



## Radio Career Feature

### Radio Announcing Jobs

**Radio announcers are those who announce station information, perform sales pitches, and introduce station programs. They often work full-time for both small and large radio stations, though their shifts may strongly vary since many announcers work morning or late night shifts.**

Radio announcers who work for small radio stations often act as the station's jack-of-all-trades. They do **radio sales jobs**, do public-service announcements, hold on-air fundraising shows, and host specialty morning or late night shows. Besides acting as on-air personalities, they may also act as the station's technical expert. They operate the station's control board, monitor the transmitter, sell commercial time to marketers, and work with managers to select the daily music playlist. In keeping with the information age, many radio operations are computer-automated, so radio announcers work widely with computers.

Radio announcers also work a portion of their jobs outside the radio station. Since they work in mass media and have well-known names, they may participate in community activities such as store openings and charity fundraisers. They may also work as disc jockeys (DJs) for a number of weddings or school dances. As DJs, they often bring radio equipment and select the music best suited to their audience. At the station, they may hold a variety of station contests in which the winner may receive prizes.

Though many radio announcers work for smaller stations, many larger and better-funded radio stations have a variety of radio announcers who perform different on-air activities. For instance, some radio announcers may take **sports radio jobs** as sports commentators for local sporting events. Other radio announcers may work solely as morning-show or late-night-show hosts. A number of large radio stations have political shows, sports shows, entertainment shows, religious shows, and advice shows. All these hosts often take listeners' calls and interact with them on-air. Naturally, larger radio stations also employ radio operators who perform the technical operations of the radio station, leaving the radio announcers to focus only on their broadcasting.

Announcers who have **radio jobs** work irregular hours. For instance, morning announcers often start their shift at 5:00 A.M. and end about 10 AM. Moreover, there are often afternoon announcers and night announcers. Some radio stations operate 24-hours per day and employ announcers

who work all night and end their shift in the early morning. However, this situation is changing as many radio stations are programming computerized technology to play music all night. Radio announcers often enjoy a small amount of personal fame, especially if they work for city stations. Naturally, these jobs are not only paid more but give other benefits to the radio announcer, such as a wide personal network. However, the most well known radio announcers also exercise unique personal charm that attracts people to them. Hard work alone will not help a radio announcer achieve distinction—he or she must also have comic skills, improvisational skills (for ad-libbing on the radio), and a pleasant speaking voice.

Many people interested in media flock to radio jobs. This makes **broadcast jobs** extremely competitive, weeding out only the most naturally talented and well-trained candidates. Today, radio announcers have bachelor's degrees in communications field, especially broadcasting. They also gain direct experience in radio through their college radio stations, or work as interns at commercial radio stations. Both jobs are equally important, since acting as a college-radio announcer will directly train the candidate in broadcasting, and interning at a radio station will allow the candidate to gain a network of radio contacts. Furthermore, these students learn to use the latest information technology concerning radio. Besides college, candidates can also attend broadcasting schools, though they need to research whether their school churns out radio announcers who enter profitable jobs.

Once radio announcers graduate from college or university, the most outstanding of them obtain entry-level jobs as production assistants, researchers, or reporters at radio stations. Though they often do not receive airtime, they may serve as substitute announcers if they prove worthy to their supervisors. After several years, some may decide to stay at their entry-level radio station to advance, or move to a larger, urban radio station where they may host programs or act as DJs.

Earnings for radio announcers depend on the scale of their radio station. Those who work for smaller radio stations



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earn about \$12.00 per hour, while those who work for larger stations earn up to \$33.00. The largest earnings are reserved for those who work at national radio stations, especially satellite stations.

Unfortunately, job security for radio announcers is fairly unstable. In fact, radio-announcer jobs are expected to diminish by 7% from 2006 to 2016. Satellite radio has

replaced many radio stations, and many smaller radio stations have been bought out by larger stations. Many announcers are frustrated by the scant opportunities for job advancement, not to mention the low pay of smaller radio stations. Nonetheless, highly determined announcers will likely find lucrative work as long as they exhibit natural talent, a solid education, several years of on-the-job training, good contacts, and warm recommendations from former employers.

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