



Careers in Broadcasting

In Michigan alone, an estimated 8,000 jobs exist directly in radio and television. Michigan broadcasters are committed to hiring a diverse group of individuals to work at their stations. Broadcasting is a fast-paced and dynamic industry that is continually changing. Careers in broadcasting can be exciting, unique and rewarding. As with all forms of business, broadcasters look to recruit qualified individuals looking to learn and grow with the changes of the broadcast industry.

Digital technology is quickly changing radio and television to the benefit of all audiences. Radio has reached the digital age and is fast become connected to computers and other electronic devices to form the next digital stereo system. Television stations have converted programming from an analog to a digital delivery system that has an astonishing clear picture quality.

Broadcasting encompasses all aspects of the job market today including marketing, public relations, engineering, sales, news, programming and management. These are the jobs that the next broadcasting millennium holds for the future.

Following are some general descriptions for jobs in radio. Remember that each station is unique in its staff structure, and no two stations are organized in the same fashion. The size of a station and the market it serves often dictates the number and types of jobs available. The following descriptions provide an overview of just some of the positions and responsibilities.

Radio Jobs:

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE - The account executive is the person who sells advertising and works closely with marketing businesses to the station listeners.

ANNOUNCERS - Announcers are the radio station's voice and are often the people with whom the public identifies. This person introduces programs and music, reads commercial copy and public service announcements, and is involved in the overall public presentation of the station.

CHIEF ENGINEER - The chief engineer is responsible for the technology necessary to put the station's broadcast "on-the-air" within the station's licensed range. The engineer works to maintain existing broadcasting capabilities and provide quick solutions to problems that may arise with the transmitter, tower, satellite receiver and other related equipment.

COPY WRITER - This staff member writes commercial and promotional copy in support of the station's sales, marketing and promotional efforts.

GENERAL MANAGER - The person responsible for the overall operation of a station. This position requires business knowledge, leadership ability and a technical understanding of how a station operates.

GENERAL SALES MANAGER - This person hires and supervises the sales staff, reviews programming for the best sales opportunities, develops sales plans and goals, oversees billing, studies and understands the station's market and approves all sales promotion campaigns. Some stations have multiple levels of sales managers, including National, Regional and Local sales managers who focus on various aspects of sales.

MAINTENANCE ENGINEER - The maintenance engineer installs and performs preventive maintenance on the station's control consoles, boards, recording equipment, microphones, and a wide variety of other station equipment and electronic systems.

MUSIC DIRECTOR - This person manages the station's music library and works with the program director in selecting new recordings to be played as they are submitted by record companies.

NEWS DIRECTOR - The news director runs the news department. The news director assigns stories to reporters on staff, monitors the wire service and is involved with identifying the important news issues within the community.

OWNER - A person or group of persons that possess the station. Every owner must hold a license from the Federal Communications Commission.

PRODUCTION DIRECTOR - The production manager assigns announcers, schedules studios, arranges recording sessions, produces commercials, and directs programs.

PROMOTIONS DIRECTOR- This position promotes the station's image, programs and activities. The promotions person works closely with the program director in creating on-air promotions and also with the sales department in securing new clients and maintaining current advertisers.

PROGRAM DIRECTOR - Responsible for the entire on-air product, the PD governs the sound of the stations. With control over production, talent, work schedules, and program schedules, the PD's programming objectives support the goals of the general manager and the general sales manager.

RECEPTIONIST - The duties of the receptionist vary according to the size of the station. This position is ideal for understanding all the aspects of how a station operates.

SALES ASSISTANT - This position offers support to the sales staff and managers by handling much of the office work, including drafting proposals, which allows the sales staff to focus on meeting with clients and developing business.

SPORTS DIRECTOR - This position is similar to the news director position. Sports directors often handle the play-by-play coverage of local sporting events. Stations that do a lot of sports sometimes hire a "color" announcer to complement the play-by-play talent.

TRAFFIC DIRECTOR - Collects data from other departments in order to prepare a minute-by-minute schedule for the broadcast day. The traffic person is the daily link between the sales department and programming department, keeping up-to-date commercial time availability.

The following are links to Michigan educational institutions with broadcasting or related programs:

Andrews University

[Communication Department](#)

Calvin College

[Communication Arts and Sciences](#)
[Telecommunications](#)

Central Michigan University

[Journalism](#)
[Broadcast and Cinematic Arts](#)

Eastern Michigan University

[Journalism](#)
[Telecommunications and Film](#)

Grand Valley State University

[School of Communications](#)
[Broadcasting](#)
[Journalism](#)

Michigan State University

[Journalism](#)

Telecommunication

Northern Michigan University

Broadcasting

Specs Howard School of Media Arts

University of Detroit Mercy

Electronic Media

University of Michigan - Ann Arbor

Film and Video Studies

University of Michigan - Dearborn

Electronic Media

Wayne State University

Radio/Television

Western Michigan University

Telecommunications Management

Broadcast and Cable Production

The following organizations can provide valuable resources on careers in broadcasting. Some of these organizations have their own Job Banks to assist both employers and people searching for jobs.

