

An introductory note, if you will. 2019 marks my 25th year conducting the RTDNA (before that, RTNDA) Annual Survey. First at Ball State University and now at Hofstra University. It has been my privilege to do this, and I want to thank RTDNA, Ball State and Hofstra for the support and opportunity to keep this going. Most of all, I want to thank all of you who spend what I know is way too much time poring over the way too many questions that I ask on this survey. Thank you.  
- Bob Papper

### **What's Going On with Radio and Mobile by Bob Papper**

New radio activity in mobile edged up a bit in the latest RTDNA/Hofstra University Survey. Still, more than two-thirds of news directors and station managers said they did nothing new and important with mobile in the past year. No sub-group – not even the biggest markets or the biggest newsrooms hit the 50% mark of doing something new and important.

#### **What's the most important new thing you started doing with mobile this past year?**

Of the 31.8% who said they did start something new, four areas cover almost all of the answers.

As usual, apps came in first ... but nearly double a year ago at 51.3%. Mostly, apps were described as new, more and improved (kind of like detergent). There were specialty apps for sports, breaking news and scavenger hunts, but mostly it was just adding apps – in some cases for the first time.

Well behind, at 20%, came content. Sports, video, “better.” I included live reporting, blogging and podcasts in the content category.

At 12.5%, came strategy and approach to mobile: better design, people to take care of mobile, more mobile-friendly, better posting and push notifications.

Assorted software also hit 12.5%. RadioFX, Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, and I included Alexa commands..

Those four areas covered more than 96% of the responses.

#### **Apps**

The percentage of radio stations with apps rose almost 7 points to 63%. That's the highest it's reached in the Survey. The average station has 1.2 apps – up from 0.9 a year ago – but the median number remained at 1. Non-commercial stations are much more likely to have an app (70.9% versus 58.6%), but commercial stations have more apps (average 1.4 versus 0.9). Both commercial and non-commercial stations rose 5 points from a year ago.

The bigger the staff and the bigger the market, the more likely that the station has one or more apps. But not how many apps they'll have. The number of apps correlates with the number of stations in the local group – not with staff or market size.

Two stations in the Survey said they charged for apps. That's not 2% -- just 2 stations. Both commercial ... one in the South and one in the West. That's an infinite increase over last year ... when no radio stations in the Survey charged for an app.

Major markets are those with 1 million or more potential listeners. Large markets are from 250,000 to 1 million. Medium markets are 50,000 to 250,000. Small markets are fewer than 50,000.

*Note that there's a fuzzy dividing line between information in this Mobile Media article and the articles on the web and social media ... so please be sure and check out all.*

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### **About the Survey**

The RTDNA/Hofstra University Survey was conducted in the fourth quarter of 2018 among all 1,685 operating, non-satellite television stations and a random sample of 3,481 radio stations. Valid responses came from 1,310 television stations (77.7%) and 645 radio news directors and general managers representing 1,938 radio stations. Some data sets (e.g. the number of TV stations originating local news, getting it from others and women TV news directors) are based on a complete census and are not projected from a smaller sample.