

**Basics of Radio Programming and Productions**  
**BA(JMC) 203**  
**UNIT II**

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**Syllabus- Unit 2**

- Radio Announcement and Links
- Radio Talk
- Radio Interview and Discussion
- Radio News
- Radio Feature and Documentary
- Radio Commentary
- Radio Play/Drama
- Radio Ads (Social and Commercial)
- Phone-in and Radio Bridge

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**What are Formats**

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 **What are Formats?**

Radio formats are like templates for the overall content a radio station broadcasts. Most commercial stations in the radio industry fit into formats defined by content that appeals to specific audiences. That content might be a style of music, or it might be news, sports, or other programming.

As a medium, radio developed radio formats to compete with television's rise in popularity. The different formats each focused on the preferences of a particular demographic, allowing them to tune in according to taste. Over time, the formats were tailored further to appeal to specific audiences.

By clearly defining a format, radio stations are able to build their media brand and sell advertising based on the expected demographics of the listeners.

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 **Types of Formats?**

- Radio Announcement and Links
- Radio Talk
- Radio Interview and Discussion
- Radio News
- Radio Feature and Documentary
- Radio Commentary
- Radio Play/Drama
- Radio Ads (Social and Commercial)
- Phone-in and Radio Bridge

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 **Radio Announcement and Links**

- **Announcements:** These are specifically written clear messages to inform. They can be of different types. For example station/programme identification. These mention the station you are tuned into, the frequency, the time and the programme /song you are going to listen to. As mentioned already you find in today's commercial radio channels, these announcements have become informal and resemble ordinary conversation. There can be more than one presenter in some programmes like magazines
- **Simple Announcements**  
You may have heard the names of radio stations, from where the programmes are broadcast. Many of you would remember Vividh Bharati, AIR FM Gold or some private commercial station. You may also remember the time being mentioned and what programme you are going to listen to. These are called **announcements**.

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 Announcements have been traditionally made by people who are known as **announcers**. The commercial radio channels may call them Radio Jockeys (RJs) or anchor persons..

- As we know most of what is spoken on radio is written down. As you have already learnt that what is written for radio is heard and is referred to as 'spoken word' as against the 'written word'. But the spoken words on radio are written down or what is generally called 'scripted'. A Radio format can be split into three parts: They are:-
- Spoken Word or Human Voice
- Music
- Sound Effects
- All radio formats have the above three ingredients. So let us first classify the spoken word format.

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 **Radio Talk**

- **Radio talk:** The radio talk probably is the oldest format on radio. There has been a tradition in India and Britain to invite experts or prominent persons to speak for 10 or 15 minutes on a specific topic. These talks have to go through a process of being changed into radio's spoken word style. Over the years, these long radio talks have become unpopular. Instead, today, shorter duration talks are broadcast. Of course, you can listen to these talks only on public service broadcasting stations.
- Radio talk shows can be defined as radio broadcasts centered primarily on conversational speech. They encompass numerous discourse genres and formats, ranging from political diatribes to highly interactive exchanges with members of the listening audience.

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 Many talk shows have hybrid formats featuring music, sound effects, and news interspersed with interviews, debates, social and political commentary, religious exegesis, medical advice, therapeutic discourse, question-and-answer sessions, sports-fan exchanges, and storytelling.

- Talk shows are typically hosted by a single radio personality, usually positioned as an expert in some area. Many also feature occasional guests who are interviewed, as well as one or two regular interlocutors who assist the host. Audience participation is usually a major feature of talk radio shows worldwide, with opportunities for listeners to telephone or write to the program host with questions, comments, or music requests, which are then relayed on air.

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- The place of talk radio in non-Western nations parallels the role of talk radio in Western nations, yet it is a relatively new area of exploration that merits more in-depth research.

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### Radio Interview & Discussion

- **Radio interviews:** Have you ever interviewed anyone? Probably yes. In the media, be it the newspaper, magazine, radio or television, journalists use this technique of asking questions to get information. There can be different types of interviews in terms of their duration, content and purpose.
- Firstly, there are full fledged interview programs. The duration of these may vary from 10 minutes to 30 minutes or even 60 minutes depending up on the topic, and the person being interviewed. Most of such interviews are personality based. You might have heard of long interviews with well known people in the field of public life, literature, science, sports, films etc.

