



Target Audience and Procedure

Employing God's Methods to Win Souls

Successful operation of a radio media ministry requires that the “people-goal” of the ministry be well-defined. It is just as important to define the meaning of “success”.

STEP ONE - DEFINING A TARGET AUDIENCE:

A common concept in radio marketing is the “target audience”. This means the types of listeners that you are trying to reach: not just the listeners you may already have, but also the listeners you **should** have, if only they can discover your station and realize what great programming it provides!

Target audiences are usually described (from a worldly perspective) in demographic terms - the type of information collected by a census such as age, sex, race, education, occupation, etcetera. However, “spiritual things are spiritually discerned” requiring Radio of Hope to employ different metrics, in the context of the Great Controversy, to define our “target audience” in these last days.

OF NECESSITY, OUR DEFINITION OF “TARGET AUDIENCE” IS MULTI-FACETTED.

1. People who are truly seeking Christian educational media.
2. People that seek to know God in a close, personal way.
3. People who are seeking help for today and hope for tomorrow.
4. People seeking that “special something” that feeds the emptiness of “soul hunger” untouched by worldly music and empty, vain philosophies.

OF EQUAL IMPORTANCE AND NECESSITY IS THE DEFINITION OF WHAT OUR “TARGET AUDIENCE” IS NOT.

5. People with more interest in media comparable to “**American Idol**”, “**Howard Stern**” and “**The Simpsons**” than “**It is Written**”, “**Focus on the Family**” or “**Nova**”.
6. People **preferring the confirmation** of traditionally-taught positions, rather than the discovery of life-changing truths, **personally mined from Scripture**.
7. People who are seeking a source of “**religious entertainment**”, obviously patterned after corrupt, secular popular music, rather than **making a total surrender** of all things to Christ.
8. People whose hearts are **satisfied with the things and conditions** of this world.

Notice that points 1-4 describe a very small cross-section of modern society. In fact, this has always been so. This is in accord with Matthew 7:14 which states (and by extension predicts) “**Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.**” Points 5-8 describe an **immense** people-group that will have **no interest** in spiritual things, unless and until the Holy Spirit is able to sufficiently enter the citadel of the soul, so that they will develop an affinity for items described in points 1-4. Based upon Scriptural predictions, radio needs to be programming for the “needle in the haystack” that will actually respond to Godly music and messages. By placing a principled

radio signal on the air we make it possible for all **TO** hear and respond **IF** they choose to do so. **“Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged.” 1 Corinthians 2:14.** As John Bunyan pointed out so well in his monumental writing, Pilgrims’ Progress, residents of “Vanity Fair” have no interest in eternal things and concepts.

While the conversion process alluded to here is certainly **hoped for** by Christian broadcasters, it is neither caused, nor aided by, the violation of Biblical principles in media programming which attempts to generate what can only be accomplished by the Spirit. The generally low state of apostate Christianity, due to its mass abandonment of Biblical standards, has led, to a large degree, to the acceptance of worldly entertainment in religious garb. Typically, **“Reaching** people where they are” in reality means **“leaving** them where they are.” If **educational** radio really **IS educational**, then exposing listeners to Godly music and programming will be an ongoing process bearing fruit **over time**. When **Christ’s** desires become **our** desires in all things (media included) we will adopt new standards in all things. Ultimately, the question needs to be; **does “I Surrender All” really mean “All” or just “some” or “most” of me?**

Recognizing the incredible power of electronic media to shape and mold moral perspective and response, the Enemy has successfully used radio, television, music and film for many years to accelerate the degradation of Mankind. The truth of “by beholding we are changed” applies to each of the human senses exposed to external influence. If KROH programming should be overly similar to other religiously-formatted sources could we even justify our existence? The Biblical admonition is clear - **“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” Romans 12:2**

Salvation and Sanctification - The Relationship to a Target Audience

Of those who have experienced the joy of Salvation, and yet recognize the continued depravity of their own character, no greater assurance is included than the encouraging words paraphrased from the pen of inspiration “sanctification is the work of a lifetime”. It is only at our own greatest peril that we forget Paul’s admonition in Philippians 3:13, 14; “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I **press toward** the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” It is obviously neither safe nor advisable to “park” in the process of our transformation. “I therefore so **run**, as not uncertainly; so **fight** I, as not beating the air: but I buffet my body, and bring it into **bondage**: lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected.” 1 Corinthians 9:26, 27.

“The Scriptures are the great agency in the transformation of character. . . . If studied and obeyed, the Word of God works in the heart, subduing every unholy attribute.” {FLB 116.7} Obviously, as long as there is breath - there needs to be growth.

