

# ACE Radio-Television Specialist Survey

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# ACE Radio-Television Specialist Survey

## **Abstract**

The 1980 directory of agricultural communicators in land-grant universities and USDA agencies lists 97 persons with electronic media service responsibilities.

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seven hours watching television, 2.1 hours reading newspapers, and 52 minutes with magazines.

One student added the following note at the bottom of his media contact sheet:

"Dear Professor: Due to various occurrences, this is not a usual week of media contact for me. This hectic university life sometimes excludes me from the rest of the world." How "excluded" was he? He reported 27 hours of media contact during the week.

Several conclusions were drawn from the study:

1. Students inevitably spent more time in media contact than they thought, based on pre-test estimates.
2. Students seemed to find the media contact record sheet easy and fun to use, indicating it is an instrument readily adaptable to other audiences.
3. Although the record sheet format might make "cheating" easy (just fill in the blanks), consistency of data over the long period of the study seemed to indicate validity.

College students probably are not typical of a general population, but they may not be atypical of a general population in their age group. This study needs to be replicated with various audiences (e.g., farmers in a given county) and in various social settings. The media contact record sheet provides a useful "first step" research tool to help communicators find out if anyone is reading, listening, or watching.

*--Robert Hays  
University of Illinois*

## **ACE Radio-Television Specialist Survey**

The 1980 directory of agricultural communicators in land-grant universities and USDA agencies lists 97 persons with electronic media service responsibilities. In an effort to collect data useful in planning regional and national ACE meetings, a questionnaire was administered to determine the kinds of activities these individuals are involved in and their attitudes toward professional improvement workshops and training sessions.

The questionnaire was distributed to 70 representatives identified by ACE Headquarters, who were asked to pass it along to those people in their respective departments with radio or television responsibilities. Sixty-nine responses were received.

**TABLE 1: Respondents Producing Daily, Weekly, or Monthly Features by Type of Features**

Type of Feature	Frequency*	Percentage**
Radio	45	65%
Documentary Radio Feature	16	23%
Radio Script Packets	22	32%
Radio PSAs	29	42%

\*N 9

\*\*Totals more than 100% because feature types are not mutually exclusive

Most respondents said they spent a substantial amount of time preparing material for commercial radio and/or commercial television stations. Seventy-seven percent said they spent at least a fourth of their time preparing commercial radio material and 66 percent said they spent at least a fourth of their time working on commercial television material.

Nearly two thirds of the respondents (45) indicated they produced radio material on a regular daily, weekly, or monthly basis (see Table 1). Almost as many (44) said they produced television public-service announcements, while significant numbers (33 and 30, respectively) said they produced television news clips and regular television features (see Table 2). A large percentage wrote and edited their own radio and television scripts and releases and did their own voicing and sound mixing. More than half did their own filming or videotaping (see Table 3).

The questionnaire included an open-ended question, "If ACE were to present training sessions on any subject, what subjects would you like to see presented?" Responses varied widely, but generally fell into three areas of interest:

1. Hands-on training

2. Theoretical considerations (e.g., what audiences want from the medium)
3. Idea sessions (e.g., tips on how to work with news directors, assignment editors and reporters).

The author would like to thank all ACE members who participated in this study.

**TABLE 2: Production of Features by Type**

Type of Feature	Frequency*	Percentage**
Radio News Actualities	39	57%
Regular TV Features	30	43%
TV PSAs	44	64%
Instructional Film or Video-tapes	22	32%
Television News Clips	33	48%

\*N 69

\*\*Totals more than 100% because types are not mutually exclusive.

**TABLE 3: Level of Technical Involvement**

Type of Activities	Frequency*	Percentage**
Write own Radio Scripts	52	75%
Write own TV Scripts	52	75%
Voice own Radio Scripts	48	70%
Voice own TV Scripts	42	61%
Film or Videotape own TV Release	36	52%
Edit own Radio/TV Release	52	75%
Mix own Sound	45	65%

\*N 69

\*\*Totals more than 100% because items are not mutually exclusive.

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