

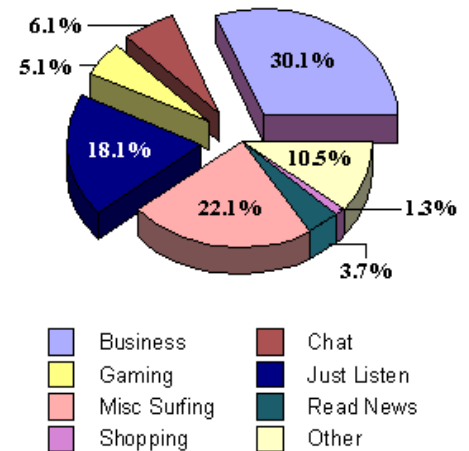
Internet Radio

Getting "On The Air"

Introduction

So-called "Internet Radio" seems to be taking off, at least in some circles. Perhaps the reported death of Internet Radio came with the "Dot-Com" era melt-down, or the lack of significant advertising revenues. Certainly, Internet Radio has its faithful listeners. But until recently, the economics of the proposition made it difficult to achieve a significant Return On Investment. Among the obstacles were the high cost of the technology, the bandwidth, and the necessary content (music) rights. No longer.

2,039 persons responded to RRadio Network's latest series of questions. In this survey we looked at what occupies their time while they are listening to radio online. In nearly equal numbers, males and females say that "business" is first with "just listening" a distant second.



Source: AudioGraphics 6/2004

Technology

Just like you can instantly stream video on the public Internet, you can stream audio. Some would argue that the advances in audio compression have been more dramatic than in video compression, and today the Advanced Audio Codec (AAC) provides amazing CD-quality stereo audio at rates as low as 96 Kbps and it holds up extremely well at rates down to 32 Kbps. Add to this the fact that there is a unified standard (ISMA), for Internet streaming, a robust competitive market, and very low costs. The AAC audio compression technology used by a VBrick VBXcast give some 30-40% improvement over the popular "mp3" audio.

Simul-Webcasting

Existing AM/FM radio stations can instantly get their programs on the Internet in about 15 minutes using a single VBXcast. They need only deliver the live program feed to the VBrick, make a few adjustments, and they are “on the air”.

Existing religious broadcasters and “talk radio” may not even have BMI/ASCAP license concerns.

“The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) and the Radio Music License Committee (RMLC) agreed to provide "stations with the right to perform ASCAP music over the air and also as part of a simultaneous stream of their over-the-air signals on their Internet web sites. The agreement goes through 2009.” – Business Week

College and University radio

stations can simultaneously send their signal on the campus LAN via IP multicast, reaching everyone without bandwidth concerns.

Building Your Own

There is a public appetite for “narrowcasting” – programs that are narrowly targeted to a particular vertical or interest group. With no more than a VBrick, an Internet connection, an audio “mixing board”, and a microphone, you can get on the air in minutes.

Bandwidth

One VBrick will directly serve your audio to up to 200 listeners. But even if your audio streaming rate were set to 32 Kbps, you would need 6.4 Mbps of Internet access. The cost of bandwidth may appear prohibitive, but there is a simple, low-cost solution.

VBrick has teamed with PowerStream who offers the “VBXcasting” reflector service. For as little as \$480, you can deliver 50 GB of powerful audio webcasting, reaching thousands of listeners and paying only for usage.