Radio Station Survey Essay, Research Paper

Introduction

Music is a general love of almost every college student. Many develop their personalities, profiles, and various other tastes based on their listening choices. In general, many college students acquire the same spectrum of listening values. If a radio station, one that wishes to target the college student population, can discover the musical preferences of the general population of students, they will be able to grow within the specific market.

Since the target market is of a personality of the student, generally a crowd that has the same likes and dislikes as his/her peers, the target musical format should be fairly easy to determine. Unlike the 25-33 crowd or 40 and up crowd, where their musical preferences range far and wide, each college student has almost the same understanding of their values. Possible reasons for this may be peer pressure or self morale gains, yet it still exists among the college crowd. Thus, a common format may be simpler for a station targeting the college format.

The station will be able to gain knowledge for its possible advertisers by analyzing its target population?s needs and wants. Plus, they will be able to acknowledge the possible locations of the students, where they go and what they do. The ultimate goal is to find out where the students are spending their money, so advertising can be solicited into purchasing radio time. Advertisers wish to have some ?concrete? data when analyzing which station they wish to spend their money on through air-time. The purpose of this study is to give the possible clients the facts placed in front of them as well as educate them as to where our target is going and the possibilities of gathering our target audience to their place of business.

Consumer behavior will come into play in the study, since part of the goal is to gather information on the needs and wants of the consumer, or radio listener. Analysis of behavior is more difficult to determine, because the data collected is based on values and personal judgment. Little data collected will be concrete, since the student will be revealing based on opinions, not facts. However, opinions sometimes hold strong enough to reach a borderline to fact.

Scope of the Study

The study was a descriptive design with an emphasis on the listening preferences of college students. Data was acquired as to which brand of music, or radio format, is most appealing to college students, such as alternative, rock, country, R&B, etc.

Also, data was collected regarding the basic needs of the students as well as the distances they wished to travel to acquire their needs. Other gatherings included the desired radio format, amount of interest in the radio, impact of personalities, and several shopping tastes the student has.

Analysis of the location of the target, how often they listen to the radio, what time they listened to the radio, and traveling distance, both overall and for necessities, were acquired to gain a general knowledge of the target market.

Methods Used

The main source of the study was through conducting a survey. A survey was offered randomly to college students on the campus of the University of Nevada-Reno. The sampling was nonprobability-random, because of the nature of the issuance of the surveys. However, coverage was broad, because the survey was issued to students ranging from freshman to senior. After the survey was conducted, a total of 57 surveys was collected. The information from the surveys included questions such as their listening preferences, time of day they listen to the radio, amount of time spent listening to the radio, and where they spend the most amount of time listening to the radio, such as in their car, at home, at work, or at school. Next, students were asked several questions in regards to their favorite radio formats. Such questions included were their favorite morning show, type of morning show they most desire, and how much of an impact the radio personality, or disc jockey, placed on the student. These questions were used to determine the students? tastes in format as well as how much of an impact the format places on them.

Also, demographics of the students, age, marital status, gender, and ethnicity, were collected. The data collected will help determine a possible correlation between the student and the other categorical questions.

Another important factor placed on the survey was the location of the student. If one can determine the general concentrated population area of most students, they will be able to determine the possible advertising companies to target. Along with location, questions were asked to determine how far a student travel when they purchase their everyday needs, like groceries, food (dining), clothing, and gasoline. Another item collected was the students? interests in participating in promotions and contests. Along with the students? interests in promotions, they were asked to see how far students would travel to participate in radio promotions. This information is mostly useful to persuade potential advertisers, where the station will be able to determine the target locations of the students. If there shows a concentration of student population in a certain area and they travel to primarily the same areas, endorsements will be extremely beneficial in the target locations. Another category used was to show how the students? spend their money. Do they spend it mostly on electronics, clothing, technology, sporting goods, home furnishings, entertainment, or some other goods.

Secondary data was used as a ?back up? to the survey. Since the survey was involving a small portion of the population, some data may be skewed. The secondary data was used as a form of a guide to the survey results. It was there to ensure that the student population was represented, even with a small sample. Forms of secondary data used included journals, magazines, newspapers, the internet, and other online databases.

Outcomes

Age

To ensure that the entire student population was covered, the average age was calculated. The results show an average age of 23.5 with a standard deviation of 5.5. Thus, the range of age was reached, with one deviation ranging from 18 to 29.

Gender

The results of the survey show that 66.7 percent of women versus 33.3 percent of men were surveyed. The survey was slightly skewed in this manner, but the coverage was still reached. Also, the majority of the survey was a single crowd. 77.2% of the poll was single, compared to 22.8% being married.

Musical format

From the survey, the data collected showed the students? preferences of format based on a 1-5 scale, with 5 being most favorite. After the data was analyzed, the following shows the college students preferences based on their mean:

1. Alternative-3.0

2. R&B-3.0

3. Rock-2.81

4. Hip Hop-2.71

5. Pop-2.60

6. Classic Rock-2.40

7. Rap-2.39

The proper radio format would be to play a mix of alternative music with some rock.

