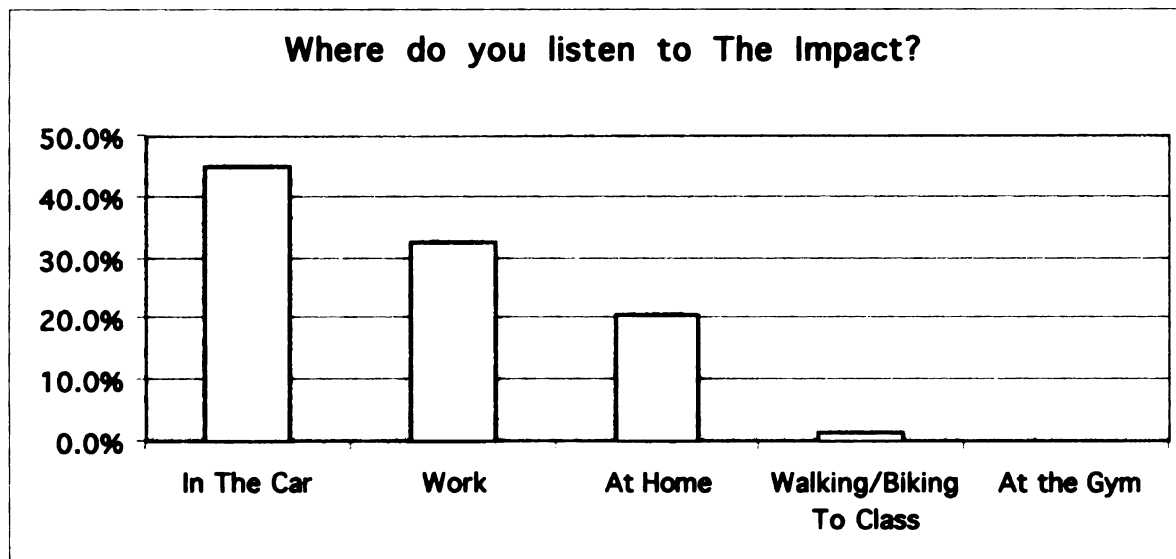
Figure 11: Places Survey Respondents Said They Listened

Like the first few survey questions, the responses here did not come as a surprise. People listen to WDBM in the car. This is good news for radio in general, in light of how many people have CD players in their cars today. It also suggests that at work listeners are a significant part of the daily audience. It does, however, suggest that WDBM must work harder to get listeners to tune on the way to class.

Arbitron supplied listening locations as a percentage of Average Quarter Hours. These numbers for Spring 2001 for persons 12+ were different from what the survey participants said. The number also varied from weekdays to weekends.

Percent of Average Quarter Hours spent listening Monday through Sunday, 6 a.m. to midnight
-In the home: 44%
-At work: 35%
-In the car: 21%
Table 20: Listening Locations broken up by Average Quarter Hours (Monday-Sunday)
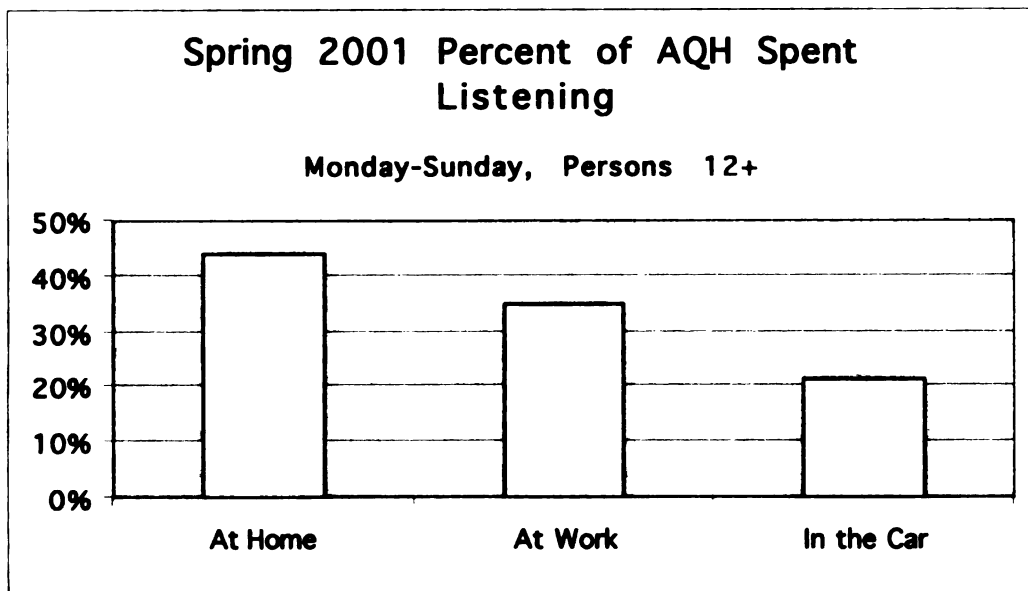
Figure 12: Listening Locations Broken Up by Average Quarter Hours
(Monday-Sunday)

Percent of Average Quarter Hours spent listening Monday through Friday, 6
a.m. to midnight
-At work: 43%
-At home: 34%
-In the car: 23%
Table 21: Listening Locations Broken Up by Average Quarter Hours (Monday-
Friday)
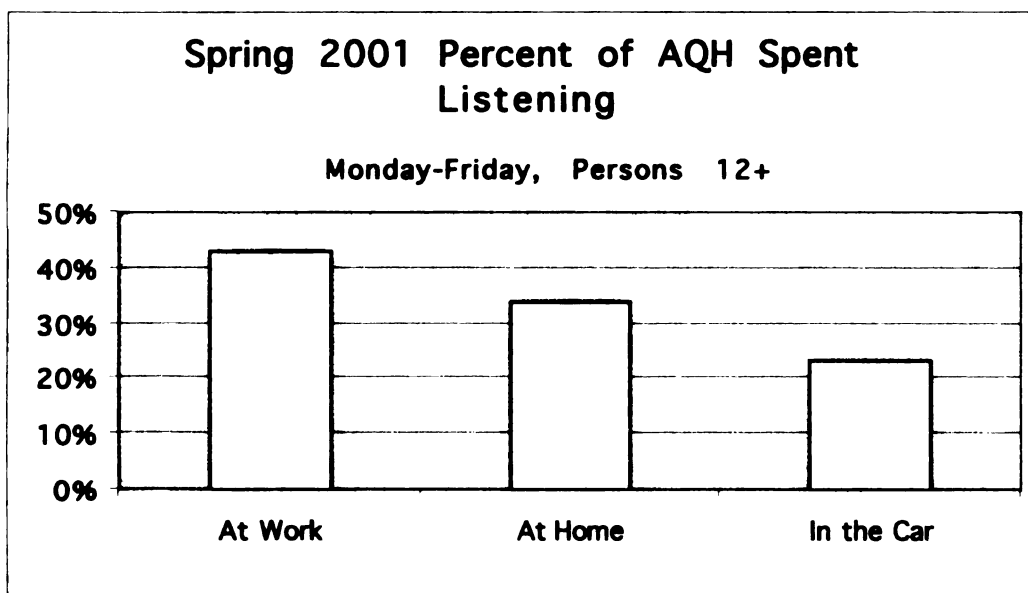
Figure 13: Listening Locations broken up by Average Quarter Hours
(Monday-Sunday)

Again, this illustrates the differing samples gathered by the web survey

and by Arbitron. It is helpful to know the difference between P1 listeners and

other listeners. It also makes sense to see more at work listening during the

week, and more at home listening on the weekend.

5. How do you tune in to The Impact? Check all that apply.
(In order from most common to least)
-On the radio at 88.9 FM: 121 people (83.4%)
-On the web via RealAudio streaming: 21 people (14.5%)
-On the web via Quicktime streaming: 3 people (2%)
-On Channel 12 on AT&T Cable: (none)
Table 22: How Survey Respondents Said They Tuned In
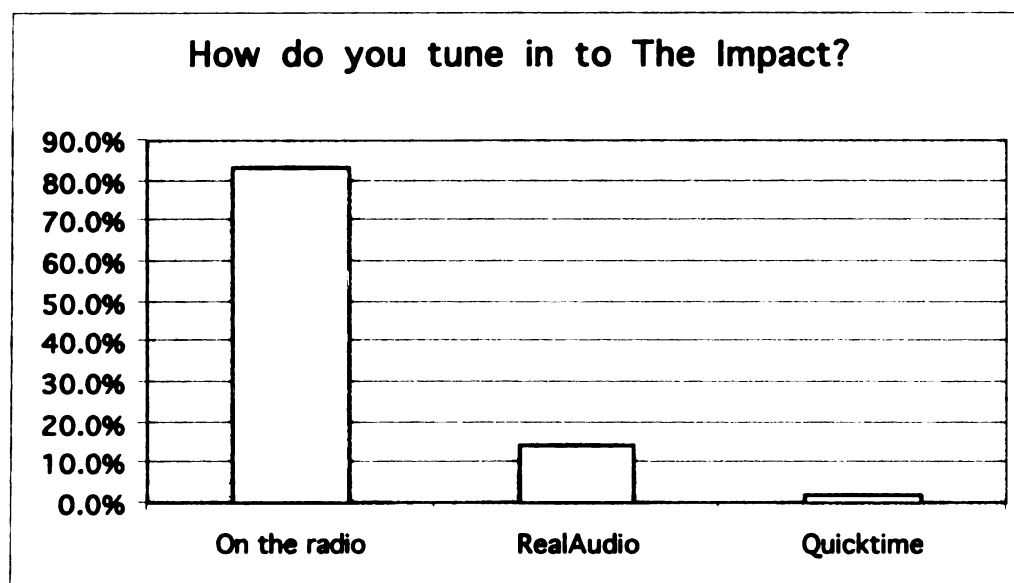
Figure 14: How Survey Respondents Said They Tuned In

This is what was assumed. Most of the WDBM audience is local.

Internet users stream with RealAudio more than Quicktime because it is a

more reliable technology. RealAudio is much more expensive to purchase

though, and much fewer people can listen at one time to WDBM using that

platform. Quicktime is less expensive and more people can tune in at once,

but it is the less popular and generally less reliable option.

6. Who is your favorite artist on The Impact?
-"Don't have one/none listed": 16 people
-"Most artists": 1 person
-"Never know the names": 1 person
-"Too many to list": 2 people
-"Various": 1 person
-"Any Brit Pop or indie pop": 1 person
-"Anything local especially The Verve Pipe and 19 Wheels": 1 person

-Other answers (in alphabetical order): 19 Wheels (x2), Air, Amory, Tori Amos, Angie Aparo (x2), Fiona Apple, Richard Ashcroft, Barenaked Ladies (x2), Ben Folds Five (x2), Bjork, BT, Jeff Buckley (x2), David Byrne, Caviar, Coalesce, Coldplay, Nikka Costa, The Cure, Dandy Warhols (x2), Alana Davis, Howie Day, Dead Kennedys, Depeche Mode Ani DiFranco (x5), Domestic Problems (x2), Eels, Five For Fighting (x3), Flaming Lips (x2), David Gray (x2), Gomez, Guided By Voices, Guster (x2), Half Looking, Ben Harper (x5), PJ Harvey, Hooverphonic, James, Jurassic 5, Limp Bizkit, Dave Matthews Band (x2), Mellow, Moby (x3), Mono, Morrissey, Nirvana, Pavement, Glen Phillips, Wally Pleasant (x2), Portishead, Primal Scream, The Push Kings, Radiohead (x8), R.E.M. (x2), Red House Painters, The Samples, The Sea and Cake, Self (x2), Bob Schneider, Duncan Sheik, Ian Simmons, Solid Frog, Soul Coughing, Teddy Thompson, Tool, The Tragically Hip, Travis (x2), Turin Breaks, The Twilight Singers, The Verve Pipe (x3), U2 (x4), Weezer (x6), Dar Williams.
Table 23: Favorite Artists of Survey Respondents

Obviously none of these answers hold much weight, even the ones

with multiple responses. It may however provide a snapshot of what artists

could be considered core artists at WDBM.

7. Who is your least favorite?
"all that folky fem rock": 1 person
"Any hip hop": 1 person
"Any rapper": 1 person
"Anything popular": 1 person
"Anything whiney": 1 person
"Bands you see on MTV (mainstream crap)": 1 person
"Bitch rock": 1 person
"head banger types who make noise": 1 person
"I like em all": 1 person
"None-you guys are great at picking music": 1

-Other answers: 19 Wheels, Bjork, Caviar (x4), Depeche Mode, Ani DiFranco (x6), Everclear (x2), Ben Harper, Garbage (x2), Gomez, Grasshopper Takeover, Head On 5, Hootie and the Blowfish, Indigo Girls, Jane's Addiction, Limp Bizkit, Dave Matthews Band (x4), No Doubt, Our Lady Peace, Outkast, Papa Roach, Pat McGee Band, Placebo, Poe, R.E.M., Radiohead (x3).
Table 24: Least Favorite Artists of Survey Respondents

This list of artists and bands was much shorter. This could mean that

WDBM is on track with what its P1 listeners want to hear. Again it is hard to

tell with so many different responses.

8. Every evening, The Impact airs a variety of genre based shows. Please mark on a scale from 1 to 5 how often you tune in to the following shows. (1=never, 3=sometimes, 5=often).

Averages (From Highest to Lowest Rating) and Breakdown by Scores

(No answers were accepted for The Reggae Sunsplash. There was a web page error.)

#1=Impact Flashback: 2.65
-54 people (12.3%) answered with a 1.
-11 people (7.6%) answered with a 2.
-33 people (22.8%) answered with a 3.
-26 people (17.9%) answered with a 4.
-21 people (14.9%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "sometimes."
-The combined total of 1s and 2s (never) is 19.9%
-The combined total of 4s and 5s (always) is 32.8%.
Table 25: Impact Flashback
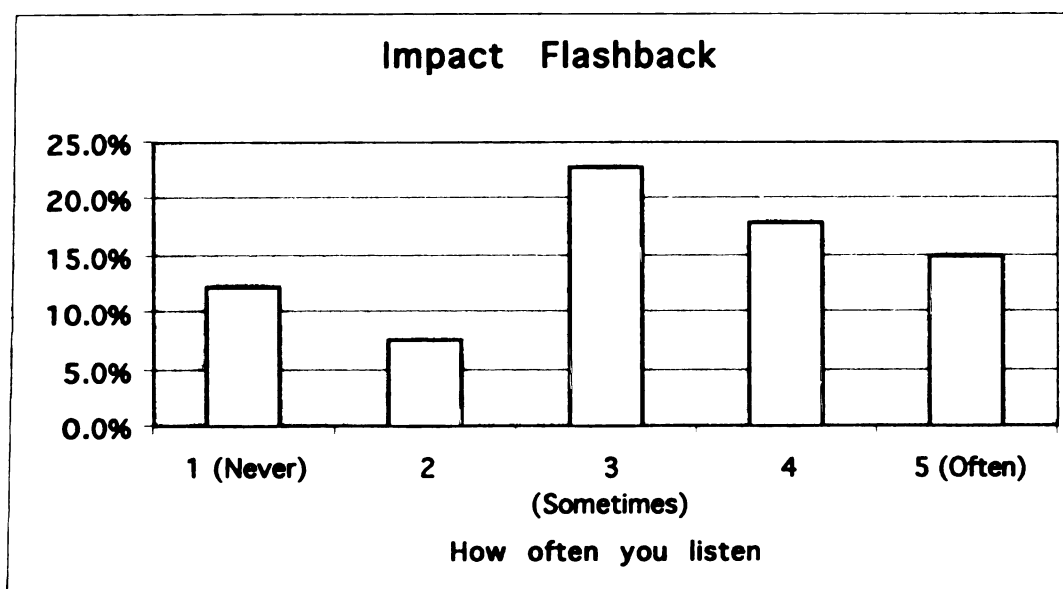
Figure 15: Impact Flashback

#2=Sit or Spin: 2.5
-51 people (35%) answered with a 1.
-17 people (11.7%) answered with a 2.
-46 people (31.7%) answered with a 3.
-16 people (11%) answered with a 4.
-15 people (10.3%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "never."
-The combined total 1s and 2s (never) is 46.7%.
-The combined total of 4s and 5s (always) is 21.3%.
Table 26: Sit or Spin
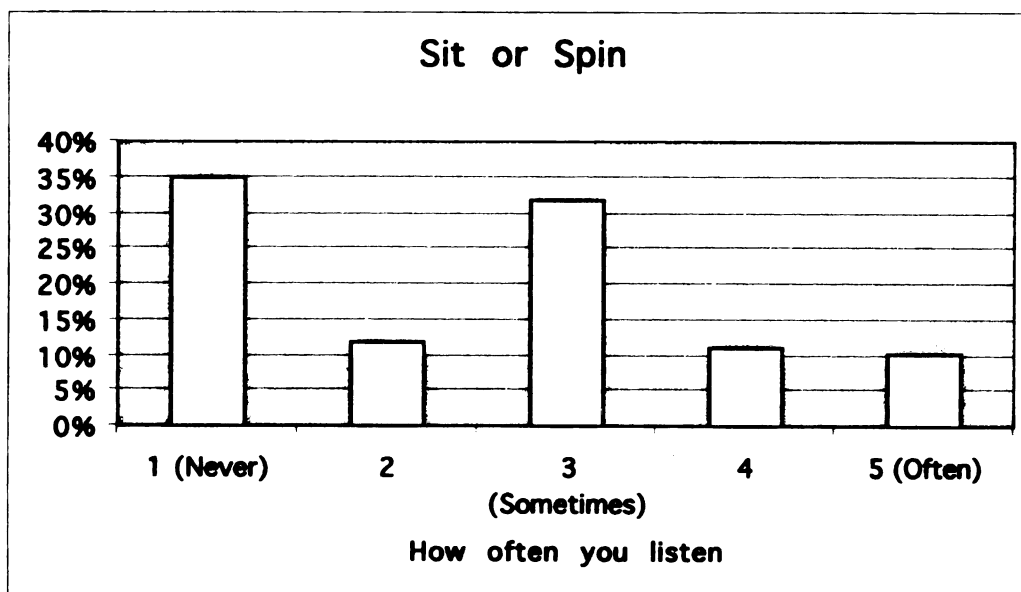
*Figure 16: Sit or Spin*

#3=The Basement: 2.37
-63 people (43%) answered with a 1.
-19 people (13.1%) answered with a 2.
-28 people (19.3%) answered with a 3.
-16 people (11%) answered with a 4.
-19 people (13.1%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "never."
-The combined total of 1s and 2s (never) is 56.1%.
-The combined total of 4s and 5s (always) is 24.1%.
Table 27: The Basement
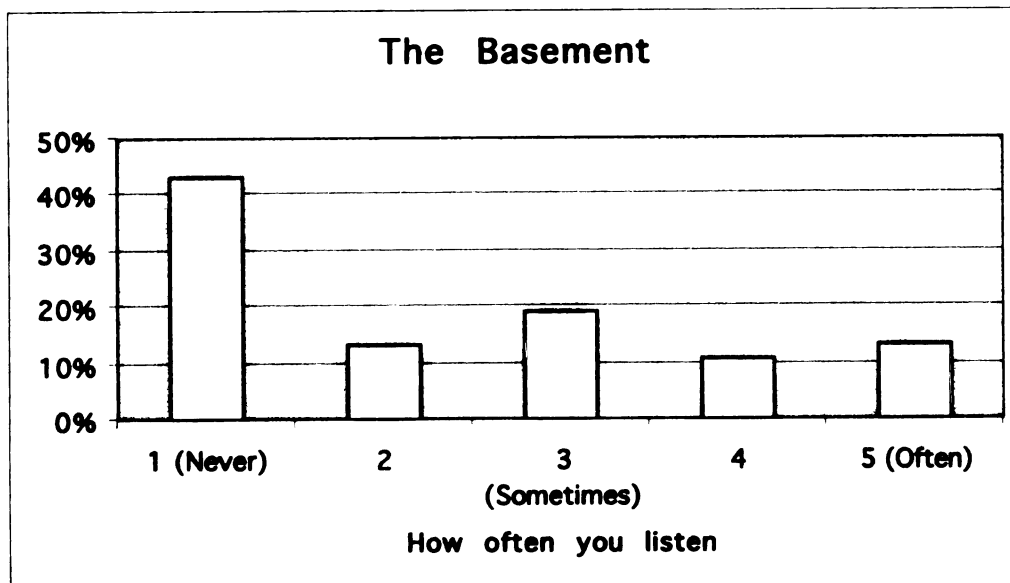
Figure 17: The Basement

#4=The Accidental Blues: 2.36
-58 people (40%) answered with a 1.
-24 people (16.6%) answered with a 2.
-33 people (22%) answered with a 3.
-16 people (11%) answered with a 4.
-16 people (11%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "never."
-The combined total of 1s and 2s (never) is 56.6%.
-The combined total of 4s and 5s (always) is 22%.
Table 28: The Accidental Blues
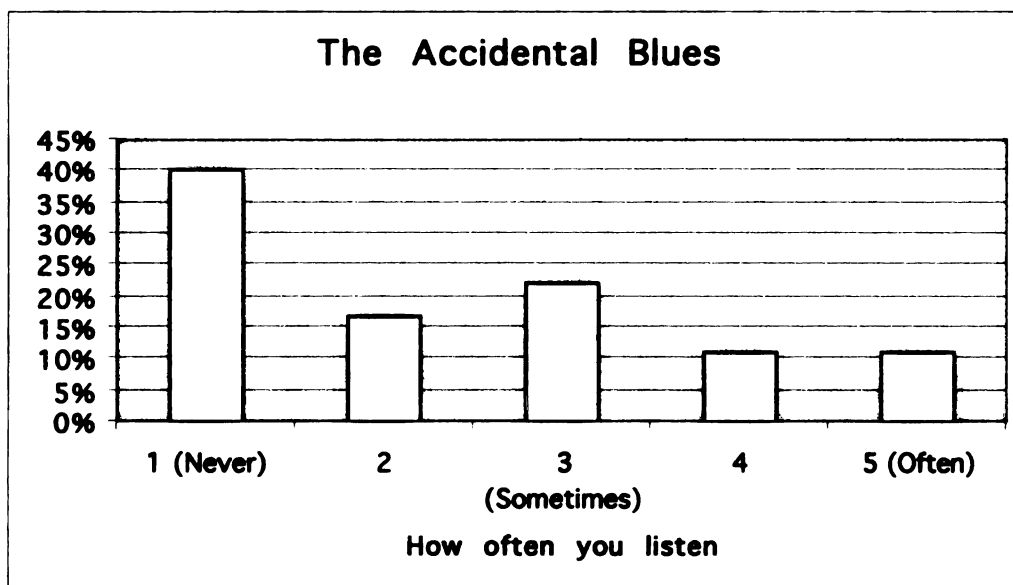

Figure 18: The Accidental Blues

#5=Space Odyssey: 2.18
-74 people (51%) answered with a 1.
-17 people (11.7%) answered with a 2
-24 people (16.6%) answered with a 3.
-15 people (10.3%) answered with a 4.
-16 people (11%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "never."
-The combined total of 1s and 2s (never) is 62.7%.
-The combined total of 4s and 5s (always) is 21.3%.
Table 29: Space Odyssey
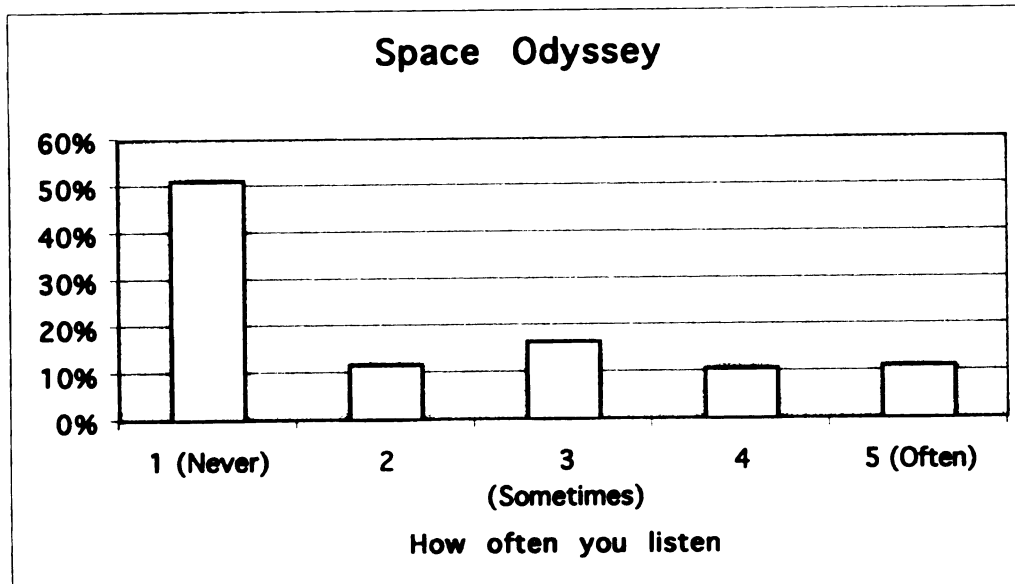
Figure 19: Space Odyssey

#8=Progressive Torch and Twang: 2.11

-72 people (49.7%) answered with a 1.
-26 people (17.9%) answered with a 2.
-21 people (14.5%) answered with a 3.
-11 people (7.6%) answered with a 4.
-15 people 10.3%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "never."
-The combined total of 1s and 2s (never) is 67.6%.
-The combined total of 4s and 5s (always) is 17.9%.

Table 30: Progressive Torch and Twang
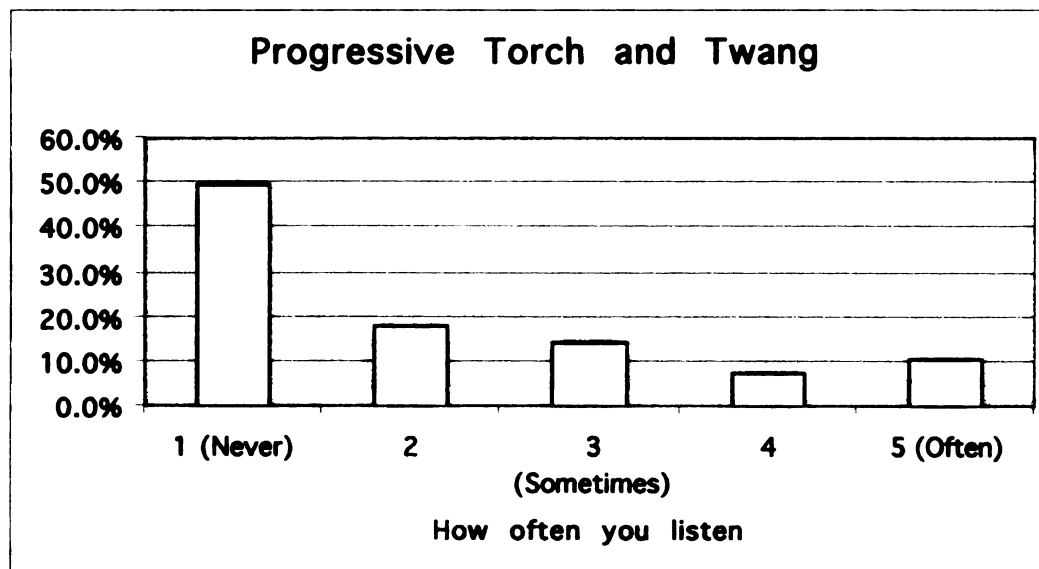
Figure 20: Progressive Torch and Twang

#7=The Jazz Spectrum: 2.10
-70 people (48.2%) answered with a 1.
-26 people (17.9%) answered with a 2.
-31 people (9%) answered with a 3.
-7 people (4.8%) answered with a 4.
-11 people (7.6%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "never."
-The combined total 1s and 2s (never) is 66.1%.
-The combined total of 4s and 5s (always) is 12.4%.
Table 31: The Jazz Spectrum
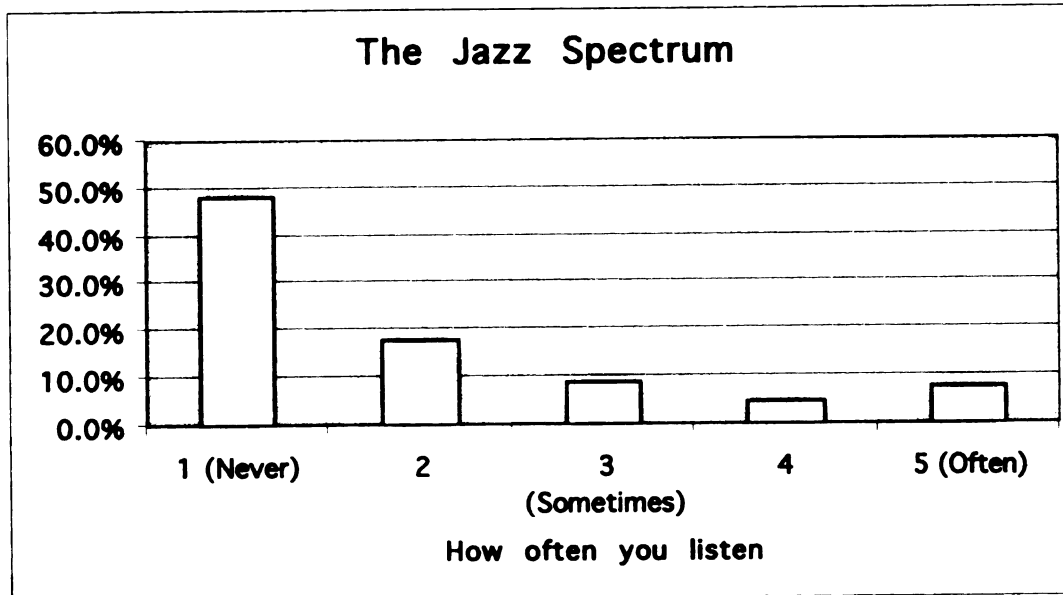

Figure 21: The Jazz Spectrum

#8=Impact Exposure: 1.92
-84 people (57.9%) answered with a 1.
-15 people (10.3%) answered with a 2.
-28 people (19.3%) answered with a 3.
-10 people (7%) answered with a 4.
-8 people (5.5%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "never."
-The combined total of 1s and 2s (never) is 68.2%.
-The combined total of 4s and 5s (always) is 12.5%.
Table 32: Impact Exposure
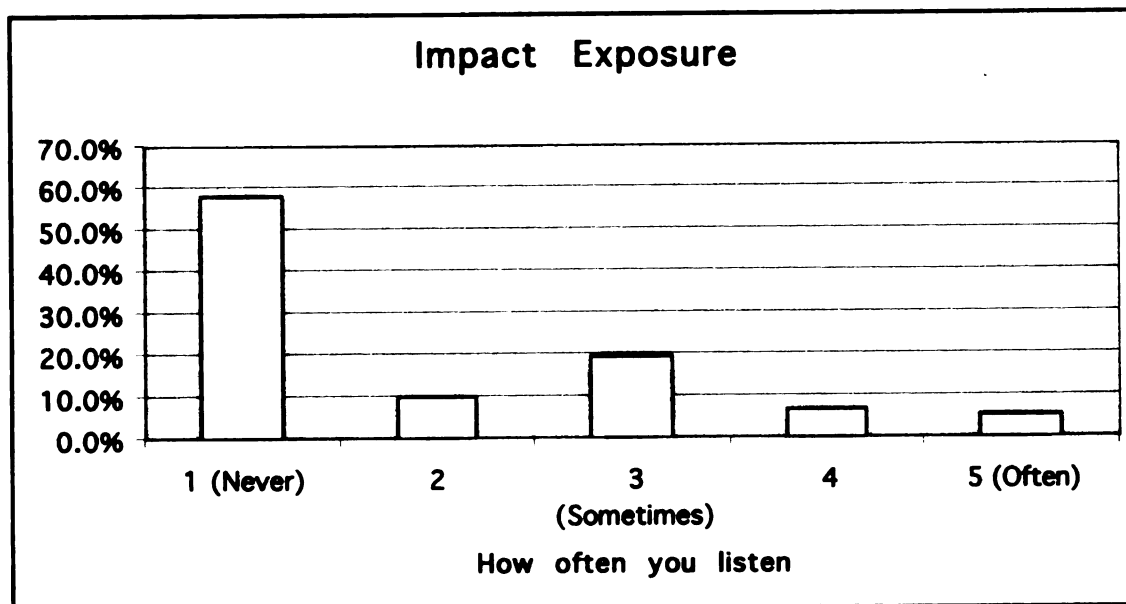
Figure 22: Impact Exposure

#9=Mechanical Pulse: 1.82
-81 people (56%) answered with a 1.
-23 people (15.9%) answered with a 2.
-22 people (15.1%) answered with a 3.
-9 people (6.2%) answered with a 4.
-9 people (6.2%) answered with a 5.
(1 person did not answer this question.)

