

Radio K



Radio K

January 23, 2009

Review for 2008-2010 Academic Years

“We acknowledge that the fees committee does not award actual dollars, but rather a penny fee that earns dollars based upon student enrollment levels. Any differences between anticipated and actual income resulting from changes in enrollment are the responsibility of the administrative unit, not of the fees committee.”

Machen Davis, Marketing Director

Pushkar Ojha, Program Director

Prepared by Stuart Sanders, Development Coach
And Sara Miller, Interim Station Manager

Radio K

Updates from the original 2008-10 Administrative Units application

“Minneapolis radio actually doesn't suck... the U of Minnesota's KUOM was once called ‘the best college radio station imaginable’ by Greil Marcus.” (Rolling Stone Magazine, July 2005)

Unit Performance Report

Recognition

- Nation-wide recognition from Pitchfork Media and CMJ; Pitchfork has posted our videos and audio from in-studios performances on their website, leading to blogs around the country talking about our Studio K productions.
- Alex Gaterud, now Radio K Training Director, received a \$1,000 scholarship from the Conclave whose mission is “Through education to improve the quality of broadcasting and related industries so they may better serve the public interest.”
- Live music sessions performed on Radio K have received national media attention from outlets including *Pitchfork Media*. Pitchfork said recordings of the Shearwater session had "a clarity of sound that's not present on his studio recordings, so this session is worth a listen." Radio K's recording of Shearwater, an Austin, TX, band was released by Matador Records, one of the largest independent US music labels.

Radio K Awards 2008

- **Minnesota Associated Press Awards**
 - Feature: "Combine Demolition Derby" (Reporter Ron Miller)
 - Series/Special: "Radio K News: At the Minnesota State Fair" (Reporter Ron Miller)
 - Documentary/Investigative: "Remembering December 7th" (Reporter Lee Vandebusch)
- **Eric Sevareid Award**
Northwest Broadcast News Association
 - Talk/Public Affairs: "Remembering December 7th" (Reporter Lee Vandebusch)
- **2008 Broadcaster of the Year**
Association of Minnesota Public/Educational Broadcasters (AMPERS)
 - Andy Marlow, Station Manager
- **College Broadcasters, Inc., National Awards**
 - Best Documentary – “History of KUOM” – finalist
 - Best Regularly Scheduled Program – “Radio K Fundamental” – finalist
- **College Music Journal Awards**
 - Best Student-Run Non-FM Station – finalist
- **mtvU's Woodie Awards**
 - Best Campus Radio Station - finalist

Improvements

Studio K Refurbishment

New Studio K equipment has provided students with an improved experience in recording bands and other audio products. Studio K is the main production facility at Radio K and the premier audio recording space on campus. It is used primarily as a recording facility for local, national and international bands that perform live on the air. The studio is also used to provide services to other campus organizations and is available for rental to non-university entities. It was converted from an analog to a digital facility in February 2008 through funds granted by the Student Fees Committee.

Radio K

More than 100 local, national, and international bands have performed in the studio since its upgrade. In 2008 we posted more than 350 music tracks and six videos from these live sessions to our website for listening and viewing on-demand. The groups ranged from local to national and international touring acts, including Andrew Broder, Of Montreal, Tapes 'n' Tapes, Gospel Gossip, M83, Jay Reatard, Doomtree, Handsome Furs, Brother Ali, Haley Bonar, Maps of Norway, and more.

The improvement of the performance studio allows Radio K to better showcase its commitment to the local, national, and international music communities through higher quality recordings. Recently, Radio K has been the only college radio station given exclusive opportunities to invite select national and international bands for studio performances. Being the only college station with this kind of unique access has elevated Radio K's reputation and prominence nationally, leading to many positive comments on important national music websites. The best recordings from this period appear on the sixth CD volume of our live studio compilations, *Stuck on AM*, released October 2008. The compilation received airplay on over 20 college radio stations around the country during a promotional campaign we conducted with Advanced Alternative Media (AAM), the largest college radio promotions company.

Additionally, funds granted to Radio K by the Student Fees Committee allowed us to hire a professional recording consultant for eight student training sessions over the course of the fall semester. This opportunity for training on recording techniques and digital equipment use proved to be highly beneficial to the development of student engineers and the quality of their recordings.

