

How to Place Radio Ads



SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST® CHURCH



How To Place Radio Ads

Created by the NAD Communication Department
Design and layout: Nick Sharon

Available from:
AdventSource
5120 Prescott Avenue
Lincoln, NE 68506
402.486.8800
www.adventsource.org

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Printed in the United States of America.

ISBN: 978-1-57756-072-2

Introduction

“Christ commissioned the Church to communicate the gospel message to the world. . . An essential activity of the communications department is to make the world community aware that there is a church dedicated to fulfilling Christ’s commission.” —*Responsibilities in the Local Church*, p. 19.

As communications leader for your church, you’ll be creating a media plan to increase awareness of your local congregation in the community.

An effective communications plan will include various online and print media, television and radio.

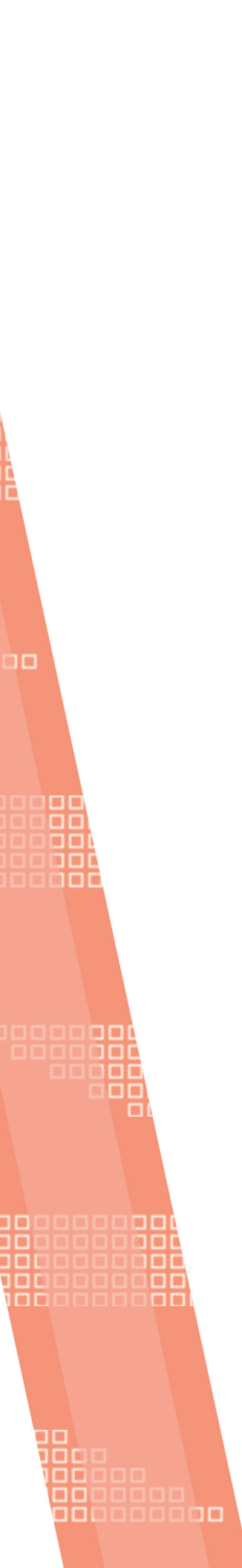
Radio has become a medium of choice for advertisers who want repeated, maximum exposure to a wide audience at a reasonable cost. Your church can gain the same advantages by utilizing radio to relay your message to the community!

Think of how many times your family listens to the radio for news, weather, and traffic reports, music and evening talk.

Read this booklet to discover:

- Here’s what radio has to offer
- Here’s what you can do
- Here’s how you can do it
- Here’s who you can talk to
- Here’s how to get started!

Ready to go “on the air”?



Radio - a mass communications medium consisting of audio signals transmitted in various bands of waves by stations classified by the type of signal.

AM stations have a long, direct and more powerful signal that travels an average of several hundred miles.

FM stations transmit signals that do not follow the curvature of the earth and offer noise-free reception. The signals are unhampered by atmospheric interference for approximately 50 miles.

How can radio benefit your congregation?

1. Radio is growing!
There are over 500 million radio sets currently in use in the United States. The number of radio stations has increased every year since the first radio station was licensed in 1921.
2. Radio is local.
A quick glance in your telephone directory's Yellow Pages will confirm the number of radio stations available in your immediate area. One way these stations compete for listeners is by broadcasting items of local interest.
3. Radio is cost-efficient.
Radio spots and programs reach a large segment of the population. But radio production costs and air time are less expensive than print or television advertising.
4. Radio is personal.
"You're in my house more than any other friend I have," listeners frequently tell radio personalities. Radio listeners can be driving to or from work, housecleaning, doing homework, jogging and still listen to the radio!

How can you creatively use radio to increase awareness of your church in the community?

- Think like an agent! Is there anyone in your congregation with a special expertise (forensic medicine, family counseling, an entrepreneur) who would also make an interesting radio talk show guest? Ask their permission and then submit their names and brief bio to the radio station's talk show host.
- Think like a journalist! If your town has an active historical society or newspaper archives, use their resources to research a little-known, but interesting story about your church or school. Write a short radio version of "50 years ago today" or "25 years ago today" and tell your story.
- Try your hand at producing! If you live in a large metropolitan area, put together an Adventist version of "Having Our Say" (a bestseller about two sisters, both over 100 years of age "having their say"). Seek out persons at or near 100 years old and interview them for short radio spots. Have a tagline that says "To your health! From your friends, the Seventh-day Adventists!"
- Do you have church members who have lived or worked overseas? Consider asking the station to do a telephone interview with them for personal insights about an international "hot spot."
- If a well-known Adventist artist, musician or group has a tour stop near your church, call or write ahead and ask if they are available for a radio interview. Coordinate a guest radio spot on your local station.
- Automatically think "radio community bulletin board" when you schedule an event that is open to the public! Contact the station's public service director as soon as an event date is finalized.

What kind of radio ad can a religious organization sponsor?

Many religious organizations (United Methodists, Mennonites and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints come to mind) sponsor public service announcements.

According to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC):

A public service announcement is “any announcement . . . for which no charge is made and which promotes programs, activities or services of federal, state or local governments . . . or the programs, activities or services of non-profit organizations . . . and other announcements regarded as serving community interests.”

The above description may sound bland, but public service announcements (PSAs) are often issue-oriented.

James Wexler, vice-president of West Glen, a New York video production and distribution house, explains that “today, the issues are hard-hitting and cover a wide range of topics. AIDS and drug abuse dominate the scene, followed closely by issues such as homelessness, concern for the environment and missing children. PSAs very much reflect the changing face of American society.”