-The mode (most answered) is "never."
-The combined total of 1s and 2s (never) is 71.9%.
-The combined total of 4s and 5s (always) is 12.4%.
Table 23: Mechanical Pulse
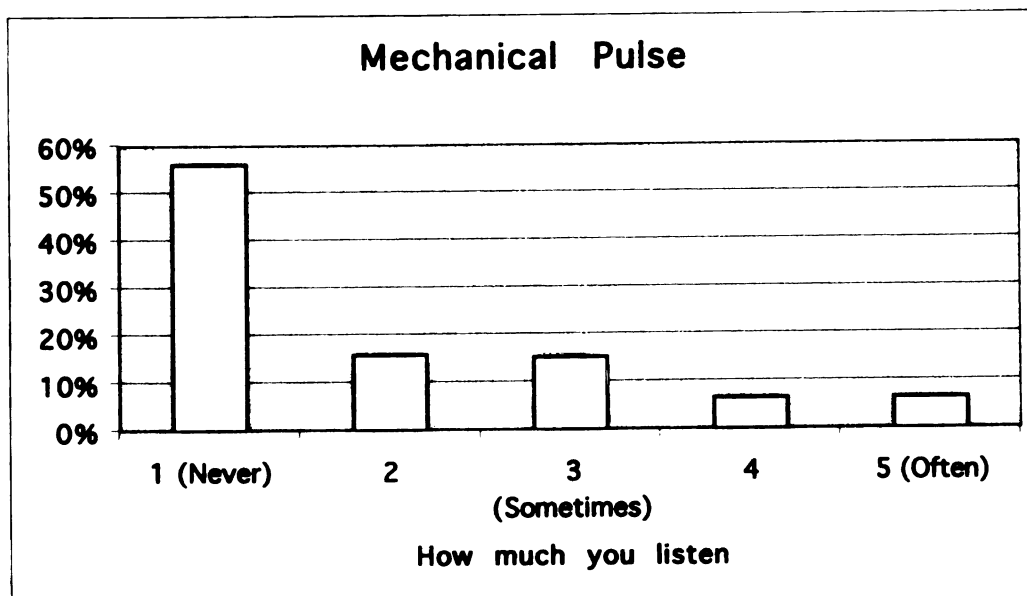
Figure 23: Mechanical Pulse

#10=Sneak Preview: 1.79
-89 people (61.4%) answered with a 1.
-19 people (13.1%) answered with a 2.
-22 people (15.2%) answered with a 3.
-9 people (6.2%) answered with a 4.
-6 people (4.1%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "never."
-The combined total of 1s and 2s (never) is 74.5%.
-The combined total of 4s and 5s (always) is 10.3%.
Table 34: Sneak Preview
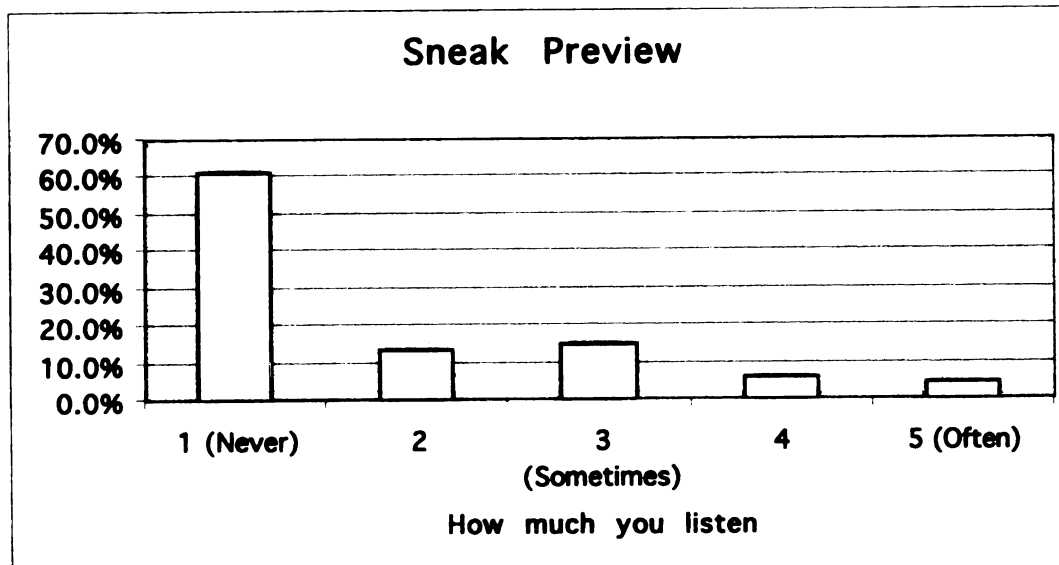
Figure 24: Sneak Preview

#11= The Cultural Vibe: 1.77

-92 people (63.4%) answered with a 1.

-19 people (13.1%) answered with a 2.

-18 people (12.4%) answered with a 3.

-8 people (5.5%) answered with a 4.

-8 people (5.5%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "never."

-The combined total of 1s and 2s (never) is 76.5%.

-The combined total of 4s and 5s (always) is 11%.

Table 35: The Cultural Vibe
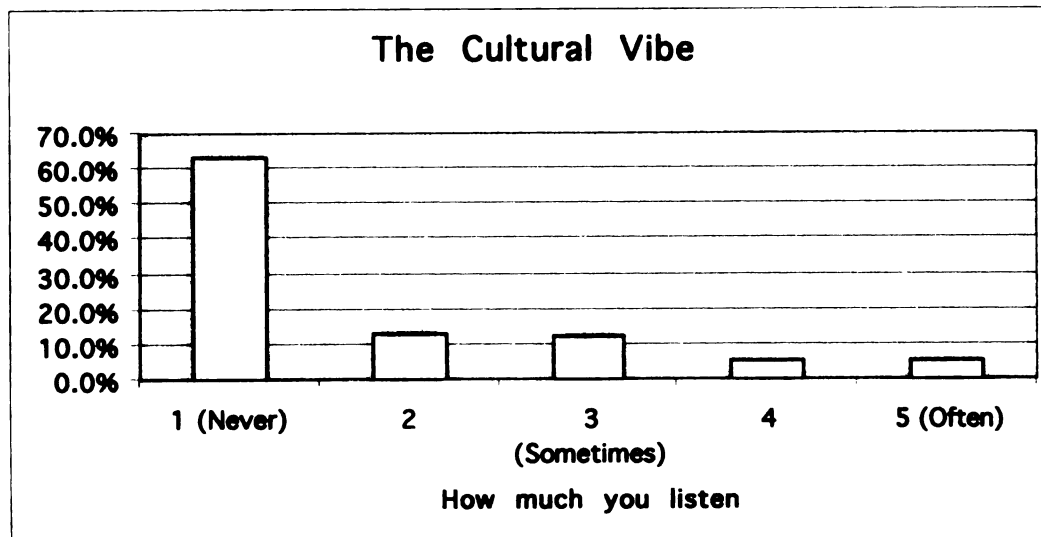
Figure 25: The Cultural Vibe

#12=Global Sounds: 1.76
-89 people (61.3%) answered with a 1.
-21 people (14.5%) answered with a 2.
-23 people (16%) answered with a 3.
-5 people (3.4%) answered with a 4.
-7 people (4.8%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "never."
-The combined total of 1s and 2s (never) is 75.8%.
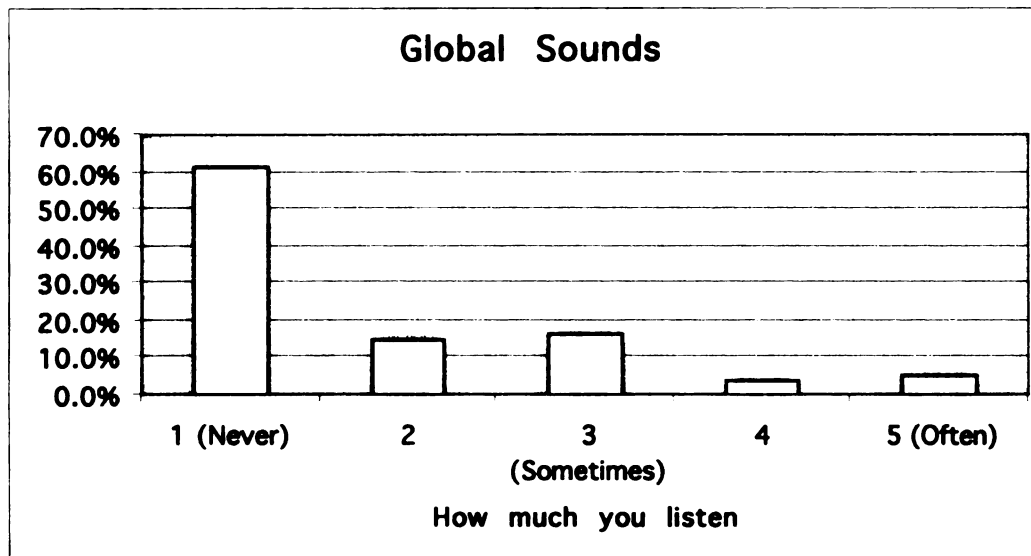-The combined total of 4s and 5s (always) is 8.2%.
Table 36: Global Sounds


Figure 26: Global Sounds

#13=Two Tone Beat 1.61 (THIS SHOW WAS CANCELLED IN MARCH 2001.)
-93 people (64.1%) answered with a 1.
-27 people (18.6%) answered with a 2.
-19 people (13.1%) answered with a 3. (12 out of the 19 people answered before the show was cancelled.)
-There were no 4's answered.
-6 people (4.1%) answered with a 5. (5 out of the 6 answered before the show was cancelled.)

-The mode (most answered) is "never."
-The combined total of 1s and 2s (never) is 82.7%.
-The combined total of 4s and 5s (always) is 4.1%.
Table 37: Two Tone Beat
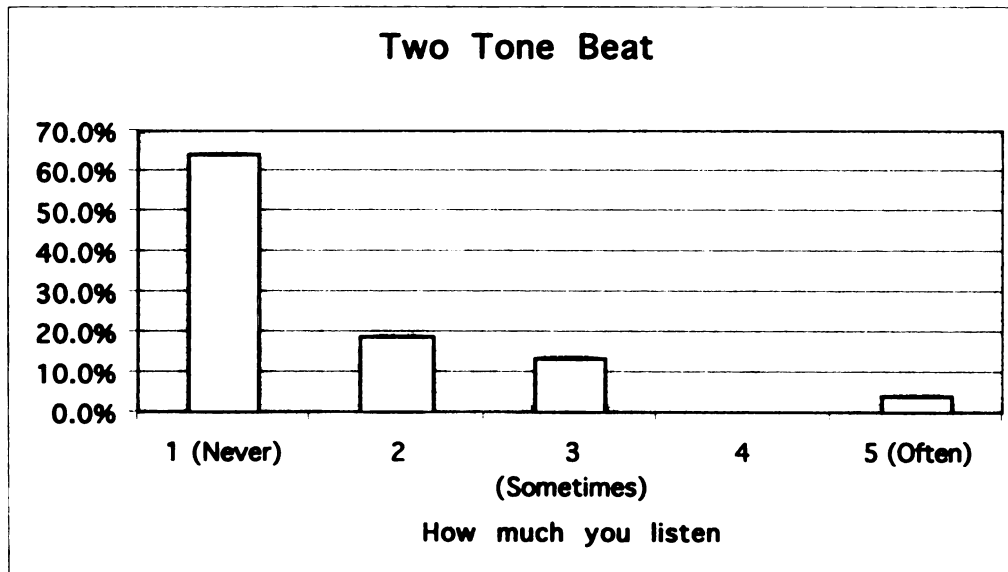
Figure 27: Two Tone Beat

#14=Thee Hourz O Power: 1.48
-112 people (77.2%) answered with a 1.
-15 people (10.3%) answered with a 2.
-6 people (4.1%) answered with a 3.
-6 people (4.1%) answered with a 4.
-6 people (4.1%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "never."
-The combined total of 1s and 2s (never) is 87.5%.
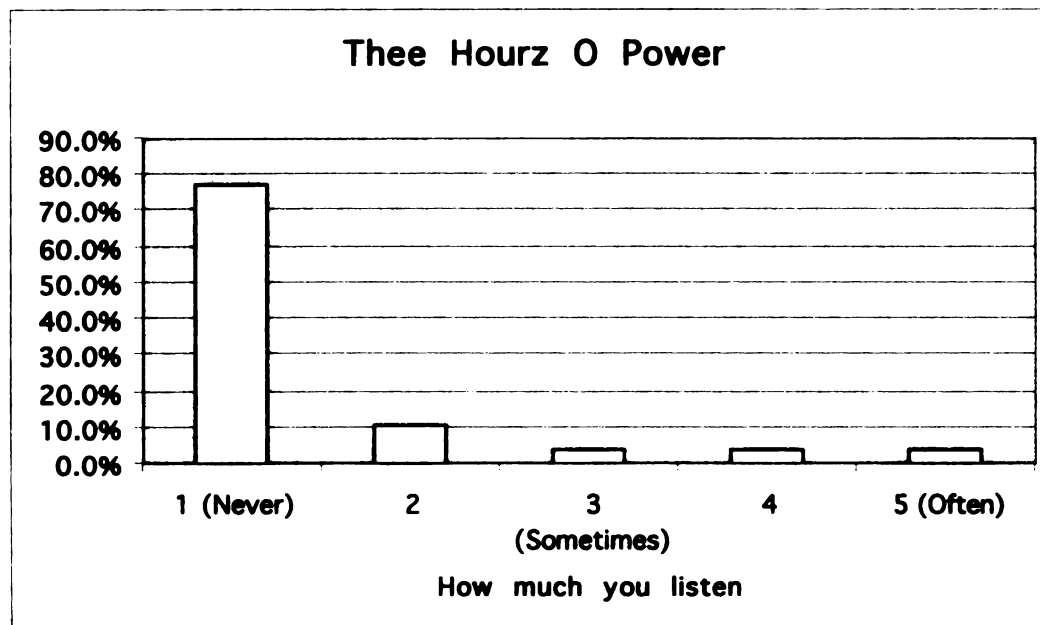-The combined total of 4s and 5s (always) is 8.2%.
Table 38: Thee Hourz O Power

Figure 28: Thee Hourz O Power

All shows were very close in their average score. Therefore, it is much more important to look at how many people answered with each number. For example, shows with many 3's may not have a very loyal audience. Shows with many 1's and 2's may need to be evaluated by the WDBM Director Staff. Those with many 4's and 5's seem to have loyal listeners and seem to be offering good radio programming. It is interesting that WDBM listeners tune in to "Impact Flashback" the most. Radio research says over and over that listeners enjoy familiar music. "Impact Flashback" is all familiar songs from

the 70's and 80's.s It seems even more interesting, though, that the survey said that "Sit or Spin" is the 2nd most listened to show. Almost all of the music is unfamiliar, which is assumed to be a turnoff for listeners. This show is only a few years old. It just moved from one hour to two hours about a year before the survey was posted online. The idea of "Sit or Spin" is to put the programming decisions of some music on WDBM in the hands of listeners. However, the Arbitron data shows that only P1 listeners must have tuned in to Sit or Spin in Spring 2001 because its Rating and Share are very low.

It is also interesting to see "The Basement" at #3. This is the local music program on WDBM. Again, local content is what makes a radio station unique. The show is just two hours a week, but this survey shows that some listeners make a point to tune in for a show they cannot find anywhere else.

On the other hand, the scores for "The Cultural Vibe" should not be worried about too much. This is a Hip Hop and Rap show on WDBM. This show has been around for almost 12 years. The current hosts received the highest scores for all WDBM specialty programs from the WDBM Director Staff. The show is consistent and original. Its audience is mainly African American. There is a much smaller percentage of African Americans online than Caucasians. This may account for the lower score for "The Cultural Vibe." The Arbitron data shows that many people who normally do not tune in on weekdays tune in on Saturdays for this show, because the Share was significantly higher in that time slot than others in Spring 2001.

A show to be concerned about is "Thee Hourz O Power," rated lowest out of survey participants. This is a metal music program on WDBM. In the past few years, there has been a resurgence in the popularity of harder-edged rock and metal bands in the U.S. This show should be a success. The show is another one that has been on WDBM for many years, and had many good hosts. Again, the Arbitron data shows that there was a larger Share in the evening than during the daytime on weekdays, but P1 listeners are clearly not satisfied. Knowing that, it may be hard to increase the Share for this show. However, this show may have many listeners who are not daily WDBM listeners, just like The Cultural Vibe. Both shows are very different from daily programming, and may bring in people who do not like the style of the daytime programming, but do listen to metal or rap.

The responses to Questions 9 through 11 have been summarized here. The entire list of responses can be found in the Appendix.

For the shows you listen to,
9. a) What do you like about them?

-Variety of music.

-New music on Sit or Spin.

-Hearing music that no other radio stations play.

-Impact Flashback is fun to listen to on Friday nights.

-Evening programming and its uniqueness.

-No commercials.

-Progressive Torch and Twang exposes new artists.

-Local music heard nowhere else.

-Educational.

-Knowledgeable disc jockeys.

-Requests get played.

-Genuine nature of the disc jockeys and WDBM in general.

9. b) What do you dislike, and why?

-Disc jockeys that mispronounce words.

-Negative disc jockeys.

-Disc jockeys who ramble.

-Not hearing song and artist names.

-Too much talking sometimes.

10. As a listener, what things keep you listening?

-Exposure to music not heard anywhere else on the radio.

-Variety of music.

-Source for new music.

-Disc jockeys listeners can relate to.

-No overplayed music.

-No commercials.

-Requests get played.

-Programs for many genres of music.

-Source for local music.

11. What things cause you to tune out?
This list is very interesting, because it really hones in on how WDBM listeners perceive the station. There are some factual errors in their responses, but their perception is the station's reality. See word for word responses in the Appendix.

-Repetitive "indie-rock."

-Repetitive "middle of the road rock."

-When songs get played over and over.

-Too much talk from disc jockeys.

-Disc jockeys that play too many of their own favorite songs.

-Not hearing the song and artist information.

-Boring talk shows.

-Sunday programming.

When thinking of listeners' perceptions, it is worthwhile to mention how

diarykeepers identified WDBM. Here are all the way listeners identified the

station in their diary in Spring 2001:

-88.9
-WDBM
-WDBM 88.9
-89.1 The Impact
-WIBM
-The Impact 88.9
-88.9 Impact
-88.9 WDBM
-88.9 Campus Radio Impact
-The Fix.org WDBM?
Table 39: WDBM Diary Recall

This shows that WDBM has a bit of an identity problem. Since it is

nicknamed "89 FM The Impact" and its dial position is 88.9, this has obviously

confused some listeners. Others did not know the call letters. This list alone

is proof that WDBM needs to stick with one phrase and use it often. "89 FM"

may even be outdated, since the majority of radio tuners are digital today.

12. If you could program The Impact for a day, what would you change? Check all that apply:

In order of preference:
-Add more unfamiliar music: 54 people (37.2%)
-Have more information on music: 53 people (36.6%)
-Emphasize information about the Mid-Michigan area, in addition to Michigan State University: 23 people (16%)
-Add more familiar music: 21 people (14.5%)
-Have less talk from the DJs: 13 people (9%)
-Have more news and sports throughout the day: 7 people (4.8%)
-No one made any of their own suggestions.
Table 40: Programming Preferences of Survey Respondents
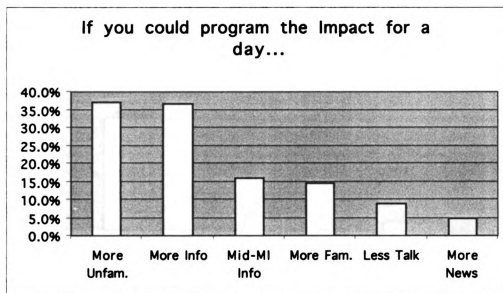
Figure 29: Programming Preferences of Survey Respondents

It is interesting to see that that most radio stations shy away from is what WDBM listeners want: less familiar music. Of course, there are listeners who want more familiar music. It is always difficult to find the perfect balance. Again, this survey is merely a snapshot of the WDBM audience. Arbitron says that WDBM listenership has decreased and also says many 18 to 24 year olds reported listening to WWDX and WHZZ, which play familiar music.

WDBM may want to increase the amount of familiar music from core artists in

an attempt to garner more and new listeners.

13. Would you like to hear more well known artists or genre-specifc programming on The Impact?   Or is the balance appropriate?

-The balance is appropriate: 119 people (82%)
-WDBM needs more genre-specific programs: 16 people (11%)
-WDBM needs more well known artists: 10 people (7%)
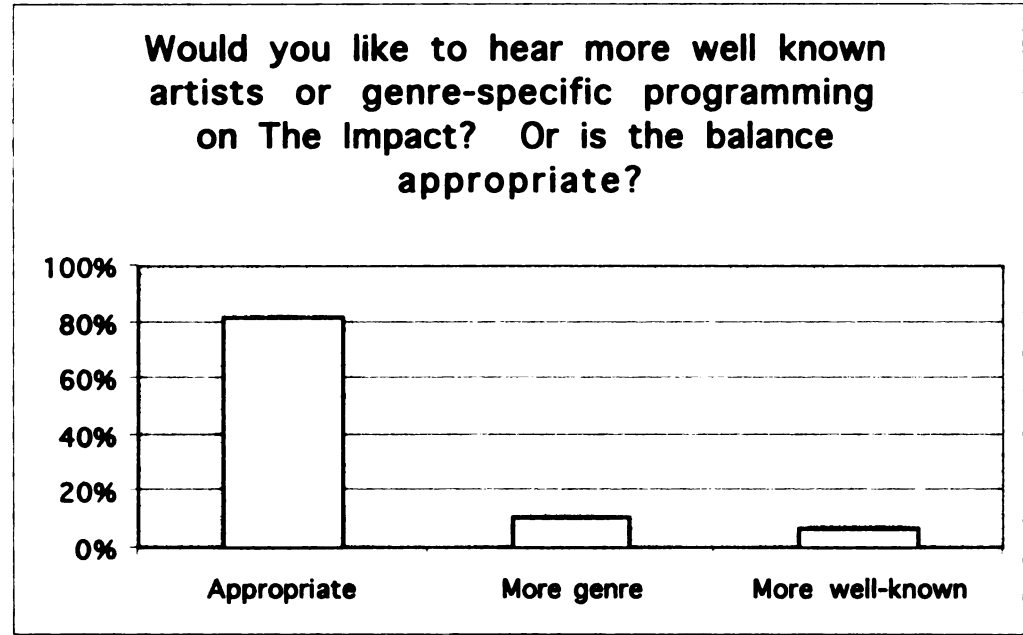*Table 41: Well Known Artists vs. Genre-Specific Programming*

Figure 30: Well Known Artists vs. Genre-Specific Programming

The overwhelming majority of people think WDBM is on track.

However, later comments do state that some listeners want to hear weekday

programming on Sundays. This is probably because "The Global Sounds"

and "The Reggae Sunsplash" (two shows that air through most of Sunday)

appeal to a very small audience.

14. Please rate the following statements:
(1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=no opinion, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree)

The first average that was calculated was from the entire group of respondents. Some statements have two averages. The second average was from a smaller group. Any respondent who answered the same to opposing statements was thrown out. Not every question had a complete opposite, so not all responses will have two averages.

a) The Impact has a wide variety of music (There is no exact opposite statement).

-The overall average is 4.6.

<u>Out of everyone</u>:
-Strongly disagree: 2 people (1.4%)
-Disagree: 4 people (2.8%)
-No opinion: 4 people (2.8%)
-Agree: 30 people (20.7%)
-Strongly agree: 105 people (72.4%)

-The mode (most answered) was "strongly agree."
-The combined total of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" is: 4.2%.
-The combined total of "strongly agree" and "agree" is: 93.1%.
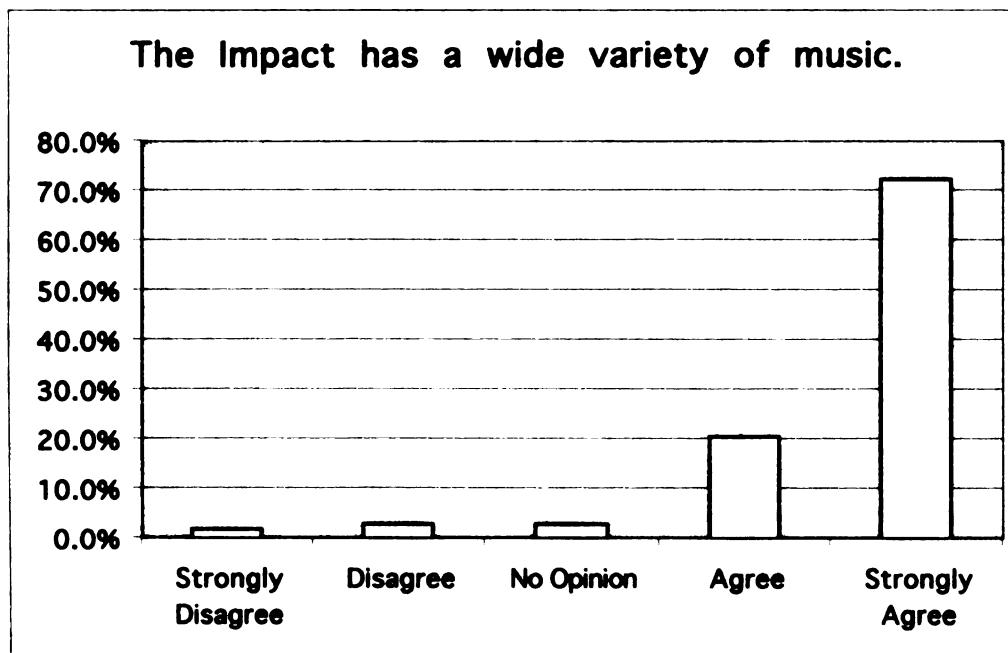*Table 42: The Impact Has a Wide Variety of Music.*

Figure 31: The Impact Has a Wide Variety of Music.

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b) The Impact could do a better job communicating to Michigan State University.

-The overall average is 2.4.

-86 people correctly scored this the opposite of I), and their average is 2.35.

<u>Of those not thrown out</u>:
-Strongly disagree: 22 people (25.6%)
-Disagree: 16 people (18.6%)
-No opinion: 44 people (51.2%)
-Agree: 3 people (3.5%)
-Strongly agree: 1 person (1.2%)

-The mode (most answered) is "no opinion."
-The combined total of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" is: 44.2%.
-The combined total of "strongly agree" and "agree" is: 4.7%.

Table 43: The Impact Could Do A Better Job Communicating to Michigan State University.
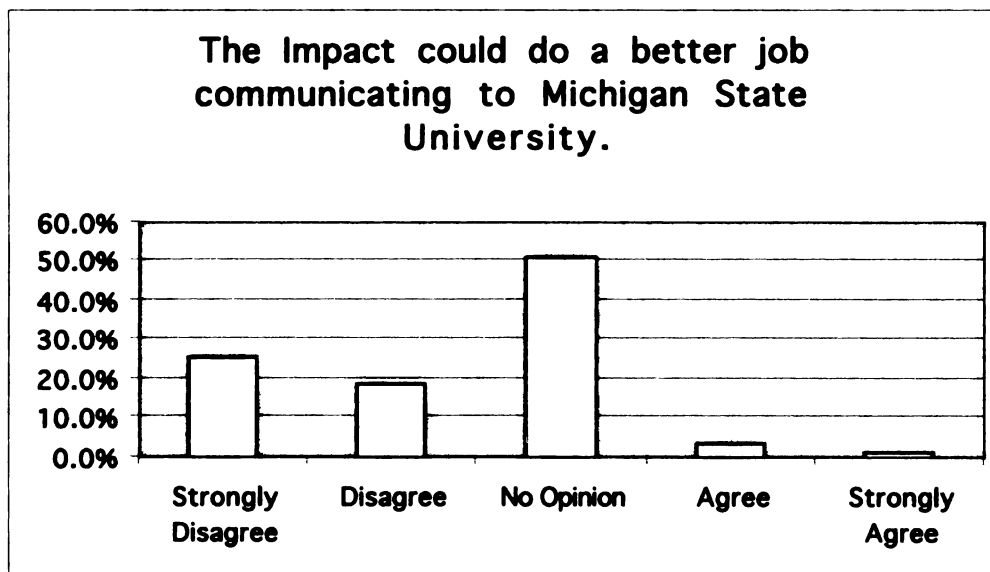
Figure 32: The Impact Could Do A Better Job Communicating to Michigan State University.

c) The Impact is consistently enjoyable to listen to throughout the day.

-The overall average is 4.

-96 people correctly scored this the opposite of k) and their average is 4.2.

