

Liverpool independent local radio licence applications

Questions and responses:

These are the responses received from Merseylife to the non-confidential questions asked by Ofcom regarding their application for the Liverpool licence.

1. Please provide definitions, for Format drafting purposes, of the ‘nostalgia’ and ‘easy listening’ music categories.

We would define ‘nostalgia’ as: *tracks to evoke a memory or emotion of a moment in someone’s life.*

Nostalgia tracks would cross a variety of genres and eras, for example, You’ll Never Walk Alone (football disaster), Waterloo (Eurovision song winner); Evita (long running show and film); Barcelona (Freddie Mercury). They will be tracks that tend to be older and have some history. A track such as Wet Wet Wet’s Love Is All Around (Four Weddings & A Funeral) would be a track that will fit the nostalgia category in a few years when it stops being AC.

We would define ‘easy listening’: *tracks that are soft and melodic with a slower tempo.*

2. In the ‘level of speech content’ paragraph within the Detail of your draft Format, it is stated that “[speech] must include a daily weekday topical magazine and phone-in style programme”. Please clarify whether this is referring to one programme or two.

This is one programme currently scheduled between 12.00-13.00 weekdays although we will encourage phone-ins throughout the day at relevant times.

3. We note that, while not committed to any specialist programming, Merseylife will “encourage” some specialist music or speech programmes. Given that this will be a Format obligation, how is it intended to do this?

We had not included evening specialist music or speech programmes in our Format obligation, although we have committed to a daily weekday topical magazine and phone-in style programme during daytime. We used the word “encourage” in our application because, in our opinion, we support the concept of specialist programmes. However, we deliberately did not use the term “commit” as we have seen these initiatives run out of steam over a period of time and this results in many stations trying to get them changed, reduced or stopped altogether.

Whilst we considered specialist programmes, particularly as they would clearly broaden audience choice in the marketplace, and our focus groups thought the idea of specialist music genre programming to be worthwhile, outside soul/Motown, only one individual had a sufficiently keen interest in more specialist genres.

We believe that a weekly nostalgia or country & western specialist music programme would not be a turn-off to our target audience, however these genres are already included in ample amounts within our daytime programming and bring nothing extra to our overall output. We researched some innovative programming proposals, for instance radio plays and drama, but found it hard to illicit significant support for these initiatives. Notwithstanding we would like the opportunity to include specialist

programming if the right topic came along, but not necessarily covering a set genre or subject matter. For instance, if Tom Jones was in town, we would invite him into the studio and perhaps do a 2-hour special about him and his music. The following week, Liverpool may host Cleo Laine and again we would feature her and her jazz music. Perhaps the following week, it would be a local artist or Claire Sweeney bringing her Guys and Dolls show to Liverpool. It is difficult to give this flexibility to specialist shows by labelling them but we would want to encourage them and we would promote them heavily in advance.

So, if Ofcom would feel more comfortable, we would be happily include text in our Format to read something like: *“There will be up to 10 hours of specialist music and/or speech programming each week covering a subject matter of direct relevance to 45-64 year olds”*.

4. Were the demand figures used in the calculation of projected listenership and referenced on page 19 (77% and 66%) weighted? If so, what weighting was used?

Yes, the demand figures used in the calculation of projected listenership and referenced on page 19 (77% and 66%) were weighted. The 77% projected listenership of all 45-64s who liked our station concept is lifted straight from page 127 of the demand tables where 180 of the 233 (weighted from 245 responses), 45-64 year olds that were interviewed, stated they were definitely, very likely or fairly likely to listen to Merseylife.

