



Is Proud to Present this

Booklet on

How to start

A Radio Program in your City



॥ धर्मो रक्षति रक्षितः ॥ ॥ यतो धर्मस्ततो जयः ॥

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Section 1 – Why create a Radio Program in your city ?

There are several reasons why a Radio Program that is exclusively focused on Hinduism, Hindu issues and concerns, targeted towards a Hindu audience is an important and welcome development in any City. We will look at some of these reasons briefly.

1. A Radio program promotes dialogue amongst Hindus

Hindus have neglected the mass media greatly. Hindus have been great Temple Builders, and we have established a vast network of Hindu Temples in India and now in North America as well. A Temple unlike a Church or a Mosque is strictly an altar of worship, and not congregational in nature. Individuals and groups can come and go as they like, and participate in different events, rituals, and modes of worship as suits their individual tastes and convenience. One can go to a Temple and worship there for many years, without developing any deep relationships with anyone else in the Temple. The modes of worship promoted are more individual and less congregational. Further, there is not much occasion for Hindus to dialogue amongst themselves as Hindus, within the premises of a Hindu Temple. Rituals, Bhajans, Kirtans, Yagnas etc. offer Hindus be together and express their devotion, but not really engage with one another intellectually and in conversation. Even when Gurus and Acharyas of various Sampradayas come visiting, their pravachans represent a kind of one way communication which is also mostly philosophically or spiritually based. The audience rarely gets a chance to communicate amongst themselves and discuss and debate in a manner that promotes and strengthens their spiritual practice or their understanding of their religious tradition and heritage.

The second generation children who are born in the US, (as well as Westernized Hindu Children elsewhere in the world including India) demand a more intellectual approach to understanding their Dharma, especially as they grow into their teenage years. It is not enough for them to visit temples, and participate in religious rituals and ceremonies which do not seem meaningful to them. They have a need to question all of this, and develop intellectually satisfying answers for themselves, which appeal to their reason. Mere blind belief and following parents' directions work only up to a certain age. There is a pressing need for second generation and westernized Hindu children to dialogue amongst themselves, and participate in conversations that promote their relationship with their Hindu Dharma. Without concrete vehicles to promote this, the second generation children are easily prone to inter-marry with local Americans and people of diverse religious backgrounds, thereby slowly losing and diluting their Hindu identity further.

A Radio program can function as an effective platform, where Hindus get together and discuss issues and concerns that pertain to their beliefs, their ideology and spirituality, in a manner that is constructive, and promotes a deeper understanding of their own traditions.

2. A Radio program promotes Unity among Hindus

Ever since the Rig Veda said "Ekam Sat Viprah Bahuda Vadanti", Sanatana Dharma has fostered a diversity of beliefs, systems, paths and practices. Even in the conception of the one Brahman, being manifested as many Gods, i.e. many Devatas, this essentially pluralistic, liberal framework has prevailed in our Bharatavarsha. Even as a spirit of "Live and Let Live" has informed and permeated our civilization, it has progressively given rise to numerous sects, sub-sects and sub-identities, that learnt to live together without conflict.

Today, with the long and hoary passage of time, Hindus generally have a stronger attachment to Sub-Identities, rather than their over-arching Hindu Identity. For example, Hindu people identify themselves as linguistic groups such as Tamil, Gujarati, Marathi, Punjabi etc. Secondly, they also

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identify themselves by caste - such as Brahmin, Bania, Reddy, Yadav, Jat, Kamma, Ezhava etc. Thirdly, they are also divided by Sampradaya identities - such as Vaishnava., Shaiva, Kashmir Shaiva, Vedantin, Vishishtadvaitin, Gaudiya Vaishnava, etc. Fourthly, many Gurus and Acharyas, emphasize their own specific version of the interpretation of the Shastras, and create new Paramparas and followings. So you have the specter of Ammachi followers, Sai Baba devotees, Art of Living group, Swaminaryan devotees, this Swamiji and that and so on.

In this background, Hindus, even though they are supposedly a majority in India, do not behave like a majority. They behave more like a large collection of small minorities. Even in North America, where we have migrated to in large numbers in recent years, Hindus continue to exhibit this characteristic of fragmentation, and our communities have numerous organizations – sometimes running into hundreds, each one catering to one sub group or sect or the other.

