

**(Basics of Radio )**

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## **RADIO STATION**

In A radio station, there Are basically three different wings. They Are (i) Programme Wing (ii) Engineering Wing And (iii) Administration Wing. While the first two wings Are responsible for running A radio station's broadcasts, the Administrative wing provides All the support that is required for the functioning of the station.

Let us learn About the working of A radio station.

### **Radio studio**

The moment one mentions the words 'radio studio' you may think of good sound. You may Also think of the photo studio with which most of you Are familiar or A film studio, which you imagine to be A special Area for shooting. A photo studio is A room which is made exclusively for taking pictures. It has certain conditions suitable for taking photographs. The room generally is dark; has plenty of Artificial lights, which Are powerful. It is suitable for the purpose of taking photographs. There may be curtains And pictures or scenery AS background. If you want to take A photograph for A passport or for Any formal purpose, you go to A photo studio. In A studio, the visual scenery is Appropriate.

But how does A radio studio look like? Let us see. There is A

table And A microphone. The room has just one door, which

is not very easy to open, As it is very heavy. Before one enters this room, there is A small enclosed place, which has Another heavy door. This empty space is called A sound lock, which prevents unnecessary outside sounds from entering the studio. Note that we have used the term 'unnecessary outside sounds'. Suppose we record sound in An ordinary classroom, office room or in A drawing room. What would be the result? You would hear the traffic noise from outside or the sounds of the old fans on the ceiling. You would Also hear birds chirping or dogs barking. Suppose you tune into your favourite radio programme And you listen to All that noise. That will be terrible.

You would expect what you listen to on radio to be clear.

A studio is so designed without Any interference to ensure that outside noises Are not recorded And you hear the voice of the speakers clearly. For this, besides the sound lock And heavy doors, you will find the ceiling And walls with perforated woollen panels. Of course the studio is nice And cool with proper Air-conditioning.



**Fig. 10.1: Radio studio**

There will At least be two studios in A station. You have just learnt About one of them. Now you will learn About the second one. This may be smaller in size with the same type of doors, walls And ceilings. ttere you will find the Announcer or the Anchor person sitting on A revolving chair with A microphone in front of the table. There will be A computer, CD players, tape decks And A mixer .This is the ACTUAL broadcast studio from where presenters make Announcements. This may be called An ~~Audio~~

~~Audio~~

### **Control Room (CR)**

Now let us move to the main technical Area of the radio station which is often called A control room. Whatever is spoken in the studio or played from A CD player or computer is sent to this control room. All the programmes Are sent from here to the transmitter.

- The control room occupies An important place in the radio

broadcast. It is the place, connected with All the other segments of broadcast.

- Whatever the speaker/announcer speaks from the studio, it reaches the control room. From here they are sent to the transmitter for its onward transmission to the listeners. A lot of changes take place when one speaks through a microphone. You may have noticed that your voice sounds different when it is recorded.

- In the control room, technical people control the whole process and immediately send these waves to the **transmitter**.

- The transmitter sends these sound waves to the listeners' radio sets which convert them into sounds. There is no time gap in the whole process.

**Studio .....Control Room (CR) .....Transmitter (XTR)  
..... Listener**

- Transmitters Are generally located outside the city boundaries.
- The transmitters Are of different capacities such As 1 KW to 100 KW, 200 KW or 250 KW or Above.
- Their locations Are decided ACCORDING to their capacity.
- A 1 KW transmitter is normally installed in the vicinity of the studio/control room whereas the high power transmitters Are installed outside the city.

### **Transmitter**

You have learnt About the studio And the control room. It is essential to know About the transmitter Also.

— A transmitter is the equipment through which we receive the radio broadcast on our sets.

— This is big equipment in comparison to other equipment installed in the studio or control room.

— The strength And type of the transmitter determines the coverage Area of broadcast.

— There Are two types of transmitters.

- Low Power Transmitter (LPT) And
- High Power Transmitter (HPT)

— Likewise, there Are:

- Medium Wave (MW) radio broadcast transmitters And
- Short Wave (SW) radio broadcast transmitters



**Fig. 10.2: TrAnsmitter**



## FUNCTIONARIES OF A RADIO STATION

### **~~SD~~**

The Station Director is in charge of the radio station And Also the head of the programme wing. In some stations they Are called managers.

### **~~SE~~**

The Station Engineer heads the engineering wing And is responsible for All the technical work At the radio station.

In Addition there is A group of technicians And engineers, working quietly behind the scene. They operate And maintain broadcast equipment And oversee the control room. They Are responsible for the technical quality of the broadcasts.

### **~~PE~~**

These Are persons who Are engaged in planning, production , preparation And presentation of radio programmes. They Are known As programme executives or producers. They Are part of the programme broadcast process.

### **~~TE~~**

Persons who Are responsible for A smooth And trouble free transmission process Are known As transmission executives.

### **~~RA~~**

The radio Announcer presents the programmes And is responsible for making them interesting. The Announcer has to convey feelings through his voice only. If the Announcer is

dull, his description will Also be dull.