We must disabuse ourselves of the notion that people of any age, and especially the youth, who **crave and insist upon worldly entertainment** are “reachable” persons within the context of our target audience. The apparent tension generated by this truth, when compared with the great commission **“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation”** Mark 16:15 and **“teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world”** Matthew 28:20, disappears when other Scriptures are considered.

While it may be initially misperceived as harsh or judgmental, Jesus Himself provided important direction in this apparent dilemma when He stated in Matthew 7:6 **“Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.”** Repeating His instruction regarding unreceptive hearts, in Matthew 10:14, Jesus again indicated what needs to be done when truth is rejected and undesired; **“And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.”** It may be difficult to accept, but even Heaven observes when evangelistic outreach for certain people groups is ultimately a waste of time! While the Gospel is certainly intended FOR everyone it is obviously not receivable BY everyone. **“Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged”** 1 Corinthians 2:14 . The hearts of Pharaoh, the Pharisees and the Sadducees are firm examples of rejected light; with a very strong parallel to

our day. Should the Holy Spirit ever be successful in softening such hearts, faithful radio must be on the air presenting what people NEED, so that the process may be complete. We must avoid the temptation to become impatient in what can be a very slow process. **One never uses Satan's tools or his music to hasten or accomplish God's work.**

Personal Preference

In dealing with music, as with any other area or topic of discussion, one often hears the term "personal preference" mentioned. While the recognition of its existence may be valid, it does not serve as justification for resistance to the sanctification process that God is attempting to work out in the heart of each individual. Baalam's "personal preference" for wealth, power and prestige had their baleful result.

In the performance of military service, the "personal preference" of safety must be set aside for the security goals and objectives of the unit. In transportation, the "personal preference" for a particular speed of travel must be moderated for the safety of others and a higher assurance of arrival at a destination. In the realm of dietary "favorites", some choices are wisely foregone due to the balance between seasonal availabilities, the cost of acquisition or, in the case of drugs and alcohol, Scriptural and societal constraint.

Children Who Followed an Untrained Appetite. -- While upon the cars, I heard parents remark that the appetites of their children were delicate, and unless they had meat and cake, they could not eat. When the noon meal was taken, I observed the quality of food given to these children. It was fine wheaten bread, sliced ham coated with black pepper, spiced pickles, cake, and preserves. The pale, sallow complexion of these children plainly indicated the abuses the stomach was suffering. Two of these children observed another family of children eating cheese with their food, and they lost their appetite for what was before them until their indulgent mother begged a piece of the cheese to give to her children, fearing the dear children would fail to make out their meal. The mother remarked, "My children love this or that so much, and I let them have what they want; for the appetite craves the kinds of food the system requires." {CG 381.1}

This might be correct if the appetite had never been perverted. **There is a natural and a depraved appetite.** Parents who have taught their children to eat unhealthful, stimulating food all their lives--until the taste is perverted, and they crave clay, slate pencils, burned coffee, tea grounds, cinnamon, cloves, and spices--cannot claim that the appetite demands what the system requires. The appetite has been falsely educated, until it is depraved. The fine organs of the stomach have been stimulated and burned, until they have lost their delicate sensitiveness. Simple, healthful food seems to them insipid. The abused stomach will not perform the work given it, unless urged to it by the most stimulating substances. If these children had been trained from their infancy to take only healthful food, prepared in the most simple manner, preserving its natural properties as much as possible, and avoiding flesh meats, grease, and all spices, the taste and appetite would be unimpaired. In its natural state, it might indicate, in a great degree, the food best adapted to the wants of the system." {CG 381.2}

Overcoming the Unnatural Appetite. -- Persons who have accustomed themselves to a rich, highly stimulating diet **have an unnatural taste, and they cannot at once relish food that is plain and simple.** It will take time for the taste to become natural and for the stomach to recover from the abuse it has suffered. But those who persevere in the use of wholesome food will, after a time, find it palatable. Its delicate and delicious flavors will be appreciated, and it will be eaten with greater enjoyment than can be derived from unwholesome dainties. And the stomach, in a healthy condition, neither fevered nor overtaxed, can readily perform its task. {CG 385.2}

The parallels of diet (in food and music) are so precise as to be unmistakable. The early and ongoing "training" we have received, and continually subject ourselves to, has its unavoidable effect. The desire for that which is in our own best interest is not desired. Fortunately, "personal preference" can, by the power of the Holy Spirit (and the influence of sanctified peerage), be set aside for the accomplishment of a goal, whether it be individual growth or a mission activity. "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, **If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.**" Matthew 16:24. Within the broadcast industry, Music Directors are routinely admonished to ignore personal preference and to rely exclusively upon market research to determine what people want to hear. This provides the **focus** and **consistency** in a musical format that is otherwise not achieved. While true **Christian** metrics to be applied in this area are different, in that we are called to present what people **NEED** to hear as opposed to what they

may **WANT** to hear, should not **focus** and **consistency** be our goals as well? In short, the issue of “personal preference” is highly irrelevant when seen from the proper perspective.