<u>Of those not thrown out</u>:
-Strongly disagree: 4 people (4.2%)
-Disagree: 3 people (3.1%)
-No opinion: 5 people (5.2%)
-Agree: 41 people (42.7%)
-Strongly agree: 43 people (44.8%)

-The mode (most answered) is "strongly agree."
-The combined total of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" is: 7.3%.
-The combined total of "strongly agree" and "agree" is: 87.5%.
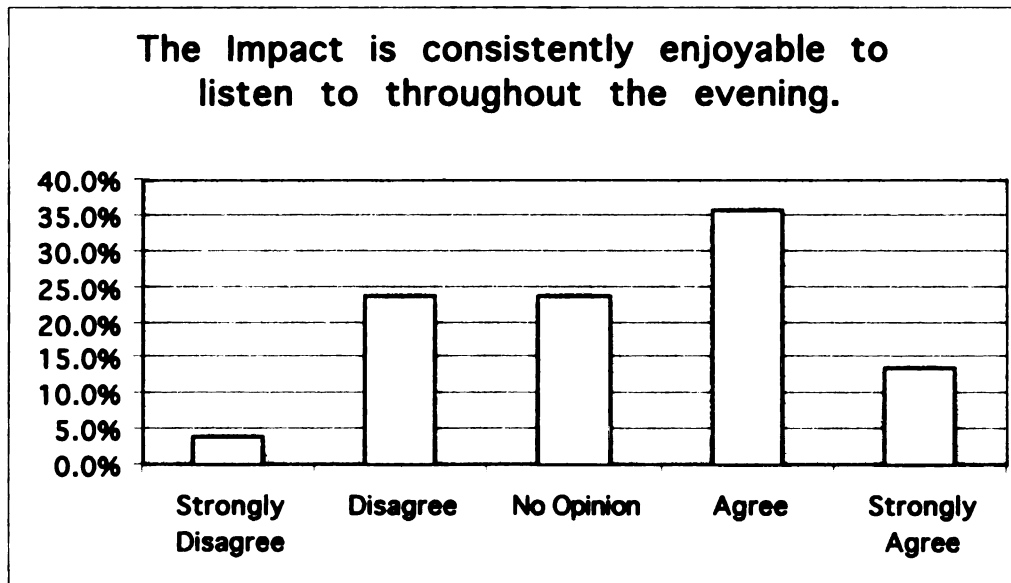*Table 44: The Impact Is Consistently Enjoyable to Listen to Throughout the Day.*

The Impact is consistently enjoyable to listen to throughout the day.
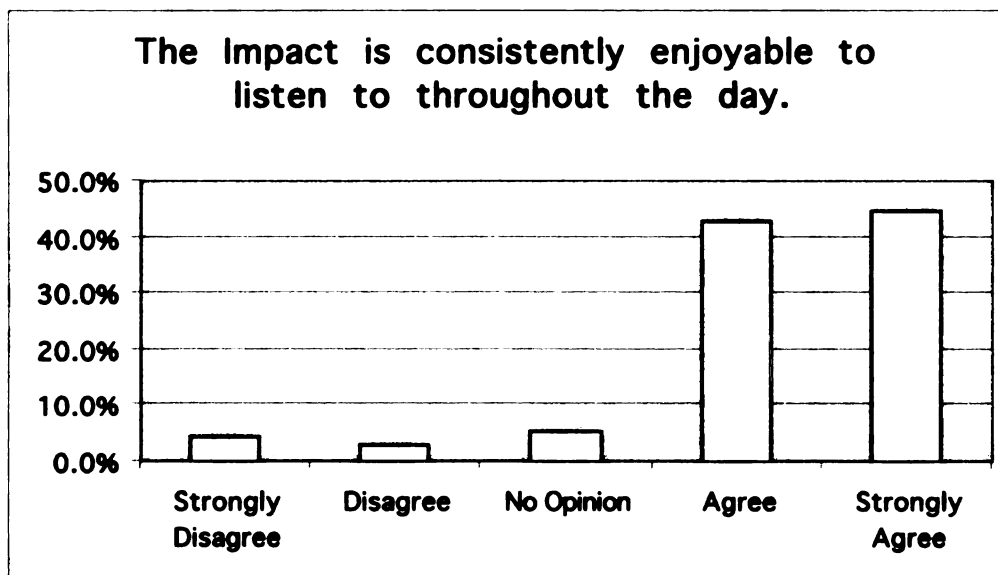
Figure 33: The Impact is Consistently Enjoyable to Listen to Throughout the Day.

d) The Impact is consistently enjoyable to listen to throughout the evening.

-The overall average is 3.38.

-81 people correctly scored this the opposite of m) and their average is 3.32.

<u>Of those not thrown out</u>:
-Strongly disagree: 3 people (3.7%)
-Agree: 19 people (23.5%)
-No opinion: 19 people (23.5%)
-Agree: 29 people (35.8%)
-Strongly agree: 11 people (13.6%)

-The mode (most answered) is "agree."
-The combined total of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" is: 27.2%.
-The combined total of "strongly agree" and "agree" is: 49.4%.
Table 45: The Impact is Consistently Enjoyable to Listen to Throughout the Evening.

Figure 34: The Impact is Consistently Enjoyable to Listen to Throughout the Evening.

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e) The Impact does not cater to all music tastes.

-The overall average is 2.3.

-98 people correctly scored this the opposite of i) and their average is 2.

<u>Of those not thrown out:</u>
-Strongly disagree: 45 people (45.9%)
-Disagree: 26 people (26.5%)
-No opinion: 9 people (9.2%)
-Agree: 13 people (13.3%)
-Strongly agree: 5 people (5.1%)

-The mode (most answered) is "strongly disagree."
-The combined total of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" is: 72.4%.
-The combined total of "strongly agree" and "agree" is: 18.4%.
Table 46: The Impact Does Not Cater to All Music Tastes.
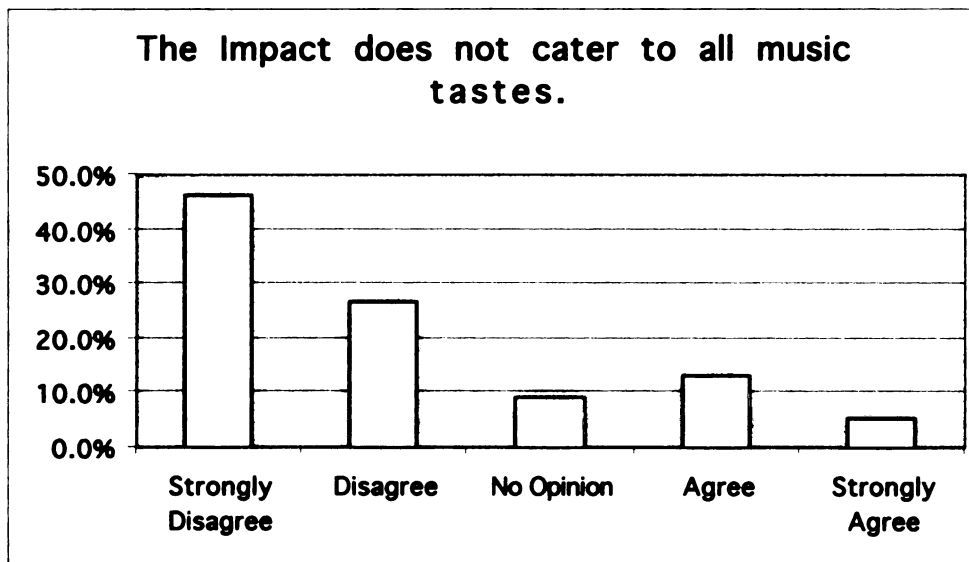
Figure 35: The Impact Does Not Cater to All Music Tastes.

f) The Impact has high quality genre-specific shows (There is no exact opposite statement).

-The overall average is 4.1.

Out of everyone:
-Strongly disagree: 4 people (2.8%)
-Disagree: 4 people (2.8%)
-No opinion: 24 people (16.6%)
-Agree: 55 people (37.9%)
-Strongly agree: 58 people (40%)

-The mode (most answered) was "strongly agree."
-The combined total of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" is: 5.6%.
-The combined total of "strongly agree" and "agree" is: 77.9%.
Table 47: The Impact Has High Quality Genre-Specific Shows.
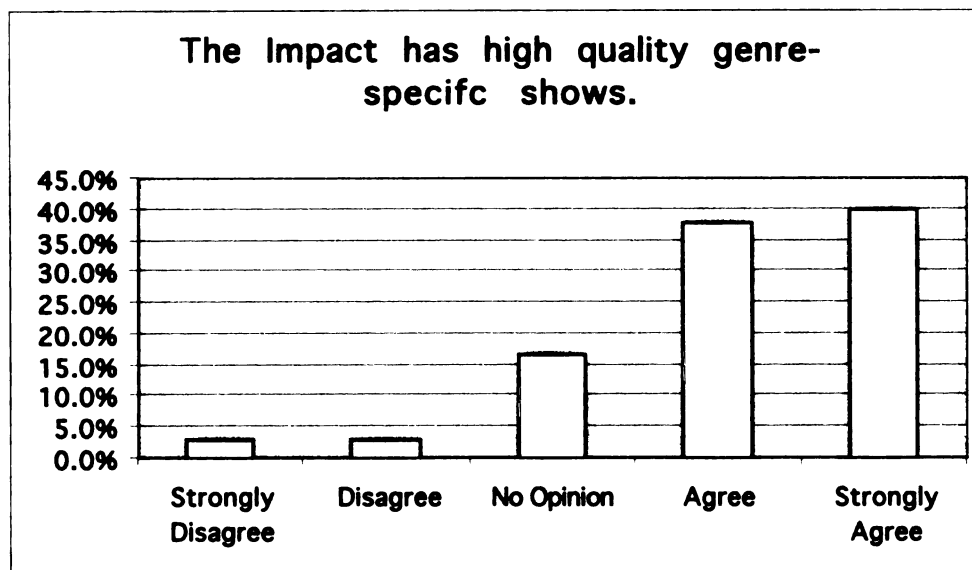
Figure 36: The Impact Has High Quality Genre-Specific Shows.

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g) The Impact could better inform listeners about new music (There is no exact opposite statement).

-The overall average is 2.8.

Out of everyone:
-Strongly disagree: 25 people (17.2%)
-Disagree: 38 people (26.2%)
-No opinion: 27 people (18.6%)
-Agree: 45 people (31%)
-Strongly agree: 10 people (6.9%)

-The mode (most answered) was "agree."
-The combined total of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" is: 43.4%.
-The combined total of "strongly agree" and "agree" is: 37.9%.

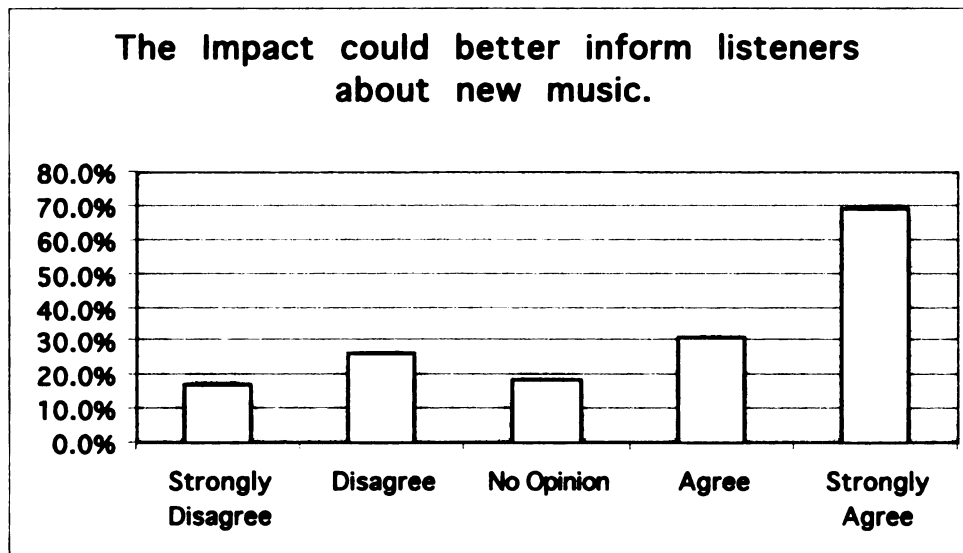*Table 48: The Impact Could Better Inform Listeners About New Music.*

Figure 37: The Impact Could Better Inform Listeners About New Music.

h) The Impact has DJs that are worse than DJs on other radio stations.

-The overall average is 1.88.

-98 people correctly scored this the opposite of n) and their average is 1.74.

Of those not thrown out:
-Strongly disagree: 59 people (60%)
-Disagree: 16 people (16.3%)
-No opinion: 14 people (14.3%)
-Agree: 7 people (7.1%)
-Strongly agree: 2 people (2%)

-The mode (most answered) is "strongly disagree."
-The combined total of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" is: 76.3%.
-The combined total of "strongly agree" and "agree" is: 9.1%.
Table 49: The Impact Has DJs That Are Worse Than DJs on Other Radio Stations.
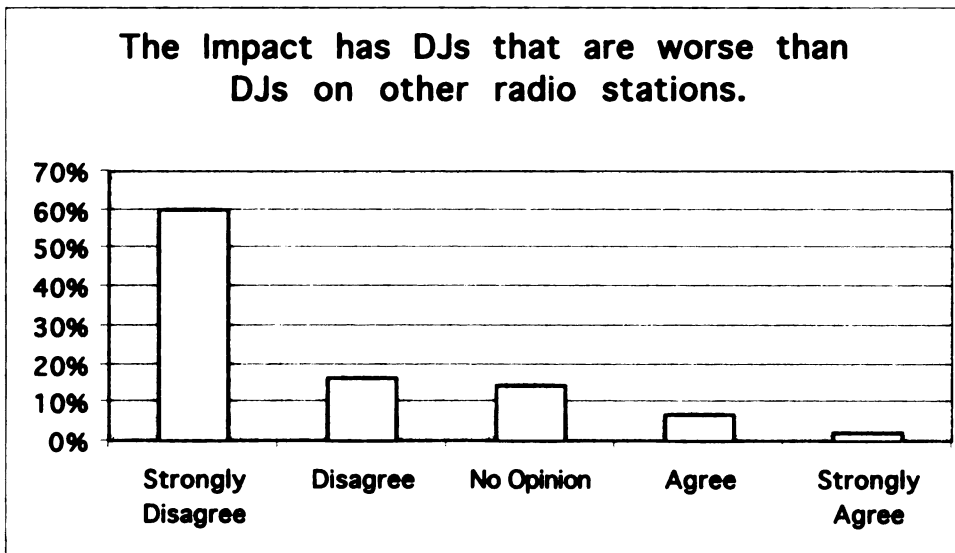

The Impact has DJs that are worse than DJs on other radio stations.

Figure 38: The Impact Has DJs That Are Worse Than DJs on Other Radio Stations.

i) The Impact has music for every taste.

-The overall average is 3.7.

-98 people correctly scored this the opposite of e) and their average is 3.8.

Of those not thrown out:
-Strongly disagree: 5 people (5.1%)
-Disagree: 15 people (15.3%)
-No opinion: 9 people (9.2%)
-Agree: 33 people (30.6%)
-Strongly agree: 36 people (36.7%)

-The mode (most answered) is "agree."
-The combined total of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" is: 20.4%.
-The combined total of "strongly agree" and "agree" is: 67.3%.
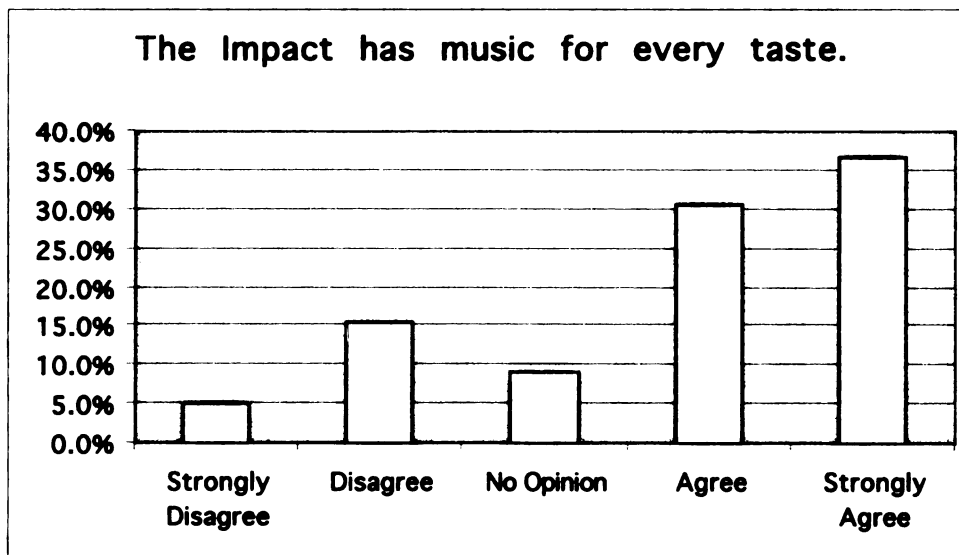*Table 50: The Impact Has Music For Every Taste.*

The Impact has music for every taste.

Figure 39: The Impact Has Music For Every Taste.

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j) The Impact plays music that many other radio stations play (There is no exact opposite statement).

-The overall average is 2.2.

Out of everyone:
-Strongly disagree: 46 people (31.7%)
-Disagree: 64 people (44.1%)
-No opinion: 8 people (5.5%)
-Agree: 10 people (6.9%)
-Strongly agree: 17 people (11.7%)

-The mode (most answered) is "disagree."
-The combined total of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" is: 75.8%.
-The combined total of "strongly agree" and "agree" is: 18.6%.
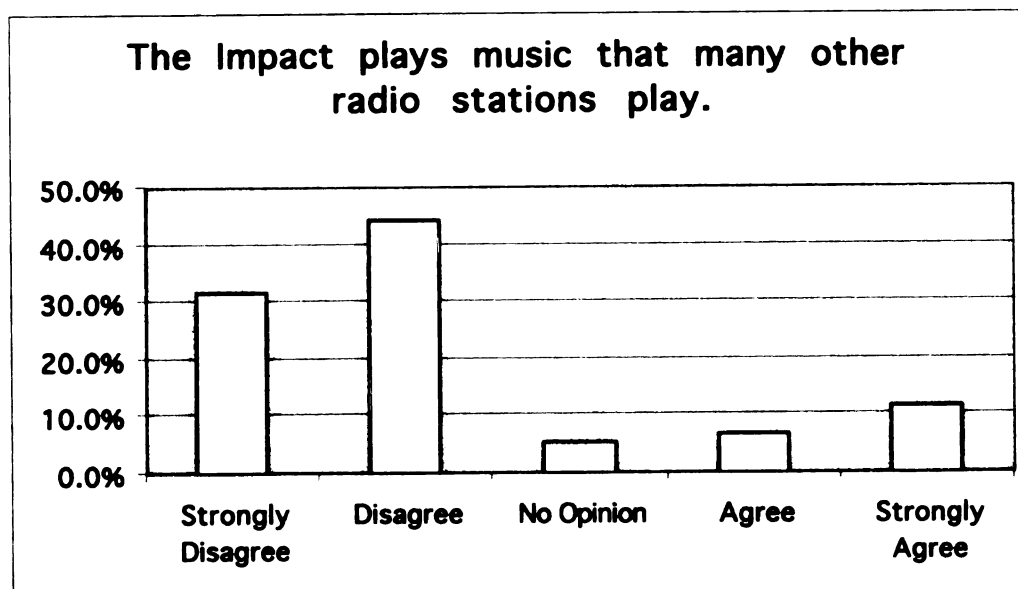Table 51: The Impact Plays Music That Many Other Radio Stations Play.

Figure 40: The Impact Plays Music That Many Other Radio Stations Play.

k) The Impact is not consistent sounding when listening during the day.

-The overall average is 2.2.

-96 people correctly scored this the opposite of c) and their average is 1.8.

<u>Of those not thrown out</u>:
-Strongly disagree: 44 people (45.8%)
-Disagree: 37 people (38.5%)
-No opinion: 7 people (7.3%)
-Agree: 4 people (4.2%)
-Strongly agree: 4 people (4.2%)

-The mode (most answered) is "strongly disagree."
-The combined total of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" is: 84.3%.
-The combined total of "strongly agree" and "agree" is: 8.4%.
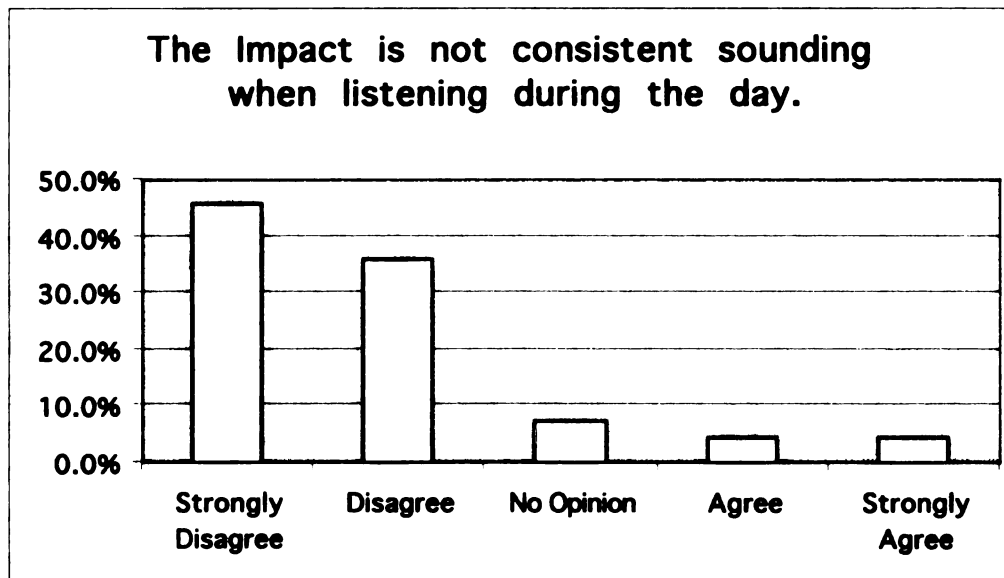*Table 52: The Impact is Not Consistent Sounding When Listening During the Day.*

Figure 41: The Impact is Not Consistent Sounding When Listening During the Day.

l) The Impact addresses the needs of the Michigan State University community.

-The overall average is 3.4.

-86 people correctly scored this the opposite of b) and their average is 3.6.

<u>Of those not thrown out:</u>
-Strongly disagree: 0 people
-Disagree: 4 people (4.7%)
-No opinion: 44 people (51.2%)
-Agree: 22 people (25.6%)
-Strongly agree: 16 people (18.6%)

-The mode (most answered) is "no opinion."
-The combined total of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" is: 4.7%.
-The combined total of "strongly agree" and "agree" is: 44.2%.

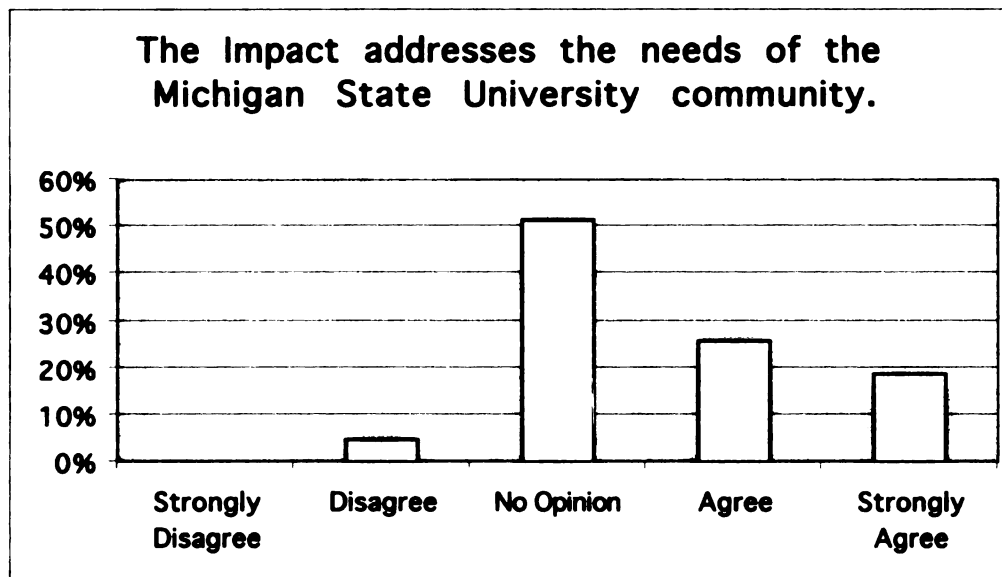*Table 53: The Impact Addresses the Needs of the Michigan State University Community.*

The Impact addresses the needs of the Michigan State University community.

Figure 42: The Impact Addresses the Needs of the Michigan State University Community.

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m) The Impact is not always enjoyable to listen to in the evening.

-The overall average is 2.9.

-81 people correctly scored the opposite of d) and their average is 2.6.

<u>Of those not thrown out</u>:
-Strongly disagree: 16 people (19.8%)
-Disagree: 23 people (28.4%)
-No opinion: 19 people (23.5%)
-Agree: 20 people (24.7%)
-Strongly agree: 3 people (3.7%)

-The mode (most answered) is "disagree."
-The combined total of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" is: 48.2%.
-The combined total of "strongly agree" and "agree" is: 28.4%.
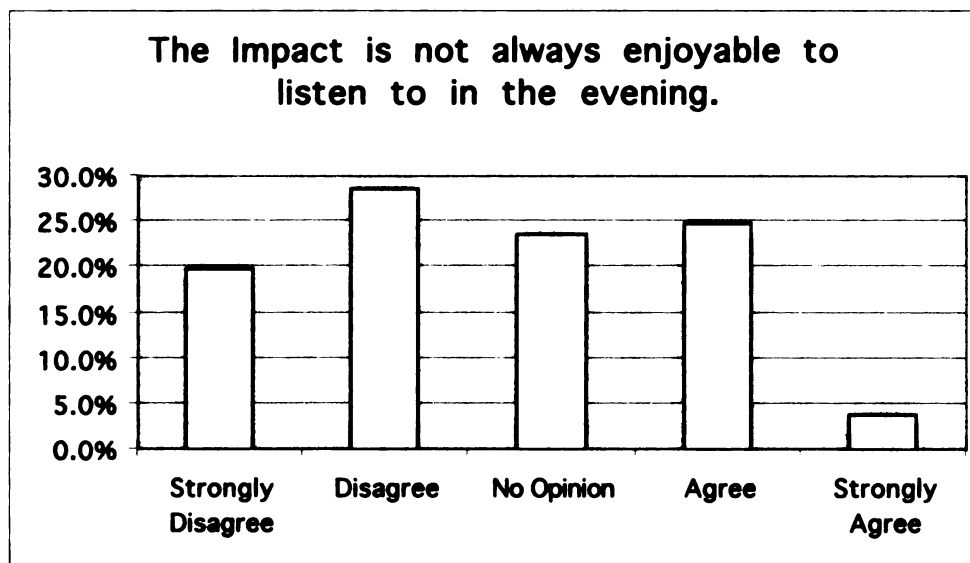*Table 54: The Impact is Not Always Enjoyable to Listen to in the Evening.*

Figure 43: The Impact is Not Always Enjoyable to Listen to in the Evening.

n) The Impact has DJs that are better than DJs on other radio stations.

-The overall average is 3.7.

-98 people correctly scored the opposite of h) and their average is 4.

Of those not thrown out:
-Strongly disagree: 1 person (1%)
-Disagree: 8 people (8.2%)
-No opinion: 14 people (14.3%)
-Agree: 38 people (38.8%)
-Strongly agree: 37 people (37.8%)

-The mode (most answered) is "agree."
-The combined total of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" is: 9.2%.
-The combined total of "strongly agree" and "agree" is: 76.6%.

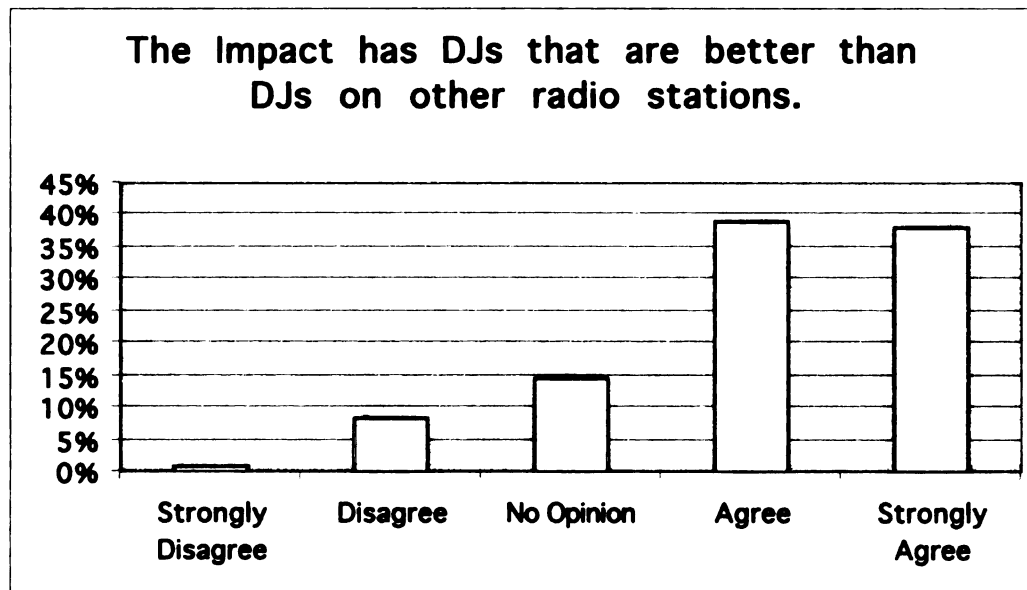*Table 55: The Impact has DJs That Are Better Than DJs on Other Radio Stations.*

The Impact has DJs that are better than DJs on other radio stations.

Table 44: The Impact has DJs That Are Better Than DJs on Other Radio Stations.

o) The impact could improve its genre-specific shows (There is no exact opposite statement).

-The overall average is 2.7.