## DID YOU KNOW ?

~~It is a valuable tool~~

~~Highly efficient~~

~~It is a valuable tool~~

~~It~~

In Addition to the Above staff, there Are Also music Artists such AS vocalists And instrumentalists who form part of the programme staff. They Are All eminent performers in their own fields And graded ACCORDING to their experience.

## RADIO BROADCASTING SYSTEM IN INDIA

Even before we discuss About the radio broadcasting system in India, you must know About All India Radio commonly referred to As AIR , which is the main radio broadcaster of India.

Officially known As Akashwani, AIR is A division of Prasar Bharati or the Broadcasting Corporation of India, An autonomous corporation of the Ministry of Information And Broadcasting , Government of India.



Fig. 10.3

### DID YOU KNOW?

~~Rishabh~~

The

headquarters of AIR is At Akashwani Bhawan, New Delhi. AIR has different services each catering to different regions/ languages Across India.

One of the most famous services is Vividh Bharati (All India Variety Programme) which offers programmes such as news, film music, comedy shows etc. in several cities of India.

Now, let us find out how AIR operates.

AIR has a three-tier system of broadcasting, namely, **national, regional** and **local**. The **National** channel of All India Radio started functioning on May 18, 1988. It caters to the information, education and entertainment needs of the people, through its transmitters at Nagpur, Moga and Delhi beaming from dusk to dawn. It transmits centrally originated news

bulletins in Hindi and English, plays, sports, music, newsreel, spoken word and other topical programmes, to nearly 76% of the country's population fully reflecting the broad spectrum of national life. The languages of broadcast are Hindi, English and Urdu apart from some music from other Indian languages.

The **Regional Stations** in different States form the middle tier of broadcasting.

This also includes the North-eastern service at Shillong which disseminates the vibrant and radiant cultural heritage of the north-eastern region of the country.

**Local Radio** is comparatively a new concept of broadcasting in India.

Each of these local radio stations serving a small area provides utility services and reaches right into the heart of the community. What distinguishes local radio from the regional network is its down to earth, intimate and uninhibited approach.

The programmes of the local radio are area specific.

They are flexible and spontaneous enough to enable the station to function as the mouth piece of the local community.

### **FM Channels**

**What do you understand by FM?**

**FM stands for Frequency Modulation which is a**

**broadcasting technology or method in radio.**

You may have all listened to one or more FM channels.

The FM service of AIR has two channels .

### **~~FM and F/G~~**

There are 12 FM Rainbow channels and 4 FM Gold Channels.

The programme content of these channels is mainly popular Indian and Western music, presented in a style which is highly popular with the urban youth.

News bulletins and current affairs programmes are also broadcast from these channels.

There are also other AIR stations on the F.M. mode. There are several private FM channels which can be heard all over the country.

Let us learn about them.

### **Private radio stations ( FM channels)**

Radio Mirchi, Radio Mango, Big FM, Times FM .....The list is becoming longer.

You must have heard about one or more of them. But have you wondered what they are ?

These are private or commercial radio stations which have been given a license to broadcast programmes on radio.

Most of them cater to the younger generation by providing a mix of music and fun.

**Community Radio** is a type of radio service that caters to the interests of a limited area or a community which is homogenous.

It broadcasts programmes that are popular and relevant to the local audience.

A community radio license is required to operate a community radio station.

These stations are expected to produce programmes as far as possible in the local language or dialect.

Although the stress is on developmental programmes, entertainment is not banned on these radio stations.

Anna FM is India's first campus community radio operating from Anna University in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. This was launched on 1 February 2004.

## **MICROPHONES:**

**Microphones:** For our voice to be recorded in a studio, we

use A microphone. You might have used or At least seen microphones. They Amplify or in other words ,increase the volume of your voice. When you speak before A microphone, you don't have to shout. You speak normally And it will be made louder if you use A loudspeaker to listen to. When we think of radio, the microphone is the most important element using which you present your programme.

There Are basically three types of microphones And they Are known by their directivity. As you go through the following text, you will understand the term 'directivity'.

**(a) Uni-directional microphone :** As the name suggests, this microphone picks up sound from one direction. As you speak in front of it, your voice is picked up. If you speak from the other side of the microphone, your voice



will not be picked up properly. In A radio studio, the Announcers, presenters And newsreaders use this type of A microphone.

A microphone is very sensitive And you need to use it carefully. You should be At the right distance from it when you speak. Otherwise, your voice will not sound good. Even if you turn A paper or breathe heavily, the microphone will pick up that sound And your programme or your voice will be Affected.

**(b) Bi-directional microphone:**– ttere Again As the name (bi) suggests, the voice or sound is picked up from two directions. If you Are recording An interview in A radio studio, you may use this type of A microphone.