The weighting we used was based on the following population projections from CACI:

Population Projections Profile

Report for: Nichola Atkinson & Associates
 Sample Area: Nicola Atkinson Radio City
 Base: United Kingdom

2007 Population

			Data for area	Data as % for area
Total Population			2,165,470	
	Males		1,042,482	48.1
	Females		1,122,988	51.9
		% Female		
Aged	0 - 4	49.5	120,879	5.6
	5 - 9	49.0	121,242	5.6
	10 - 14	49.2	135,576	6.3
	15 - 19	48.9	149,763	6.9
	20 - 24	50.1	148,948	6.9
	25 - 29	50.6	127,262	5.9
	30 - 34	52.0	117,917	5.4
	35 - 39	52.6	155,359	7.2
	40 - 44	52.0	165,563	7.6
	45 - 49	51.7	155,524	7.2
	50 - 54	51.6	138,680	6.4
	55 - 59	51.1	139,857	6.5
	60 - 64	51.3	126,751	5.9
	65 - 69	52.7	104,119	4.8
	70 - 74	53.6	90,671	4.2
	75 - 79	57.2	74,015	3.4
	80 - 84	61.9	51,268	2.4
	85 +	70.3	42,076	1.9

Our weighting calculations, therefore, were as follows:

Weighting calculations - Demand				Sample				750	
	Males	Females	Population	Males	Females	%	%	Males	Females
15 - 19	76,457	73,306	15-24	150,746	147,965	8%	8%	60	60
20 - 24	74,289	74,659	25-34	119,412	125,767	7%	7%	53	53
25 - 29	62,856	64,406	35-44	153,085	167,837	9%	9%	68	68
30 - 34	56,556	61,361	45-54	142,286	151,918	8%	8%	60	60
35 - 39	73,592	81,767	55-64	130,060	136,548	7%	8%	53	60
40 - 44	79,493	86,070	65+	155,091	207,058	9%	12%	68	90
45 - 49	75,163	80,361		850,680	937,093	48%	52%	360	390
50 - 54	67,123	71,557							
55 - 59	68,368	71,489		427,437	495,524				
60 - 64	61,692	65,059		50%	53%				
65 - 69	49,300	54,819							
70 - 74	42,076	48,595		922,961					
75 - 79	31,669	42,346		52%					
80 - 84	19,534	31,734							
85 +	12,512	29,564							
	850,680	937,093	1,787,773						

5. What is meant by the term on page 22: “discount the responses”? If it is meant that responses were down-weighted, please provide an explanation of the weighting used.

Yes, discount does mean down-weighted. We applied down-weighting to individual demographics to ensure the over enthusiasm displayed by respondents was quelled for our final audience projections. Here is a summary of the down-weighting applied to the demand research in order to attain our year 3 projections.

	Adults	15+s	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Year 3 Reach		18%	7%	11%	16%	26%	28%	22%
Down-weighting to music & concept Def & VL								
Males		25%	50%	50%	35%	5%	5%	20%
Females		26%	50%	50%	35%	25%	15%	15%
Down-weighting on other demand results:								
The Concept – Def & VL		43%	73%	54%	45%	31%	27%	42%
The Concept – Def, VL & FL		74%	91%	83%	77%	67%	63%	67%
Music & Concept - Def & VL		26%	50%	50%	35%	16%	10%	17%
Music & Concept - Def, VL & FL		63%	80%	74%	71%	57%	52%	52%

On reviewing all the information from the demand research we considered that those respondents who stated they would listen to a new station with the Merseylife music montage and ALSO said they were definitely or very likely to listen to our station concept for a new radio station for Merseyside would represent our core audience.

We, therefore, applied our down-weighting to those respondents as shown in the above table. We down-weighted heaviest amongst those age bands outside of our core to reflect the impact our speech format is likely to have on those listeners. There was an over enthusiastic response from 45-64 females throughout our research programme, especially for music, whereas males displayed more interest in speech

items than females. This was also reflected in the down-weighting amongst 45-64 year olds.

6. Please indicate what the clusters used in the taste and interests survey were, and which music types match which cluster. What order were the clusters presented to the respondent. Please provide all showcards and research materials for this research. What weighting was used on the data? What was the actual music played in each cluster?

