

## POLICY BRIEF

# GUIDELINES FOR STARTING NEW RADIO METROS

## OVERVIEW

The Nielsen Radio Metro Survey Area (Metro) is the primary survey area for the buying and selling of local radio advertising time. Nielsen Metro definitions are based on radio listening<sup>1</sup> patterns with economic interdependence<sup>2</sup> and may differ from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) definition of a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

## CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING A NEW NIELSEN RADIO METRO

A new radio Metro may be established under the following guidelines:

- The proposed Metro is comprised of contiguous whole counties or county equivalents<sup>3</sup> with a combined estimated Persons 12+ population of 50,000 or greater<sup>4</sup>; and
- At least 30 percent of listening in each county is credited to stations assigned to the proposed Metro's counties; and
- At least 15 percent of commuting from each county must be into the proposed Metro.

## CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING AN EMBEDDED RADIO METRO MARKET

An embedded Metro is a market in which counties defining the Metro may be contained within an existing Metro. In addition to population and commuting requirements listed above, the following criteria must be met:

- In Diary markets, the embedded Metro must be measured during the same surveys as the parent Metro; and
- The proposed embedded Metro's estimated Persons 12+ population must not exceed 25 percent of the parent Metro; and
- At least 25 percent of listening reported in each county is credited to stations assigned within the proposed embedded Metro; or
- At least two stations assigned to the proposed embedded Metro have a total week Persons 12+AQH share ranked among the top 10 in the proposed market<sup>5</sup>.

## NON-METRO TOTAL SURVEY AREA (TSA) CRITERIA

The Total Survey Area (TSA) of a Nielsen radio market is a geographic area composed of the Metro and additional non-Metro counties. In order for a non-Metro county to be included in the TSA, the following must be met:

- Metro licensed stations receive mention<sup>6</sup> in at least 10 diaries returned from the county; and
- Diary mentions to Metro-licensed stations account for at least 15 percent of the total mentions to all stations from the county.

<sup>1</sup> The term "listening" in this sheet refers to unweighted quarter-hours of listening during the previous calendar year's Spring and Fall surveys.

<sup>2</sup> Economic interdependence is evaluated based upon the updated commuting data from U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey, <http://www.census.gov/population/metro/data/other.html>

<sup>3</sup> A definition of county equivalents is available in the Description of Methodology (DOM)

<sup>4</sup> Based upon most recent Claritas, LLC Population Estimates

<sup>5</sup> Or alternatively, if there is only one station assigned to the proposed embedded Metro, it must have a total week Persons 12+ AQH share ranked among the top 10 in the proposed market.

<sup>6</sup> TSA "mentions" criteria based on previous two calendar years' Spring and Fall surveys

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### PROCESS OF EVALUATION AND TIMELINE

New market evaluations may be valid for up to one year from assessment for contract use. New Metros are opened for the Spring and Fall survey periods only. Winter or Summer start-ups of embedded Metros may be considered in certain circumstances. Contracts must be finalized by the market change deadline, usually 90-120 days in advance of the first Diary week in which the new Metro would open.

### CONTACT

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