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- Secondly, there are interviews which are used in various radio programs like documentaries. Here the interviews are short, questions specific and not many. The purpose is to get a very brief, to the point answer.

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**Radio Interview Types**

- The Informational Interview
- The Interpretive Interview
- The Emotional Interview
- **Informational Interview** : To impart information to the listener. The sequence in which this is done becomes important if the details are to be clear. Topics for this kind of interview include: the action surrounding a military operation, the events and the proposal contained in the city's newly announced development plan.

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- **The Interpretive Interview**: The Interviewer supplying the facts and asking the interviewee either to comment on them or to explain them. The aim is to expose the reasoning behind decisions and allow the listener to make a judgement on the implicit sense of values and priorities. Examples in the category would be a government minister on the reasons for an already published economic policy.
- **Emotional Interview**: To provide an insight into the interviewee's state of mind so that the listener may better understand what is involved in human terms. Specific examples would be the feelings of relatives of people trapped in the debris of earthquake and the moment of supreme achievement for an athlete or successful entertainer.

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**Components**

- Interviewer
- Interviewee
- Aim and context
- Questions

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 **What the Interviewee should know?**

- What is to be about? Not the exact questions but the general areas, and the limits of the subject.
- It is to broadcast live or recorded?
- How long is it to be?
- What is the context?
- Is the interview part is wider treatment of the subject with contributions from others or a single item in a news or magazine program?
- For what audience? Where? At studio or elsewhere? When?
- How long is there for preparation?

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 **Radio Discussion**

- **Radio discussions:** When you have a problem in your family or with your friends, don't you say "let us discuss?" Yes we do. Through a discussion we can find out a solution to problems. In any discussion there are more than 2 or 3 people and then ideas can be pooled to come to some conclusion. In radio, this technique is used to let people have different points of view on matters of public concern. Radio discussions are produced when there are social or economic issues which may be controversial. So when different experts meet and discuss such issues, people understand various points of view. Generally, these discussions on radio are of longer duration-say 15 to 30 minutes.

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 **Radio Discussion**

- Two or three people who are known for their views and a well informed senior person or journalist who acts as a moderator take part and discuss a particular topic for about 30 minutes. The moderator conducts the discussion, introduces the topic and the participants and ensures that every one gets enough time to speak and all issues are discussed.

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 **Radio News**

- **NEWS:** Among all the spoken word formats on radio, news is the most popular. News bulletins and news programmes are broadcast every hour by radio stations. In India, only All India Radio is allowed to broadcast news. Duration of news bulletins vary from 5 minute to 30 minutes. The longer news bulletins have interviews, features, reviews and comments from experts.
- **The principles of bulletin preparation**
- Radio bulletins are usually made up from three types of material:
- written stories in the form of a **script**;
- voice reports from journalists, either recorded or live;
- Recorded sound called **actuality**.

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 **Radio News**

- This is usually the sound of someone speaking, perhaps taken from an interview or a speech. A short segment of actuality is called a **grab**. Grabs are used in a similar way to quotes in a newspaper story. In some countries, grabs are called **cuts** or **inserts**.

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 **Does & Don'ts in Radio News**

- **News for Once only** :Since newspaper can be read for many times a day and it is something that can be picked up for confirming or re-reading news stories whenever one feels like. But this is not the case with radio news. Radio news bulletin goes on air once only. That is why the radio news must be written in such a way that the listener may be able to understand and grasp the contents of the news when he/she listens to it.
- **Language:** It has been mentioned time and again that the radio is a medium that is meant for ears and not for eyes. Radio is a verbal communication medium and the language to be used for knitting radio content must be spoken, easy and colloquial.

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- **Avoid Written Expression:** Though what is put on air on radio is first, in most of cases, written on paper and then put on air by the newscaster, but the way the message is written must not be in written expression. The example given below will explain the difference between written and spoken expressions. Written Expression "The government," said the opposition leader, "had created the problems." The same sentence when read out may take the following shape conveying altogether opposite sense. The government said, "The opposition leader had created problems." Expression for Radio The opposition leader said that the government had created the problems.
- **Avoid Literary Expression:** Literary expression has its own tone and style and is different from journalistic language so must not be used for print or electronic media.