STEP TWO - How large is your target audience?

The simplest way to set a target audience **size** is a **share**. If three radio stations can be received in your coverage area, each station **might** expect to get a one-third **share** of the total audience. However, this analysis is overly simplistic and must be tempered with other format considerations. Another measure of audience size is **reach**: how many different people may listen to the station even if only a little and that infrequently. A third definition of target audience size, which best defines the desire and goal of “Radio of Hope” is **passionately devoted listeners**.

Most listeners seek radio that keeps them comfortable in their sin. Unfortunately, that will cause them to flee faithful Christian radio. Having said that, it is still desirable to **try** to have an equal **share**, but many non-commercial stations fall far short of that, for two main reasons beyond the obvious:

1. A lot of community stations are fairly new, and long-established stations usually have an advantage, because listeners are slow to change their habits.
2. Commercial stations can often afford a lot of off-air advertising, and offer financial incentives to listeners, such as competitions with valuable prizes.

On the other hand, the greed of commercial networks encourages them to try to increase profits by reducing their staff, and therefore having less local content. Because many listeners highly value local content, if commercial stations reduce it, audiences for community stations are likely to increase.

The more stations in your market, the **more tightly** your target audience needs to be defined. You might think the opposite: that the larger your target audience, the larger the audience you will get. But it doesn't work like that. In a market with many radio stations available, stations that **set too broad a target** usually end up with **very small audiences** - they try to offer something for everybody, but for every need they fill, another station fills it more comprehensively. The **art** of defining a target audience is to have one that is **as large as it can be**, but also defined clearly enough to allow the programming to be **distinctively different** from other stations that serve the same area.

STEP THREE - AUDIENCE GOALS – “SUCCESS”

A common question for any radio station that is trying to increase its audience (as most are) is "Which measure should we try to maximize?" “**Share**” or “**Reach**”? “Radio of Hope” is atypical, due to the nature of its target audience, and will have to modify conventional wisdom in the accomplishment of its mission.

It is commonly believed that community stations are better served by expressing their target audience size in terms of **reach**, rather **than share**. There are several reasons for this:

1. Maximizing **reach** matches with what most community stations are trying to do: that is, "we'd like as many people as possible to listen to our station, even if they don't listen for long" rather than "we're trying to attract a small number of people who will spend many hours listening to this station."
2. A station with high **reach** should be able to attract underwriting more easily than a station with high share (but the underwriters will need to be **educated** about this).
3. **Reach** is easier to measure than **share**: a simple survey will measure **reach**, but to measure **share** requires a **complex and expensive diary survey**.
4. **Reach** is more easily understood than **share**: e.g. "we want 20% of the people in this area to hear our station at least once a week," rather than "of the aggregate hours that people in this area spend listening to radio, this station wants to achieve 20%." (As explained above, **share** is not a percentage of people, but of person-hours.)

For a station whose funding does not come mostly from advertising, the best goal is to maximize neither **reach** nor **share**, but the number of **passionately devoted listeners**. If you ask the **passionately devoted listeners** for support, **they will give** money, or donate time, goods or services.

Interestingly, stations that make a determined effort to increase their numbers of passionately devoted listeners usually end up increasing their reach and share as well - but stations that only try to increase their share often fail.

It is a slow business, **cultivating devoted listeners**, and a little like growing vegetables: you must never forget to water them. They should feel they are being given programs better than they have any right to expect. Additionally, any contact they have with people at the station should be **pleasant and fulfilling**. **This approach seems to work best when a station has a smallish target audience, and broadcasts a type of program with no local competitors.**

We anticipate that our understanding and application of these principles will expand and mature as we further our investigation and the Lord leads in our operation. While sufficient listener-support to maintain, and even grow, operations can sometimes be a realistic metric of operations, our truest measure of “success” may not be made until we are in the Kingdom. Numerous religious media operations teach significant error in many theological areas or use compromised, ungodly music and yet have every **appearance** of success. Our commentary would be **“Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.” Luke 6:26**

Results Not Measured by Apparent Success - “We are to be sincere, earnest Christians, doing faithfully the duties placed in our hands, and looking ever to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. **Our reward is not dependent upon our seeming success**, but upon the spirit in which our work is done.” Manuscript 20, 1905 “If you **lower the standard** in order to secure popularity and an increase of numbers, and then make this increase a cause of rejoicing, you show **great blindness**. If numbers were evidence of success, Satan might claim the pre-eminence; for, in this world, his followers are largely in the majority.” **Christian Education p.42**

God has promised **“so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” Isaiah 55:11.** May our greatest success be faithful service to the Master as we broadcast to the world.