<u>Out of everyone</u>:
-Strongly disagree: 24 people (16.6%)
-Disagree: 30 people (20.7%)
-No opinion: 60 people (41.4%)
-Agree: 25 people (17.2%)
-Strongly agree: 6 people (4.1%)

-The mode (most answered) was "no opinion."
-The combined total of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" is: 37.3%.
-The combined total of "strongly agree" and "agree" is: 21.3%.
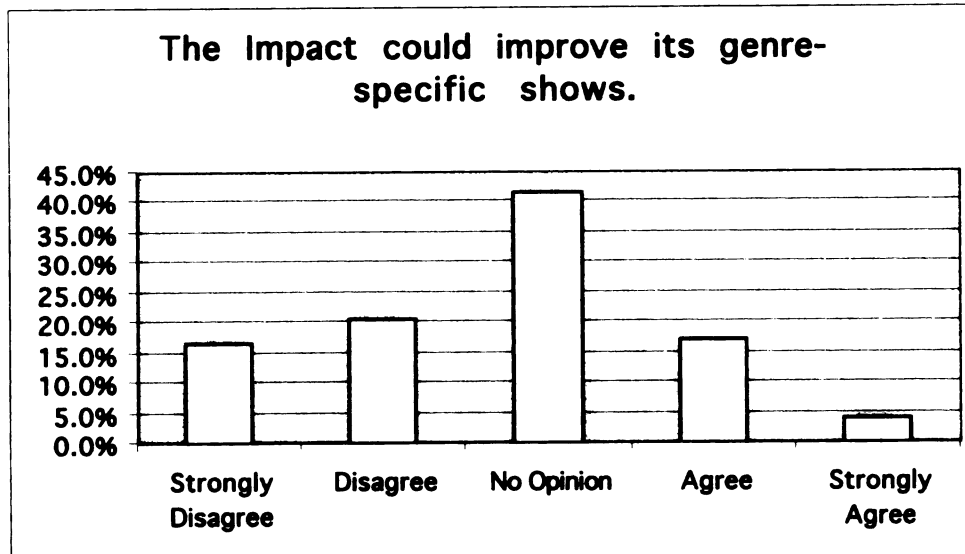Table 56: The Impact Could Improve its Genre-Specific Shows.

Figure 45: The Impact Could Improve its Genre-Specific Shows.

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p) The Impact has helped me learn a lot about new music (There is no exact opposite statement).

-The overall average is 4.1.

Out of everyone:
-Strongly disagree: 8 people (5.5%)
-Disagree: 5 people (3.4%)
-No opinion: 14 people (9.7%)
-Agree: 52 people (35.9%)
-Strongly agree: 66 people (45.5%)

-The mode (most answered) was "strongly agree."
-The combined total of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" is: 8.9%.
-The combined total of "strongly agree" and "agree" is: 81.4%.
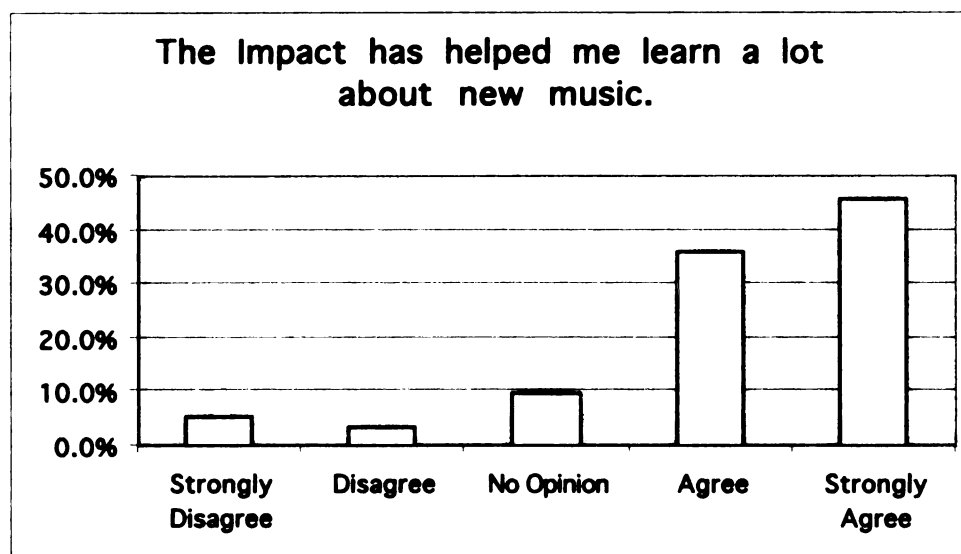Table 57: The Impact Has Helped Me Learn A Lot About New Music.

Figure 46: The Impact Has Helped Me Learn A Lot About New Music.

Most of the responses to Question 14 were what WDBM had expected.

However, it seems that WDBM may not be effectively communicating with

Michigan State University. In both statements about MSU, the most

responses were "no opinion." That could mean that participants either did not

know or did not care. WDBM is Michigan State University's student radio

station. If it was doing a sufficient job informing and talking with MSU

students, the two statements would have had more "agree" or "strongly agree" responses. Additionally, WDBM may not be informing listeners about new music. The most common answer to 14 g) is "strongly agree." Though WDBM plays a large amount of new music, it may not inform listeners sufficiently about the new music heard on the station. Finally, WDBM may not garner many P1 listeners during genre-specific programs. The most common response to 14 o) was "no opinion." Survey respondents probably do not listen to those programs on a regular basis, if at all.

15. Review the following lists of artists you can hear on The Impact. Rate them from most favorite to least favorite. (1=love, 5=hate)

Dave Matthews Band
-Average=2.5.
-49 people (33.8%) answered with a 1.
-29 people (20%) answered with a 2.
-34 people (23.4%) answered with a 3.
-13 people (9%) answered with a 4.
-20 people (13.8%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "love."
-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 53.8%.
-*The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 22.8%*
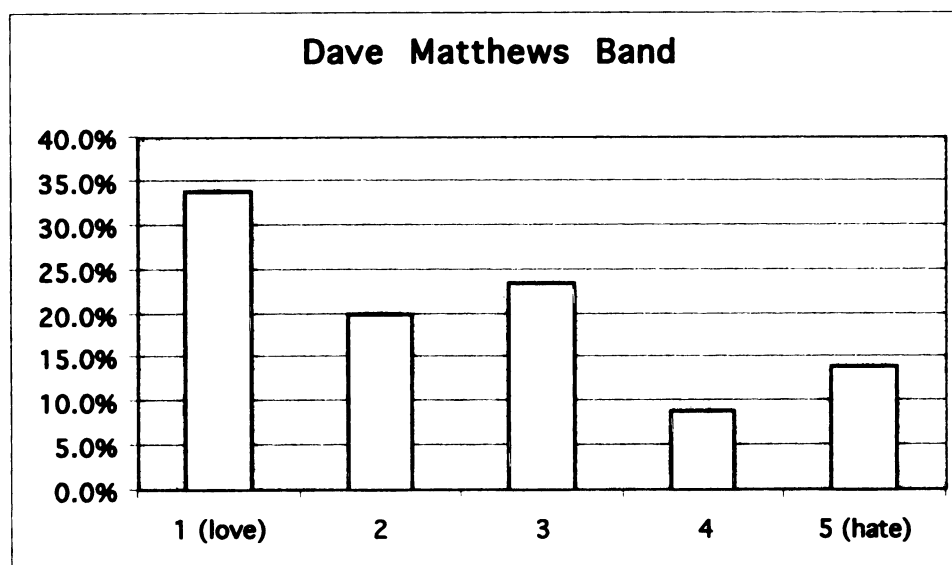*Table 58: Dave Matthews Band*

Dave Matthews Band

Figure 47: Dave Matthews Band

Ani DiFranco
-Average= 2.5
-52 people (35.9%) answered with a 1.
-24 people (16.6%) answered with a 2.
-37 people (25.5%) answered with a 3.
-14 people (9.7%) answered with a 4.
-18 people (12.4%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "love."
-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 52.5%.
-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 22.1%.
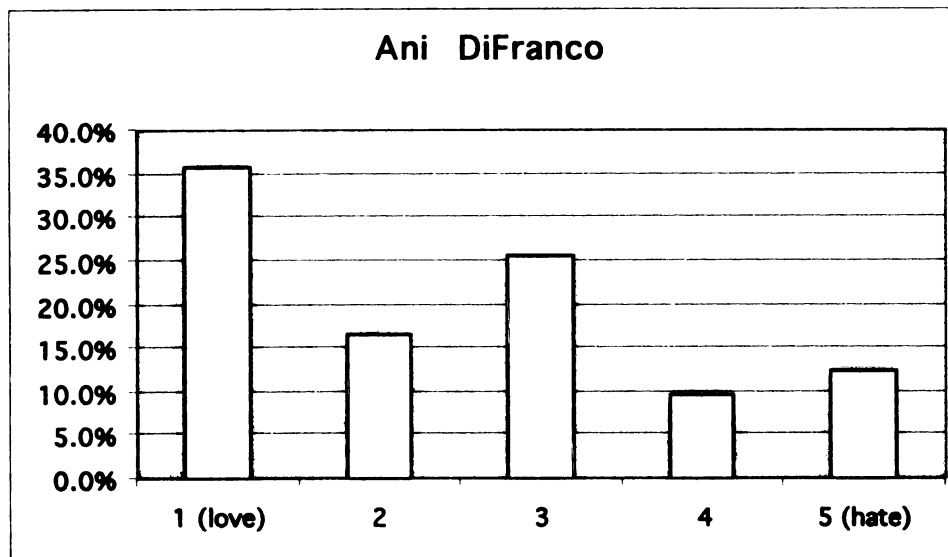Table 59: Ani DiFranco

Figure 48: Ani DiFranco

Travis

-Average=2.6

-34 people (23.4%) answered with a 1.

-26 people (17.9%) answered with a 2.

-63 people (43.4%) answered with a 3.

-10 people (7%) answered with a 4.

-12 people (8.3%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "in the middle."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 41.3%.

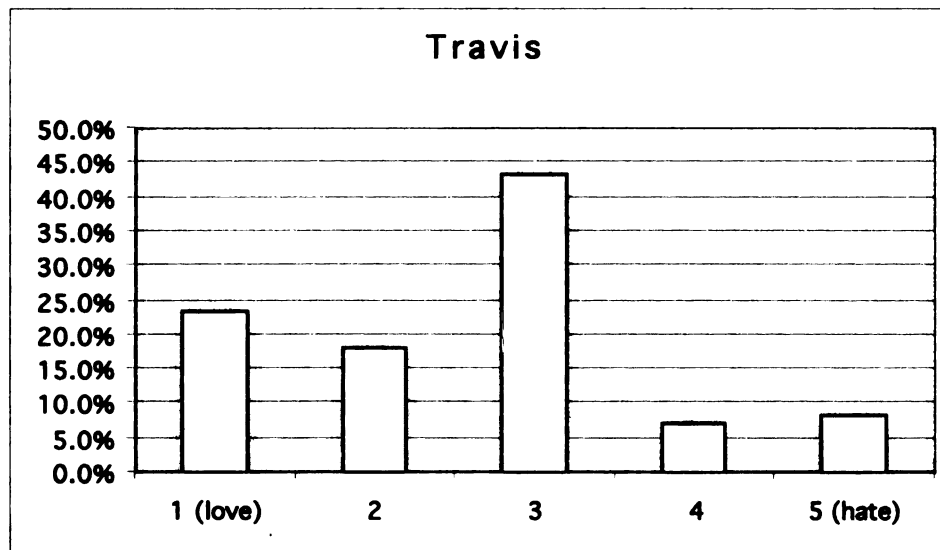-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 15.3%.

Table 60: Travis

Figure 49: Travis

Sarah McLachlan

-Average=2.5

-43 people (29.7%) answered with a 1.
-35 people (24.1%) answered with a 2.
-35 people (24.1%) answered with a 3.
-19 people (13.1%) answered with a 4.
-13 people (9%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "love."
-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 53.8%.
-The combined total of 4's and 5's is 22.1%
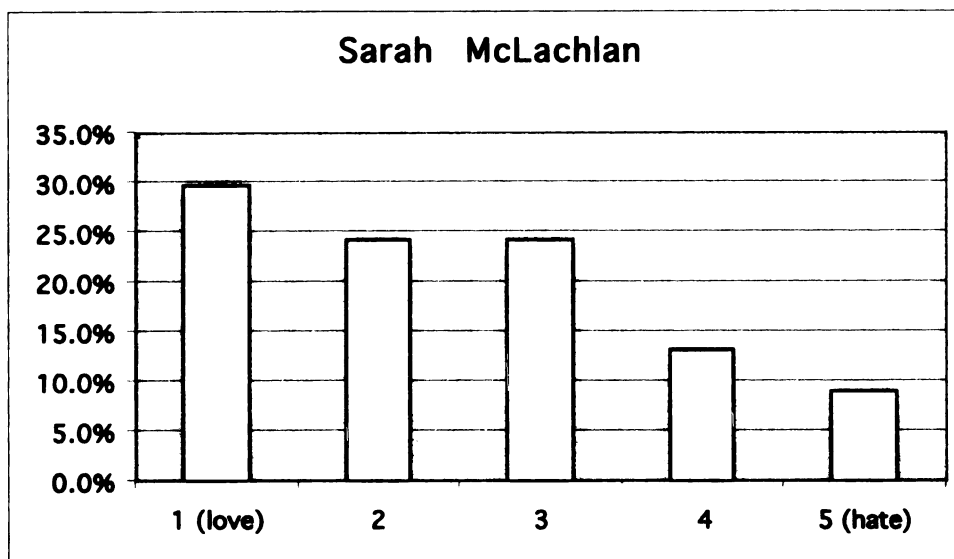
Table 61: Sarah McLachlan

Figure 50: Sarah McLachlan

Troll For Trout
-Average=2.8
-21 people (14.5%) answered with a 1.
-18 people (12.4%) answered with a 2.
-77 people (53.1%) answered with a 3.
-21 people (14.5%) answered with a 4.
-8 people (5.5%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "in the middle."
-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 26.9%.
-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 20%.
Table 62: Troll For Trout
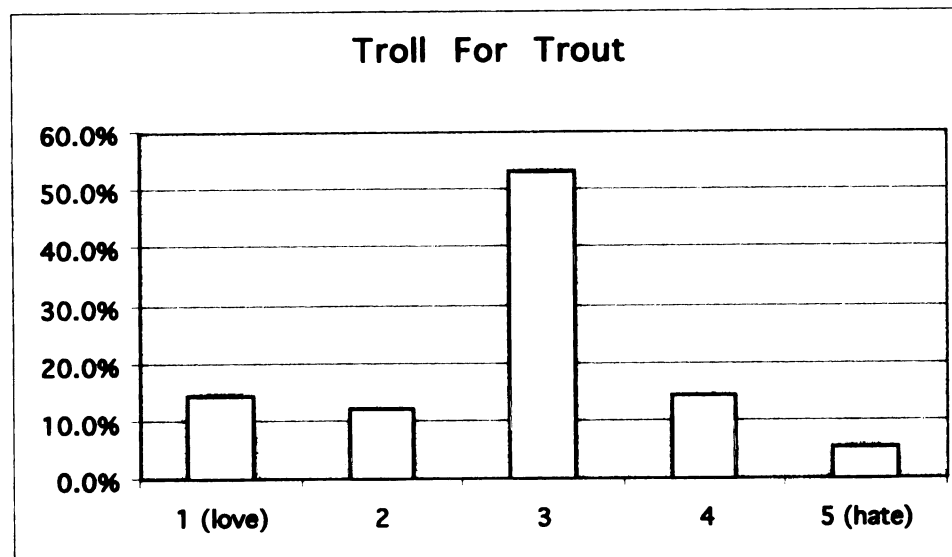
Figure 51: Troll For Trout

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Billy Bragg

-Average=2.7

-28 people (19.3%) answered with a 1.

-31 people (21.4%) answered with a 2.

-59 people (40.7%) answered with a 3.

-17 people (11.7%) answered with a 4.

-10 people (6.9%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "in the middle."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 40.7%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is 18.6%.

Table 63: Billy Bragg
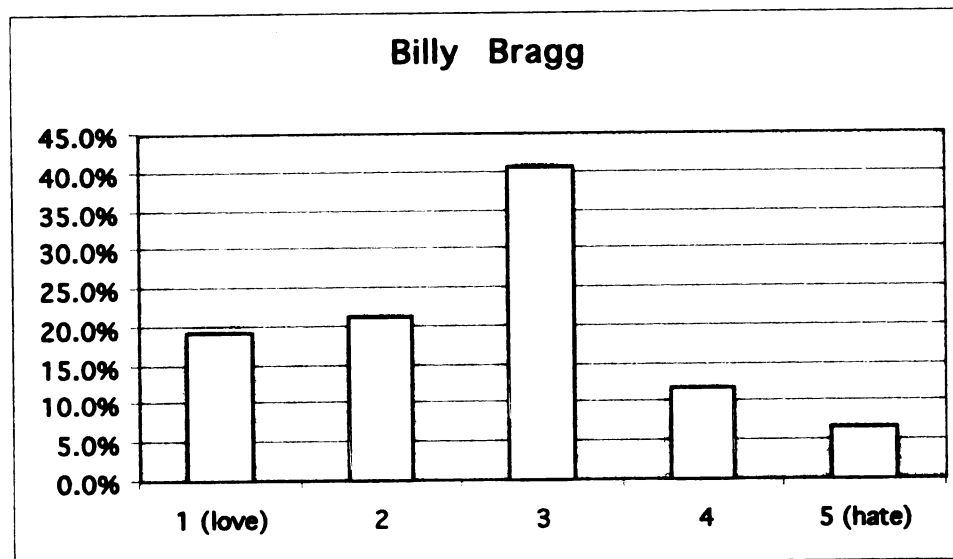
Figure 52: Billy Bragg

Barenaked Ladies

-Average=2.6

-42 people (29%) answered with a 1.

-35 people (24.1%) answered with a 2.

-25 people (17.2%) answered with a 3.

-18 people (12.4%) answered with a 4.

-25 people (17.2%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "love."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 53.1%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 29.6%.

Table 64: Barenaked Ladies
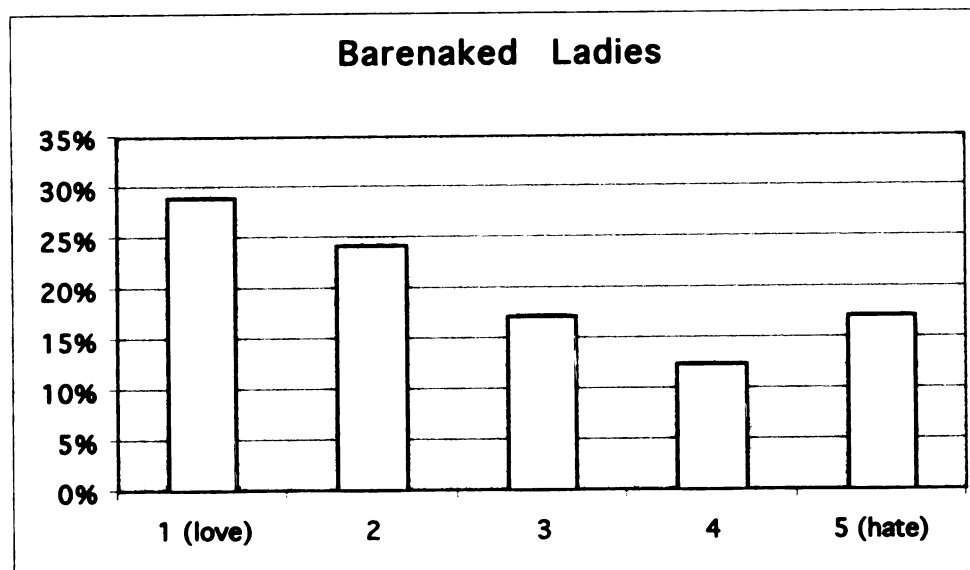
Figure 53: Barenaked Ladies

Wilco

-Average=2.5

-43 people (29.7%) answered with a 1.

-28 people (19.3%) answered with a 2.

-49 people (33.8%) answered with a 3.

-13 people (9%) answered with a 4.

-12 people (8.3%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "in the middle."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 49%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 17.3%.

Table 65: Wilco
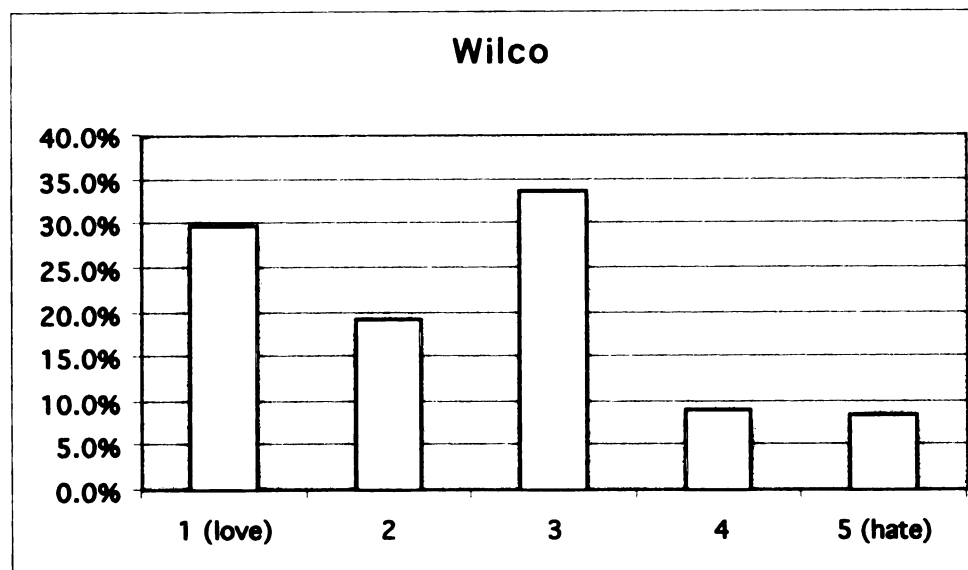
Figure 54: Wilco

19 Wheels

-Average=2.3

-53 people (36.6%) answered with a 1.

-36 people (24.8%) answered with a 2.

-28 people (19.3%) answered with a 3.

-17 people (11.7%) answered with a 4.

-11 people (7.6%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "love."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 61.4%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 19.3%.

Table 66: 19 Wheels
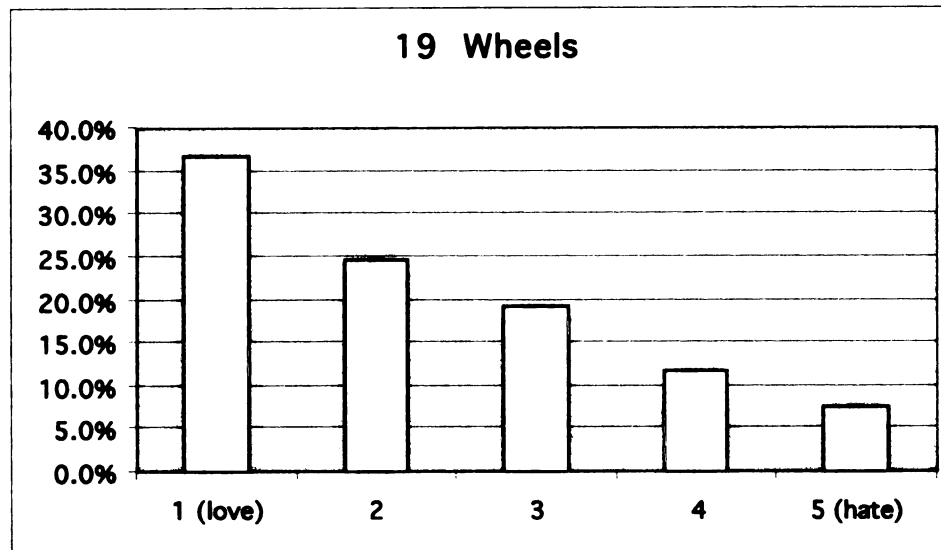
Figure 55: 19 Wheels

Old 97s
-Average=2.6
-33 people (22.8%) answered with a 1.
-25 people (17.2%) answered with a 2.
-65 people (44.8%) answered with a 3.
-17 people (11.7%) answered with a 4.
-5 people (3.4%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "in the middle."
-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 40%.
-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 15.1%.
Table 67: Old 97s
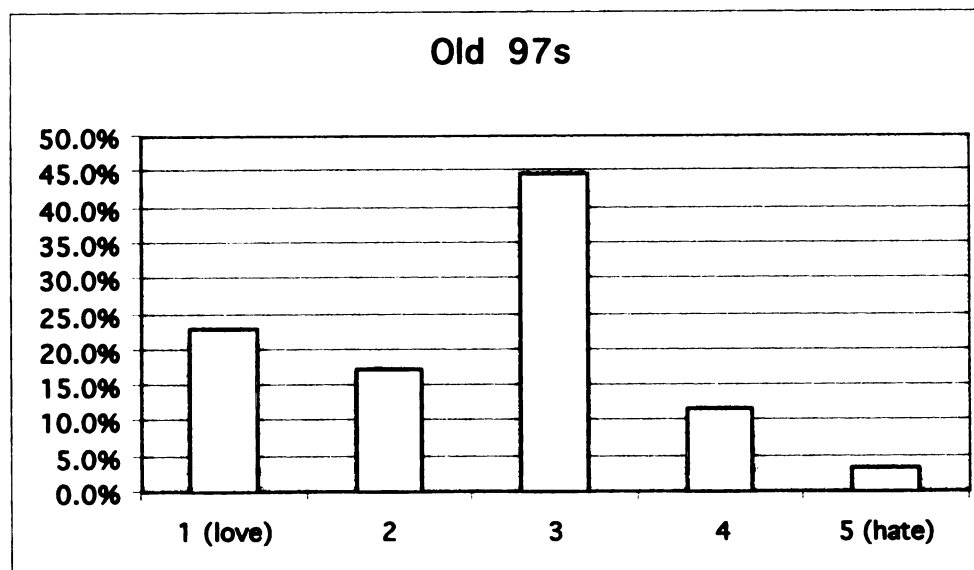
Figure 56: Old 97s

The Verve

-Average=2.7

-50 people (34.7%) answered with a 1.

-41 people (28.5%) answered with a 2.

-28 people (19.3%) answered with a 3.

-17 people (9.7%) answered with a 4.

-8 people (5.6%) answered with a 5.

(1 person did not score The Verve.)

-The mode (most answered) is "love."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 63.2%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 15.3%.

Table 68: The Verve
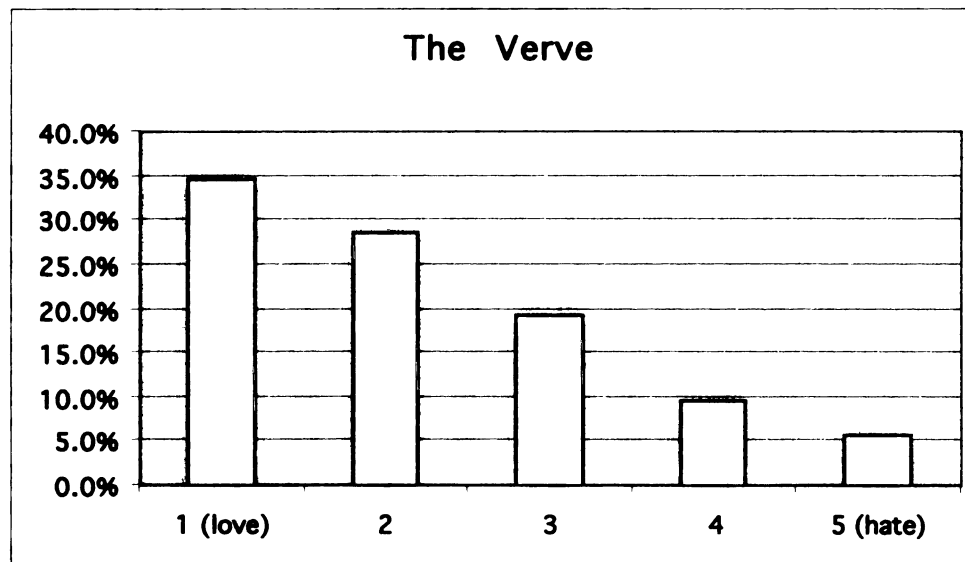
Figure 57: The Verve

Indigo Girls

-Average=2.7

-39 people (26.9%) answered with a 1.

-29 people (20%) answered with a 2.

-35 people (24.1%) answered with a 3.

-22 people (15.2%) answered with a 4.

-20 people (13.8%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "love."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 46.9%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 29%.

Table 69: Indigo Girls
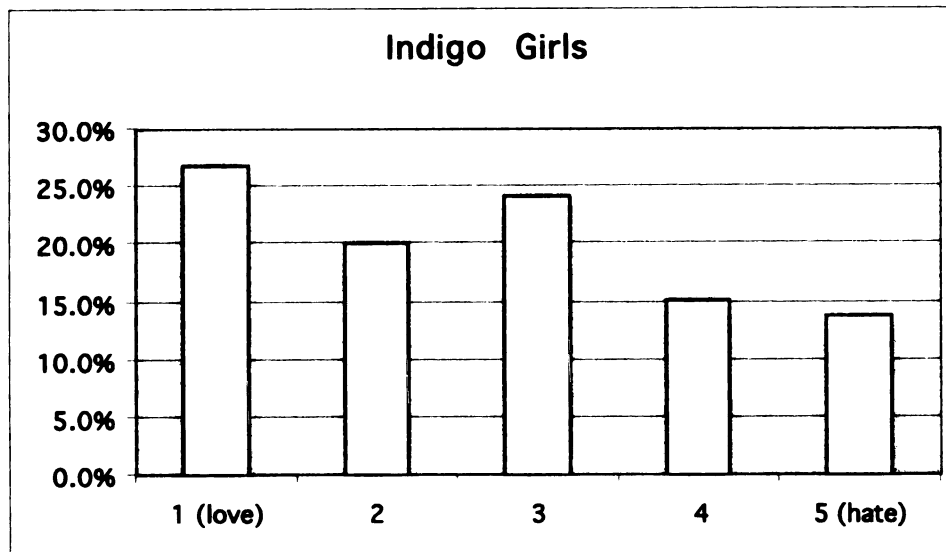
Figure 58: Indigo Girls

Oasis

-Average=2.7

-38 people (26.2) answered with a 1.

-30 people (20.7%) answered with a 2.

-33 people (22.8%) answered with a 3.

-21 people (14.5%) answered with a 4.

-23 people (15.9%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "love."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 46.9%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 30.4%.

Table 70: Oasis
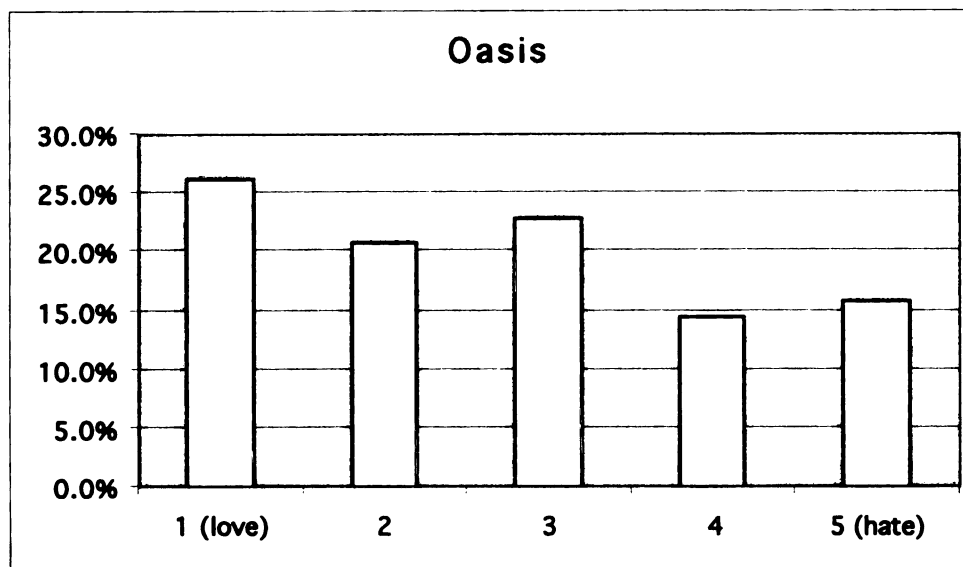
Figure 59: Oasis

Domestic Problems

-Average=2.3

-48 people (33.1%) answered with a 1.