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 **Script Format for Radio News**

**TROY FIRE**  
**5:00 AM NEWS**  
**RIP REED**  
**11:42PM (RUNS 1:00)**

**NAT SND; SIRENS, FIRE CREW AT SCENE UP AND UNDER**  
**REED:** An explosion followed by huge sheets of flame rising hundreds of feet lit up the sky over Troy this morning. A security guard called the fire department at 4:30, and when firefighters arrived just six minutes later, the fire had escalated. Chief Jed Kuyatowak (CHEE-TOE-VEE-ACK) said his men battled the toxic alarm fire for five hours before they brought it under control. (1:30)  
**REYDOWAK-HUNGRIO OUT: BEFORE WE EVER GOT HERE.**  
**REED:** The fire's cause is unknown, but they haven't ruled out arson. No one was injured. Police officials and fire department arson investigators say they'll issue a full report as early as Monday night. In Troy, I'm Rip Reed, Newsradio 93.6. (1:20)

*Radio News style notes to Mass Comm. students:*  
**ABBREVIATIONS:** NATSND-Natural Sound, OUT-Outcue  
**BASIC RULES:** Use Courier font, 12 point, justify all copy flush left. Every full line, with your Microsoft Word software set at zero and 6 1/2, times out to about 30 seconds. Double-space copy for easier editing and reading. Spell difficult to pronounce names phonetically in parentheses following the name, e.g., HAY-LE JAVINS (HAY-LEE-JIN-AH-VIN) and give the complete syllable of the name in ALL CAPS. Put all audio and technical cues in caps to avoid accidental on-air reading. Provide timing times for readings and natural sound. Be aware that many of your clients average 150 words per minute. Use the word count for the entire segment at 1:45 of the page to counting full lines and totaling up each segment. Be aware that each radio news department has variations on the standard provided here. You'll have to adapt to the style and production differences of a station.

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 **Radio Feature and Documentary**

- **Radio documentaries/features:** If you see a film in a movie hall, it is generally a feature film, which is story based and not real. But there are also documentary films which are based on real people and issues. A lot of programmes you see on television are educational and public service documentaries. Radio also has this format. Unlike documentary films, radio documentaries have only sound – i.e. the human voice, music and sound effects. So a radio documentary is a programme based on real sounds and real people and their views and experiences. Radio documentaries are based on facts presented in an attractive manner or dramatically. Radio documentaries are radio's own creative format. The producer of a documentary needs to be very creative to use human voice, script, music and sound effects very effectively. Radio documentaries are also called **radio features**.

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 **How to produce good Radio Documentary?**

- Like in print and television, radio documentary/feature can be made on practically any subject. From current events to history, from scientific inventions to philosophy- you can make documentaries on practically any subject. AIR, Cuttack once made a radio feature on 'Silence'. Creativity is the key. However, before taking up a subject take the 'so what' test. Think about the relevance of the subject for the intended audience: how interested the audience will be in this subject. Is it important? Is it interesting? Will it have some impact on the audience or/and policy makers/ government/ administration? Will it make the audience sit up and notice something that they have not cared to notice till date? Will it amuse the audience? Will it entertain the audience? Make documentary on something you care about - If you don't care, why should anyone else?

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 **How to produce good Radio Documentary?**

- There can be different approaches to make a radio documentary/feature: ramrod straight- journalistic type or like a meandering drama with the build up, climax and resolution. It could be made with a dash of humour or with all seriousness. It could be made with lot of sound effects or with minimal effects. The trick is to see, if it helps in achieving the objective of the documentary. The approach should depend on the objective, mood and tenor of the documentary.
- Think about the execution. Think about the resources (financial, human resource, logistical) you have or could get. Make a realistic and pragmatic plan of action.

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 **How to produce good Radio Documentary?**

- Before you embark on any documentary, conduct considerable research about the subject. You should have ample materials on the subject.
- Write a working script before you start recording. You should be clear about what you want to do. A written script gives a control on the subject.
- Be creative. Think out of the box. Think of stories, which have not been told so far. Think of a different angle to tell a story told hundreds of times. Think. Is there a new way to approach an 'old' idea?
- Tell engaging Stories. People like to hear good stories, well told.