MAB: Michigan Association of Broadcasters – representing Michigan Radio & TV Stations

State Broadcasting Associations - Many states have statewide associations, similar to MAB, which represent the interests of the stations in the state.

AAJA: The Asian American Journalists Association seeks to increase employment of Asian American print and broadcast journalists; assist high school and college students pursuing journalism careers; encourage fair, sensitive and accurate news coverage of Asian American issues; and provide support for Asian American journalists.

AES: The Audio Engineering Society is the only professional society devoted exclusively to audio technology.

AWC: The Association for Women in Communications is the one organization that recognizes the complex relationships that exist across communications disciplines.

AWRT: American Women in Radio and Television is a national, non-profit, professional organization of women and men who work in the electronic media and closely allied fields.

BBA - Black Broadcasters Alliance is primarily comprised of African American broadcasters, who represent the interests of both employees and owners in the broadcast communications industry.

BEA: The Broadcast Education Association is the organization for professors, students and professionals involved in teaching and research related to radio, television and electronic media education.

BTP: The Broadcasting Training Program's mission is to diversify the newsroom by the placement of minority TV/radio news reporter and news management trainees at television and radio stations across the United States.

CBI: Collegiate Broadcasters, Inc. represents students involved in radio, television, webcasting and other related media activities. They provide technical, legal, organizational promotional and political resources to members.

IBS: Intercollegiate Broadcasting System is an organization representing college and school-based Webcasting, closed-circuit, AM carrier-current, cable radio and FCC-licensed FM and AM stations.

[IRTS: The International Radio and Television Society Foundation](#) offers educational programs on electronic media for established and young professionals, students, professors, and other interested publics.

[MCAI: Media Communication Association International](#) (formerly called ITVA) serves the needs of accomplished visual communicators who work in corporate, organizational, and independent settings.

[MAEB: Michigan Association of Educational Broadcasters](#) represents low-power educational broadcasting stations in Michigan.

[MAPB: Michigan Association of Public Broadcasters](#) represents the public radio and TV stations in Michigan.

[NAB: The National Association of Broadcasters](#) priority is to maintain a favorable governmental, legal and technological climate for the constantly evolving and dynamic business of free over-the-air broadcasting by representing the radio and television industries in Washington -- before Congress, the FCC and federal agencies, the courts, and on the expanding international front.

[NABJ: The National Association of Black Journalists](#) is the largest media organization for people of color in the world.

[NAHJ: The National Association of Hispanic Journalists](#) is dedicated to the recognition and professional advancement of Hispanics in the news industry.

[NAJA: The Native American Journalists Association](#)'s primary goal is to improve communications among Native people and between Native Americans and the general public.

[NBS and AERho: The National Broadcasting Society and Alpha Epsilon Rho](#) have as their purpose to enhance the development of college and university students involved in telecommunications, broadcasting, cable and other electronic media.

[Newslab](#): A non-profit resource for television newsrooms, focused on research and training.

[NLGJA: The National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association](#) works from within the news industry to foster fair and accurate coverage of lesbian and gay issues and opposes newsroom bias toward lesbians and gays and all other minorities.

[NPPA: The National Press Photographers](#) website.

[The Poynter Institute](#): The Poynter Institute is a school for journalists, future journalists, and teachers of journalism.

[Project for Excellence in Journalism](#): An initiative by journalists from all media to clarify and raise the standards of American journalism.

[RTDNA: The Radio & Television Digital News Association](#) is the national association of electronic journalists. RTDNA represents local and network news executives in broadcasting, cable and other electronic media in more than 30 countries.

[RTDNF: The Radio & Television Digital News Foundation](#)'s mission is to promote excellence in electronic journalism through research, education and professional training in four principal program areas: journalistic ethics and practices; the impact of technological change on electronic journalism; the role of electronic news in politics and public policy; and cultural diversity in the electronic journalism profession.

[AEJMC: The Association for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication](#) focuses on the teaching, practice, study and research of broadcast news as a profession.

[Reporter.org](#): Resources for journalists, including specific beat-related links.

[SBE: The Society of Broadcast Engineers](#) is a non-profit organization serving the interests of Broadcast Engineers.

(Source: [Michigan Association of Broadcasters – michmab.com](#))

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