-35 people (24.1%) answered with a 2.

-40 people (27.6%) answered with a 3.

-12 people (8.3%) answered with a 4.

-10 people (6.9%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "love."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 57.2%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 15.2%.

Table 71: Domestic Problems
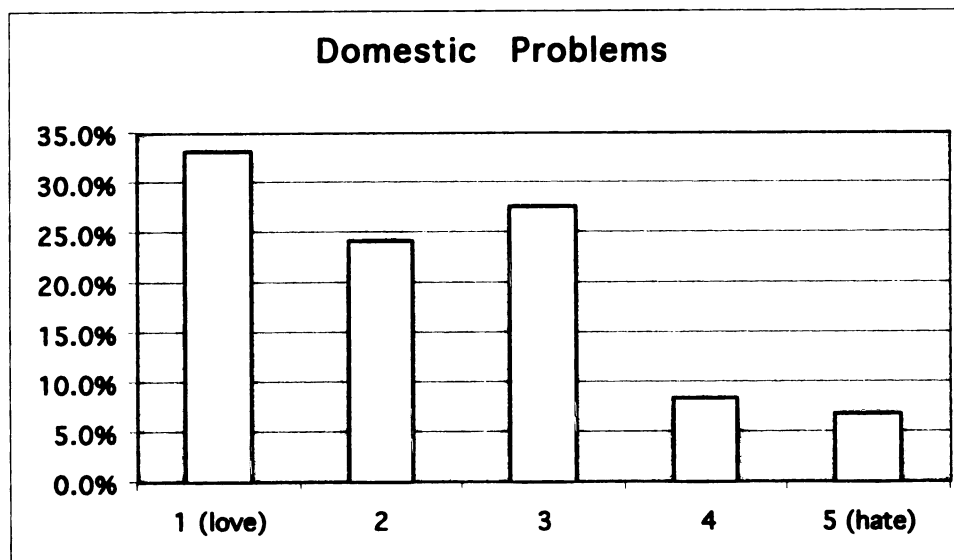
Figure 60: Domestic Problems

The Waterboys

-Average=2.6

-31 people (21.4%) answered with a 1.

-24 people (16.6%) answered with a 2.

-66 people (45.5%) answered with a 3.

-17 people (11.7%) answered with a 4.

-7 people (4.8%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "in the middle."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 38%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 16.5%.

Table 72: The Waterboys
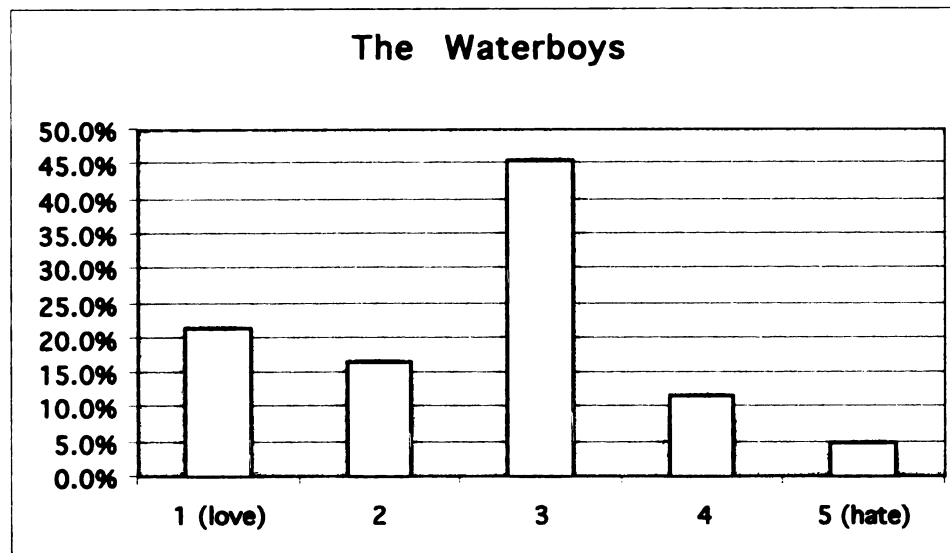
Figure 61: The Waterboys

Pavement
-Average=2.4
-41 people (28.3%) answered with a 1.
-34 people (23.4%) answered with a 2.
-51 people (35.2%) answered with a 3.
-10 people (6.9%) answered with a 4.
-8 people (5.5%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "in the middle."
-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 51.7%.
-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 12.4%.
Table 73: Pavement
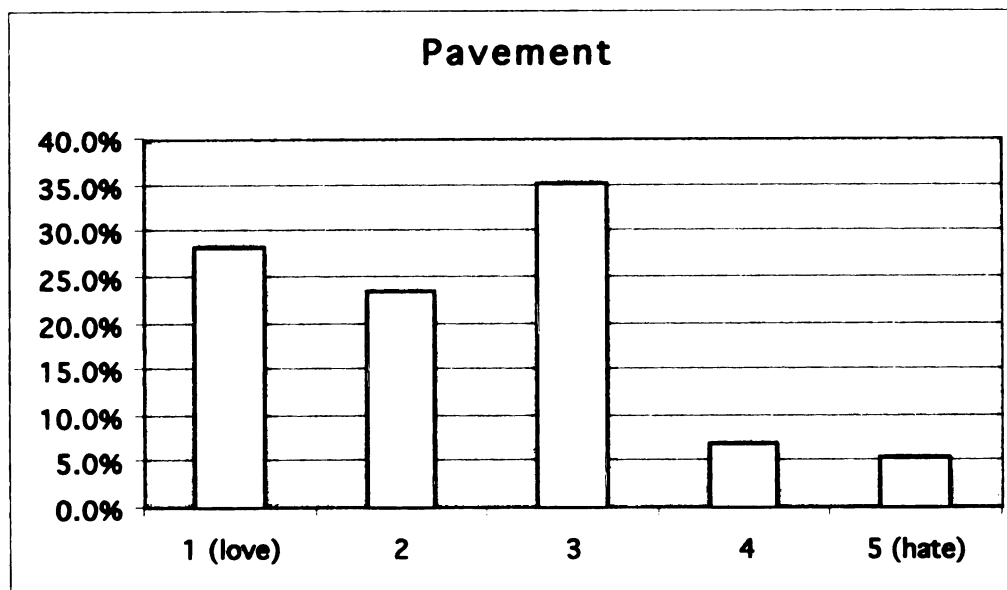
Figure 62: Pavement

Flaming Lips

-Average=2.4

-40 people (27.6%) answered with a 1.

-37 people (25.5%) answered with a 2.

-43 people (29.7%) answered with a 3.

-17 people (11.7%) answered with a 4.

-8 people (5.5%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "in the middle."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 53.1%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 17.2%.

Table 74: Flaming Lips
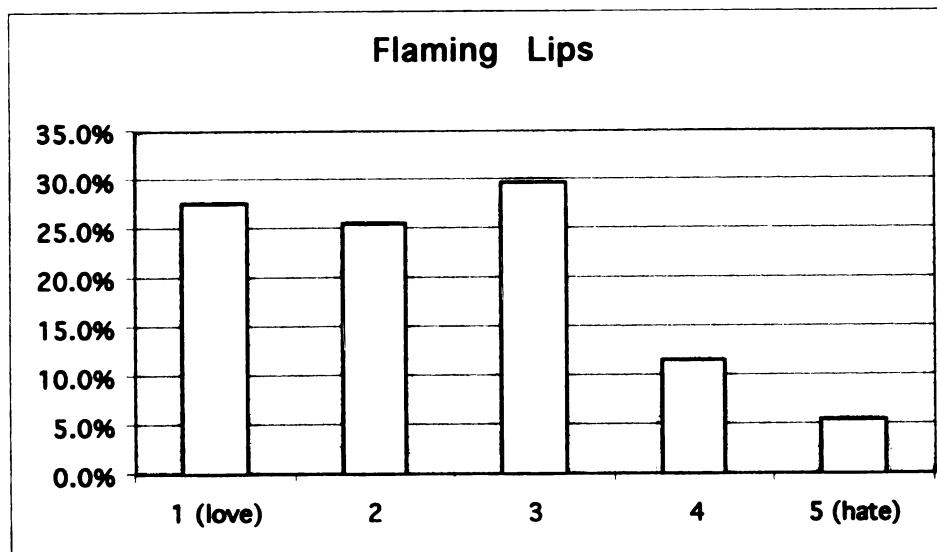
Figure 63: Flaming Lips

Knee Deep Shag

-Average=2.3

-42 people (29%) answered with a 1.

-42 people (29%) answered with a 2.

-41 people (28.3%) answered with a 3.

-12 people (8.3%) answered with a 4.

-8 people (5.5%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "love."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 58%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 13.8%.

Table 75: Knee Deep Shag
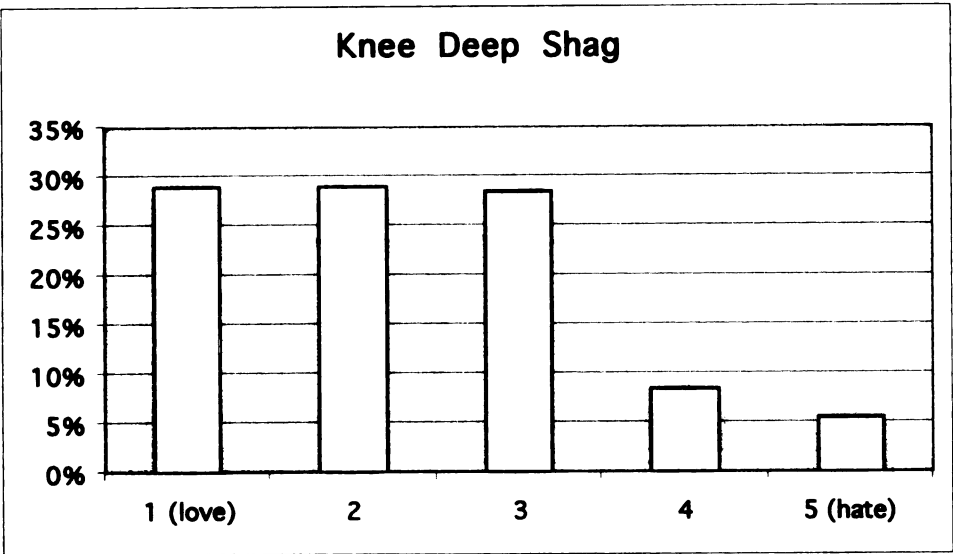


Figure 64: Knee Deep Shag

Our Lady Peace

-Average=2.5

-47 people (32.4%) answered with a 1.

-26 people (17.9%) answered with a 2.

-34 people (23.4%) answered with a 3.

-23 people (15.9%) answered with a 4.

-15 people (10.3%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "love."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 50.3%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 26.2%.

Table 76: Our Lady Peace
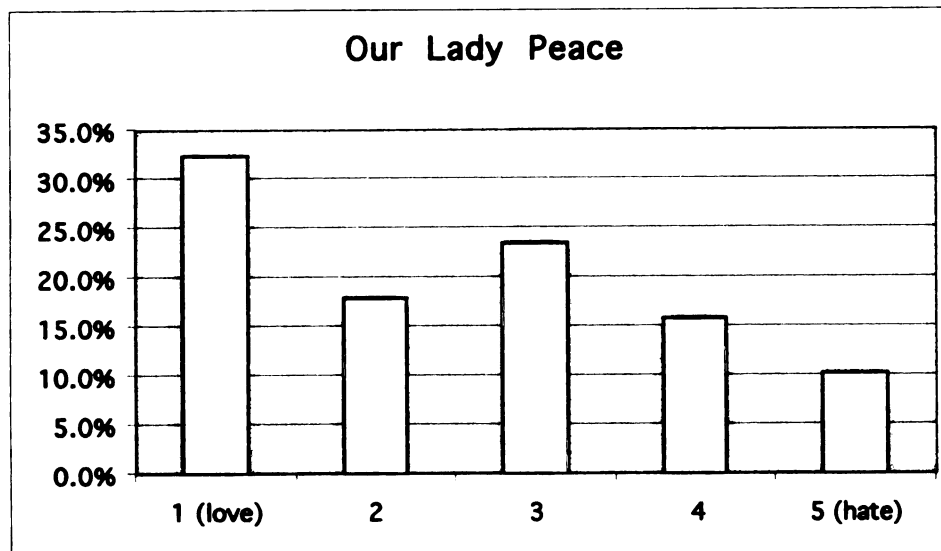
Figure 65: Our Lady Peace

Dinosaur Jr.
-Average=2.5
-38 people (26.2%) answered with a 1.
-33 people (22.8%) answered with a 2.
-46 people (31.7%) answered with a 3.
-20 people (13.8%) answered with a 4.
-8 people (5.5%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "in the middle."
-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 49%.
-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 19.3%.
Table 77: Dinosaur Jr.
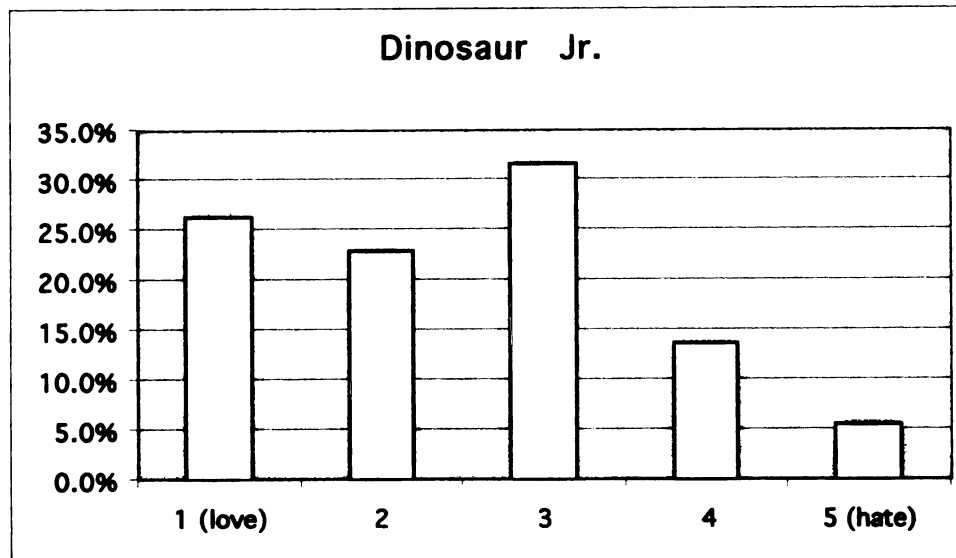
Figure 66: Dinosaur Jr.

Angie Aparo

-Average=2.4

-52 people (36%) answered with a 1.

-21 people (14.5%) answered with a 2.

-46 people (31.7%) answered with a 3.

-18 people (12.4%) answered with a 4.

-8 people (5.5%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "love."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 50.5%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 17.9%.

Table 78: Angie Aparo
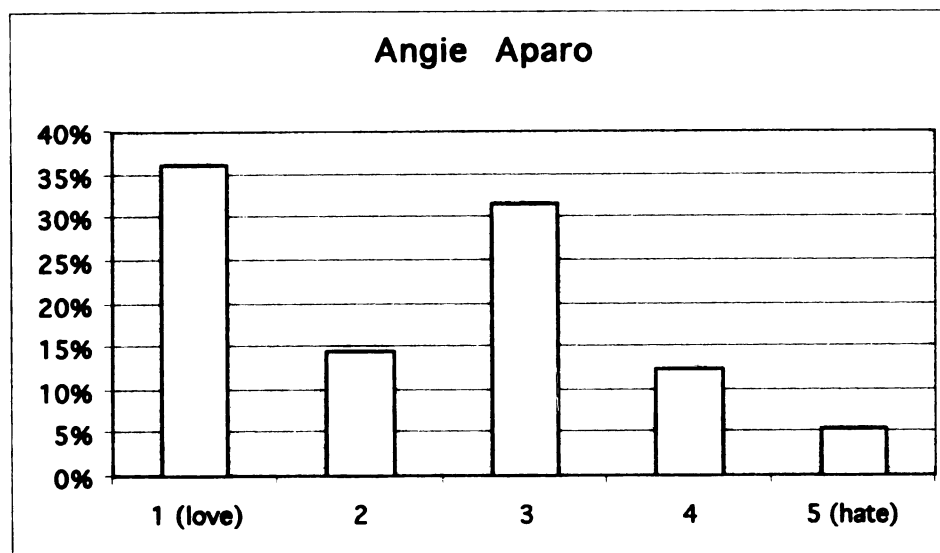
Figure 67: Angie Aparo

Blur

-Average=2.1

-53 people (36.6%) answered with a 1.

-43 people (29.7%) answered with a 2.

-31 people (21.4%) answered with a 3.

-7 people (4.8%) answered with a 4.

-11 people (7.6%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "love."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 66.3%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 12.4%.

Table 79: Blur
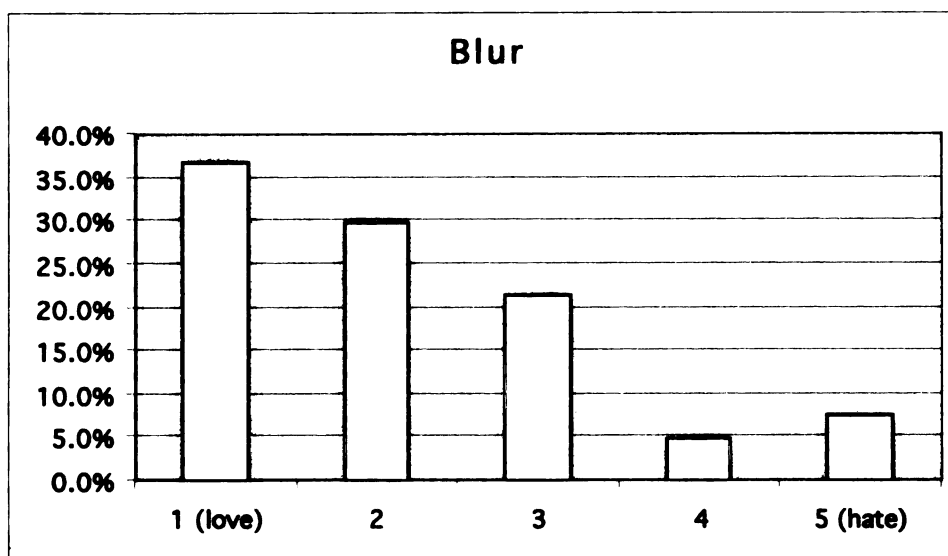
Figure 68: Blur

Echo and the Bunnymen

-Average=2.3

-46 people (31.7%) answered with a 1.

-38 people (26.2%) answered with a 2.

-44 people (30.3%) answered with a 3.

-12 people (8.3%) answered with a 4.

5 people (3.4%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "love."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 57.9%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 11.7%.

Table 80: Echo and the Bunnymen
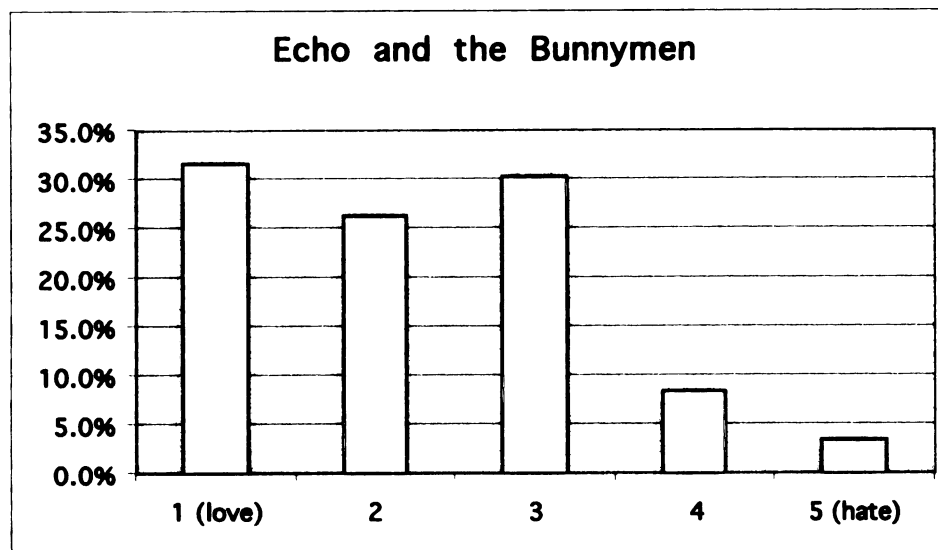

Figure 69: Echo and the Bunnymen

Reverend Horton Heat

-Average=2.5

-40 people (27.6%) answered with a 1.

-33 people (22.8%) answered with a 2.

-44 people (30.3%) answered with a 3.

-18 people (12.4%) answered with a 4.

-10 people (6.9%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "in the middle."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 50.4%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 19.3%.

Table 81: Reverend Horton Heat
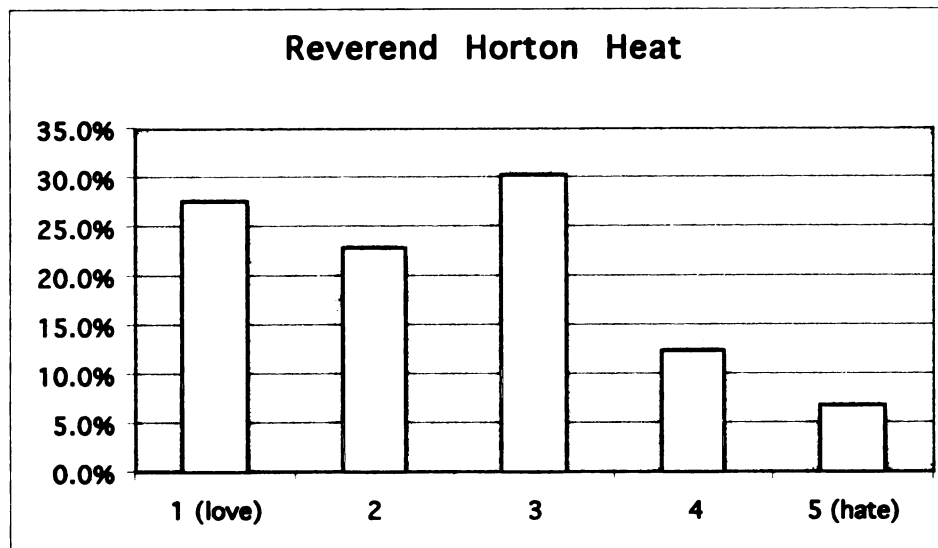
Figure 70: Reverend Horton Heat

Peter Gabriel
-Average=2.2
-54 people (37.2%) answered with a 1.
-37 people (25.5%) answered with a 2.
-29 people (20%) answered with a 3.
-16 people (11%) answered with a 4.
-9 people (6.2%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "love."
-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 62.7%.
-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 17.2%.
Table 82: Peter Gabriel
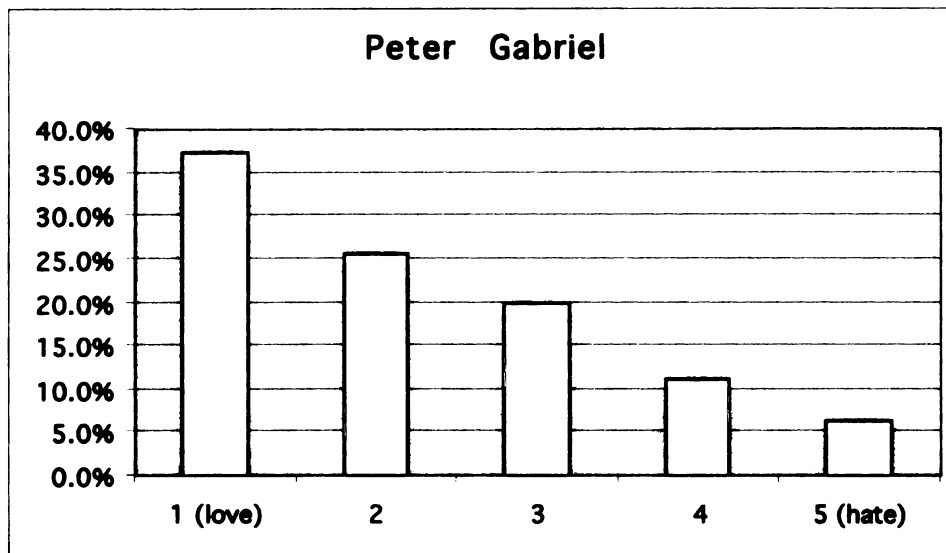
Figure 71: Peter Gabriel

Tori Amos

-Average=2.4

-59 people (40.7%) answered with a 1.

-25 people (17.2%) answered with a 2.

-24 people (16.6%) answered with a 3.

-18 people (12.4%) answered with a 4.

-19 people (13.1%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "love."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 57.9%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 25.5%.

Table 83: Tori Amos
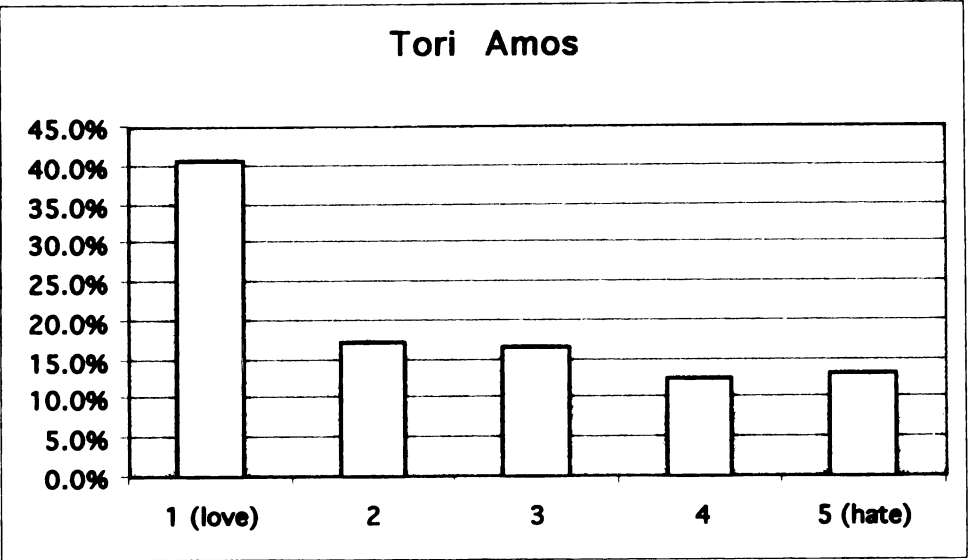
Figure 72: Tori Amos

The Atomic Numbers

-Average=2.5

-34 people (23.4%) answered with a 1.

-31 people (21.4%) answered with a 2.

-60 people (41.4%) answered with a 3.

-15 people (10.3%) answered with a 4.

-5 people (3.4%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "in the middle."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 44.8%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 13.7%.

Table 84: The Atomic Numbers
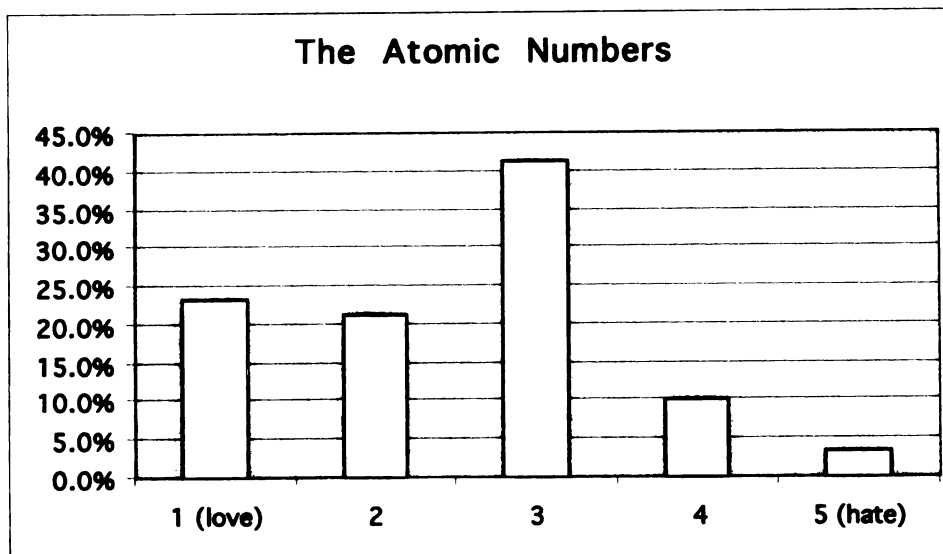
Figure 73: The Atomic Numbers

Ben Harper

-Average=2.0

-76 people (52.4%) answered with a 1.

-24 people (16.6%) answered with a 2.

-21 people (14.5%) answered with a 3.

-11 people (7.6%) answered with a 4.

-13 people (9%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "love."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 69%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 16.6%.

Table 85: Ben Harper
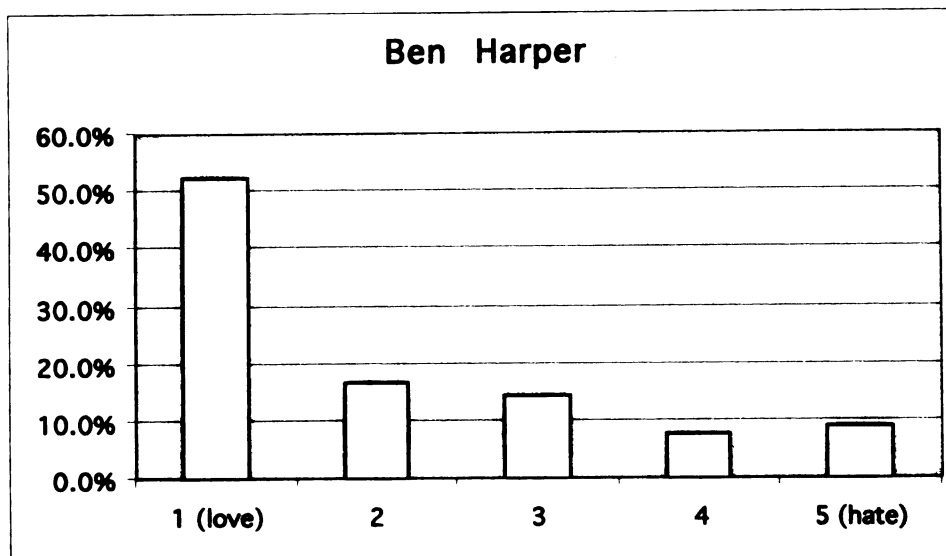
Figure 74: Ben Harper

Liz Phair

-Average=2.2

-58 people (40%) answered with a 1.

