

RADAR: Network Radio's Accountability Tool



At a time when advertisers are pushing for greater accountability across all media, radio networks already have a time-tested tool to meet their needs. The tool is RADAR®, Radio's All Dimension Audience Research, a service that enables radio networks to provide agencies and advertisers with measurement of audience to cleared commercials.

Here's why RADAR is the "gold standard" for media accountability:

Audience Estimates to Cleared Commercials Only

The RADAR service provides audience estimates for subscribing radio networks. These estimates are the product of 1) radio listening from a sample of Persons (who is listening) and 2) commercial clearance information collected by the networks (what is broadcast). The network clearance information is based on stations' reports of their clearance (or nonclearance) of commercials.

Affiliate contractual obligations vary by station. Some affiliates clear commercials more than once. Some affiliates do not clear all commercials. Not all network affiliates clear network programs and commercials as scheduled. For this reason, RADAR tracks clearances and merges them with radio listening data.

Clearance data used for this purpose include:

- Information on network-affiliated stations for one week per report.
- Program and commercial clearances for two selected weeks during the most recent year.

Affiliated stations supply clearance affidavits to the networks. Networks process these data and report to Arbitron.

For each broadcast, the network designates the number of commercial units in that broadcast. For each commercial unit in each broadcast on each station, the network reports:

- Commercial unit cleared within the program at a specified time, or
- Commercial unit was cleared alone at a specified time, or
- Commercial unit not cleared at all.

Arbitron selects one commercial unit from each broadcast, and audience is calculated based on the clearance day and time for that specific commercial unit. If a person reported listening to a station during a quarter-hour in which a network commercial was cleared, then that person is considered part of the audience for that commercial.

Minimum Reporting Policy Provides Increased Accountability

Because network-affiliated stations determine the actual airplay of a commercial, a commercial may be broadcast at times outside of the daypart in which the RADAR-reported commercial or program feed time falls.

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Within RADAR published data, there is an indication of the extent to which commercials actually clear within a reported daypart. Given the rise in the number of multidaypart networks and the increasing importance of daypart scheduling, RADAR clients have expressed their need to know that their commercials are airing in the network daypart they bought. With this in mind, RADAR has set reporting criteria such that at least 70 percent of the daypart average estimate for Persons 12+ for the total U.S. is required to come from respondents listening to commercials within the specified daypart, or that daypart is flagged.

In addition, to better report program audiences (e.g., "news" or "sports"), a minimum level of within-program audience is required to report a program by name. The minimum amount of Volume 3 audience (Audience to Commercials Within Programs) is 50 percent of the Volume 2 audience (Audience to All Commercials).

Monthly Spot Confirmation Service Checks on Commercial Clearances

To check on the accuracy of clearance information, Arbitron conducts a verification study with a sample of stations associated with each network organization for one week each month. This procedure includes capturing selected time periods known only to Arbitron and subsequently comparing this information to network affidavits or reports.

A discrepancy between reported clearances and the results of verification may mean the reported program or commercial was played at a different time, or possibly not at all. In any case, any discrepancy is counted as an error in computing a clearance accuracy rate. Overall network results

are provided to all clients each quarter, including a rolling average of four quarterly reports, plus the most recent quarter. Each network organization receives a report on the results of the monitoring efforts for its own clearances.

Arbitron uses Mediaguide and Media MonitorsSM broadcast monitoring technology to verify whether the radio commercials that were scheduled to be aired on affiliated stations of RADAR-rated networks were broadcast as indicated in the network commercial clearance reports. Arbitron will monitor 2,400 stations in 2008. The stations are monitored for 3 to 5 hours over the course of a week, depending on their network affiliation.

Post Analysis Reports for Advertiser Schedules

A RADAR Post-Analysis gives the advertiser a complete report on a specific advertising schedule on one network for one week. The report includes the overall schedule audience and can include audience for demographic subgroups of the population. If properly interpreted, it can be an important tool for the successful use of network radio.

Commitment to the Network Radio Industry

Arbitron is committed to making the RADAR service increasingly valuable to networks, agencies and advertisers and providing the industry with even more reliable measures of schedule integrity. Creating ROI and providing accountability to network radio are key components in that ongoing effort.

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www.ArbitronNationalRadio.com



New York
142 West 57th Street
New York, NY 10019
(212) 887-1300

Chicago
222 South Riverside Plaza
Suite 630
Chicago, IL 60606
(312) 542-1900

Atlanta
9000 Central Parkway
Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30328
(770) 668-5400

Los Angeles
10877 Wilshire Boulevard
Suite 1400
Los Angeles, CA 90024
(310) 824-6600

Dallas
13355 Noel Road
Suite 1120
Dallas, TX 75240
(972) 385-5388

Washington/Baltimore
9705 Patuxent Woods Drive
Columbia, MD 21046
(410) 312-8000

New Jersey
6 Commerce Drive
Cranford, NJ 07016
(908) 497-2400