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- Research. When developing a documentary, especially on social awareness project, doing the proper research is mandatory. The information dispersed by such a show must be accurate, reliable, and current. Research can be accessed via the Internet, library, educational/research institute. Doing research for the radio documentary may also involve finding people who have something to contribute to the documentary, either by providing an interview, a story, or any other bits of material that can give the show some added substance.
- Provide need-based information.

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- Make your documentary intimate. Try to have direct access to the people/events/storytellers- Real people, real accents. Second hand information can dilute the subject matter, person or event.
- Create near real scenes through audio pictures. Places, scenes and imagery bring stories to life. A scene can as simple as a kitchen, a field or a car. One of the greatest gifts of radio is its ability to provide audio pictures of scenes, thus allowing the listener into that space. Record out and about. What's happening in the background can sometimes be as important as what's being said - i.e. chirping of birds, laughter in a room, a tractor/machine, water/wind/fire etc.

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- Involve the audience. Take feedback. Act on the feedback.
- Listen to good documentaries made all over the world. A list of websites has been given at the end of this article to help you in this regard.

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 **Radio Commentary**

- **Running commentaries** : If you can't go to see a football or cricket match in a stadium, you may watch it on television. But for that you have to be at home or at some place where there is a television. But if you are travelling or outside, then you may listen to radio for a running commentary of the match. A commentator would give you all the details of the match such as the number of players, the score, position of the players in the field etc. So by listening to the running commentary, you get a feeling of being in the stadium and watching the match. The commentator needs good communication skills, a good voice and knowledge about what is going on.

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 **Radio Commentary**

- Running commentaries on radio can be on various sports events or on ceremonial occasions like the Republic Day Parade or events like festivals, melas, rath yatras, swearing in ceremony of ministers, last journey (funeral procession) of national leaders etc. Today radio running commentaries especially of cricket and other sports can be heard on your mobile phones.

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 **Radio Play/Drama**

- A radio play isn't simply a play that happens to be missing the visual aspect but an entirely different and specific medium of performance. Radio plays are dramatized, purely auditory performances that are specifically designed to focus on painting a picture in the listeners mind's eye. They rely entirely on dialogue, music, and foley, otherwise known as sound effects.
- As a writer you need to decide who your audience will be and what your intention is. For example do you want to:
  - make your audience laugh?
  - comment on a current or historical event?
  - tell a story?

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- convey a message?
- When you have decided on these things you are ready to begin planning the ingredients for your script which are the elements of drama.
- The elements of drama are its basic building blocks. The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum defines the elements of drama as the the 'key ingredients' of drama.
- The elements of radio drama are the same as those of stage drama:

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- role: characters in the play
- time: when the action takes place
- place: where the action takes place
- action: what happens in the drama
- tension: conflict within and between characters and their environment
- focus: the ideas, feelings, or characters that the playwright wants us to concentrate on in a particular moment.

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### Radio Ads (Social and Commercial)

- Just like advertisers pay for the commercials you see on television during your favorite show, some advertisers also choose to focus their marketing dollars on radio advertising. That is, buying commercials, frequently called **spots** in the radio industry, to promote their products or services. Advertisers pay commercial radio stations for airtime and, in exchange, the radio station broadcasts the advertiser's commercial to its listening audience.
- In radio advertising, there are numerous types of commercials that an advertiser might employ, similar to how brands might pursue different print advertising options (newspaper vs. magazine, for example) or electronic advertising options (email vs. social media).

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**Types of Radio Advertising**

- Depending on your brand and the type of message you're trying to convey, you'll likely lean toward one of these popular radio advertising choices.
- **Live read** :The ESPN Radio show Mike & Mike is a good example of a format where you can hear commercials read in real-time online by a radio announcer, a type of commercial also known as a live read. This type of advertisement is more effective with a really popular on-air host because advertisers hope that the host's voice will carry extra weight with the show's audience.
- **Sponsorship** :Many radio stations implement sponsorships for certain types of radio segments, such as traffic, weather, or sports scores during halftime of the big game. It will generally sound something like this: 'This hour's weather update brought to you by Beach Rentals. Call Beach Rentals for all of your vacation needs.'

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**Produced spot** :A produced spot can either be a **straight read** of your advertising message or a read that incorporates multiple voices, sound effects or a jingle. A **jingle** is a short, catchy song about your company. These typically tell listeners where to find your business or your products and can be funny, serious, or informative.

