

Liverpool independent local radio licence applications

Questions and responses:

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

1. How do the roles of Nick Davidson (MD GCap North) and Mark Lee (MD GCap Regions) currently differ, and how will they work together going forward?

As Managing Director Regions at GCap, I am responsible for GCap's radio operations outside of London. These are split into 6 regions, one of which (the North) is managed by Nick Davidson who reports into me. This responsibility includes both revenue generation, as well as audience delivery. In addition, I oversee the implementation of GCap strategy across the 6 regions ensuring a common set of objectives shared by both commercial and programming functions of the business. As Managing Director of Planet Rock, I am directly responsible for the audience and revenue performance of the station and its brand extensions.

Nick Davidson is responsible for the operational performance of the radio businesses within the North region of GCap Media and also of the XFM National network. This role ensures the decision making authority is as close to the listener and customer as possible and that the radio stations are maximising share of audience across the northern portfolio. Nick will manage the day to day operational performance and leadership of Planet Rock Liverpool, with programming expertise and direction coming from myself and the Planet Rock brand team

2. What proportion of sponsorship revenue would be derived locally, and how will national sponsorship (and spot advertising) be handled?

We would anticipate a 60% to 40% national to local split of sponsorship revenue.

National sales and sponsorship will be handled by GCap's National Commercial team which is led by Duncan George. GCap operates national sales team in London and Manchester.

3. Please clarify how it is proposed to define "rock" for the purposes of the Format. (for example, "guitar-led music with a strong beat").

We are happy for rock music to be defined as "guitar-led music with a strong beat".

4. Assuming that this is indeed the case, please confirm that the draft station Format should read that news will be broadcast 'at least hourly' (so as not to make the broadcasting of additional bulletins a technical breach).

This would be fine.

5. By what measure will it be assessed whether Planet Rock’s presentation is ‘intelligent’?

By its nature ‘intelligence’ is somewhat subjective, especially when trying to describe speech content on a radio station. Our experience of operating Planet Rock as a digital service has shown that alongside the traditional ‘fun’ radio items, a significant volume of Planet Rock’s output concentrates on topics about the music and the people who made it. The audience, and the station, takes it music seriously and the level of discussion is interesting, knowledgeable and is tackled in a definite ‘intelligent’ style. Music is an incredibly important part of Planet Rock’s listeners’ lives and they demand that the radio station cares for it in the same way.

We do not think setting intelligence quotas would be the best way to regulate a radio station. However broadly speaking we feel that intelligent speech should be the result of the station:

- Taking a regular in-depth look at people and topics
- Taking the opportunity to discuss music in an expert fashion

6. Please provide the calculation for the statement that ‘Planet Rock 105.9 has the ability to deliver similar average hours to 105.4 Century FM’s P1s and P2s’ (page 18).

The following tables details P1 and P2 data for 105.4 Century FM for W1 2006. The table also details similar data for a number of other services.

	Average Hours					
	Century 105.4	Century 100-102	Planet Rock	Kerrang 105.2	BRMB	Virgin
P1	17.5	13.5	13.4	15.4	15.5	16.7
P2	3.3	4.0	3.9	3.2	3.7	3.3
Total	8	7.4	5.6	7.6	7.4	7.5

Source: RAJAR W1:2006

The detail behind these calculations is attached in an excel spreadsheet.

7. What recruitment criteria were used for the quantitative research? Were quotas used, and if so, what? Please provide details of the methodology. How was the research conducted? Please provide the responses to questions 13 and 14.

The Liverpool licence research was conducted through an online survey that ran between 30th June and 9th July 2006. Respondents were recruited from online research panels (sourced by ToLuna, Research Now! and Aurora Market Research) and were invited to take part only if their postcodes were within the 96.7 Radio City TSA. Initially we obtained 604 responses from the 16 to 54 age group. This was then supplemented with an additional 100 responses from the 55+ age group. We did not enforce strict quotas, but made sure that a spread of ages and genders were invited to take part. The survey was conducted in accordance with the Market Research Society (MRS) Code of Conduct. Prior to analysis, the dataset was weighted to match the age and gender profile of the 96.7 Radio City TSA.

8. Is the data shown in Table 5 (page 38) based on a subset of age groups or males?

The average age figures shown in Table 5 are based on the average age for the total audience, not the male audience as incorrectly stated in the document.

9. Please provide base numbers for Table 6 (page 39).

The base numbers are 416 amongst all adults and 223 amongst 25 to 54 year olds.

10. It is stated that 'Radio 2 would see the largest exodus of listeners, with potentially 20% leaving the station' (page 41). How is this figure arrived at, as the table states 12%?

The text under the table on page 41 contains a mistake. It should read:

- "Radio 2 would see the largest exodus of listeners, with potentially 12% leaving the station, and a further 20% listening less"