-25 people (17.2%) answered with a 2.

-39 people (26.9%) answered with a 3.

-17 people (11.7%) answered with a 4.

-6 people (4.1%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "love."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 57.2%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 15.8%.

Table 86: Liz Phair
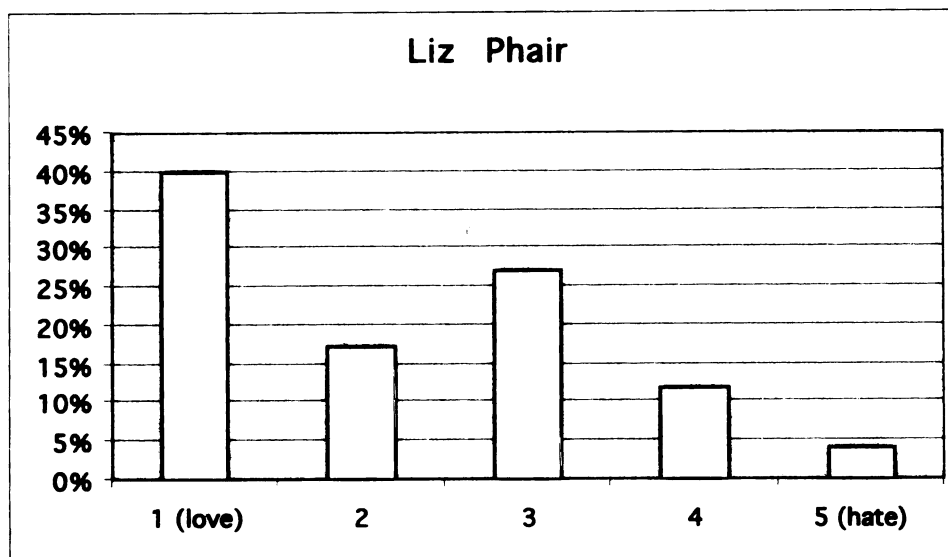

Figure 75: Liz Phair

R.E.M.

-Average=2.3

-56 people (38.6%) answered with a 1.

-35 people (24.1%) answered with a 2.

-24 people (16.6%) answered with a 3.

-12 people (8.3%) answered with a 4.

-18 people 12.4%) answered with a 5.

-The mode (most answered) is "love."

-The combined total of 1's and 2s is: 62.7%.

-The combined total of 4's and 5's is: 20.7%.

Table 87: R.E.M.
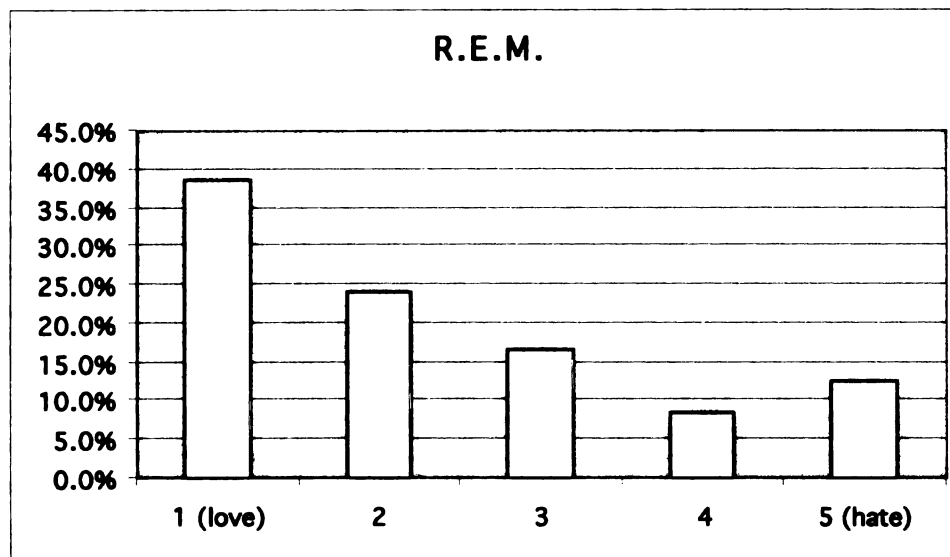
*Figure 76: R.E.M.*

These artists were chosen as a representative sample of each type of

music played on WDBM that are broadly recognizable among the target

audience. Since 1=love, all these artists did extremely well. This means the

choice of artists played on WDBM is generally what P1 listeners want to hear.

Because all the artists had such incredibly close scores, it is important to look

at which ones had many 1's and 5's as well as 3's. Any artist/band with many

1's and 5's provokes strong emotions from listeners. Any artist/band that

received many 3's did so because listeners do not care one way or the other

about, or the artist/bands not very well known yet.

Each artist/band was given a code so each category could also be

examined. The codes are as follows:

<u>Familiar</u>
Dave Matthews Band
Barenaked Ladies
Peter Gabriel
R.E.M.
Our Lady Peace

Familiar average=2.42
Table 88: Familiar Artists and Their Average Score

<u>Female</u>
Ani DiFranco
Sarah McLachlan
Indigo Girls
Tori Amos
Liz Phair

Female average=2.46
Table 89: Female Artists and Their Average Score

<u>British</u>
Travis
Oasis
Blur
Echo and the Bunnymen
The Verve

British average=2.48
Table 90: British Artists and Their Average Score

Local
19 Wheels
Domestic Problems
Knee Deep Shag
The Atomic Numbers
Troll For Trout

Local average=2.44
Table 91: Local Artists and Their Average Score

Americana
Billy Bragg
Wilco
Old 97s
The Waterboys
Reverend Horton Heat

Americana average=2.58
Table 92: Americana Artists and Their Average Score

College
Pavement
Flaming Lips
Dinosaur Jr.
Angie Aparo
Ben Harper

College average=2.34
Table 93: College Artists and Their Average Score

Again, because scores were so close, it is important to at least look at the order of listener preference, from most liked to least:

1-college
2-familiar
3-local
4-female
5-British
6-Americana
Table 94: Category Scores

Category Scores

Category	Score
College	~2.34
Familiar	~2.42
Local	~2.44
Female	~2.46
British	~2.48
Americana	~2.58
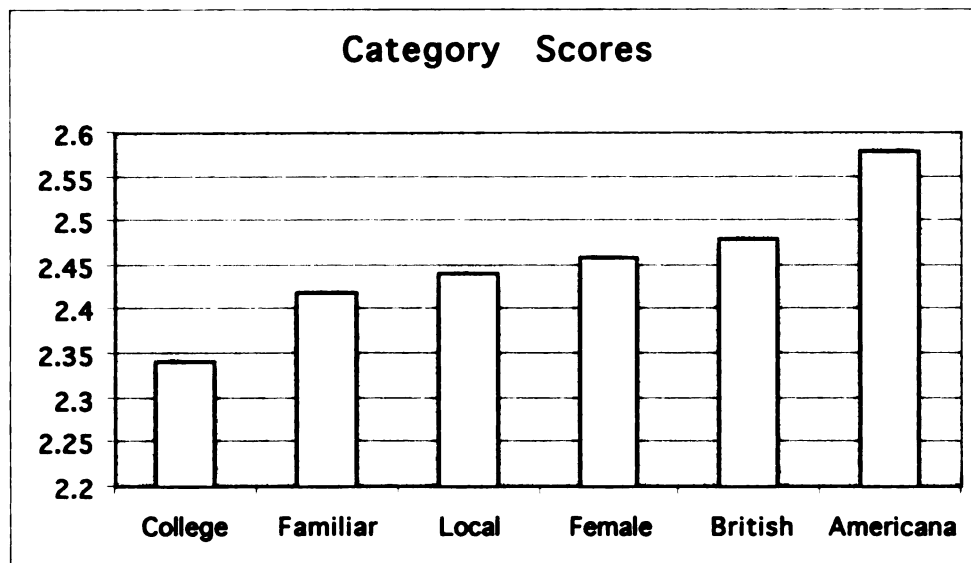
Figure 77: Category Scores

As WDBM is a college radio station, it seems appropriate to see that "college" artists are rated the highest among survey respondents. It is even appropriate to see that familiar artists, often heard on other radio stations, are still well liked. Though a good chunk of survey respondents said they want to hear unknown artists, a good chunk of people like familiar ones as well.

Those categories lower on the list (though still well liked) are the kind of artists that are not in the mainstream in the U.S. Local music popularity will vary from place to place, but female, British and Americana artists seem to garner cult followings. Each one has certainly seen more popularity in the past few years. They are generally just well known overall, and that can account for their ranking.

16. What gender of deejays do you prefer to listen to on The Impact? (If no preference, skip to #18.)
-92 people chose male. (63.4%)
-53 people chose female. (36.6%)
Table 95: Gender Preference
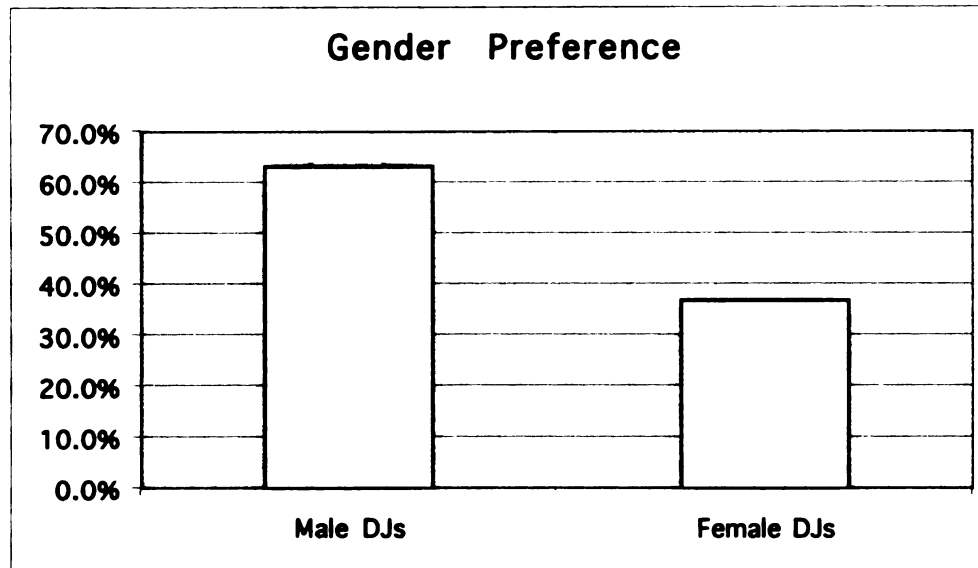
Gender Preference

Figure 78: Gender Preference

According to Arbitron, WDBM has many more male listeners than

female. An assumption sometimes made by WDBM staff is that playing more

female artists than other radio stations will alienate male listeners. Obviously,

it has not. Both the web survey and Arbitron say WDBM has many more

male listeners than female. The male/female ratio of WDBM listeners in

Spring 2001 was 62%/28%. Perhaps this is why listeners prefer male DJs.

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17. Why do you prefer one gender over the other?
Male:
There were only a few responses to this question. They follow.

-A mans voice is more pleasant to listen to.

-I hate to go against my sex, but the guys seem to be more entertaining usually. There are a few girls I like, but most of them come across as whiny, really.

-Interesting - I already addressed this. It is definitely more noticeable and disagreeable to my ears when female deejays have an annoying voice or make mistakes. The oxymoron in all of this is that Lindsay is one of my all time favorite deejays, as is Larry Marasco, a male who has a heavy nasal New York accent.

-It doesn't matter as long as their voice isn't annoying.

-Probably just because I'm a girl and I like guys. Also, Marasco has the greatest voice this side of Barry White, if you know what I mean.

-The girl DJ's always seem to be a bit ditzy, have trouble pronouncing band names and such. The guy DJ's I hear seem to be more well informed on new artists.

-Voices don't sound whining-like.

Female:
This list was short as well. All the responses follow.

-Because I can tell a female DJ I will love her if she plays a song for me.

-Because I'm male and it just is more enjoyable to listen to a woman.

-Female voices are generally soothing. Male voices tend to be abrasive.

-I don't prefer one that much, but it seems women play more female artists.

-Impact female DJs talk a little more than males and they do it well.

-My favorite Impact DJ's have been women (played my favorite music). I enjoy the sound of a young woman's voice (without all the EQ'ing of commercial stations).

-Nicer sounding voices.

Female, continued
-They seem more knowledgeable about music.

-Soft spoken (usually)

The responses to Questions 18 and 19 have been summarized here. The entire list of responses can be found in the Appendix.

18. What would you like to see on this web site?
-More content.

-Less clutter.

-More band information.

-Playlists.

-Descriptions of each genre-specific program, as well as a page for each program detailing weekly happenings.

-More community news.

-Opinion polls.

-CD release information.

-Ability to download music.

-List of concerts on sale every week.

-More local concert information.

19. Please write any other comments on The Impact here.
-The music selection is not pleasant to listen to on the radio.

-I would like to be better informed of artist and song information.

-The Impact is the best station around.

-The professionalism of disc jockeys can be improved.
-Genre-specific programs are worthwhile because they cannot be found anywhere else.

-Like the wide variety.

-More familiar music might help more people listen.

20. What is your age?
1: 15-year old
1: 16-year old
3: 17-year olds
5: 18-year olds
9: 19-year olds
5: 20-year olds
26: 21-year olds
7: 22-year olds
14: 23-year olds
7: 24-year olds
9: 25-year olds
4: 26-year olds
5: 27-year olds
7: 28-year olds
8: 29-year olds
2: 30-year olds
3: 31-year olds
4: 32-year olds
3: 33-year olds
2: 34-year olds
1: 36-year old
1: 37-year old
6: 38-year olds
1: 39-year old
3: 41-year olds
1: 42-year old
1: 43-year old
1: 47-year old
2: 48-year old
1: 50-year old
1: 53-year old
1: no answer for age
-Average age=26 years old
-Median (middle) age=24 years old
-Mode (most often occurring) age=21 years old
Table 96: Age of Survey Respondents

Remember that it is necessary to always use Arbitron data in

conjunction with other station research, if possible. Arbitron always supplies

age information.

<u>WDBM, Spring 2001</u>:
-Teens: 1%
-18-24: 62%
-25-34: 12%
-35-44: 2%
-45-54: 23%
-55 & up: 0%
-Largest group of listeners: 19-28 years old
Table 97: Arbitron Age Information for WDBM
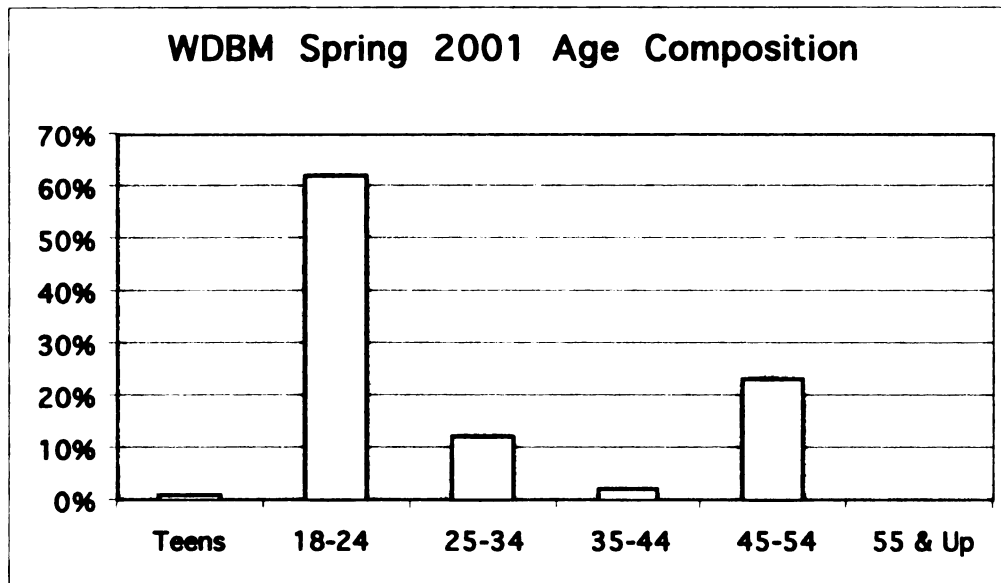
Figure 79: Arbitron Age Information for WDBM

It is also important to look at radio stations in the market that probably

have some of the WDBM target audience.

<u>WHZZ, Spring 2001</u>:
-Teens: 28%
-18-24-37%
-25-34: 18%
-35-44: 14%
-45-54: 3%
-55-64: 1%
-65 & up: 0%
-Largest group of listeners: 16-25 years old
Table 98: Arbitron Age Information for WHZZ
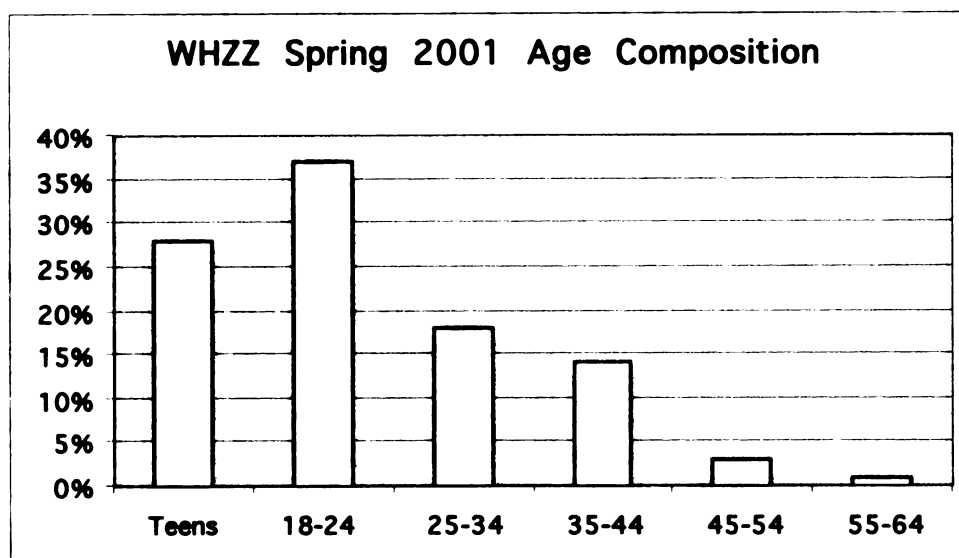
Figure 80: Arbitron Age Information for WHZZ

WWDX, Spring 2001:
-Teens: 25%
-18-24: 41%
-25-34: 19%
-35-44: 12%
-45-54: 3%
-55-64: 1%
-65 & up: 0%
-Largest group of listeners: 13-22 years old
Table 99: Arbitron Age Information for WWDX
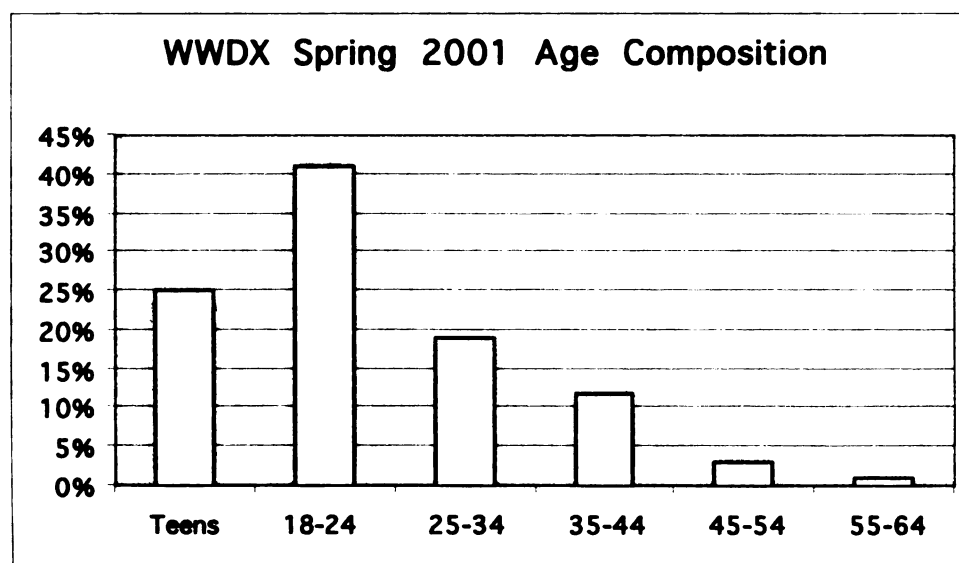
Figure 81: Arbitron Age Information for WWDX

Perhaps the most interesting data about age is in the age cell composition supplied by Arbitron. Here is the comparison between age composition of WDBM in Fall 2000 and Spring 2001.

	Fall 2000	Spring 2001
Teens	8%	1%
18-24	23%	62%
25-34	29%	12%
35-44	33%	2%
45-54	5%	23%

Table 100: Arbitron Age Composition Comparison for WDBM
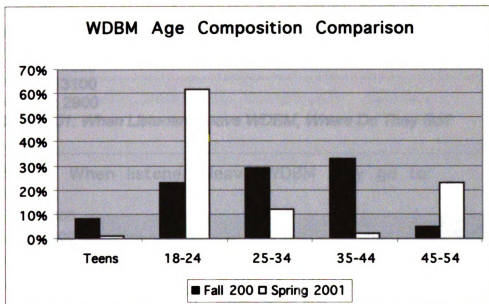
Figure 82: Arbitron Age Composition Comparison for WDBM

These numbers basically show WDBM excelled in targeting its 18-24 year old listeners. Unfortunately, Arbitron does not give a reason for the change. Only guesses can be made as to why there was a shift in age cell composition.

When considering the competition, it is also useful for a program director to know about station preferences among listeners. Arbitron also gives data on P1 vs. P2 listening.

In Spring 2001...

-When WDBM is P1, the top P2 is WWDX, with 23% of the diaries.

-The percentage of listeners who say only listened to WDBM was only 8%.

-When WDBM is P2, there are two top P1 stations: WHZZ and WKAR, both with 33% of the diaries.

Additionally, Arbitron supplies information on where listeners go when they leave a particular station. This is especially helpful in examining the competition.

When listeners leave WDBM (Monday-Sunday, 6 a.m.-midnight), they go to:
-WWDX: 7900
-WHZZ: 4600
-WJXQ: 3100
-WKAR: 2900

Table 101: When Listeners Leave WDBM, Where Do They Go?
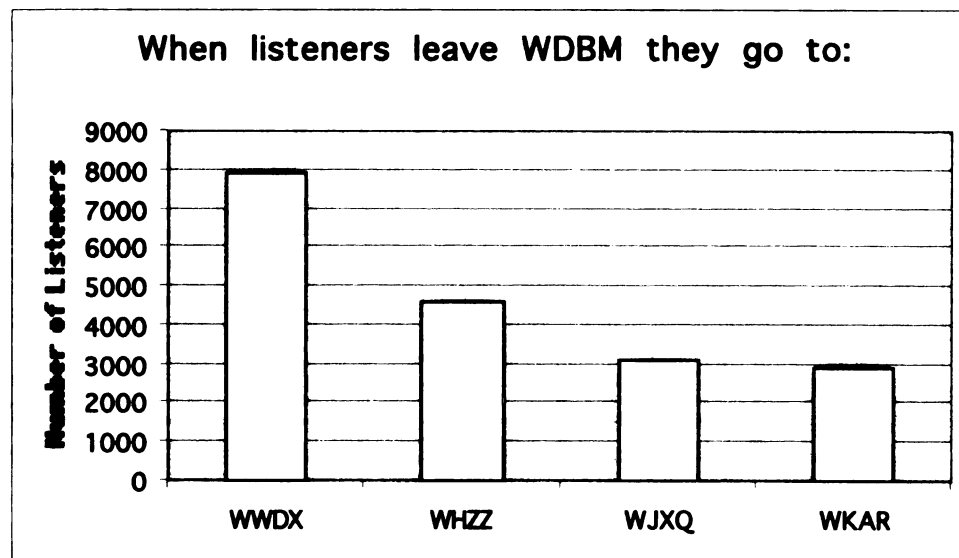
Figure 83: When Listeners Leave WDBM, Where Do They Go?

This is the kind of Arbitron data that helps clear up any misconceptions a radio station may have. For a long time, WDBM assumed that WWDX was their main competition. The above data shows that more than one station is equally a threat to WDBM.

WDBM is a non-commercial radio station. It is important to also look at other non-commercial radio stations in the Lansing/East Lansing market, because those stations may share some of the same listeners as WDBM. The Following is some of the Arbitron data for non-commercial stations in Lansing/East Lansing for Spring 2001.

	Share	AQH	Cume	TSL
WDBM	1.1%	600	14,900	5 hours
WKAR-AM	2.3%	1200	14,900	7 hours
WKAR-FM	4.2%	2200	39,600	7 hours
WLNZ	1.5%	800	13,200	7 hours, 45 minutes

Table 102: Non-Commercial Station Comparisons for Share, AQH, Cume and TSL
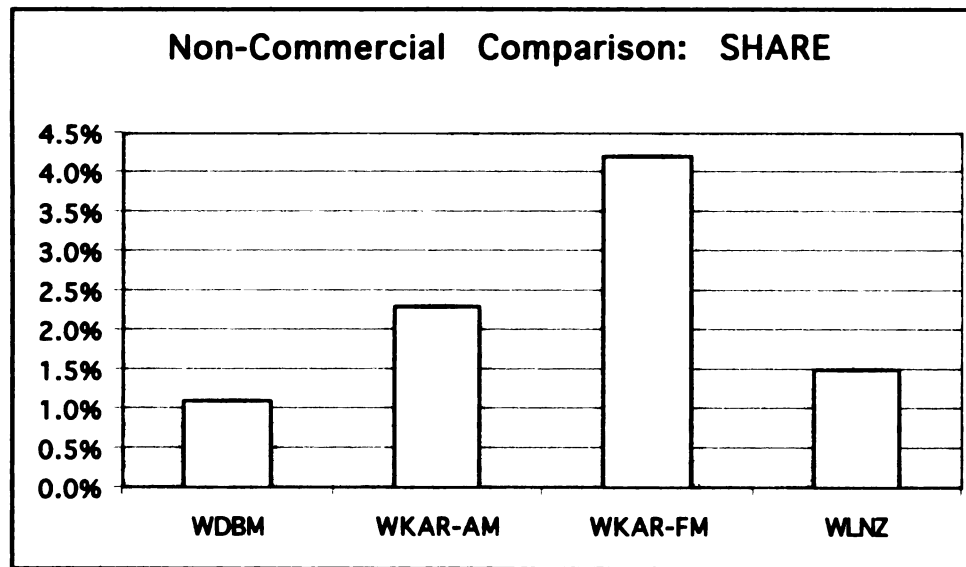
Figure 84: Non-Commercial Station Comparison for Share
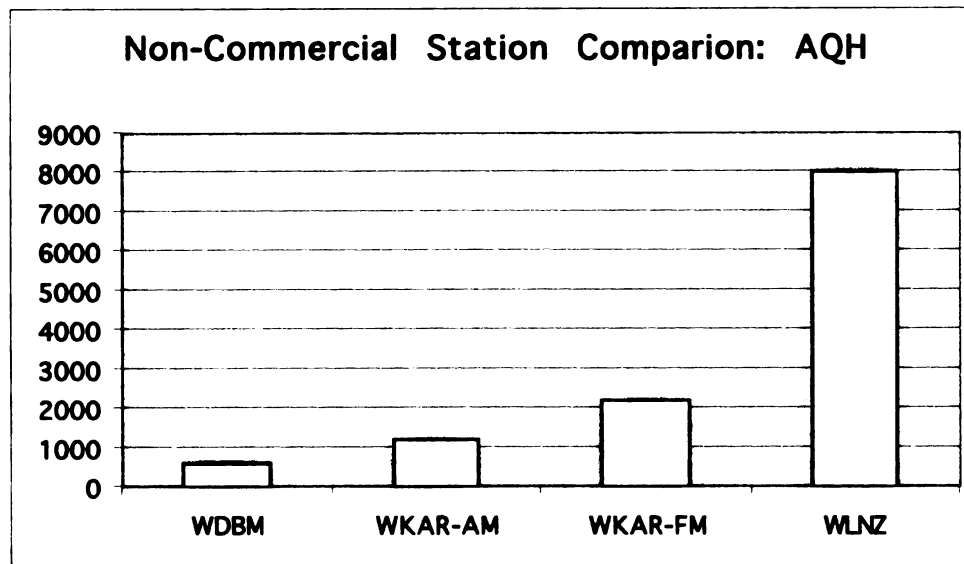
Figure 85: Non-Commercial Station Comparison for AQH
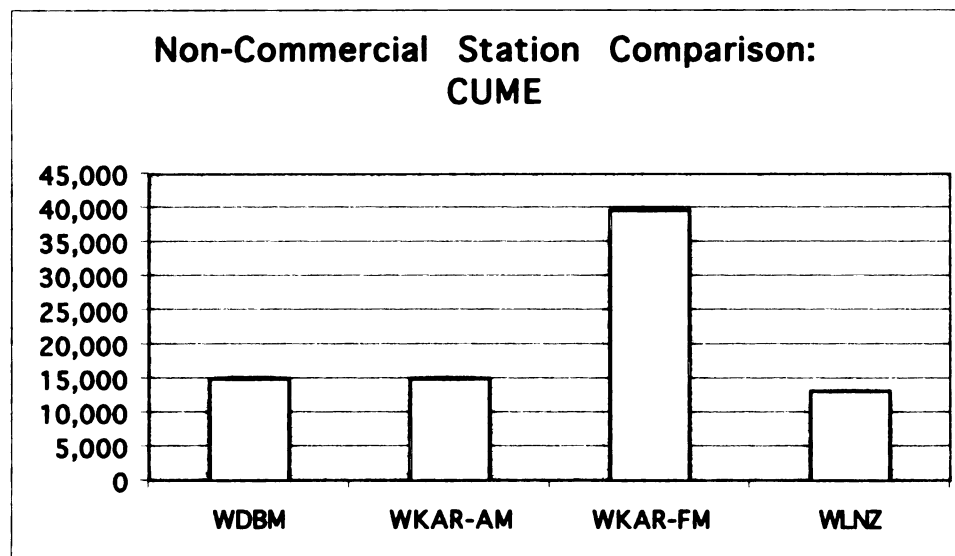
Figure 86: Non-Commercial Station Comparison for Cume

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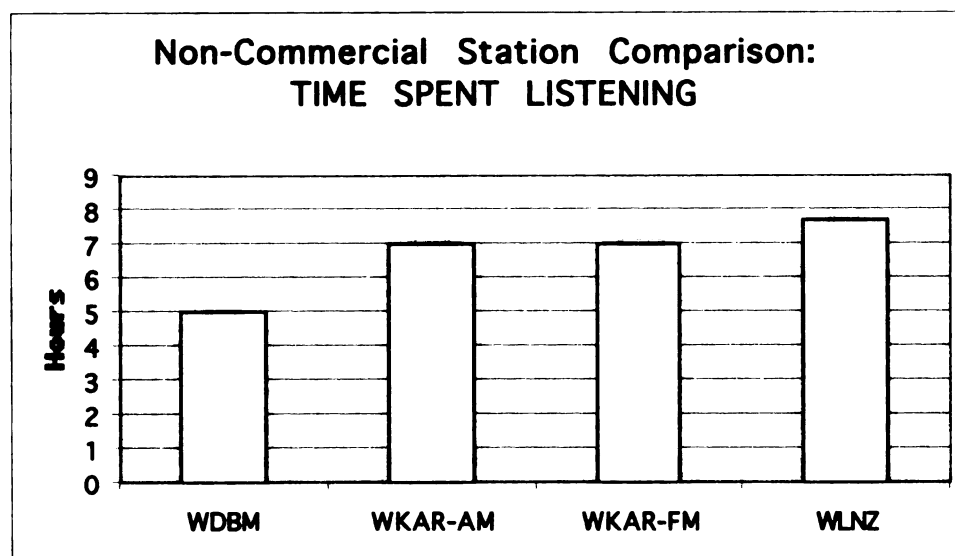
Figure 87: Non-Commercial Station Comparison for TSL

21. What is your gender?
-92: male (63%)
-53: female (37%)

Arbitron supplies gender information for every station in a market.

