



NAB Digital Dashboard Recommended Best Practices April 2019



Below is a summary of recommended best practices for radio stations which, when followed, should result in a dashboard appearance that is useful and pleasing to listeners and will support a more consistent user experience across the radio dial. This list is divided into separate sections for the programming and engineering departments, with the understanding that some recommendations apply to both.

PROGRAMMING

1. For stations that don't currently have Radio Data System (RDS) equipment, obtain an RDS encoder and set it up to support transmission of station information using Program Service (PS) and RadioText (RT) fields.
2. Make sure that someone on staff uses daily a car equipped with an RDS-capable radio and an HD Radio for digital stations. For HD Radio stations, both RDS and HD Radio displays need to be monitored.
3. Install an RDS monitoring system and an HD Radio system in the on-air studio to allow air staff to view the textual information that is being broadcast.
4. For music stations, song titles and artist fields should maintain the following standards:
 - Contain only the actual artist name, song title, etc. without metadata notes (ex: "edited version").
 - Artists should be expressed as first name, last name.
 - Capitalization of proper nouns (artist, song), but no all caps for entire words.
 - For HD Radio systems, review all artwork. Album artwork is optimal; artist photos are acceptable. Generic format artwork/graphics are discouraged. The station logo should be the default.
5. For spoken word stations and/or personality/programs/shows on music stations, the following standards are recommended:
 - During programs, display text with name of show, and with HD Radio, a graphic logo.
 - Use capitalization standards as specified above for music stations.
 - Other content display options include a program topic, guest, call-in number, etc. Stations might also want to consider additional enhancements (weather, traffic alerts, sports scores, etc.).
6. Radio programs on both music and spoken word stations should be identified with text and logos during their real-time broadcasts. Show/DJ/host logos should be created and displayed.
7. Logos should be created and displayed for each HD Radio multicast channel. Program formats should be properly identified in the PS data text field.
8. During commercial breaks, consider displaying advertiser information (phone number, URL), and, for HD Radio, using Artist Experience to display advertiser logos.
9. Programming and engineering staff should conduct a quarterly audit of dashboard displays using vehicles with both RDS and HD Radio with Artist Experience receivers, observing and rating your station's metadata appearance for both RDS and HD Radio.
10. Conduct a quarterly review of how well your station's music library successfully matched to clean metadata, also noting the unmatched songs which need to be corrected.

1. For stations that don't currently have RDS equipment, obtain and set up an RDS encoder.
2. The station engineering team should have full time access to an RDS receiver and to HD Radio for digital stations to observe textual information, album art and commercial art.
3. Install an RDS monitoring system (and an HD Radio monitoring system for digital stations) in each control room to support monitoring by station air staff. For HD Radio stations, *both* RDS and HD Radio displays need to be monitored.
4. Every station should be using middleware and a software service like Quu2Go to clean up the song title and artist data to ensure an accurate and consistent user experience.
5. Make use of the RT field in RDS systems.
6. Set the program type (PTY) code to identify the station's format into the RDS and HD Radio equipment.¹
7. Set the RDS injection level. While there is no specified level, four to five percent injection levels are common and provide reliable RDS encoding throughout the station's service area.
8. The RT field (64 characters maximum) should be comprised of what is currently being broadcast, specifically artist/song title, program/host name, etc. Other information (call letters, "now playing on") should appear in the PS data field.
9. Set up middleware to display desired information in the RT field in RDS systems.
10. If the PS data (eight characters maximum) is static, it should be comprised of call letters, frequency or station name.
11. If the PS data is dynamic (to provide for song title, artist, etc. to RDS radios without RT), content should be shown as chunking instead of scrolling.
12. Set up middleware for displaying the Program Service Data (PSD) information in HD Radio systems.
13. For stations employing HD Radio systems, consult with the station's programming department to set up the Station Information Services (SIS) including station call, PTY, station slogan and station message.
14. In HD Radio systems, be sure that the Exporter and Importer software versions are up to date.²

1. Refer to Table F.2 in the NRSC's RDS standard; (<http://www.nrscstandards.org/sg/NRSC-4-B.pdf>).

2. The current version number (Exporter and Importer) is v4.4.7. This is what manufacturers are shipping and this will support all current features.