Basic Audio (Radio)

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Radio transmissions came about in the early years of the 20th Century – 1906 onwards

- A new medium which took the world by storm
- The possibility of broadcasting a message over large distances without wires
- The concept of immediacy
Advantages of the medium

- Enhances imagination
- Portable
- Relatively cheap
- Immediate
Disadvantages of the medium

- Lack of visuals
- Transient medium – message is covered by time and not space
- Applies primarily to one sense (aural)
- Message can easily be lost
Development of radio in Malta

- Until 1991 – state monopoly – 2 national radio stations
- The Broadcasting Act – liberalized the airwaves and allowed the setting up of private stations
- Popularity of FM frequencies
- Total of 13 nationwide FM stations
- More than 30 community radio stations
- 2007– Setting up of the DAB+ system (six new local stations)
The Broadcasting Authority (1961) regulates broadcasting

Broadcasting Act is the main legislative framework for broadcasting regulation

The need for a licence to broadcast in Malta

Authority can impose a series of measures on stations that break the law
Broadcasting Act has a total of 41 articles and 5 schedules

A further 34 Legal Notices (subsidiary legislation)

Broadcasting law is extensive and deals with various aspects

Third Schedule deals exclusively with advertising
Basic components of a radio message

- Voice
- Music
- Sound Effects
- Silence
Dimensions of the Voice

- Volume
- Pitch
- Rate (normally around 3 words per second)
- Quality (nasality, breathing techniques etc)
- Pronunciation
What do listeners want?

- Entertainment/Infotainment (Music)
- News and information (traffic updates, weather)
- Less of a priority
- Talk radio
- Sports
- Religious
Feedback on radio

- A two-way process communication
- Feedback is immediate
- The widespread use of social media in the industry (an extension to the medium)
- The ability of handle feedback (⁺ve and −ve)
What makes a good radio script?

- Clear and concise language (conversational)
- Use of the present tense
- Creative use of sentences
- Absence of bias, stereotypes, racial comments
  - (RESPECT the microphone)
Some useful hints

- Never print/write on both sides of a page
- Avoid using CAPS in a script
- Avoid the use of abbreviations (IOC/RFI etc)
- Limit number of words per line to 9–12
- Generous line spacing
- Ask for voice tests for your guests
- Mic to be switched off when not on air
Advertising on radio

- Usually the main source of revenue for a station
- A maximum of 15 minutes per clock hour
- Alcohol related ads allowed between 9.00pm–6.00am
- Gambling adverts can be broadcast between 9.00am–2.00pm and after 7.00pm
- Tobacco and related products – outright ban
- Subscription based medicine – outright ban
Who are my listeners?

- Most radio stations are commercial concerns
- A relationship between listeners and advertising

Best slots for audiences:
- Early morning 7.00–9.00am
- Lunch time 12.00–1.30pm
- Drive time 4.00–7.00pm

- Listenership falls sharply after 8.00pm
How to measure audiences

- Market research (quantitative) – Audience ratings

- Surveys conducted by independent bodies such as the Broadcasting Authority

- Stratified scientific sample representative of the population (gender, age, locality)
Research Trends

- Around 55% of the population listen to radio on a regular basis
- Bay Radio has been the most popular station for the past six years
- Largest market share is in the region of 25%
- Foreign stations less than 1%
- DAB+ stations – small percentage (uptake of DAB+ receivers still not popular)
An evolving medium

- Radio has survived despite new technologies
- The concept of on-demand services (podcasts)
- Convergence to the visual medium
- A global audience
- Providing what the audience wants
The future of radio

- Did video kill the radio star?
- Radio is still a popular medium and has survived the challenge of new technology
- Embracing change and diversification = SURVIVAL