Personnel

All student employees received a \$2.00 hourly increase in salary from \$7.25 and \$7.50 an hour to \$9.00 and \$9.50 per hour beginning July 1, 2008. A more adequate wage has allowed student managers to be able to devote more time and focus to their jobs at Radio K, as well as their school work since they no longer need to have a second or third job.

Two Part-time Student Positions Were Created and Filled

- Head Recording Engineer – has improved the Studio K training process and the quality of in-studio recordings, which has attracted national attention. They also train other students in the use of Studio K and recording technique.
- Graphic Designer – designs all Radio K promotional material and our entire 15th anniversary marketing and advertising campaign.

Off-site Training

- Two students were sent to the College Music Journal Marathon in New York City. Our Music Director and Assistant Music Director attended seminars and made important face-to-face contacts, with musicians and independent music industry leaders.
- The Program Coach was sent to the Public Radio Program Director's conference in Los Angeles to attend workshops and seminars about industry trends and ideas for effective programming. Her registration was provided by a scholarship, and the station paid for airfare and hotel.
- The Radio K Station Manager and student Production Director went to the National College Media Conference in Kansas City, MO, co-sponsored by College Broadcasters, Inc., of which Radio K is a member. The station paid for registration for the two attendees and the Station Manager donated the transportation and hotel. Both attended numerous workshops and seminars, and networked with students and faculty advisors from other college radio stations.
- In March we will send four students to the South by Southwest music and media conference in Austin, TX. In addition to networking with music industry professionals and attending seminars, the Radio K staff members who attend will also facilitate three days of live broadcasts from Austin. These broadcasts will allow the station to interact with many music groups, and raise the profile of the station both locally and nationally.

Radio K

General Achievements

- We produced and distributed *Stuck on AM 6*, the sixth in a series of music compilations produced from live performances recorded at Radio K. The songs come from the *Off the Record* local music program and live performances by touring national and international acts. We contracted with AAM to distribute the CD nationally to other independent radio stations and promote its addition to their playlists and to date 20 stations have added the CD to their music rotation.
- 2008 marked Radio K's 15th Anniversary. We celebrated the event at First Avenue, Minneapolis' legendary music venue, featuring artists that reach back to the very beginning of the station as well as popular local artists. We had many positive press coverage including *The Star Tribune*, *City Pages*, *The Minnesota Daily*, and WCCO-TV. Our newly hired Graphic Designer created an effective and unique ad campaign to promote the 15th Anniversary show.

Affinity Group research

During 2008 Radio K completed the assessment of its fund-raising, marketing and programming begun in 2007. The final element was a series of affinity groups conducted by public radio consultant Ken Mills. Affinity groups are informal focus groups designed to determine perceptions and attitudes of Radio K listeners. Mills conducted 6 group sessions including one that was conducted in a U of M Communications Studies class that was studying survey research.

The groups examined these questions:

- Which attributes of Radio K's programming cause listeners to tune away from Radio K or not tune to Radio K?
- What actions can Radio K take to get listeners to tune in more often and listen for longer periods of time after tuning in?
- What are the unique attributes of Radio K that listeners consider having the greatest importance to them?

The primary recommendations arising from this study either have been or are in the process of being implemented. They are:

- Test the music in the Radio K library
- Provide more information and context for the music
- Enforce minimum quality standards for on-air hosts
- Greater focus on specialty shows
- Make better use of on-air promotion
- Radio K branding of local music heard on the station
- Emphasize the Radio K weekday morning show

Radio K provides content for the University of Minnesota's public iTunes U site that allows the University to share and highlight the exceptional faculty, staff, and students and the exciting work, research, and events from campus.

Radio K is now available on the iPhone and iPod Touch utilizing the *Public Radio Tuner* iPhone application. The only college station represented is Radio K.

Radio K

Programming

Programming Changes

We continuously look at ways to improve the listening experience and increase the amount of time our audience spends listening to the station.

Last year we moved our specialty programming schedule from weekends to weekdays and draw additional listeners to our FM and webcast signals at times of the year when our AM signal signs off early. In conjunction with the move, we introduced on-demand streaming capabilities of archived specialty shows through our website allowing our audience to listen to their favorite specialty shows whenever they desired.

