

COMPARE MY RADIO STATISTICS FOR BBC MUSIC RADIO

Background

The music offered by individual radio stations is important. The type of music they play helps define the audience that will listen. Compare My Radio, part of Absolute Radio's One Golden Square Labs, provides a tool to monitor radio stations' "now playing" information to examine the similarities and differences of radio play-lists.

Using Compare My Radio, tracks that are played on UK radio stations can be compared against individual competitors to analyse the crossover during a 30 day period. For example, using the Compare My Radio online engine, 3% of Radio 1's August 2014 play-out was played on Capital FM London.

Brief

RadioCentre, the UK commercial radio trade-body, asked Compare My Radio to compare every commercial radio station in the database with each individual national BBC service. This data is not available publicly through our online tool.

RadioCentre believes that to look at stations in a one-on-one basis is restrictive, as it does not fully represent the market. In terms of spectrum and reach, there is no individual commercial station which can compare directly to a national BBC popular music service.

Compare My Radio measures unique tracks over a 24 hour period. As different times of the day are of more value to commercial radio due to advertising demand, especially during weekday daytime (0630-1900), RadioCentre also wanted to examine how distinctive BBC popular music services were to commercial radio at different times in the day.

Methodology

87 of the 335 commercial radio licences are catalogued on Compare My Radio. Each BBC popular music station (R1, R2, 1Xtra, 6Music) was individually compared against all 87 commercial radio stations for the 12 week period of 1 July-30 September 2014.

Each station was analysed over each of the 12 weeks (0000 Sunday – 2359 Saturday) by examining how many of the tracks played did not feature on commercial radio stations in that week. This provided a unique score for that week. These scores were then aggregated and an average mean score for unique tracks was taken over the three months to ensure there were no anomalies.

When breaking track play-out down to specific time periods, only the tracks played during that period on both the BBC station and the commercial stations were used. Therefore, when examining weekday daytimes, for example, only the tracks played between 0630-1900 Monday-Friday on both the BBC station and the commercial stations were counted, calculated and aggregated.

As this only includes 87 of over 300 commercial stations, it should be noted that the commonality between commercial radio and the BBC is likely to be understated. An increase in the amount of stations would be likely to increase the amount of duplication of tracks being played in the measurement period.

Results

Broadly speaking the results show a pattern that off-peak times (after 1830 on weekdays, and weekends) are more unique when compared to commercial radio stations.

Radio 1

Full week	24 hours	70% unique	
Weekday	0630-1830	40% unique	Daytime
Weekday	0630-1000	48% unique	Breakfast
Weekday	0630-1400	41.5% unique	
Weekday	1000-1245	48% unique	FC
Weekday	1300-1400	38% unique	SM
Weekday	1600-1900	48% unique	GJ
Weekday	1700-1900	40.6% unique	Drive
Weekday	1900-0630	80.8% unique	Night
Weekend	0630-1830	44% unique	
Weekend	0930-1830	48% unique	

1Xtra

Full week	24 hours	85% unique
Weekday	0700-1900	73.2% unique
Weekday	1900-0700	92.5% unique
Weekend	0600-1900	79.1% unique

Whilst an average of 7/10 tracks Radio 1 played across the entire week are unique to the station, this appears primarily because it has so many unique tracks after 7pm at night (more than 8/10). In weekday daytime, only 4/10 tracks on the station are not played somewhere on commercial radio during this period.

1Xtra, which is much more unique than its analogue sister station, follows the same pattern; with over 9/10 tracks not being played on commercial radio through the night, but only 7/10 in daytimes.

Radio 2

Full Week	24 hours	45% unique	
Weekday	0630-1830	40% unique	Daytime
Weekday	0630-0930	63% unique	Breakfast
Weekday	0630-1400	31.7% unique	
Weekday	0930-1200	39% unique	KB
Weekday	1400-1700	20% unique	SW
Weekday	1600-1900	59% unique	
Weekday	1700-1900	32.2% unique	Drive
Weekday	1900-0630	45% unique	Night
Weekend	0630-1830	72% unique	
Weekend	0930-1830	75% unique	

6Music

Full week	24 hours	81% unique
Weekday	0700-1900	68.8% unique
Weekday	1900-0700	87.8% unique
Weekend	0700-1900	79.6% unique

Similarly, only 4/10 of tracks played on BBC Radio 2 during daytime hours are not played in daytime on commercial radio. This drops as low as 2/10 for the three hours during the Steve Wright show in afternoons (1400-1700).

Again, unique tracks are much more likely to be found after 1830 during off peak on the Radio 2 sister service 6Music – although once more the digital service plays far less unique tracks during daytime than at night.