

Fewer Radio Stations Get News From an Outside Provider **by Bob Papper**

The latest RTDNA/Lawrence Herbert School of Communication - Hofstra University Survey found that the percentage of radio stations getting news from an outside service slid back slightly from last year's record high – down from 25.1% a year ago to 23.7% today.

Commercial stations went down from 29% last year to 27.3% this time around. Non-commercial stations held steady at 14.5%.

The smaller the staff, the more likely that the station gets its news from an outside service. No surprise there. Number of stations in a group made no difference one way or the other. Market size was inconsistent, although small markets remained less likely to use an outside service than any other market size. Geography made no difference.

For those who said local radio news came from an outside service, I asked for the name:

- 26% Various local TV stations ... down nearly 4 points from a year ago
- 26 Various local newspapers (clearly with and without some sort of agreement) ... more than double last year
- 17.7 24/7 News Source (formerly Metro Networks and Total Traffic Networks) ... nearly double last year but the number seems to bounce up and down in alternate years
- 13.5 Associated Press ... down 3+ from last year
- 6.3 Various statewide radio networks ... a third as high as a year ago
- 3.1 VirtualNewsCenter ... about half what it was last year
- 3.1 The internet ... without noting what sites
- 2.1 Remote News Service ... unchanged
- 1 News Flash ... new this year
- 1 Skyview ... new this year

Dropping off completely from a year ago: Spectrum News.

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.

About the Survey

The RTDNA/Newhouse School at Syracuse University Survey, funded in part by the Lawrence Herbert School of Communication at Hofstra University, was conducted in the fourth quarter of 2019 among all 1,702 operating, non-satellite television stations and a random sample of 3,427 radio stations. Valid responses came from 1,313 television stations (77.1%) and 673 radio news directors and general managers representing 1,996 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.

About Bob Papper

Bob Papper is Adjunct Professor of Broadcast and Digital Journalism at the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University and has worked extensively in radio and TV news.