The standard length for PSAs are 60, 30, 20, 15 and 10 seconds. They are usually broadcast free by radio or television stations.

Who do I contact at the radio station about placing public service announcements?

Most radio stations have a designated public service director. His or her job is to find appropriate public service announcements.

As part of your overall media strategy, send PSAs to the public service director when you have suitable information. You do not have to send it in broadcast form. Most stations will rewrite the announcements to fit their style and length requirements.

Send news releases to the radio station’s news director.

Paid advertisements are arranged with an ad sales representative.

Radio Stats

- Most cars on the road have radios. Morning drive time (6 AM to 10 AM) and afternoon drive time (3 PM to 7 PM) are the most expensive times to advertise, but you'll reach the most listeners.
- Radio is a high frequency medium. Listeners need to hear your message an average of three times before they respond.

Jane Peters
Media Management Services

In addition to public service announcements, what other ways can your local church use radio?

Local churches can make creative use of several different radio formats:

- Radio news release - a single-page news release written in a format and style suitable for immediate reading over the air. A news release should cover a major event that has broad community appeal.
- Talk or call-in shows - a popular radio format where the host chooses a topic for discussion and interviews live guests and/or opens up telephone lines for call-in reactions.
- Live or telephone interviews - most often involve local, regional or national celebrities—artists, musicians, actors, politicians, authors, etc.
- Contemporary religious music - have a favorite Adventist solo artist or group? Consider sending a copy of their newest album with a note that says “This group heads our ‘Top Ten List!’ Would you consider airing some tracks on Saturday night’s _____ show?” Then have all your youth sign the card. It’s an audio “letter-to-the-editor”!
- Weekly services - recruit a few experienced sound and video personnel from your church who can record and edit your weekly church service. If you have an outstanding choir, attention-getting speaker or unique children’s contribution, let your community know about it!
- Community bulletin board announcements - usually a free service offered by local stations in the community interest. Be sure and get your event dates in early!
- Paid advertising spots - a guaranteed way to get a specific, targeted ad aired at certain times is to pay for it! Radio ad sales representatives can help you write and produce a quality ad and also advise as to the best times for airing it.

Writing Radio News Releases

If you can write a concise, short press release of broad general interest, you have a good chance of getting the attention of the radio news director. Specific human interest stories are also likely to be used.

For the best results, follow these guidelines when writing copy for radio news releases:

- Keep your copy simple and direct.
- Avoid slang and unnecessary catch words and phrases.
- Listen as you write—write for the ear.
- Avoid unnecessary titles, ages, initials and incidental information.
- Simplify numbers (“nearly 15-hundred” instead of 1,483).
- Watch use of pronouns. Repeat a name if there is a chance a reference may be misunderstood.
- Lead with a general statement to draw the listener into the story.
- Write in the active voice, emphasize immediacy.
- Write one thought to a sentence, but keep a sense of rhythm.
- Use contractions unless two words are needed.
- Mix in a compound sentence occasionally for variety.
- Avoid adverbs, adjectives, clichés and long words.
- Test read your copy aloud.

Adapted from James H. Steele and Bill Wolfe
How Shall They Hear? A Handbook for Religious Communicators

Tip: A 60-second message will require about 15 lines of written copy.

Sample Radio News Release

October 15, 2013

To: Don Schaeffner
KFOR News Director
1254 Langley Drive
Fort Worth, Texas 76133

From: Jane Conley
5th Grade Teacher
Loughborough Adventist Elementary
Fort Worth, Texas 76133

Re: “Pin One On For Josh”
60-second press release

“Pin One On For Josh”
Contact Person: Jane Conley
Radio News Release
Phone: 817-294-5760
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FAX: 817-294-3324

Somehow, the words “childhood” and “leukemia” just don’t belong together. Ask Josh Hendrickson, 11-year-old son of Tom and Ellen Hendrickson of Fort Worth. Josh has already had three bone marrow transplants. Now he’s at home . . . waiting.

He can’t attend regular school classes for risk of infection. But like any kid his age, he loves toys and electronic games. His parents and sisters will tell you “we take one day at a time.”

Josh’s fifth-grade classmates at Loughborough Adventist Elementary are sponsoring “Pin One On For Josh,” a campaign to help raise funds for his cancer treatment. You’ve seen the heart pins all over town—Target Stores, SuperSaver, The Children’s Corner and other merchants distribute the pins for a \$5.00 donation.

Josh’s classmates, friends and KFOR invite you to join us and “Pin One On For Josh.” And thank you—every day counts.

** END OF RELEASE **

Checklist for Getting Started . . .

1. Have you determined the “borders” or geographic area where you want to communicate your message?
2. Which radio stations serve that area?
3. Do you have a list of the various radio station managers, public service and news directors, ad representatives, etc. that serve your core area?
4. Are you targeting a specific audience? Young marrieds? Families? Boomers? Seniors? Specific ethnic groups? College grads?
5. How can your message best be formatted? A public service announcement? news release? bulletin board announcement? special program? guest interview? a paid ad?
6. Are you familiar with the style of the radio station you are approaching with a release? Does your release or ad reflect that style?
7. Is your information newsworthy, timely and accurate?
8. Is your PSA or news release short, simple and straightforward?
9. Is your copy typed, double-spaced, dated and does it include a contact name and numbers (phone, email)?
10. Have you followed up your station contact with a telephone call?

Sources

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