This coming year, the programming department's goal is for Radio K's programming to have a bigger impact on the time that listeners spend tuned to Radio K by improving the effectiveness of our broadcast in these key specific areas:

- Assessing the frequency and impact of artists fundamental to Radio K
- Assessing the size of the rotation library
- Assessing how non-music elements interact with other programming elements to ensure the highest quality and effectiveness of our promotions and underwriting

We introduced a new format for our weekly news program, *MN Notebook*, last summer and also made an editorial commitment to cover more stories related to the University of Minnesota and stories of interest to the student community at large.

Marketing

Marketing Efforts

Radio K's marketing efforts are driven by our number one strategic goal: "Increase awareness of and pride in Radio K among U of M students, faculty and staff."

To achieve this goal, the marketing department involves the station in all major events on campus and provides promotional support to student groups and departments.

We have re-branded ourselves as Radio K "Where Music Matters Most" and own the domain names www.WhereMusicMattersMost.org and www.WhereMusicMattersMost.com, both of which are redirected to our award-winning website. We focus on building and reinforcing our branding as Radio K "Where Music Matters Most" from the University of Minnesota.

Radio K continues to expand our presence on campus. In the past year we have been involved in the following events:

- Funk at the Fred
- New Student Orientation
- Convocation
- Paint The Bridge
- Homecoming
- Live broadcast daily from the U of M stage at the Minnesota State Fair
- Community Involvement Fair
- The Making Music Series at The Whole Music Club in CMU
- College of Biological Sciences Picnic
- Peace for the Species
- Live weekly broadcast of our All Request Hour from The Whole Music Club

Radio K

- Greek and Residential Life Day
- Connections Resource Fair
- Student Activities Fair
- Welcome Week
- Weisman's *Hearsighted* production
- College of Continuing Education's new employee event
- CLA's Sneak Preview Information Fair
- Summer Concerts at Northrop
- *Peace and War in the Heartland* in Coffman's Great Hall
- Coffman Union and the Student Activities Fairs on both campuses
- Distributed 6,735 Radio K music sampler download cards to every resident living in on campus housing, almost 2,000 downloads have taken place
- Weekly street teams that distribute promotional materials and engage with students on campus

Radio K also regularly provides promotional support to many departments and student organizations and continues ongoing cross-promotional agreements with the Student Activities Office, *The Minnesota Daily*, *The Wake*, *The Ivory Tower*, Twin Cities Student Unions, School of Music, University Book Stores, University Theatre Arts and Dance, and our own College of Continuing Education.

We sponsor shows weekly with most major rock venues in the Twin Cities, such as First Avenue, Seventh Street Entry, Triple Rock Social Club, The Whole Music Club, Cedar Cultural Center, Turf Club, Big V's, Fine Line, Varsity Theatre, Minnesota Museum of American Art and the 400 Bar. Radio K is the exclusive radio sponsor of the popular weekly dance night, "Too Much Love" at First Avenue. We continue to be media sponsors of the Minnesota AIDS Walk and the GLBT Pride Parade. Larger shows that perform at the Roy Wilkins Auditorium, State Theater, The Orpheum and The Historic Pantages Theatres are also sponsored.

Radio K also creates our own events to help those less fortunate than ourselves; the sixth annual "Hip Hop for the Homeless" at Triple Rock Social Club and "Punk for the People" at the Weisman Art Museum are two examples where the proceeds are donated to charitable organizations.

A joint marketing and programming project designed to build outreach to area high schools has resulted in a precedent-setting broadcast that has continued since its debut on Radio K in September 2001 called *The Breakfast Club*. It is produced and presented by a group of six to eight high school students from various metropolitan area schools. This program reflects the high school students concerns and musical tastes and has involved almost 100 students from 20 schools. More than 10% of these students have enrolled at the University of Minnesota citing their positive experience at Radio K. This is an example of a successful marketing tool that makes more young people aware of our station and encourages students who are more involved with extracurricular activities to pick the University of Minnesota as their college of choice.