Please find attached the actual clusters used for the tastes and interests research along with a list of the tracks and artists for each cluster. The clusters were presented to the respondent at random, with the CATi system rotating the clusters automatically and in no specific order. There were no showcards used for this research as it was conducted over the telephone and the only 'research materials' used were the music clusters.

The weighting used was the same method as for the demand survey as detailed in Q8:

Weighting calculations – Tastes & Interests				Sample		600			
	Males	Females		Population		%	%	Sample	
				Males	Females			Males	Females
15 - 19	76,457	73,306	15-24	150,746	147,965	8%	8%	51.0	50.0
20 - 24	74,289	74,659	25-34	119,412	125,767	7%	7%	40.0	42.0
25 - 29	62,856	64,406	35-44	153,085	167,837	9%	9%	51.0	56.0
30 - 34	56,556	61,361	45-54	142,286	151,918	8%	8%	48.0	51.0
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40 - 44	79,493	86,070	65+	155,091	207,058	9%	12%	52.0	70.0
45 - 49	75,163	80,361		850,680	937,093	48%	52%	286	314
50 - 54	67,123	71,557							
55 - 59	68,368	71,489		427,437	495,524				
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65 - 69	49,300	54,819							
70 - 74	42,076	48,595		922,961					
75 - 79	31,669	42,346		52%					
80 - 84	19,534	31,734							
85 +	12,512	29,564							
	850,680	937,093	1,787,773						

7. Please provide all showcards and research materials for the demand research. What was the actual music played in each cluster? What variables were weighted and what were the weighting factors used?

Again, our demand research was conducted using CATi so no showcards were used and the only research materials were the music montages for our sample station, created from the tastes and interest survey along with two other station sounds known to target 45-64 year olds. The montages were played at random by the computer, preventing any favourable positioning.

Please find attached the music montages for the demand part of our research along with a list of the tracks and artists.

Again, for weighting, please see our answer to Q8 above.

8. What were the recruitment criteria for the qualitative research? Please provide details of qualitative research such as the report and/or discussion guide.

Please find attached the recruitment criteria that Millward Brown used for our focus groups. I also attach the discussion guide, transcripts and summary report for your information.

9. Please provide a sample description, recruitment and research methodology for the advertiser research. Several tables indicate the based should be all respondents, yet the actual base is 43 or 39, for example. Which respondents have been filtered out?

CN Group Ltd has a separate company, CN Research Ltd, set up for the newspaper division. They have a call centre with a fully installed CATi system. Nichola Atkinson is able to use the interviewers at the call centre. The interviewers were supplied with the questionnaire, a list of advertising agencies which have clients who advertise in the Liverpool area as well as a list of companies who book their advertising direct without the use of an agency. The names of these advertisers and advertising agencies are sourced from MMS. The call centre is given a list of the top 200 spenders in the marketplace.

Our interviewers when contacting the advertising agencies ask to speak to the media buyer who will book the advertising for the client we are asking about. This may take several calls and in some cases a telephone appointment has to be made before a response can be obtained.

For those companies who book their advertising direct, the interviewers ask to speak to the person who deals with the booking of the advertising for the company who is normally the Marketing Manager or Managing Director.

The call centre obtains 100 responses from the list of contacts supplied, working from those advertisers who spend the most first.

For MerseyLife, there were 100 respondents who were asked questions 1 to 7 and then questions 13 to 15.

In question 7, 43 respondents stated they would consider advertising on a new FM station covering Merseyside. These respondents were then asked question 8.

In question 8, 39 of the respondents that stated they would advertise on a new FM station for Liverpool in question 7, then said that if the new station targeted 45+s that would be useful to them.

These 39 respondents were asked question 9 and could have been filtered again for question 10, but not one of them (in question 9) said they wouldn't advertise on a new FM station targeting 45+s. These 39 respondents were then filtered for question 11, as 15 of the 39 would reallocate their budgets from another medium. Those who were asked question 11 were also asked question 12.