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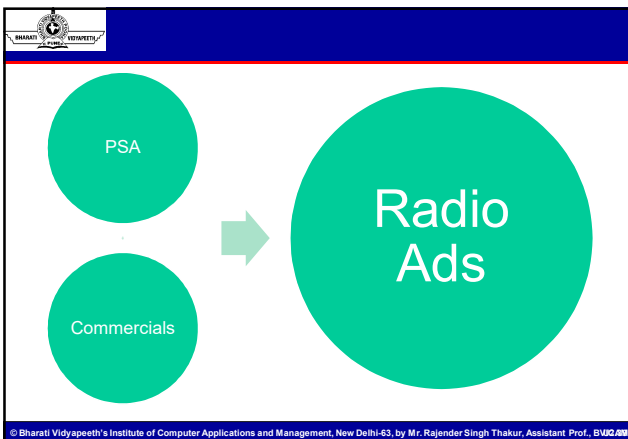
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- A **public service announcement (PSA)** is a short, community-oriented message that radio stations air at no cost in order to fulfill their obligation to serve the public interest. PSAs are a cost-effective way for non-profit organizations to raise awareness about the benefits their organizations provide. Radio stations receive PSAs as audio files – typically recorded as :30or :60-second messages. These files can be accompanied by scripts for announcers to read live on air. Through appropriate distribution, they can be targeted to preferred demographics and markets.

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 **5 Key Steps:**

- **Frequency of Ads:** A radio commercial needs to air multiple times before it sinks in with the listener. Running your commercial once a week for a month isn't going to be enough. Frequency refers to how many times your ad airs in a short amount of time. A commercial that airs multiple times in a day has a better chance of reaching the listener than a commercial that only airs a few times in a week.
- **Target Audience:** Just like with every ad you create, you must know your target audience. Advertising your western gear store on a country station makes sense. Advertising a teen clothing store on the same station doesn't. Make a list of the radio stations in your market. Listen to each one to help identify your own target audience. What kind of listeners will be tuning in and are they a potential customer for your product or service?

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- **Producing Your Commercial :** Unlike television commercials, production is more simple for a radio commercial. You need a script and voice talent. However, that doesn't mean you should just slap something together. Your copy isn't relying on any visuals so it's vital you capture the listener's attention from the start. The copy needs to be crystal clear and not muddled by trying to be cutesy in your pitch . Voice talent can be as simple to find as calling the radio station. Most stations have a complete list of voice talent in your area. You send the script, they voice it.
- **Rates:** Take advantage of the low ad rates for radio. Ad rates are on the rise but the costs are still more affordable than visual mediums like television. Use your negotiating skills to get a good deal on an ad bundle. The more ads you buy, the better rates you'll be able to get.

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 **Timing Your Spending:** Ad rates are generally less expensive in the first and third quarters. Radio commercials in these time frames are easier to negotiate and cheaper for you to advertise. Before you take the plunge into radio advertising, find out if you're Ready for Radio. And if you're ready to hit the airwaves, this radio commercial script can show you how to deliver strong copy that will reach your listeners every time .

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 **Phone-in and Radio Bridge**

- **Phone in program:** In this age of technological development, phone-in is the most important format. This is called interactive programming where the listener and the presenter talk to each other. Their talk goes on air instantly. The listener has the satisfaction that his voice is being listened to and replied immediately. Other listeners also listen to him. Such presentations need advance publicity so that the listeners get ready to air their grievances/queries or requests. They dial up the announced telephone number at a stipulated time and get their problems discussed with experts in the studio. Initially this format was introduced for playing the listeners' request based film songs. Now it is being used for health related program, rural broadcasts, complaints against the government/ administrative machinery etc.

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 **Radio bridge** :Radio bridge means connecting different stations throughout the length and breadth of the country. In this technique, for example, an expert sitting at Chennai can interact with the common man in the studio in Delhi. This format was first used by All India Radio during elections.

- Radio Bridge signifies the extension of Phone-in program. In a phone-in program, listeners usually interact with the experts located in the studio of a particular radio station. However, in a Radio Bridge program four or more studios of different cities are connected and experts called to discuss a given topic or issue. Thus, the listeners are able to listen to the opinions or views of different experts at one time from different places and can also elicit clarification from the experts 'live'.

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