Going Forward

Andy Marlow is retiring as Station Manager of Radio K on February 20th. He has been Station Manager since KUOM became Radio K in 1993. Sara Miller, Radio K Account Executive, has been appointed as Interim Station Manager by the Dean of the College of Continuing Education and assumed the duties as of January 5th. She is working closely with Andy to assure a smooth transition.

In March, Radio K will conduct its first long distance remote broadcast from the South by Southwest (SXSW) Music Festival in Austin, Texas. Radio K will be one of the only college radio stations to broadcast live from SXSW. The broadcast, which will span three days from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day, will include updates on the music festival and live performances of SXSW bands. Radio K staff members will also produce video and photographs for our website. The South by Southwest music festival is one of the biggest, most important events for the independent music community. The ability to attend and conduct a live broadcast at such a significant event is a good measurement of Radio K's value to this community.

Radio K

The website is being redesigned making use of College of Continuing Education’s content management software to allow more people to contribute to the website and make it more interactive.

We are in discussions with *The Minnesota Daily* to form a joint venture to increase advertising/underwriting sales for both media outlets.

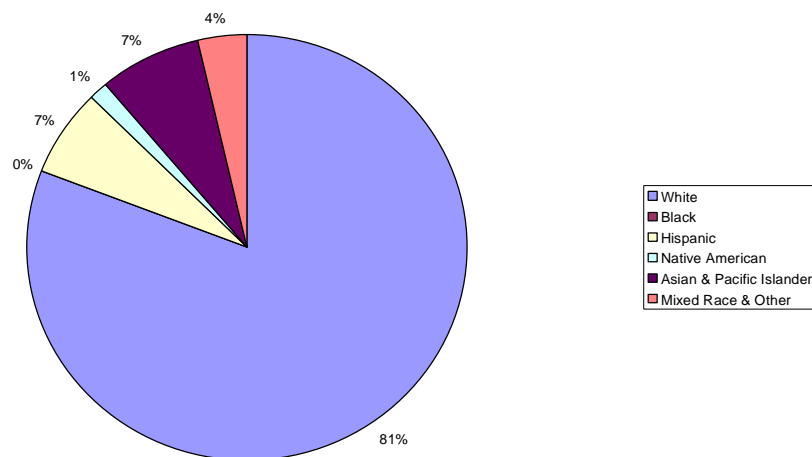
Radio K has continually worked toward overcoming the limitations of our daytime-only AM signal. In 2003, we began sharing the 106.5 FM frequency with KDXL-FM licensed to the St. Louis Park School District. Since then we have taken several steps to improve the FM signal by moving the transmitter for 106.5 and by adding translator stations. The originating station (KUOM-FM) at 106.5 MHz can be heard within a 5 kilometer radius of the transmitter just west of Lake Calhoun. It operates with 8 watts of power and is precluded from increasing power by surrounding stations, hence the need for adding translator stations. Our first translator station (W264BR) went on the air in 2005. It is licensed to Falcon Heights and operates with a power of 10 watts on 100.7 MHz.

Radio K has been granted a Construction Permit from the Federal Communications Commission for another translator station. As soon as a tower crew is available and the weather suitable, we will begin operating our second translator station from atop Rarig Center. It will have a power of 99 watts at 104.5 MHz. The new transmitter will provide a very strong signal to both the Minneapolis and St. Paul campuses of the University and most of the core population of Minneapolis, St. Paul and suburbs.

Located on campus and in the heart of the core cities, this translator station will reach a far larger audience than the two existing stations combined. The new signal will provide high quality listening in an area within a 7 mile radius from Rarig Center including the suburbs of Brooklyn Center, Crystal, Little Canada, New Brighton, Richfield and West Saint Paul. Approximately 818,000 people live in the area that will be covered by a strong signal from this translator.

This chart shows the population make-up of the potential audience for this translator.

