

Who's listening to Radio LaB?

Radio LaB 97.1 Estimated Listenership

February 2018 Report Executive Summary

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Research carried out on behalf of:



Executive summary

Aims

This report, by Dr Emma Ward of Blueprint Research and Training on behalf of Radio LaB, presents findings from the Radio LaB Public Survey 2017, conducted in October and November 2017. The main aim of the survey was to provide data that could be used to estimate Radio LaB listener figures. The survey also intended to investigate whether the core target audience of young people was likely to access the station and how listenership compared to other stations broadcasting to Luton.

Methodology

Respondents were asked about their awareness and listenership of radio stations broadcasting to Luton without mention of Radio LaB in the question phrasing to avoid biasing the response. Extrapolated listener figures were based on the proportion of people who had listened in the last week at time of survey. Other information about participant characteristics was gathered in order to investigate the profile of Radio LaB listeners. Radio LaB aims to reach a core audience of young people in line with their key objectives, and, therefore, we were particularly interested in respondents aged 18-29 years.

Sample

For the survey, 380 people were surveyed, of which 360 (97.7%) lived in the Ofcom 'coverage area' defined as postcodes LU1-6 (CA) and 185 were of the Target Coverage Group (TCG); that is they lived within LU1-6 and were aged between 18-29 years. The public survey was representative of ethnicity of the wider population of people living in LU1-6 within 5%, but the TCG had an overrepresentation of males and the CA had an over representation of people from the younger age groups. Attempts were made to make the sample more representative of the wider LU1-6 population by stratifying by gender, age and ethnicity within 5% of the Census proportions; this sample was used to estimate listener figures for the coverage area.

Radio station awareness and listenership

A very diverse range of radio stations were mentioned by the sample. Unprompted station awareness appeared to be dominated by BBC stations and Heart with over half of the sample being aware of at least one of these stations. Almost a third of public survey respondents from the TCG had mentioned, unprompted, that they had heard of Radio LaB.

Radio LaB was the third most listened to local station by people responding to the public survey. Of TCG respondents, a quarter had listened to Radio LaB at some point, 13% had listened in the last month and 11% had listened within the last week at the time of the survey. Awareness and listenership was comparable to the other two community stations broadcasting to Luton.

Estimated listener figures

It is important to note that the estimated listener figures discussed are not an estimation of total listenership. Due to limitations with sampling, the listener figures presented in this report only relate to those living in the reach area. Therefore, it is likely that the actual number of total listeners is greater than figures presented here.

A basic extrapolation was applied to the public survey data using Census data. It is estimated that 5,571 people aged 18-29 living in the reach area had listened to Radio LaB in the last week, and estimated that the station has reached approximately 12,586 at some point. We can be 95% certain that between 6.3% and 15.5% of people aged 18-29 living in postcodes LU1-LU6 had listened to Radio LaB in the last week, equating to an estimated weekly listenership of between 3,249 and 7,892 of young people aged 18-29.

People from outside the target age range had listened to Radio LaB, and, therefore, it was of interest to try and estimate a listener figure for people living in the coverage area (not just those aged 18-29). The sample was stratified by randomly omitting some responses to ensure a sample representative of the wider LU1-6 population by age, gender, and ethnicity within 5%. The proportion of people from the stratified sample who had listened in last week was 4.4%.

A basic extrapolation was applied to the stratified survey data using Census data. It is estimated that 9,331 people living in the reach area had listened to Radio LaB in the last week, and estimated that the station has reached approximately 33,505 at some

point. We can be 95% certain that between 1.7% and 7.1% of people living in LU1-LU6 had listened to Radio LaB in the last week, equating to an estimated weekly listenership of between 3,605 and 15,056 of people living in LU1-6.

Profile of Radio LaB listeners

All data was combined to investigate characteristics of Radio LaB listeners. The analysis showed that the station is reaching its specified core audience of young people; people who had listened within the last week were around five times as likely to be aged 18-29 than people who had not listened in the last week.

Overall, over 50% of all people who had listened, had tuned in on weekday afternoon and the weekend, with just under a third having listened on weekday mid-mornings, around a quarter at Breakfast, and a fifth on weekday evenings. Listeners within the last week had listened to a greater variety of shows, than respondents who had not listened recently, but were no more likely to tune in at a particular time of day.

Three quarters of all respondents listened to radio generally on AM or FM signal; almost half listened on DAB radio; a third online; 7% had listened to podcasts; and 6% on TV. When looking at Radio LaB's regular listeners only, trends were the same apart from increased online listening. Healthy online listener figures reported for the survey period support also indicate that Radio LaB listeners enjoy accessing the station online.

Comparison to 2015 public survey data

Similar data was gathered via a public survey in 2015. Due to the 2015 sample only sampling from younger age groups, comparisons can be made between the 2015 and 2017 TCG samples only. The proportion of listeners to Radio LaB within the last week was 11% for both years, indicating that Radio LaB listenership has remained stable and listener numbers roughly the same. Both years found that Radio LaB was listened to by a higher proportion of younger listeners, but no associations were found between listenership and gender or ethnicity in either year.

Conclusion

The findings suggest that Radio LaB is a competitor in Luton's local radio station market, despite its community radio status. Although there are some limitations with representativeness of the samples, the findings give a good indication that Radio LaB is reaching thousands of Luton public each week. Unfortunately, (due to resource constraints) the survey is unable to give one complete listener figure including people out of the FM signal reach area and students. Therefore, it is likely the complete listener figure is higher than the estimates reported here.

There is evidence that the station is predominately appealing to its core audience of young people and is therefore meeting this key objective, but it is encouraging that the survey shows people outside the age range are also tuning in. It is reassuring that the weekly listener proportion reported in this survey is the same as the survey two years previous, indicating a stable listenership. Recommendations for further work include conducting a larger public survey giving scope to manage representation issues, conducting a student survey to investigate student listener figures and habits, and a qualitative exploration of how Radio LaB could increase its appeal.

