ARBITRON

What Is a Station?

Over the years, Arbitron adapted its station reporting policies to reflect changes in the way its survey respondents perceive radio.

This booklet provides an overview of the radio stations that are eligible for reporting in Arbitron's services and a summary of audience estimates reporting policy.

FCC-Licensed Radio Stations

In its currency services, Arbitron reports audience estimates for AM, FM, and HD radio stations licensed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).*

Radio Station Streams

Arbitron also reports audience estimates for the Internet streams of FCC-licensed radio stations in its services.

Because a radio station's stream may transmit programming or commercials that are different from those broadcast on-air, Arbitron reports estimates for a station's stream separately from the estimates reported for the on-air station.

In other words, Arbitron considers an on-air station and its stream to be two *different* stations. This helps ensure that all of the listeners represented in a station's Arbitron audience estimates heard exactly the same programming and commercials in the same sequence during a particular time period.

Audience Estimates Labeling

Arbitron labels a station's audience estimates with the station's FCC-designated call sign followed by a two-character suffix that identifies the station's band or type.

This helps ensure that the label Arbitron uses for a station's audience estimates is unique to that station.

Following are examples of call letter / band-id labels for stations that Arbitron reports:.

Band ID	Station	Example
AM	Analog AM station	WAAA-AM
FM	Analog FM station	WBBB-FM
F2, F3	HD-multicast station	WBBB-F2, WBBB-F3[1]
IA	Internet stream of an AM station	WAAA-IA
IF	Internet stream of an FM station	WBBB-IF
G2, G3	Internet stream of an HD-multicast station	WBBB-G2, WBBB-G3

FM Translators

FCC regulations require that an FM translator re-transmit the signal of another FCC-licensed radio station. As such, Arbitron automatically includes a station's translator listening in the estimates published for that station. Arbitron does not prepare or report standalone audience estimates for FM translators.

Low Power FM Radio Stations

Low Power FM (LPFM) radio stations are small, noncommercial radio stations that the FCC licenses to community, educational, or religious organizations. While LP stations broadcast on the FM band, they are subject to a unique set of FCC regulations that differentiate them from FM stations. LP stations are eligible for reporting in all Arbitron services except for Diary-based Radio Market Reports. Arbitron labels LP station estimates with the station's call sign followed by the suffix 'FM' (or, in rare circumstances, an appropriate alias call sign).

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[1] Canadian stations licensed by the CRTC and Mexican stations licensed by COFETEL are also eligible for reporting in Arbitron's services as applicable.

[2] The numeral of an HD-multicast station indicates the channel's number; for example, HD2 is "F2" and HD3 is "F3."

Satellite Radio

Sirius XM is an FCC-licensed radio service. For that reason, Arbitron includes satellite radio listening in its Persons Using Radio audience estimates. However, Arbitron does not report satellite radio audience estimates in its syndicated services.

Other Media and Nonlicensed Stations

Arbitron does not include listening to audio media outlets that are not radio stations in any of its syndicated services. Examples of these outlets are the audio channels available via cable or satellite television services and pure-play Internet streams (e.g., audio content distributed online but not broadcast on an over-the-air radio station).

Similarly, Arbitron does not include listening to unlicensed radio stations such as shortwave, subcarrier, or "pirate" stations in its syndicated services.

New Radio Terms

On-air stations or *Over-the-air stations* are terms the industry uses to refer to broadcast AM, FM, and HD radio stations.

Platform describes the method or methods by which a broadcaster distributes content or programming. For Arbitron's purposes, a "platform" is not the same thing as a "station."

Primary and *Partner* are Arbitron business terms that refer specifically to stations involved in a Total Line Reporting relationship.

Feed is a term that an engineer may use to describe an audio signal. For Arbitron's purposes, a 'feed' is not the same thing as a 'station.'

Looking Ahead

Arbitron continually monitors marketplace developments. Periodically, Arbitron adapts its services and policies to reflect changes in how survey respondents identify 'radio' and to account for new technology used to distribute and listen to radio stations.

Additional Information

For additional information on Arbitron's station reporting policies or any of the other subjects addressed in this booklet, contact:

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