



Standard Operating Procedure

Procedure Title: WLNZ Best Practices

Procedure #: MKT.001

Revision #: 00

Unit Responsible: College-wide Marketing

Individual Responsible: WLNZ Station Manager

Effective Date:

Initial Approval Date:

Last Review/Update Date:

Next Review Date:

***Does this procedure support a Board Policy?** Yes

[6.020-Advertising/Underwriting](#)

Board policies can be found at: [LCC Board of Trustees Policy Page](#)

***Does this procedure support HLC criteria?** No

HLC Criteria can be found at: [HLC Accreditation Criteria](#)

***Does this procedure support a State or Federal Regulation?** Yes

Federal Communications Commission Hourly Legal ID Regulation

***Note:** Standard Operating Procedures should be in furtherance of some LCC policy and/or accreditation criteria, even if the relationship is not direct. Assistance in determining this information can be obtained from the Academic Procedure Advisory Committee (APAC) and/or the Accreditation Liaison Officer.



WLNZ Best Practices, BP 6.020

1. Purpose

Station Identifier

Make sure every promo, produced or live, addresses a clearly identified station priority and targets audience interests. A general overview of promotional goals may include building the station brand, increasing listenership, developing membership or underwriting, heightening awareness of station or community events, creating awareness of college information and events, generating more web traffic, or increasing social media interactions. However, promotional goals may extend well beyond this list. So, deciding what to promote can be distilled into two questions: What is the promotional objective for LCC Radio or the college? What value does it have for the listener? There should be simple answers for each question.

Radio listeners are constantly tuning in and tuning out. This is most evident with the notion of someone making a quick trip to the store, tuning into the station once they get in the car, and then tuning out once they've arrived at their destination. Every time the microphone is turned on, some listeners have been listening for longer period of time, but most are coming-and-going. Therefore, repetition is a "necessary evil" in radio. For an announcer, talking about a promotion several times within a timespan can feel redundant, but they need to keep in mind that it may be the first time a listener is hearing about it. It is helpful for an announcer to consider the times of day when the coming-and-going is greater and when audience movement is less dynamic and more stable.

Another reason repetition is important in radio is that the listener is often distracted. Although driving a car or folding the laundry may not require full concentration, it does create distraction. This is why radio spots (commercials) will often repeat information like telephone numbers, web addresses, or locations more than once within the spot. In addition, if the listener can't write down or make a note of the information, repetition can assist in helping to remember the important hit points of a spot.

As a framework for all promotion, it is best to consider what is being asked of the listener. The simpler the request, the more effective the promotion; in turn, as the request become more complicated, the promotion becomes less effective. The most successful type of promotion deals with what's coming next. This is known as vertical promotion (also flow or forward promotion). It simply asks the listener to keep listening to the station. Saying "stay tuned" is simple to understand and simple to do.

Promoting what's coming up immediately is sometimes known as a jump promo, and it typically promotes something coming at the end of a break, after a produced promotional item, or a song. The time frame can be as little as 10 seconds and range up to a few minutes. Promoting an item over a short period of time, like 10 to 15 minutes, is also an acceptable approach. In part, this is due to the use of quarter-hours as the standard unit of audience measurement, but it is also a practical amount of time by which an announcer can hope to extend a listening occasion. When doing a jump promo, the key is to be imaginative, be clear, and be specific.

Given the realities of typical radio listening habits, doing a stay tuned promo that looks ahead by more than an hour or so is of limited value. It should only be done when the audience may find something especially appealing. Again, be specific and be clear, but it should be done with the understanding that talking about something that is an hour into the future is a tough sell for most listeners. Core listeners of LCC Radio who have the station on all day long may find the promotion helpful, but it is unlikely to change the behavior of a lighter listener or someone whose schedule and habits will take them away from the radio. This sort of long-term promotion is most appropriate for branding the station, reminding listeners of the kinds of things we regularly do.

A great deal of radio listening is habitual, based on an individual listener's personal schedule and lifestyle. Someone who listens at the office during the afternoon is likely to do so again the following day. Those habits can be reinforced with promotion.

Promoting from a specific time or daypart to the same time or daypart on future days is called horizontal promotion. It requires more of an investment from the listener than a vertical promotion. In horizontal promotion, the listener needs to hear the message, understand the message, and return again at the same time. It is a lot to ask, but it's an important part of building a relationship with devoted listeners and can lead to long-term listenership. This is also the type of listener that is also likely to become a member and supporter of noncommercial stations like LCC Radio.

Horizontal promotion is also indirectly tied to the notion of specialty programming on noncommercial stations like LCC Radio. The station enlists a number of community members and students to host genre-based programs (i.e. Latin, jazz, reggae, K-pop, etc.) that are not readily available on commercial radio stations. This concept relates to the premise of horizontal promotion with listeners tuning in every week for the program, creating a loyal audience of the program. These listeners often become the most enthusiastic supporters of the station. This is why ongoing promotion of the station's various programs should always be a priority.