WDBM should be evenly divided between males and females, like WWDX. In the past, WDBM was heavily male-skewed and eventually evened out. It is back to where it was when it began in 1989. As mentioned, WHZZ probably has many of the females that WDBM tries to target. Here are the ratios.

Arbitron Gender Composition for Monday-Sunday, 6 a.m. to midnight, Spring 2001:

	WDBM	WHZZ	WWDX
-Male:	62%	22%	49%
-Female:	38%	78%	51%

Table 103: Arbitron Gender Composition Comparison for WDBM, WHZZ and WWDX
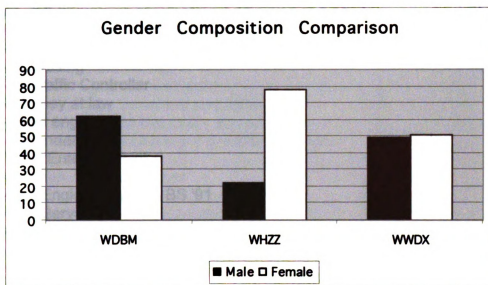
Figure 88: Arbitron Gender Composition Comparison for WDBM, WHZZ and WWDX

22. What is your occupation? (If you are a student, please write what school, college or university you attend.)

-2 Administrative Assistants
-advertising
-Air Traffic Controller
-Attorney at law
-Audio engineer
-Bartender
-BMG Entertainment
-bum
-Civil Engineer (MSU - BS '91
-Civil Servant
-CMU Student
-Computer graphics/web designer
-Computer Programmer
-Construction/musician
-Contractor
-Crawford Door Co. sales
-Customer Service Specialist
-Customer Service/Office
-data entry
-Davenport University
-Debit Card Product Manager
-Dentist
-Departmental Specialist
-disabled
-2 Engineers
-Engineering/Scientist - The Boeing Company - Mesa, AZ.
-Environmental Engineer
-Executive Assistant
-2 Facilities Directors
-General East Lansing Groupie
-General Motors Electrician
-General Motors employee
-GM team member
-Grad Student, Depaul University
-Graphic Designer
-Hair Salon Manager/Musician
-health care
-in high school
-High School Librarian
-Hospital Administrator
-I drive the Kinkos van.
-2 Jackson Community College Students
-KSU student
-Lab Technician

22. Continued

-5 Lansing Community College Students
-Legal Secretary
-Marketing Professional
-2 Mason High School students
-Michigan State University employee
-36 Michigan State University students
-4 Michigan State University graduate students
-4 not listed
-Network Admin in Detroit
-Network System Administrator
-2 Okemos High School Students
-Organizer for nonprofit group
-Owner, consulting company
-Production Manager, HOM-TV
-Proofreader/Copyeditor
-Purdue University
-Record store manager
-Research Associate (MSU grad)
-Research Tech
-Resident Director for Univ. Alabama Huntsville
-Retail Coordinator
-Retail Sales and student, LCC
-sales
-Sales Executive
-Sales Manager for Page Com
-Sales Representative
-sales, student next year
-Sales/Estimating Coordinator/LCC, Ferris
-high school
-Self employed
-Staff Director for local non-profit
-Student (LCC, MSU, U of M) Computer Salesman
-Teacher
-Tech Supervisor
-Texas A&M graduate student
-Traffic Coordinator
-Transportation Planner
-unemployed MSU grad
-University of Applied Sciences in Worms, Germany
-3 University of Michigan students
-Urban Forester
-US Air Force
-Vermont Law School
-Wayne State University (MSU ALUM)
-Web Developer

22. Continued
-Welder/ student LCC
-work for the state of Michigan

As mentioned, Arbitron supplies demographic information. In addition to Ratings and Shares broken down by age and gender, Arbitron goes further to break down Ratings and Shares by education level, income, whether or not listeners have children and household size. Here is the data Arbitron supplied for Lansing/East Lansing in Spring 2001.

Shares for Persons 18-24
Education
High school graduate: 0%
Some college: 3.5%
College graduate: 2.4%

Income
<$25,000: 2.8%
$25-50,000: 1%
$50-75,000: 2.2%
$75,000+: 4.4%

Children
No: 3.6%
Yes: 1.5%

Household Size
One: 1%
Two: 4.2%
Three: 0%
Four+: 3.1%
Table 104: Pertinent Lansing/East Lansing Demographic Information

Another useful piece of information Arbitron provides is the workplace and home zip codes of diarykeepers. This is useful to a program director as well as a promotions director. Together, these two people can work to target those areas that did not show up on the list.

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Workplace Zip Codes, Spring 2001
(from most often occurring to least)
-48823-East Lansing
-48825-MSU Campus
-48917-Lansing
-48911-Lansing
-48864-Okemos
-48910-Lansing
-48909-Lansing
-48912-Lansing
-48824-MSU Campus
-48854-Mason
-48842-Holt
-48919-Lansing
Table 105: Workplace Zip Codes

23. Do you live on or off campus?
130: off (89.7%)
15: on (10.3%)
Table 106: Where Survey Respondents Live

Residential Zip Codes, Spring 2001
(from most often occurring to least)
-48823-East Lansing
-48842-Holt
-48917-Lansing
-48912-Lansing
-48910-Lansing
-48864-Okemos
-48825-East Lansing
-48911-Lansing
-48840-Haslett
-48906-Lansing
-48854-Mason
-48820-Dewitt
-48808-Bath
Table 107: Residential Zip Codes

CHAPTER 10
PROGRAMMING SUGGESTIONS FOR WDBM

According to Arbitron, 8 a.m. had the highest Average Quarter Hour persons of the daytime hours (6 a.m.-7 p.m.) in Spring 2001. Clearly, the best disc jockeys on WDBM must be on the air at that time. It is always a challenge to get college students to get up at 5 a.m. to work in a morning shift, but WDBM is now armed with the knowledge that mornings are the most listened to time of the day. The prior assumption was that afternoons had the highest Shares. Disc jockeys often think the amount of phone calls correlates with the number of people listening, but it really does not. There are much fewer calls in to WDBM in the morning, but more listeners tune to WDBM in the morning than other times of the day when the request line rings more often. Afternoon drive time remains an important time to have good disc jockeys on the air as well. The highest number of potential listeners have the possibility of checking out WDBM when they are in their car on the way home from work as well as on the way to work.

Based on the Arbitron numbers, WDBM also had a good amount of listeners on Saturday afternoons and evenings. An assumption prior to this research was that there was not a significant amount of weekend listeners. If the trend continues, the program director at WDBM will be smart to schedule stronger DJs on Saturdays than in the past.

Over 67 percent of survey participants said that they listen to WDBM between one and four hours a day. Arbitron also showed high time spent listening. Regardless of satisfactory Time Spent Listening, disc jockeys do not promote all aspects of WDBM to the extent they should. All disc jockeys are

learning the trade, and a common mistake is that they forget that many things go on at the station after they finish their shift. The program director can incorporate more ways to promote all station happenings directly on the music log. This could help turn evening listeners into daytime listeners, and vice versa.

Additionally, the overall sound of WDBM can be improved by illustrating the importance of disc jockeys being enthusiastic on the air. Though many are nervous because they are new at their trade, there is nothing more important than having fun with listeners. Even just smiling while speaking can improve the sound of a disc jockey's voice. Even though many people have the radio on for background noise, they listen to the radio to generally lift their spirits. Unenthusiastic disc jockeys are doing a disservice to WDBM and its listeners. It is ultimately the responsibility of the WDBM director staff to constantly critique disc jockeys' on air performance, to help improve their presentation as quickly as possible.

The most common survey response to where listeners tuned in to WDBM is in the car. The most common Arbitron diarykeeper response was at home when measuring the entire week, and at work when measuring weekday listening. So it can be assumed that P1 listeners tune in to WDBM the most in their car and, in general listeners tune in at work during the week and at home during the weekend. To prevent tuneout by P1 listeners, traffic reports may be very helpful in the morning and afternoon. WDBM used to give traffic reports in the morning. This is probably a good pubic service to bring back, even though the Lansing area does not have as long or congested a commute as a larger city

like Detroit. It may even be beneficial to hire more staff members to announce traffic reports. This could be a great place for person with little radio experience to start.

Weather reports are also very important to all listeners. Weather reports are given twice an hour in the morning and once an hour throughout the rest of the day. Often, disc jockeys think weather is not important (or interesting) information to have to mention on the air. The weather is never predictable in Michigan. If listeners do not hear about the weather on WDBM, they will go elsewhere to find out about it. Every radio station has to promote what they do beyond the music. Radio stations that provide all useful pieces of information will have more satisfied listeners than those who do not. Some Arbitron diarykeepers mentioned in the Spring 2001 diaries that they do not enjoy much talk on the radio in the morning. If WDBM provides pertinent information such as traffic and weather on a regular basis in the morning and even in the afternoon, those people may choose WDBM over the talk stations they are dissatisfied with.

In addition to traffic and weather, there is also a great importance in announcing station events like the Top 5 at 5, Impact Exposure, genre based programs and giveaways. Reminders should be made as often as possible because these "benchmarks" are great reminders for listeners to tune in several times in a day. These reminders might pique the interest of someone who is tuning up and down the dial who has never tuned in to a genre based program or the Top 5 at 5. Updating promotional spots for these benchmarks with new, creative, attention grabbing announcements may also aid in garnering more

listeners. Creating spots about daytime programming to be played in the evening may turn evening listeners into daytime listeners as well. Simply announcing upcoming songs is not enough to keep listeners tuned in.

At work listening was evident for both the WDBM survey respondents and the Arbitron diarykeepers. This is a time of the day that many radio stations in the U.S. are capitalizing on with promotions and giveaways to increase time spent listening. Using some of those stations as an example, WDBM can reward its listeners for tuning in all day long. This suggests that WDBM may benefit from offering more giveaways during the day. The program director should come up times of the day that he or she deems appropriate for giveaways. Currently WDBM only does about one giveaway during the day. To properly communicate with at work listeners, rewarding them every other hour with giveaways might keep them tuned in longer. These giveaways do not have to all be different, and could be as small as a CD.

Not every listener cares about winning prizes from radio stations, and time spent listening to WDBM is clearly very high. A different way to communicate to at work listeners is with actually thank businesses for tuning in. This is also often heard on commercial radio and sounds very professional. It also makes WDBM look good, and might help turn more listeners into P1 listeners. This can only be effective if a long list of different names is used, so it actually shows that many different people listen at work. This list could be compiled in several ways. One easy way is to ask those who call the station where they work and if WDBM can

mention the name on the air. Another way is to write down all the places the station is heard in the community and announce those places often.

Barely any listeners said they listen to WDBM on the way to class. The commute around Michigan State University can be as long as 25 minutes. Disc jockeys can capitalize on this by giving reminders to students to bring along their Walkman players with them on the walk, bus or bike ride to class. They could also remind them to make requests before they leave for class and hear them on their commute. There are many creative ways to get in better touch with students. The key here is training disc jockeys to get into the mind of an MSU student. They are all students themselves, so this should not be a hard task.

Perhaps this is why later survey responses show that "The Impact Flashback" has so many faithful listeners. The main slogan for the show is that it "gets you in the mood to go out." Listeners hear that and remember to tune in on Friday evenings. This is the perfect example of WDBM getting into the mind of its listeners. By understanding that most people (MSU students or not) like to go out on Friday nights, the station successfully capitalized on communicating a valid reason to tune in at a time that many people are available to listen to the radio.

Coming up with catchy statements like the above-mentioned "Impact Flashback" slogan to use throughout regular daytime programming and for all of genre based programs on WDBM might help the station as a whole become more memorable. Then the statements can be incorporated into promotional

cards read for all WDBM programs and into program logs and placed on clipboards in front of them in the studio.

It has often been the assumption of WDBM staff members that the station would have more MSU students listening if there was more outside promotion of the station. It is important to take a step back to think about how students found out about any station in the area when they came to college. Most likely, they turned on their radio and tuned up and down to find a song they liked. WDBM had an equal chance of being chosen. Certainly sponsoring campus concerts and being at college bookstores at the beginning of each semester is important in reminding students to listen to WDBM. But what will keep students tuning in is the programming. If they are not hearing the music they like, they will not listen. Considering that WHZZ and WWDX have many college aged listeners, clearly college age listeners enjoy hearing more familiar music on the radio. WHZZ is a Contemporary Hit formatted station, so every song played is familiar. WWDX is an Alternative formatted station and the majority of its programming is familiar songs as well. It is important for WDBM to play a variety of music, but the majority probably should come from its strongest artists: the core artists that have many familiar songs to choose from for airplay.

The vast majority of survey respondents listen to WDBM on their radio. The importance of bringing listeners to the station web site has already been stressed many times. Something WDBM already does should be continued though. Public service announcements are written up near university holidays when students often leave campus. The announcements typically tell listeners

that they can take the station with them wherever they go over the holidays by tuning in on their computer. These initiatives should continue. They should in fact be incorporated into programming every day. Radio stations should get their listeners to their web site, and their web site should bring their listeners back to their station.

The list of favorite and least favorite artists played on WDBM was inconclusive. There were no more than a few common answers to each question. Each answer must be taken with a grain of salt. The only significant fact is that the list of favorite artists is much longer than the list of least favorite artists. No changes need to be made in musical selections. It is smart however, to look at what artists the WDBM listening audience feels strongly about. These could be the kinds of artists to highlight more often and possibly create station promotions around. It is also possible to look at what *type* of artists come up often, such as local, familiar, less familiar, female, male, etc. Additionally, it is interesting that one respondent put "don't know their names." This is a valid point for all disc jockeys. It illustrates the importance in recalling all the songs and artists played each hour.

The WDBM Board of Directors evaluates its genre based programming every year. The latest evaluations should be compared to how listeners rated the shows. Both sets of scores should be shown to the program hosts. The more the program director informs the hosts, the more the hosts can do to make the shows the best they can be. The program director should sit down with each host individually. They should discuss what is strong and weak about the

program and figure out immediate and long-term goals for the program. This is especially important now that the Arbitron figures showed that evening programs garner a larger Share than the daytime programming.

Also, there were many worthwhile comments made on these shows that the hosts can benefit from seeing, especially the negative ones. Often hosts are so close to the show that they do not know that they may not be properly serving their audience. The comments on "Impact Exposure" are probably the best ones to pass on to the hosts of that show. "Impact Exposure" is a talk-formatted program open to any Michigan State University student group. Many times, these groups are very immature and unprofessional. Since they are very new to hosting a radio program, they do not always take their role as a host as seriously enough. Every show can benefit from a summary of survey respondent's comments.

By taking the pessimistic approach for a moment, it should be noted that only the "Impact Flashback" show had a mode (most occurring response) of "sometimes" and it was the highest scored show with only a 2.65 out of 5. Not one program had a mode of "always" and all the other shows had a mode of "never." So P1 listeners seem to mainly tune in during daytime programming and other listeners tune in for genre based programs. WDBM has the task of trying to get both types of listener to tune in during the day and in the evening. This can be attempted by imaging. Proper promotion of daytime programming during the evening, as well as evening programming during the day, is a good start. Urging evening listeners to "try us on during the day" or a different catchy slogan

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throughout evening hours might increase the station's Ratings and Shares between 6 a.m. and 7 p.m. daily.

All the open ended questions about what listeners like about WDBM (genre based shows, what keeps listeners tuned in and what causes them to tune out) should be summarized by the program director and shown to the staff of disc jockeys at their next staff meeting. Hearing these things straight from the listeners' mouths may have a bigger impact than their boss telling them the "do's" and "don'ts." There are many things that listeners said that the WDBM board of directors has continually tried to remind disc jockeys. The list should show all the positive responses first to show DJs what they are doing well. Then all the constructive criticism should be shown, in the hope that it will stick in their heads.

In regard to how listeners would program WDBM for a day, answers varied quite a bit. Many listeners want unfamiliar music and some want more familiar music. WDBM plays both. Either way, Arbitron data shows there is a very small percentage of people in the Lansing/East Lansing market tuning in. It has already been stated that more music from core artists is a good place to start to gain more listeners. Another good strategy is imaging. Incorporating more production for disc jockeys to play each hour can better describe the different things WDBM does best and what makes it unique. Imaging such as "music you will can't find anywhere else," "commercial free music," "an Impact classic," "an album deep cut" or new, creative slogans should be played in front of almost every song so listeners get an idea of what makes WDBM unique and special.

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Choosing the correct music is important for a program director, but presenting it to the audience in an exciting, coherent way is vital.

Almost 37 percent of survey participants want more information on music. WDBM can become its listeners' primary source for music news. The Board of Directors can provide more information and make sure disc jockeys know that listeners want to hear relevant information, not mindless rambling. Providing more information on music is really easy. It is getting disc jockeys to take the initiative to do so that is the hard part. Instead of relying on disc jockeys, instructions on when and where to share the information provided by the Directors is also necessary. In addition, training disc jockeys to use the Associate Press wire available to them can also be advantageous to WDBM. More talk is not necessarily bad if all of the information given over the air is worthwhile to listeners.

In regard to question 14, the program director at WDBM should think about ways to better communicate to Michigan State University and better ways to inform listeners about new music. This will require the entire Board of Directors. A suggestion on communicating to Michigan State University is to consistently have news and sports in the mornings (and possibly in the afternoons as well). This will require more cooperation from students in the School of Journalism at Michigan State University. Reminding listeners about the station's web site can better inform listeners about new music. There is a complete concert calendar and music news updated weekly at the web site. Additionally, a promotional announcement entitled "The Concert Condom" that

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keeps listeners "covered" can be promoted more consistently throughout the week. It airs every Thursday and Friday. In addition, every Tuesday, a new edition of "Music News" airs all day. Again it just requires permanent promotion by disc jockeys. Listeners are constantly doing other things while they listen. It takes a good amount of repetition for any message to settle in their minds. A common mistake made by disc jockeys is assuming listeners pay as much attention as they do. A typical radio listener is not nearly as close to radio as those who work in the industry.

The program director at WDBM will benefit from spending some time evaluating the scores for individual artists. Those that have a mode of "3" should be examined. Those artists are either not well known or listeners just do not care about them either way. The program director can then decide whether their airplay should increase or decrease. Additionally, the program director should keep in mind how each category fared. The highest rated category was college artists. This is the style of music not heard on commercial radio stations. These artists are very important to the unique sound of the station. Also important is a good mix of familiar artists. The other four categories are not well represented on commercial radio either, so these artists are also important to WDBM.

Respondents preferred male disc jockeys by a landslide. This landslide of votes for men means that female disc jockeys can get better by spending more time with the Training Director learning and getting critiqued. Male disc jockeys should not be ignored, but since survey respondents stated some valid

suggestions, those should be passed on to the female disc jockeys. Spending a little more time on females might help get them up to par.

Finally, there have been many ways already discussed on how to improve a radio station's web site. WDBM can benefit from adding a program schedule that details each program and what genre it plays. This is a great index for any listener that does not have the schedule memorized. Next, having a linked web page for every genre based program could help WDBM. The pages might include what the show will feature every week, what new artists will be played, what giveaways will be offered and any guests that will visit the shows. This is certainly a bit more work for everyone, but is a possible way to increase overall listener interest, time spent listening, Cume, Ratings and Shares. If people have a reason to listen, they have a higher chance of remembering to listen.

More local information could be on the web site also. Examples of local information include local concerts, community news and opinion polls on local issues. Listeners also want to be able to make song requests online. Finally, listeners want to see more song and artist names than are already present.

The bottom line from the Arbitron data is that WDBM should work on garnering many more new and younger listeners. An assumption made prior to this research was that WDBM had a much larger audience than it really does. Creative "out of the box" ideas will have to be made to find ways to capture the 18- to 24-year olds that told Arbitron they tuned to WWDX and WHZZ. WDBM has shown to have loyal listeners, based on time spent listening. Once the station grabs a listener, that listener tends to stay for a while. The target

audience for WDBM is 18-24 year olds, but the largest percentage of the current audience is 19-28 year olds. WDBM will have to come up with ways to capture a younger audience without losing current listeners.

The WDBM web survey is essentially analogous to a focus group. The responses cannot be generalized for the entire audience, but the open ended questions do provide listeners' responses in their own words. Also, this web survey is a good source of preliminary data. This survey can be used to form a follow up survey.

Since Arbitron does not survey on campus housing, WDBM may benefit from surveying a random sample of on campus students with a survey to find out information such as what radio stations they listen to and what they look for in a radio station. Additionally, the station may benefit from outside promotion of the station with billboards and TV commercials. But higher Shares and Ratings may possibly be achieved by playing more familiar music from core artists.

CHAPTER 11
SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE WDBM SURVEYS AND OTHER WEB BASED RESEARCH

Future WDBM Surveys

To get a larger number of completed surveys, future surveys should be shorter in length. Obviously the first time around there were a large number of questions that WDBM wanted answered. As WDBM learns more about its audience, questions can become more specific to get to know them even better. Future surveys should be about half as long as this survey. It should only take between a maximum of 5 and 10 minutes to complete. The shorter it is, the more people will probably complete the entire survey. Many surveys had to be thrown out because they were only partially completed.

Next, e-mail requests to participate in the survey should be sent out to a sample of Michigan State University students. Perhaps asking them to participate could increase the number of participants and therefore survey responses could be generalized to the WDBM target audience of 18 to 24 year olds. By requesting their participation by e-mail, one can predict a fairly high response rate of 60 to 70 percent for several reasons. First, there is 100 percent Internet penetration among Michigan State University students. Second, e-mail is a good way to request participation in a web survey because students are already at a computer at the time they are being asked to take the survey. A follow-up e-mail could also be sent as a reminder to students who did not respond to the first e-mail.

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Additionally, several different surveys could be produced for the web site in the future. Each one could of course be much shorter than this first one and each one could target a different type of listener. One could be for listeners who mainly tune in to WDBM in the evening for genre based programs. One could be for daytime listeners. It will be easier to generalize responses when surveys are targeted at a more specific population. Those who take it will remain random and anonymous but will have more in common. This will allow WDBM to find out the unique needs of both types of listeners.

No matter the kind of survey written, several members on staff should read it before making a final draft. Only two people read this survey before it was posted on the Internet. Question 9 was not answered correctly by many respondents. Instead of respondents commenting on the specialty programs on WDBM, many offered their opinions on the station in general. This proves that questions must be stated in a more obvious way. Instead of asking, "For the shows you listen to, what do you like about them?" the question should have been phrased, "What do you like about the genre based shows you listen to on Impact 89 FM?" The second part of question 9 ("What do you dislike...") should have been phrased the same way. What is obvious to the person writing the survey is NOT necessarily obvious to the people taking the survey. Concise questions should produce concise answers.

To ensure that the web survey works on the web site, someone on staff must complete the survey first before actually making it available for listeners. This will ensure that there are no problems in the design of the web site and is

yet another way to uncover any unclear questions. The survey had one error and because of that error no responses were received about a question on "The Reggae Sunsplash," one of the genre based programs on WDBM.

The questions that asked participants to rate WDBM artists were troublesome. A wider range of 1 to 10 might be more effective in getting a better idea of how listeners really feel. Like auditorium and call-out music tests, there should have been an additional choice for "don't know" when rating the artists.

The questions that asked participants to tell how often they tune into genre based programs could have easily been adjusted with a better Lickert scale. Instead of the options "never," "sometimes" and always," the options could have been more specific. Options of "never," "less than once a month," "once a month," "twice a month" and "every week" would have given exact answers that do not require any interpretation.

Another problem that can be avoided next time is writing opposing statements that are true opposites. Instead of trying to be creative, the survey creator should just write exact negating sentences. The idea of writing an opposing statement is to make sure respondents are paying attention to the question. Out of all sub-questions in Question 14, there were three pairs that ended up not being exactly the opposite of each other. They follow.

-"The Impact has a wide variety of music" and "The Impact plays music that many other radio stations play."

-"The Impact has high-quality genre-specific shows" and "The Impact could improve its genre-specific shows."

-"The Impact could better inform listeners about new music" and "The Impact has helped me learn a lot about new music."

This just means that more different questions were answered (instead of just the opposite of an earlier question), but does not ensure that respondents were paying attention. The best thing to do is write more questions if there are more to ask, and then write *exactly* the opposite of those questions. This is a sure-fire way of finding invalid surveys.

Finally, future surveys may not need so many open ended questions. Those questions serve exactly the same purpose of a focus group. They will help form other questions for future studies.

Suggestions for your own web based research

The hardest hurdle to get over in the online world of research is getting a significant group of respondents when they all are volunteers. Most radio station web site visitors are the station's P1 listeners. Paying close attention to what these people want will help a radio station the most. They are the ones who like the station the most and listen the most. But although it creates more work, it is a good idea to ask all types of listeners to take a radio station survey, and even recruit people over e-mail, the phone or in the campus newspaper. This should be done in an attempt to get an even amount of males and females, a good variance of ages of respondents and more than only P1 listeners. P2 (2nd

preference) and P3 (3rd preference) are also important to learn about because just knowing a little about them might be a way to turn them into P1 listeners.

It is important to make sure that questions are clearly stated, all answers will remain confidential and participants will remain anonymous. This is particularly helpful in reducing the amount of "socially acceptable" answers people may provide instead of their real feelings (McDowell 20). The design of a web survey itself allows participants to take it by themselves, but the more comfortable they are made to feel, the more honest answers will come in.

Have at least three people on staff read the survey to ensure that all questions are stated in a clear way. Additionally, make sure to have at least one person take the survey online before making it available to listeners. This can also clear up any improperly written questions as well as uncover any bugs on the Internet.

Alternating statements that participants rate from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" is also a great way to keep a participant's concentration level up. This was done with the WDBM online survey. It is an important tool to validate a survey. If a respondent answers one answer one way and the next the opposite, surveys that include mistakes can be thrown out. Just make sure that the statements are truly exact opposites.

Also, keep in mind that sample size is not affected by market size. So a small market does not mean a small sample. Sample size is correlated to the amount of media choices in a market (McDowell 40). Sampling error must be avoided at all costs. Sampling error is the difference between the results from a

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sample survey and the result that would be obtained from a complete census conducted in the same manner as the sample survey (<u>Audience Research Sourcebook</u>, 188). To decrease sampling error by half, the sample size must increase four times (47).

In an effort to get a large number of participants, Walter McDowell suggests flattery, an explanation of why the research is relevant to an individual, and of course, incentives (48).

There are ten tips the <u>Audience Research Sourcebook</u> suggests for writing questions (55-56). They are:

-Use simple words.
-Avoid jargon,
-Keep questions short,
-Be specific, but not too specific,
-Avoid questions beyond the respondent's knowledge base,
-Avoid negative questions,
-Avoid double questions,
-Avoid overlapping responses, and
-Exercise care when asking personal questions.

Certainly, until there is 100 percent Internet user penetration, samples will not be 100 percent reliable. But as it becomes more difficult to get people on the phone, the Internet will become a more acceptable form of audience research.

CONCLUSION

No radio station should charge one person with making decisions about the sound of the station based on his or her own tastes. Nor should any radio station completely alter their playlist to make it exactly fit the mold of one auditorium or call-out music test. Audience research puts the listeners first before a programmer's intuition. Almost 98 percent of a radio audience do not call the request line, buy a CD or take part in a station promotion. Research is designed to uncover and utilize the opinions of this "silent majority" that will not come forward uninvited (Kelly 47). It is necessary to examine both qualitative and quantitative audience research. Both types of research offer data that is equally important to a radio station. Looking at one or the other only tells part of the story for a radio station.

Program directors often target too narrowly. Reflecting a specific locale and what that local audience wants is one of the best ways to make a radio station unforgettable. With the onslaught of radio ownership consolidation in the U.S., audience research in every market may prevent a homogenized sound. Radio stations that are unique from other stations, and also program according to their listeners' tastes, can be a success.

Tom Kelly said, "Music is art, research is science. Finding the balance leads to success" (29). It is true that using research alone to program a radio station can lead to a boring radio station. But a radio station that conducts audience research is much better off than one that does not. Examining

quantitative and qualitative research allows program directors to make educated decisions.

There is no doubt that radio audiences are challenging to study. And every type of audience research has its strengths and weaknesses. Any radio station, whether in the largest market or the 150th, can benefit from examining as many different research methods as is possible for the station. This way, the most different questions can be posed and the most different opinions can be heard. From Internet radio, satellite radio and ownership consolidation, change in the radio world is constant, and competition is rising. Program directors who expect their station to be a success and keep up with what their listeners want on a very regular basis can satisfy those listeners and deliver the ratings needed to make a profit.

Ongoing audience research is completely necessary. Kurt Hanson states four reasons to keep research ongoing:

-To track listeners' tastes in music (which change often),
-To monitor trends in perceptions (which also can change a lot),
-To head off competition, and
-To discover the unexpected (Audience Research Sourcebook, 153).

Susan Korbel suggests what type of general research to do, based on what quarter of the year it is:

First Quarter
-Primary perceptual research on programming and formats: start the year with this kind of research to prepare for a strong Spring ratings book.

