

How to Host a Radio Show



A Talk Network Radio Guide

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Hosting a radio show can bring you fame, help you find new customers, or make a case for your cause. Talk Network Radio is a radio network where you can host your own radio show. Here are answers and our best advice on how to host a radio show, from design to launch to marketing.

Q: Why would I want to host my own radio show?

People host radio talk shows for a variety of reasons. Some people often - professionals like doctors, lawyers, real estate agents, or financial advisors use - radio to highlight their knowledge, increase their name recognition, build up their local celebrity, and gain new clients. These same types of people may use their shows to promote books, seminars, or other sideline business, in - effect, running ads for themselves during their own show!

Others use radio to entertain or to promote a point of view - political, - religious, or otherwise. This noncommercial type of show is often supported by advertising. Hosts can even make their radio show into a business of its own, buying time for a fixed price, and selling ads themselves directly to businesses. The difference is your profit!

A mixture of these two is always possible as well. You should just be clear in advance what your objectives are, so you can gauge whether your show is achieving them

Q: How do I create a new radio show?

Before you do anything else, listen to existing shows that are like what you have in mind. Take note of what topics are most interesting to you, as well as the topics that generate callers, listeners and on-demand play counts. Also take note of boring things that slow a show down. Obviously, you'll want to avoid these practices. Ask your friends what they like and dislike, or even better, ask people who represent your potential audience. They may confirm your ideas or give you new ones.

Then make a schedule, which should include a list of topics you'll want to cover or people you want to interview. Make sure you have enough for at least your first two weeks, since you'll be building an audience, and you just can't rely on callers to fill up the time! Sometimes you may even want to "prime the pump" by having friends call in to ask questions. This tactic makes potential callers more comfortable about chiming in.

Want to host your own radio show? Contact us info@TalkNetworkRadio.com for more information!

Q: What are good topics for my radio show?

Obviously, the topics you cover should relate to your show's general theme. Beyond that, anything goes. Here are a variety of creative ideas for topics that you can discuss on your radio show:

- News, especially very recent events
- Interviews with recent newsmakers or local politicians
- Controversial issues (the economy, crime, global warming, education, etc.)
- Interviews with book authors (who are always hungry for publicity)
- Recent articles from the newspaper, magazines, or online publications
- Celebrity gossip
- Recent events in TV shows or movies (don't spoil the ending! well, unless it's a reality show.)
- Ridiculous things that really happened to you or a friend
- Music parodies and Internet memes (the Macarenas of today, the Harlem Shakes of tomorrows)
- Sex & relationships (keep it clean)
- Health and fitness advice
- Trivia contests with listeners
- Hate mail to your show

Note that interviewees don't have to be in the studio with you - you can conduct the interview entirely by phone. If you buy airtime with TNR, we provide complete training on how to do that. Also, do your research before you start blabbing - bring printouts of what you're going to discuss, or bring your laptop with topics bookmarked

Q: How should I structure my radio show?

Listeners like predictability, and predictability comes from structure. This means have a clear, signature open, an obvious close, and if you have them, commercial breaks at the same time for each show. (We at Talk Network Radio can help you create a signature sound for your show, so that listeners readily recognize they have tuned in to your show.) We also recommend you divide your show into segments. This lets you handle a variety of different topics and assures the listeners that they will hear about these same topics every day or every week. Remember, predictability is key if you want people to remember when and why to tune in.

Q: Should I host my radio show alone, or have a co-host?

Having a co-host is a great idea. It gives you someone to talk to when callers are slow. A co-host can provide a different point of view, or even a completely opposite one. Listeners love to hear co-hosts squabble! Just make sure your co-host is someone you respect, and whom you're happy to disagree with. A co-host can also take over when you get sick or go on vacation. In other words, two talking heads are better than one.

Q: How do I pay for the radio show?

Hosts should always ask themselves how they plan to support their radio show over the long term. If you are a professional using radio to build your business, the publicity and increased business alone may make the show financially worthwhile. (Of course, if you are also espousing political views, this publicity might not always have the positive effects that you anticipate!)

If the show is primarily for political, religious, or entertainment purposes, you should be seeking advertisers or sponsors from day one in - fact, well before day one! Find businesses that appeal to your type of listener and ask them to give you a try. For more information on radio advertising, you should read our article [How to Advertise on Radio](#). This will give you some ideas on what makes your show valuable to potential advertisers.

Alternately, you may have a dedicated group of sponsors or donors. Some of our most successful shows are funded entirely through donations. But even so, think about how you can bring these donors value, week after week nobody wants to listen to a permanent pledge drive!

If potential advertisers aren't sure, ask them for trade – that is, to give you something which can give away on air, or barter.

Q: So, I really buy my own radio show time?

Yes, that's how it works with most radio. At TNR, you can buy air time by the hour or half-hour, depending on the time of day. Ideally, you should buy the same time every week, so that listeners make you part of their daily routine. You can even buy the same time every weekday, Monday through Friday, depending on availability.

Q: Won't just a one-time radio show be enough?

It's unlikely. Think of all the times you missed a one-time-only mini-series that you thought you wanted to see! It's the same with radio. Your objective is to build yourself as a trusted commentator, as well as to be part of your listeners' daily routine. Being in the same place and time, week after week, is crucial for building an audience. We won't say no to your money, but we want you to be able to see and measure the results of your efforts!

Q: How do people advertise on radio shows?

Advertising on the radio doesn't have to mean the traditional 60-second spot with a silly jingle. It can be as simple as a statement read by the host, saying: 'This show is brought to you by Power Motors. Step on down to their showroom at 1414 Motorway Trail, where they have special deals on....' Of course, short 30-second radio ads also work well.

Ideally, advertisers should include a special offer available only to radio listeners, since that helps them measure the effect of their ads. For more information, visit our pages on radio advertising and how to create radio ads. We can help you directly, if you have more complicated needs.

Q: How do I promote my radio show?

Before you even start the show, talk to people who would be interested in listening. Talk to friends in your social, political, or religious groups, and tell them in advance where and when you'll be on. If a group has your ideal listener, visit it! Also, write a press release and send it to local newspapers. Some hosts also maintain a website, sponsor local events, advertise in local newspapers, or put up signs along major roadways.

We at TNR can also run teasers (short radio ads promoting your show) in advance of your new show, display your profile and picture on our **show host page**, and link to your website. What works really depends on your audience just ask yourself where your audience gets information and reads ads!

Q: Why should I host my radio show on Talk Network Radio?

First, there just aren't that many online radio networks dedicated to talk radio. Sadly, most other radio networks and stations are owned by companies based in far-off places, which means most programming decisions are made elsewhere. We are veteran owned and operated, and we have no intention of changing that.

Second, we believe in stability. Some stations get new owners every few years; others love switching formats at the drop of a hat; still others boot show hosts for no apparent reason. We don't do those things, and we try to provide stability for our hosts and listeners.

If you're wondering whether you can commit to a station, ask the station a few questions:

- Who owns this radio station? Where is that company based?
- If the radio station isn't managed by the owner, who manages this station? Where is that person or company based?
- If the station is managed under a "local marketing agreement" (LMA), how long is that agreement good for? Can I see the contract? (The contract is public record and must be kept in the station's public files. If it is not there, you should be concerned.)
- What are the owner's intentions for the station? Could it be sold tomorrow?
- What is the condition of the equipment?
- What assistance can you provide me?

We're happy to answer all your questions. Just contact us!

Q: So how can I get started with a radio show?

Contact us at 757-966-0013! Tell us your show idea, and we'll explain how it all works.

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