Regardless of its specific intended purpose or how it is approached, the overall goal of promotion branding and positioning the station or assisting the college with its goals. It reminds the listener of who we are and what we do. In brief, the most significant objectives of promotion are extending the duration of individual listening occasions and increasing listening occasions. Both are critical for success.

2. Scope

n/a

3. Prerequisites

n/a

4. Responsibilities: Announcer Presence

Radio is the most intimate of any media platforms and the language used by an announcer should reflect that notion. Developing a connection with the listener is one of the most important goals of the announcer. Generally speaking, when an individual is listening to the radio, they are alone; perhaps driving a car, doing housework, or engaged in a similar activity. Therefore, even though the announcer is literally talking to thousands of people at once, the announcer should always be speaking as if they are talking to only one individual using pronouns such as “you” and “me”. As much as possible, generalized language should be avoided. For example, “Hey Lansing”, “You all”, “Everyone out there”, etc.

Human connection is the main reason why radio is still relevant. The announcer becomes a bridge between the music and the audience. Streaming services typically play song after song, with the only transition coming during a commercial break. There is no introduction of the next song, no insights or backstory of the artists presented. It’s a hands-off presentation of music with no one assuming responsibility for the choice. An announcer should think about what makes the music interesting to the listener and frame it in a compelling way. Employing “tease promos”, or posing a question that will be answered in the next intro is an easy way to increase time spent listening. Almost everyone will stick around to hear the answer to a well-posed question.

5. Procedure: Imaging

In radio, the production of positioners, liners, and taglines is known as imaging. Sound effects, music beds, and various production elements are utilized to create “stationality” that is cohesive with the radio station’s overall sound. In marketing terms, imaging can best be correlated to the concept of branding. When used properly, imaging provides a narrative of who the station is, what the station does, and where it is done. Like the station’s identifier, imaging is a key element in distinguishing the radio station from all other stations within a market. The phrases used should be simple, clear, memorable, and convey a conviction and promise to the listener.

For all radio stations, an hourly legal identification (ID) is a mandatory requirement of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). A legal ID must consist of the station’s call letters

followed by the name of the city that it is licensed in. LCC Radio's legal ID is "WLNZ Lansing". The traditional rule is that the ID should run as close to the top of the hour as possible; usually within ten minutes before or after. Although the FCC has become more relaxed in its enforcement of the time requirement, LCC Radio still adheres to the ten-minute rule and when possible, also runs a secondary legal ID midway through the hour. The preferred method of delivering a station ID is via prerecorded messaging, however a live announcement is also acceptable by FCC regulations. When done as a prerecorded message, the ID can be intertwined with imaging elements as long as "WLNZ Lansing" are still connected within the statement. For example, "We are your community station, LCC Radio 89.7 WLNZ, Lansing", "Independent thinking, community minded, LCC Radio 89.7 WLNZ, Lansing", "From the TLC building at Lansing Community College, WLNZ, Lansing", etc. This provides a way for the station to reinforce imaging while at the same time, meet FCC requirements.

A radio station positioner is a short phrase that describes the station's format or role within their market. The task of positioning a commercial radio station can be more straight forward than a noncommercial station. Generally speaking, commercial radio tends to focus on one format (rock, R&B, country, etc.) and one particular audience (or demographic in marketing terms). Noncommercial stations tend to have more eclectic formats and diverse audiences, therefore it is usually necessary for a noncommercial station to "cover more ground" when developing their positioning statement and offer something with a broader scope. The best positioners are two to four-word descriptors of the station. LCC Radio's primary positioning statement is "Your community station". When attached to the station's identifier (LCC Radio 89.7), it is a statement that connects Lansing Community College and the station with their support and belief in the Lansing community.

A liner is a statement that addresses how you want your audience to view the station, strengths of the station, or general information regarding station features and programming. For example, "Your community connection...", "Discover new music, rediscover your favorites...", "Broadcasting online at lccradio.org...", etc.

For live on-air reads, announcers should demonstrate the same consistent messaging offered by the station's positioner and liners. A live read of liners in radio is sometimes referred to as a tagline. Either at the intro or outro (sometimes both) of on-air break, announcers should support the "stationality" by utilizing these taglines. For example, "From the campus of Lansing Community College...", "Your home for the Coffee Break morning show...", "From local musicians to international music...", etc. Although a verbatim delivery is preferred for taglines, it is not required. There is plenty of room for host creativity and personality using context, pace, and tone when delivering taglines. However, any alterations to taglines should still coincide with the overall format and messaging objectives.

6. Reference

n/a

7. Definitions

n/a