Time of Day

The survey for to acquire when the student listens to the radio was a very similar format to the one in acquiring their favorite tastes. Four categories, morning, afternoon, evening, and late night, were used. Students were to rate the categories from 1-4, with 1 being the time of day the person listened mostly. The following results appeared (based on the mean of the students? ratings):

♦ Morning (5am-11am)- 2.28

♦ Afternoon (11am-5pm)- 2.60

♦ Evening (5pm-11pm)- 2.63

♦ Late Night (11pm-5am)- 2.56

A heavy dose of morning listeners was revealed from the survey. While afternoon, evening, and late night were approximately the same, morning showed the most concentration. Thus, the radio should concentrate on heavy advertising in the morning.

Also, the amount of time the student listens to the radio per day was viewed. The data was separated into four categories, less than one hour, one to three hours, three to five hours, and more the five hours. The results show:

♦ Less than one hour- 22.8%

♦ One to three hours- 54.4%

♦ Three to five hours- 15.8%

♦ More than five hours- 7.0%

Thus, 77.2% of the average students listen to the radio from zero to three hours a day.

Area of Listening

The students were also asked about the area that the listen to the radio the most. Their choices were either in the car, at home, at work, or at school. They were to rank the selections in order from 1-4, with 1 being most frequent. They showed the following results (based on the mean of the students? ratings):

♦ In car- 1.75

♦ At home- 2.07

♦ At work- 2.67

♦ At school- 3.51

The data shows that the students listen to the radio mostly in their car or at home. From the information, many students spend their time traveling when they are listening to the radio. Thus, we analyzed the distance they drove per day. From the survey, the average student travels showed an average driving distance of

Student Preferences

From the results, students are influenced by the disc jockey on the radio. 56.9% stated that they would listen to a radio station based on the disc jockey used. Also, a study of morning formats was analyzed. The following categories, along with their results, are revealed:

♦ Comedy talk-19.0%

♦ News talk- 6.9%

♦ Sports talk- 3.4%

♦ Music with talk-29.3%

♦ Music with no talk-58.6%

The major preference of the average student wishes to have a music format with no talk. However, comedy talk had a decent impact also, creating a 19.0% interest. Also, the variety of music was analyzed. The survey asked whether the audience wished to have a format with a wide variety of music or one with a specific playing pattern. Students wished to have a wide variety, 68.4%, rather than a specific pattern, 31.6%.

Next, data based on students personal tastes was collected. They were asked what they spent the majority of their money on and given the following categories to choose from: electronics, clothing, technological, sporting goods, home furnishings, and entertainment. The data showed:

♦ Electronics-42.1%

♦ Clothing-73.7%

♦ Technological10.5%

♦ Sporting Goods26.3%

♦ Home Furnishings50.9%

♦ Entertainment33.3%

The majority of tastes for students showed up in clothing, with home furnishings, electronics, and entertainment receiving very capable results.

Distances

The distances students were willing to travel were taken next. They were asked their usual driving distances to gather groceries, dining, clothing, and gasoline. Also, they were asked how far they were willing to drive to attend a radio promotion. Categories were divided into 0-1 miles, 1-3 miles, 3-5 miles, and over 5 miles. The statistics show that:

♦ Groceries-0-1mi: 24.6%, 1-3mi: 45.6%, 3-5mi: 15.8%, 5+mi: 14.0%

♦ Dining-0-1mi: 5.3%, 1-3mi: 38.6%, 3-5mi: 24.6%, 5+mi: 31.6%

♦ Clothing-0-1mi: 1.8%, 1-3mi: 22.8%, 3-5mi: 22.8%, 5+mi: 52.6%

♦ Gas-0-1mi: 33.3%, 1-3mi: 36.8%, 3-5mi: 12.3%, 5+mi: 17.5%

♦ Radio Promotion0-1mi: 21.1%, 1-3mi: 24.6%, 3-5mi: 22.8%, 5+mi: 31.6%

The average distances for the students was also calculated. Students averaged 3.25 miles to get groceries, 4.33 miles to dine, 5.00 miles to purchase clothing, 3.11 miles to get gas. Also, they were willing to travel 3.98 miles to attend a radio promotion.

Recommendations

Target Format

The music format of choice would be to do a variety of alternative and rock music. R&B would be a good choice, too, but the variety would be too wide for the tastes of the college students. Alternative music and rock is somewhat similar, yet it still has some variety to it, which is something that the survey showed.

Also, the morning format must be focused upon more than the other times of the day. The most drastic statistic revealed from the survey was the amount of listening college students do in the morning hours, from 5 to 11am. Thus, the station should analyze this part of the day more carefully than any other. From the survey, it was revealed that students mostly preferred a morning format with either no talk and all music. Also, several of them were influenced by the disc jockey used. This should be considered deeply when drawing a conclusion to the format. In my opinion, I feel that the station should go with a mostly music with little talk show format. The disc jockeys should have a comic appeal, though. The ultimate goal is to please the majority, and there is a happy medium between an all-comedy format and an all-music format. Yet, the station must be careful in regards to its levels of talk and music.

Target Location

Many of the students reside near campus or in Northwest Reno. An emphasis should be placed on this area, with a radius of approximately 4 miles, since students are willing to travel this far for a promotion.

Target Advertisements

The station should highly emphasize its advertising on the clothing industry. Many students spend the majority of their money on clothing, and they are willing to drive longer distances than usual to acquire it.

Other areas they should target would be home furnishings, electronics, and entertainment. These categories, although incomparable to clothing?s demand, are still areas with a great concentration of the students? funding.