**(c) Omni-directional microphone:** You may be familiar with the word omni. We say god is omnipresent, which means ‘present everywhere’. In the case of An omni-directional microphone, it picks up sound from All directions. This type of microphone is used when A number of voices Are used in A single programme like A radio discussion or A radio drama. There Are many other types of microphones which come in different sizes And lengths. If you watch television programmes, you may find A small microphone clipped on the collar. This is called A ~~pp~~ which is Actually A uni-directional microphone. These microphones Are not

normally used in radio.

Then there are long microphones called **goosenecks** used in sports production. These microphones are often omni directional ones. There are also **lapel** microphones. You might have seen them being used in stage shows. They do not have any cables or wires attached to them. They have a small transmitter in them which can send the sounds to an amplifier.

# **FORMATS OF RADIO PROGRAMMES**

## **FACTORS TO BE TAKEN INTO**

## **ACCOUNT FOR MAKING A RADIO**

## **PROGRAMME**

Think of the village or town in which you live. You find people belonging to All communities men And women, rich And poor. Radio plays A very important role in the lives of the people of India. Though there Are plenty of rich people And highly developed cities, A majority of our people Are poor And A large number of them cannot read or write. So the only medium that can really reach them to inform, educate And entertain is the radio. Radio stations especially those run by the government perform A public service duty. The requirements of listeners of radio stations Are not the same. To serve them, we need to know many facts About them. Let us make A list of what we should know About the Audience:

- (A) Number of people — i.e. the total population of the Area.
- (b) Number of men And women — Sex ratio
- (c) Literate people/Illiterate people
- (d) The languages spoken in the Area.
- (e) Schools/Colleges
- (f) Children going to school
- (g) Health facilities — Availability of doctors, primary health centre, clinics, hospitals.
- (h) Any major diseases
- (i) Religions in the Area—population wise
- (j) Power supply
- (k) Nearest radio stations/Television stations

- (l) Climate of the place
- (m) Main occupation of the people
- (n) Income per head/people below poverty line
- (o) Roads/transport facilities
- (p) Irrigation facilities
- (q) Number of people engaged in Agriculture/other occupations.
- (r) Types of crops.

You can add many more issues to this list. We need to know these facts to decide the language, the type of broadcast, timing of programmes etc. Radio formats therefore are decided on the basis of the needs of the audience.

## TYPES OF RADIO FORMATS

Do you remember the programmes you have heard on radio. Try And recall some of them. 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 have been traditionally made by people who are known as ■ The commercial radio channels may call them Radio Jockeys (RJs) or anchor persons. Before you learn about the different radio formats, you must know the ingredients of a radio format.

As you 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:-

- (A) Spoken Word or human Voice
- (b) Music
- (c) Sound Effects

All radio formats have the above three ingredients. So let us first classify the spoken word format.

## **SPOKEN WORD**

**1. 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.

**2. 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.

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

Thirdly there are a lot of interviews or interview based programmes in news and current affairs programmes. Have you heard such interviews on radio? With phone-in-programmes becoming popular, you might have heard live interviews with listeners. These interviews have been made interactive.

There is Another type of interview based programme. There generally just one or two questions are put across to ordinary people or people with knowledge on some current topic to measure public opinion. For example when the general budget or the railway budget is presented in the parliament, people representing radio go out and ask the general public about their opinion. Their names and identity may not be asked. Such programmes are called 'vox pop' which is a Latin phrase meaning 'voice of people'.

You have to be very inquisitive and hard working to be a radio interviewer with good general awareness and communication skills.

**4. 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. 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.

**5. 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



**6. Radio drama:** A Radio drama or A radio play is like Any other play staged in A theatre or A hall. The only difference is that while A stage play has Actors, stage, sets, curtains, properties movement And live Action, A radio play has only 3 components. They Are the human voice, music And sound effects. Radio of course uses its greatest strength for producing radio plays And that is the power of imagination And suggestivity. For example, if you want to have A scene in A radio play of A north Indian marriage, you don't have All physical Arrangements made. All that you have to do is to use A bright tune on the shehnai And excited voices of people to create in A listeners' imagination, A wedding scene. The voice of the Actors, music And sound effects can create Any situation in A radio play.

**7. 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. 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.

**8. Magazine programmes :** You are familiar with magazines which are a form of print media. They are published weekly, bi-weekly, fortnightly or monthly. There are general magazines and magazines for specific readers. These magazines could be for children, women, youth or on health, sports, science or music. If you open any one of these

magazines, you will find articles, reviews, features, photo features etc. Radio also has magazine programmes like those in the print media.

A radio magazine is broadcast at a particular time on a particular day of a week or a month. That means it has periodicity. Similarly it has plenty of variety in contents. Some or many formats of radio are included in a radio magazine. These may be talks, discussions, interviews, reviews, music etc. Likewise, the duration of each programme or item in a magazine programme also vary. Another characteristic of a radio magazine is that it has a signature tune. A signature tune is an attractive piece of music which is specific to a programme. It can be like the masthead (title) of a magazine. A magazine programme also has a name and one or two presenters or anchor persons who link the whole programme. In the beginning, the titles of the day's programme will be given by the presenters after the signature tune. They also give continuity and link the whole magazine.