Second Quarter
-Follow up the perceptual research with auditorium or other music testing (Call-out research should happen all year long).

Third Quarter
-This is the best time for sales and financial research. Since Korbel does not
have a suggestion for programming research, this would be an excellent time to
try out newer methods like the WDBM web survey.

Fourth Quarter
-This is the time to plan for next year's image and promotion campaigns. Focus
groups are suggested to throw out promotional ideas and alternative marketing
ideas (Audience Research Sourcebook, 4-5).

As a suggestion, generally focus groups are a good place for a radio

station to start, if little or no research has ever been conducted, or if it has not

been conducted in a while. Perceptual tests can follow, by designing questions

that are follow ups to broad ideas discussed at focus groups. Then the

auditorium (or home) music tests can follow. Call-out research should be

constant. And new methods should be administered whenever time allows it.

Additionally, there are many great web sites that offer relevant information

for program directors. Arbitron is one example of a company that offers radio

studies on their web site that are free for anyone to download. Taking advantage

of these web sites is smart because there is no research to do on the

programmer's end. Coleman Research and Edison Media Research are two

more examples of companies that offer free studies. All three of these

companies conduct research on a very regular basis as well, so the information

is always up to date.

The more a program director knows about his or her audience, the better

off his or her radio station can become. And the more hard data there is, the less

guesswork has to be made. Ratings alone are not enough proof to show how

well a radio station is performing. Other forms of research are not enough proof

either, if there is no Arbitron ratings data to back them up. The more a program

director is acquainted with his or her local audience through quantitative and

qualitative audience research methods, the more he or she can make the radio

station worthwhile to listen to by sounding unique from all other radio stations.

APPENDIX

Responses to Question 9. a):
For the shows you listen to, what do you like about them?

-Sit or spin is a great idea and the show works as well as it should. Hearing new music is awesome and the small discussion afterwards is nice too.

-I like the variety and different forms of music.

-The Impact Flashback is great to get you in the mood for going out!

-Variety of music.

-Not living in Michigan anymore, it keeps me up on the local music scene.

-I love hearing the new music and giving an opinion on it, via Sit or Spin.

-I like the fact that you can hear music that regular radio stations don't play. And I think the people on exposure are pretty funny most of the time.

-New and unique music presented by well informed DJ's.

-I love the blues and jazz shows for the variety that they play and the information given about the artist by the DJs.

-The Impact Flashback is just plain *great* music for Friday nights.

-In general I like the evening programming. It adds some more variety to lineup. I especially like sit or spin, but I don't get to hear it very often because I can only tune in during the day.

-Music I haven't heard before that I may like.

-Variety, and focus of the program to provide information on artist that I have not heard of - but are in a style that I like.

-They are different from everything that's out there, and there are no commercials.

-The music.

-The wide variety of spectrums you offer. It opens me up to new artists and their styles of music.

-Progressive Torch &Twang - AWESOME!!! So nice to listen to alternative country music. Nice & Fresh!

-I love hearing the different styles of music on a more in depth level. The deejays that lead those shows know their stuff and are passionate about their specific genres. It ends up being an educational listening experience as well as an enjoyable one.

-New artists - exposure to new music, particularly in genres I enjoy, like bluegrass and the blues.

-I enjoy Progressive Torch and Twang the best because it exposes me to the most new (for me) music. The other shows I listen to for new artists (especially The Basement).

-The type of music played. And Impact Exposure has some interesting topics.

-The diversity that the programs offer.

-Impact Sneak Preview is a good way to see if I want to buy that particular CD or not. It saves me from wasting money on an album that isn't worth it. I like the Flashback simply because I'm a child of the eighties, and I like to hear all the old favorites once in a while.

-I like the special shows because they are a nice break from the normal rotation.

-Mainly the music is why I'm listening. I listen to Sit or Spin also because I like hearing people's opinions and Larry and Clay are hilarious. Same with Flashback. I enjoy Issac's commentary also. I listen to The Basement because, where else am I going to hear local music?

-Love The Basement! Always great to hear the latest from the local artists.

-Global Sounds is refreshing, interesting. Marcus "eye" is so soothing as well!! I think Sit or Spin is also interesting--you have a good mix of intelligible people running the show. I love Flashback. Very fun, great for parties as well!!

-The knowledge the DJ's seem to have about the music they showcase and the artists they play.

-The genre of music, the DJs, the exposure to new music.

-Very diverse and educational. I love the State News Live. It's eye opening and funny.

-I like the ability to hear music "new" music. I have discovered many bands that I would never hear on commercial radio. Many of these bands end up main stream a few years later (Barenaked Ladies come to mind) which is great. Some don't but I still enjoy the variety.

-The variety of music played. Also the fact that there is some focus.

-I love the diversity on Thee Hourz 'O power-the different kinds of metal.

-I like the diversity...You can't hear music like this anywhere else, as far as I know.

-Their variety, and their accessibility. I like the idea of playing an entire new album, like I've heard in the sneak preview show and in the jazz show; I also like the idea of voting on what makes it onto the airwaves like in 'Sit or Spin'.

-I like the realness of the radio station, I feel that everyone else is playing sort of "assembly line" radio. I want to be a guest on sit or spin but I'm not an MSU student!!!!

-It's music no one else plays, and I know when certain types will be on.

-I enjoy hearing great music that no other station will play.

-Torch and Twang exposes me to music to which I want to hear, but know nothing about.

-I LOVE Flashback and Cultural Vibe is sweet because it's the only show in town.

-The Vibe always has the newest shit around.

-They're so much more interesting than what other radio stations offer. It is refreshing.

-I like that The Impact gives the DJ's the freedom to take their music to the (reasonable) limit. They are able to get the best music out there and play it to us poor music starved fools.

-I like shows with an eclectic mix of music that commercial stations won't play. I like to hear roots musicians and traditional and contemporary music from around the world.

-The people that take the time to run them. I realize it takes valuable time from their schedules, but it helps listeners such as myself expand their own taste of music.

-Lots of good music, theme based shows, few commercials, little talk, I know I will like most of the music in the particular shows; Ras Marcus has the best voice, he could just keep on talking...

-I like the specific genre to hear exactly what I'm in the mood for. I like that they play your requests.

-Variety, from cutting edge to classics. Also, I like amateur DJs. DJ's don't interrupt music with nonsense babbling and recorded phone calls.

-I feel the DJ's have a good feel for the music and it helps to have an informed DJ playing other than mainstream within a genre.

-I love the fact that I can turn on the radio and hear music that is worth listening to. I like that you can hear good music from the last few years too. At least once a day, I smile for nostalgic reasons.

-I like the music you play and the requests you give.

-The specialty shows really allow DJs to display their knowledge and passion for music.

-I like to hear underrated music get airtime by people who seem genuinely excited about the music, not just doing it for the buck.

-The local music shows are always a good way to find good bands. Plus most of them play around here, so I get to check them out at the clubs. Also some of the progressive music is much more appealing than the pop rock crap.

-Cutting edge, you have the best blues program on the planet! Oldies are not moldies.

-The variety and freshness that is displayed by the college radio station. I am not a very avid fan of mainstream radio or its lack of variety, but I always find something that is at least interesting on our college station. It is nice to be able to tune in and hear something that I could never hear on the radio anywhere else.

-Rare to find stations devoting time to non-mainstream music-in particular, Jazz and Blues. Plus, these shows seem to be directed to my generation (college students) more so than other similar shows.

-I like stuff that is not overdone like the new pop explosion.

-Unrivaled diversity - cutting edge of new: no single source gives out so much information on a genre of music.

-I love Mechanical Pulse because it is the best show on the radio playing the techno that isn't played anywhere else. And I love Flashbacks because 80's music is the best.

-Great variety...I rarely find myself getting burned out on any particular song.

-The variety-- The Impact is the only station in the area to even attempt to provide diversity to the listening experience. After that, your DJs are great-- personable and knowledgeable.

-I really like the fact that the impact plays non-commercial and weird stuff overall, because no matter what genre, it's usually pretty good. Like how I hate country, but I love Torch and Twang.

-Most of the stuff, I have never heard before, I grew up when 'classic rock' was brand new. I am so over the old stuff.

-They sound a little rough but sound more like a conversation between friends. Also they play everything before mainstream radio gets its grubby paws on it and plays the hell out of it.

Responses to 9. b):
What do you dislike and why?

-When DJ's tell exactly how many minutes they have left in the studio at every break; The LL Cool Jay Peace Corps PSA with the disconnected phone number; DJs who cannot pronounce "Rock-a-billy" or "Tupelo."

-I listened to Sneak Preview once for a new Everclear album, and I was so turned off by how much the DJ didn't like Everclear, and his comments were much unappreciated (haven't listened since).

-Going too long without saying who the bands are. A chronic problem with all radio stations (Impact is better than most, but still, this is something stations need to work on).

-Don't like when the Flashback DJ plays a continuous stream of 70's. I also prefer the Flashback DJ's that are more informed on different types of 80's music, rather than just Michael Jackson and Cyndi Lauper. There was a lot more variety than that!

-No mention of song names.

-The DJs sometimes ramble.

-Rambling DJ's.

-Just too much dreary indie music. It ends up wearing thin after a while. I am not always in a sad mood.

-Don't dislike much, but there's sometimes when I don't know who is singing a song or what it's called and it never seems to be said.

-Some DJ's aren't knowledgeable about what they are playing, sounds like they're reading from a sheet at times.

-Reggae Sunsplash, because it's too repetitive.

-Too much talking/commentary.

-I don't like a lot of talking in any radio show.

-Should try to say the artist and song more often. It's really frustrating when you hear a new song and have to wait twenty minutes before you find out who it is.

-Overall there is nothing I dislike, I feel the DJ's could always improve their shows presentation and diversify so they don't get stuck putting on the same show week to week.

-I don't always agree with the people on Sit or Spin.

-Sometimes the hosts lose my attention.

Responses to Question 10.:
As a listener, what things keep you listening?

-I like the latest music that they play.

-Exposure to music and or artists not heard on commercial radio.

-I like the variety of music that is not played on traditional radio stations. It is nice to hear the tunes from smaller bands also.

-I listen at the office. In one day I can hear an old song from Talking Heads, a new song from Beth Orton, and everything in between. In my opinion, the variety of good music that goes back as far as the early 80's and still deserves to be played once in a while, obscure stuff that doesn't necessarily make it on other radio stations, but is still good music, is the key to the

success of the Impact. And you play the new stuff way before 92.1 and with a lot less frequency.

-New music - not just the same crap you here on the mainstream stations.

-I live in New York City and this station still plays the best music anywhere!!! The variety and style is great...

-Great music selection, variety, no commercials, you don't kill songs. In fact usually is other radio stations have picked up a song like "Hash Pipe" you seem to quit playing it as frequently. I'd still like to hear that song more often because it rocks! And I don't want to switch stations!

-I really like the variety of music. I've learned of quite a few artists that I really enjoy!!

-The new music, it is not the same mainstream song playlist everyday that must come from a list of no more than 25 songs.

-DJ's I can relate to, music I can't hear on other stations.

-The cutting edge tunes, the wide variety too!

-A mix of familiar favorites and exciting new flavors.

-I enjoy listening to the station while driving and knowing that it's run by students just like me.

-I enjoy listening to music that is out of the mainstream. The turnover of music is great too. Nothing gets too played out.

-The alternative beat, that you just can't find anywhere else. And being available on the web. (I now live in Albuquerque after 5 years in Lansing.) Also, no commercials!

-Hope that I will be exposed to a new song or band that I wouldn't have heard form other sources.

Incredible selection of music. More than just the singles are played. More than just major label artists are played.

-Good songs, new and old, especially 'college' music (U2, Radiohead, Pulp, Primal Scream, Afghan Whigs). Some of my favorite bands I discovered from your station.

-Better Music, no commercials. No screaming DJ's that think *they* are the entertainment and not the music!

-I hear a lot of the music I love that I can't hear on other radio stations - Pat McGee, Ben Harper, Travis, samples, Granian...contests ALWAYS have great giveaways that you're more likely to win than those of other stations...I can request whatever I want and if you have it, you'll actually play it!

-The fact that I keep on finding new artists that I like. I never would have heard of any of the following groups/artists: Ben Folds, Ani DiFranco, Jonatha Brookes, Mishka, Shea Seger, Sheila Nichols, Travis, Tragically Hip, Belle and Sebastian.

-The variety and the freshness of the music. New hits month after month, year after year. I like the Top 5 at 5.

-I love that you play funky music that the other stations are too stuffy to play. I also like that you don't hear the same songs over and over. Finally, I love that they play your requests!!

-Hearing new music I can't hear on any other station is my biggest reason for listening to the impact. Also, Impact DJ's talk a lot less than commercial stations, so more music.

-Superior programming and lack of commercials. Love the original local stuff.

-Something different is just around the corner.

-The fact that you guys play music that no one else does and the fact that everyone else plays music that sucks.

-VARIETY- I love that the shows represent almost all genres of music. It's refreshing to have a station that doesn't limit itself to one category of popular music. Since I started tuning in, I have found myself learning a lot about different things that I wouldn't have heard otherwise. Even when I feel like I'm listening to crap, at least it's usually crap I've never heard before (which is in great contrast to most commercial stations that play the same crap all the time).

-The variety and also it seems like you are reading my mind...very strange. I grew up here, and I think my tastes have always been geared toward your radio station.

-The music I want to hear and hearing new stuff before others.

-The newest freshest music. I have made several purchases after hearing a song just once on your station.

-Cutting edge of what's new in many hard-to-find-out about music genres.

-There is no better station for such variety and quality of music! And if you're hungry for new artists, you get them. It's NEVER boring or repetitive. And I like the DJs....especially Marasco. Please put him on more often.

-Got hooked as an undergrad ('91-'96), the station keeps me current with developing artists, and I have yet to hear a better station, anywhere.

-Impact has become my new music source...you also have some great personalities on your air staff.

-New music! The Impact is the only station to play local or indie groups first. Most of my CD collection is built around artists I heard first on the Impact.

-I love hearing new music before it gets popular and then shoving my finger in the face of my friends and saying something like, "I told you so" or "I heard them first"

-You play the music I like, and if you get a good DJ like Clay--it makes long drives go a lot faster. Plus you don't have commercials which is wonderful in and of itself. Your DJ's, in general, are my favorite kind of DJ--calm, informative, no gimmicks. Larry Marasco has just enough flavor to make it interesting. None of your DJs are annoying, and that is huge.

-There is absolutely no other station, anywhere, who plays so many local and "new" and "otherwise-never-heard" artists. No other station would devote so much airplay to hours of jazz, folk, etc. I love it!! In fact, I was infuriated when attending the Ani DiFranco concert and Breslin and heard it was sponsored by 92.1 the Edge. What the heck?? They never play Ani - and they pretend to be this great station that plays local and "cutting edge" music. I could go on, but... On the other hand, the Impact plays Angie Aparo - and then he's here at Rick's - and I think that is so great.

-Great music, great variety. No annoying DJ's/commercials. I like the gimmick-free nature of the whole station.

-The overwhelming amount of kick-ass new music you play. Always have a pen and paper handy to write down a song after 89 plays it. Keep up the extraordinary work! Long live the Impact!

-Constant Change.

-New music. Playing my requests. Concert announcements.

-The variety of new, old school, independent and original music.

-The Impact is true to the music, commercial free, and unlike anything I have ever heard (and I've been around). Honestly, I have never heard of a better radio station, and will go to any length to be loyal as they are loyal to us listeners.

-The constant variety in styles in music. From David Gray to Outkast and every thing in-between.

-Variety, lack of commercials, local stuff, hearing good music that other stations won't play, getting info pertinent to East Lansing area/MSU.

-I am actually living in Indiana currently, but I feel that the Impact is far superior to any other station in probably the entire country. (Yes I am serious.) For one thing it is very comforting to hear the MSU students talk about thing happening in the Mid-Michigan area. But when it comes down to it, the playlist is heads and shoulders above anything else on the radio. Even during the 90's when "Alternative" music had reached the height of its popularity, the IMPACT still has the best playlist. Now that the alternative phase is dying out or has been corruption by corporate band knock-offs, the IMPACT is still there delivering the best music.

Responses to Question 11.:
What things cause you to tune out?

-I Never listen in the evenings.

-Hearing songs by artists such as Matchbox 20, Wallflowers, Goo Goo Dolls, etc. already overplayed on commercial radio.

-When it isn't coming through on my computer.

-Too much REM...get over them already.

-Nothing in particular makes me change the station, maybe a song that I don't feel like listening to but otherwise nothing that the Impact does makes me angry.

-Long sets filled with repetitive, uneventful middle of the road rock (Live, Our Lady Peace, BNL, Blues Traveler, Incubus) and anemic sounding copy-cat singer songwriters running out of things to whine about (Amy Correa, etc.) I can tolerate them, but not all one after another. Mix it up!

-Repetitive indie-rock.

-Lousy talk shows about lame MSU issues.

-Dave Matthews Band and all the public service announcements that you play over and over again.

-Commercials and babbling by DJ's that is not imparting any news/information to me.

-Specialty shows that I have no interest in, or a song I don't like.

-The heavy music, or a major change in style. But we think it's cool that you have it and would not ask you to change having music for everyone.

-When you all keep playing the same songs over and over again. Sometimes if I try to listen during the day I can hear the same song played within an hour.

-Talk shows (although I'm not a student). Even too much talk by the DJ's. I don't really care what the DJ thinks about the weather.

-Occasional annoying voice patterns from DJ at the time. DJ that plays a vast collection of their own favorites (usually the same style), whiny chick vocalists.

-Not finding out what song I just listened to.

-DJs that talk too much and in a monotone voice.

-Jocks that talk too much and really have nothing to say. They are not adding to the programming - just preventing me from hearing the next song NOW. I understand that Impact is a student run program, but just getting the jocks to think about "what's the most important thing that I can say about ____," and "what do the listeners want to know?" would improve every jocks show.

-The PSAs and often whatever happens to be going on during the 7pm hour.

-Too much indie music in a row that all ends up sounding like one long dreary song.

-Sometimes the DJ's screw up or talk about inane things that I don't' wanna hear. Or when I just don't like a song you're playing.

-Only one thing-- on the rare occasions I'm tuned in during the morning, the DJs that mangle and mispronounce their way through the news! Good Lord-- either get DJs that can read the news, or discontinue it!

-Commercials or excessive DJ chat.

-Boring exposure shows.

-Adolescent jokes about pot smoking. Sorry, but it is totally inappropriate for a quality, classy radio station (which I really think you are).

-Nasal female deejays who stumble over their words (The guys stumble, too, but it doesn't seem to bother me as much. Because I'm a female??) and the occasional "too hard & heavy for me" song.

-The only thing I really do not listen to is the Sunday programming.

-The Reggae or Cultural Vibe, just because it gets boring and annoying.

-Too much slow sad music, it can be upsetting on a day when you have test, relationship problems or you miss home.

-Old music that is played too often or stuff that 92.1 plays all the time. Also the specialty shows aren't always my thing.
-Sunday till Sit n Spin, Friday night and Saturday night could be better.

-Music that I don't like or too much commentary shows. I hate that show that Hillel does sometimes. Those people are annoying!

-Mostly songs I don't like (Indigo Girls, other fluff) and the genre shows I don't care for. I tune out on Sunday until the evening because I want to listen to Impact music on Sunday, not genre music.

-Not Sportswrap, but the news and sports updates are painful sometimes.

-Again, sometimes the hosts lose my attention.

Responses to Question 18.:
What would you like to see on this web site?

-More community things. Also opinion polls and more stuff on the MSU/local scene.

-A list of music played in the hour, in order.

-A page for each specialty show so I could e-mail the specific hosts about questions, comments, and requests

-Along with the top albums, the names of the songs you play off the albums would be nice too. Besides, the top five, I mean.

-Band related info? Tour dates for local venues?

-Better updates, requests, to be able to vote for top 5

-Charts with track names

-Deejay profiles...also more info on the songs in current rotation.

-Download music

-Easier ways to see what's going on in town - home page may show who's playing tonight

-What show is on sale this week. Possibly a database of the playlist - so listeners can look up an artist if they did not hear the jock mention the artist's name.

-First time visitor...Would like comprehensive concert calendar, new music release dates...Artists playing on the weekly talk shows (day or night).

-I would like to be able to send requests via the web site.

-I would like to see a complete playlist. I would also like it if the song title and artist for the song currently playing could be shown on your web site.

-I would like to see more information on the music currently being played on the Impact.

-I'd like to see historical charts...what were your top spins 5 and 10 years ago?

-Info about musicians, music, etc.

-Info on the bands you play.

-Internet radio with the capability to see the artist that is being played, I've seen it on stations like 2cool4radio.com.

-It would be cool to see past/present history of your artists of the week.

-Less clutter, and a break down of the daily schedule.

-Links to local artists sites.

-List and description of shows.

-Maybe more info on the bands you play. Also the list of bands and songs from sit or spin, that would be great.

-More artist and music industry links.

-More concert info. More artist info and maybe more impact related promotions

-More music news. News about DJ's and upcoming Impact events. I would like to access interviews and live performances from the past. Fun stuff like games and an Impact tour. Maybe a mailing list with impact news via email.

-More web content like music news, and other interactive sites.

-Online Chat groups, more links to the genre web pages (spaceodisy.homestead.blah. Why isn't this.msu.org?) A lot more devotion to the genre web pages. Playlists from their shows.

-Photo's of all the DJ's. I've always wondered what Marcus looked like. And maybe a history of the Impact, including information on how it started and where the studio has been.

-Pictures of DJs to see who I'm listening to; also e requests.

-Playlists...check out www.kexp.org. It's great to see playlists as you're listening. I live in Seattle (MSU grad) and prefer to listen to the FIX but sometimes its nice to see the playlist and I will switch to University of Washington's station to see lists and see what they are playing. My biggest turn off about the UW station is that it is too mixed. They play Travis and then next play some unheard of electronica then world music...just too mixed...that's why I prefer the Fix. Its new stuff but not too obscure.

-Playlist schedules? Seems impossible, but it'd be nice.

-PLAYLISTS!!!! from all shows for the past 6 weeks at least... possibly add time played during the show or something indexable so I can go out and find the song title on the list when the DJ doesn't announce the titles except between 10-song breaks, and ultimately BUY the recording.

Responses to Question 19.:
Please write any other comments on The Impact here.

-I think that Impact needs to improve their programming. Their music selection doesn't make it pleasant to listen to the radio. Not that any other station has anything good, I just believe the college station has a lot more opportunity to put good music back on the radio. I see the impact lacking in their power to spread good music.

-Sometimes when I hear music, I wish I knew who it was. Since I hear so much new music on the impact and I can't keep up on everything, I would like to know which songs are by who. DJs usually do a pretty good job of keeping us informed, but not always.

-I am so glad this station exists. I have been introduced into so much new great music that I would have never known about otherwise. I would also be forced to listen to the edge, and I hate hearing the same 5 songs every hour with 20 min of commercials.

-I love the Impact and would be lost without it. Although I do skip around the dial ever so often, the Impact is almost always what is on my radio. And after several months of fighting for control, I have finally convinced the guys at my work that the Impact is cool and they will hear newer music sooner than when they listen to 92.1, a station which I think is crap. I pointed out to them that most of the songs on there I have already heard of months before thanks to the Impact. Sorry that that sounds so cheesy, but it's true!

-Hope Impact outlives me!

-The Impact may be the best station in the country, and I don't know what I would do if it ever ceased to exist.

-The music is great and I have been listening since the Impact was first founded. However, the professionalism of the DJs could be improved.

-Please consider other programming during the day on Sunday!

-You are the best station in Lansing. Keep up the good work!

-I love this station, it's pretty much the only one that I listen to!

-Just hope you stay on the air and keep doing a great job of providing a wide variety of new/local music by knowledgeable DJ's.

-I really like the Impact. The only suggestion I really have is that there should be more hip- hop in the regular rotation. I do like the fact that they're playing Outkast's B.O.B.

-I really have no use for MSU news, as not only do I not attend this university, but I do harbor a certain disdain for it. Despite this, I believe the impact and NPR are the only good frequencies in the Mid-Michigan area.

-College radio in no way has to be RADIO FRIENDLY. That term should be used by advertisers and record company wishing to push certain artists (products). I find it entirely appalling that almost every artist played during regular formatting has style derivative of Radiohead, Jeff Buckley or (GASP) Creed. The first two have enough material to cover their particular market segment. The impact not only has the responsibility, but also the grand OPPURTUNITY to really make an impact by playing obscure and experimental music. Unpopular does not mean unworthy. I'm not trying to push music so different that no will want to listen to it, but mixing music in that people complain about, but is good will only help to enlighten our Dave Matthews Band saturated sound environment. A great radio station to look at as far freedom allowed the DJs is WFMU out of new jersey (www.wfmu.org).

Bands to consider playing:
Modest Mouse, Dismemberment Plan, White Stripes, Les Savy Fav, Home, Papa M, Ganger, Magnetic Fields, Sleater-Kinney, Schellack, Smart Went Crazy, Tortoise, Macha, Sea and Cake, Yo La Tengo, Jesus Lizard, Spiritualized, Howe Gelb & Giant Sand, Beta Band, Smog, Mogwai, Blonde Redhead, Enon, Juno, Low, Mercury Rev, Sigur Ros, Places, Super Furry Animals, The Olivia Tremor Control, Velvet Underground, Summer Hymns, DJ Shadow, Don Caballero.
Does this help?

-I have been a loyal impact listener for over 8 years. I only listen to other stations when some of your less enjoyable programs come on.
-Love the work you're doing, I'd be lost without you.

-I really appreciate the theme shows, even the head banger ones, which although I don't appreciate, I feel the impact is the appropriate place to provide this kind of music for the MSU audience. the blues, jazz, and world music shows are most excellent, followed by the progressive T+T and the flashback. most of the DJ's are very good, entertaining, right mix of talk and music; some DJ's try to be too cute with talk and, honestly, just don't sound very good over the radio waves. overall, impact is my music station of choice and I will continue to support the station.

-The Impact has been my favorite station since we moved to mid-Michigan from Chicago in 1989. I wish the signal was stronger in St Johns where we live.

-I love the Impact...even though I graduate next month, I plan to continue to listen over the 'net, wherever I wind up working.

-As someone who listens to radio station at work during the day I get very sick of hearing the same songs over and over and over again. Please expand your playlist. It seems like somedays I'll hear the same songs 5 or 6 time during the day.

-Clean up your act during the day. Quit playing the same songs over and over again. I would certainly listen to you more if it weren't for the redundancy during the day.

-I'd like a little less mainstream, and more local bands, but this is my favorite station in the area.

-Thank you for existing!!

-IN REGUARDS TO YOUR EARLIER ? OF GENDER I GO WITH THE ONES THAT PLAY THE BEST MUSIC/MIX.

-I have been listening to the impact since I was a student at MSU. I love this station. It is in essence the only station I really listen to. The deejays may not be as slick and quick witted as on other stations, but I'm looking to be entertained by the music, not the deejays. And for the most music, and the greatest variety, there is no other station to listen to.

-I love you guys. Keep up the good work. You know, there are people that respect the underground still; you guys do a good job maintaining that.

-I would like an hour or two of older cutting edge bands like Iggy Pop, Talking Heads, Lou Reed, etc...Perhaps more music less talk on the Basement show.

-Some of the night shows are too long. It would be nice if I could listen to general music at some point in the evenings. Impact is by far the best radio station in the Mid-Michigan area, even if I do not like all of the music played at least its different.

-The Impact is the best college radio station that I have heard. I have recently moved out of Michigan and am glad that I can listen over the internet.

-All in all, a great station. It should continue to serve the current students taste's first...that's the point of student radio.

-The best radio station I've ever heard. Keep up the good work! Seriously. Can this ass kissing get me a bumper sticker? bakenjason@yahoo.com.

-This is a great station!!! I'm a student now, but live in the area and have been listening for a long time.

-Your station is way better than anything on the dial.

-I think all in all its a great station, I answered that it wasn't for all because if your into a lot of the poppy crappy stuff, you wouldn't like it, but that is a positive thing.

-I think your station is the greatest!! The best thing about this whole stinking town! On 94.9 (classic rock) the number one classic album for the Lansing area was not the Stones, the Beatles, Pink Floyd--it was PETER FRAMPTON--does that speak volumes about what else this place has to offer??? A man and his talking guitar??

Over all I think that you are doing a fantastic job! I've been listening to the Impact since day one (or two?.
-damn good station.

-I really like the fact that you can listen to impact for many hours and get a wide variety of artists. I think it is important too to allow students the chance to do the work on the radio. So often college stations are taken over to be done professionally since the airwaves can be such a competitive source of dollars for the school. KEEP STUDENT RADIO!

-We Love you here in Chicago, well I do at least.

-I think the impact is a great station with a wide diversified base of music and people. I believe this is the impacts best asset. The people who work at the station are not clones of each other and their different personality's translate over the air shift to shift.

-Don't change a thing - it's one of the best things in the Lansing Area.

-I've enjoyed listening to the Impact religiously for the past 6+ years. Keep up the good work.

-The impact is the single greatest radio station ever conceived and I hope it never changes.

-I have an idea that more people will listen. First, add more genres of music and have some more well known artists. You should also add some MTV-

type music like N'sync, BSB, Disturbed, and others. Also, add the spin college radio to your station.

-While the Impact plays more local music than anyone under the sun, I do feel that they could add more local artists to the general playlists (if such a thing is possible). Plus, more in studio deals with live artists. Those are cool. But finally, I have been listening to the Impact since my freshman year in high school, and I have never heard a better radio station. No matter where I am, I will always be a loyal Impact listener for life (thanks to the internet. Impact for Car Satellite Radio!) I have been so inspired by this station, I hope to start my own radio station one day. Thank you Impact.

-I've listened to the Impact since it first started (I believe in 1989). I may not be your typical listener, but I'm a loyal listener and I'll continue to listen. Keep things fresh. Never play music because it's "popular". Keep up the good work.

-I graduated MSU in 96 and love the fact that I can get Impact online. The music is great and I enjoy hearing about MSU. I cannot find a radio station that I enjoy as much as I do the Impact.

-There is one DJ that tends to only tell you the name of the song...annoying when you have no clue who the artist is! Play a little more Indie stuff.

-Vastly improved web site design-great job.

-Keep on keeping on.

-Good DJ's, better than most other stations (I cannot stand the DJ's on 92.1). Play more Cure and Tori. Also, If you can, play some of the Lillywhite sessions.

-Doing a good job. Don't stop improving though.

-Pissed because I'm having trouble listening on the web (RealPlayer). Only one speaker works with the fix.org.

-I thoroughly enjoy the Impact. I was very surprised when I moved to this area about a year and a half ago and gave your station a listen. The Impact reminds me of how 89X in Windsor was like when I went to college in '92. Unfortunately, 89X went way too mainstream once they were bought out. Hopefully, something like that will never happen to the Impact!

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