K283BR 60 dBuV/m Audience Composition - Total 818,156

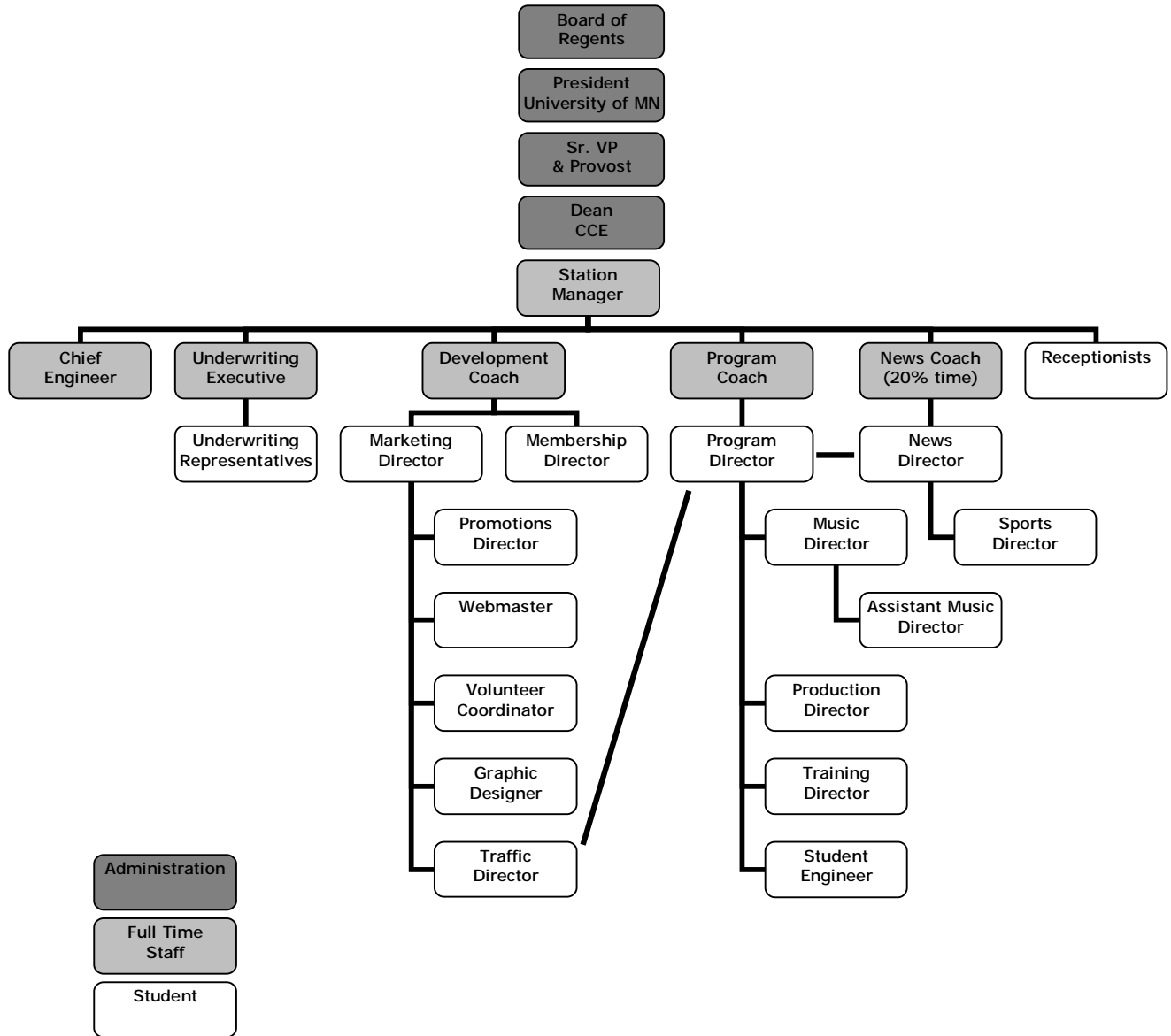


Conclusion

Strong support by the student fees committee all the way back to Radio K’s beginning in 1993 has enabled us to become one of the best college radio stations in the country. With your on-going support, we will continue to pursue our vision of being THE BEST student-run radio station in the nation.

Radio K

Organizational Chart



Radio K

Reserve Accounts

Not applicable.

Financial Footnotes

Our goal is to budget to zero dollars for year-end, but there are so many variables that we are usually a few hundred to a few thousand dollars over or under budget. We are allowed by our college to carry over any surplus and required by them to carry over any deficit.

Radio K is audited each year by an outside auditing firm as one of the requirements of the grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). The station has always passed the audit with flying colors and is on sound financial ground.