A Radio program that provides a platform for all varieties of Hindus, can function as a unifying platform by bringing people together, and fostering dialogue in a way, that most other institutional mechanisms do not.

3. A Radio program promotes awareness of contemporary Hindu issues

While from a Spiritual / Religious point of view, the fragmentation of Hindu Society into multiple sub-fragments, along linguistic, sampradaya-based, and caste lines, is not a problem, and India has always valued a certain inherent diversity, and a co-existence of different paths, sects and sampradayas, this is a very serious problem, from a political stand-point. For example, when the Kanchi Shankaracharya was arrested, it was very difficult for a Hindu in Assam or Himachal Pradesh to feel personally impacted. Similarly when the Kashmiri Pandits were being persecuted, it is difficult for a Hindu in Tamilnadu to feel any impact. Even as Hindus in Pakistan and Bangladesh were being killed and persecuted by the thousands, the vast majority of the Hindus in India were able to ignore the problem completely. The predominant Hindu sentiment is one of aloofness and alienation – “As long as it didn’t happen to me or my immediate family, or my caste or community, why should I bother about it”.

In any modern democracy, (where numbers matter) assembling a coherent identity, translates to influence and power. So Hindus must learn to forge together a larger overarching identity, and start behaving like a more coherent, homogenous group. More and more, Hindus are finding that their rights are being taken away, and their freedom is being attacked, their institutions are being destroyed and mostly they don't even know that it is happening or why it is happening – and there are many examples - Rama Sethu, Amarnath, Plight of Kashmir Pandits, Arrest of Kanchi Shankaracharya, Distribution of Temple lands to Non-Hindu people, Usage of Hindu money for Non-Hindu purposes, such as for Haj pilgrimage, Destruction of Hindu temples in Malaysia, the future of the Ram Janmabhumi movement and so on.

A Radio program can promote awareness of these kinds of issues amongst Hindus, and encourage healthy debate and discussion of these issues. Most often we can find Hindus who are on both sides of these kinds of touchy, controversial issues. Encouraging public dialogue about these kinds of topics, especially with the presence of experts who understand these issues deeply, can foster new understanding and better perspectives.

4. Hindus need a Media presence urgently

Lastly, Mass Media is an important reality today. Hindus have ignored this Media domain, thereby causing a great disadvantage to themselves. This is an area, where we have a lot of catching up

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to do. If we survey the media ownership around the world, we find that most of the Media is owned by Christians and Muslims. Even in India, prestigious publications such as The Hindu, The Indian Express, Times of India and TV channels such as NDTV and CNN-IBN etc. are openly anti Hindu today. Frequently, these Media channels give voice to Christian and Muslim perspectives, but are very negative about the Hindu point of view. We also find that in the USA, amongst the media and academia, there existing pervasive stereotypes about Hinduism, based on the caricatures of Caste, Cows, Curry, Dowry and Sati. For example, in high school text books, when Hinduism is discussed, often Caste is discussed as the main feature of Hinduism – There is hardly a word about Yoga for example. This results in a negative perspective of Hinduism in general, and Hindu children often are at a loss as to why they are being singled out for such subtle negative criticism. School text books in the USA are written by Academicians who are not Hindu by birth or practice; Hindus themselves seem not to be interested in influencing the processes that result in such text books. Similarly Journalists who write about religions in the USA are also influenced by their own educational experience, and for the most part the mainstream Media in the US does not connect Yoga with Hinduism at all, even though most western practitioners of Yoga do at some level.

Hindus need to develop a more media savvy consciousness that allows them to present themselves in Mainstream Media, in a more dignified and sophisticated manner. Hindus need to develop the ability to quickly counter negative perceptions, and present their view-points gracefully. Even as Hindus have become the most successful and wealthy community in the USA, they are not yet organized enough to exert their views, and make their mark in the consciousness of the world.

A Radio program in your city may be a small beginning, but it has the potential to energize youngsters, children and old alike, in embracing their Dharma, strengthening their awareness and understanding of themselves and their culture, and presenting themselves to each other and world, in a manner that befits our ancient and endearing civilization. Perhaps the next generation will learn to bridge the gap between the traditional, conservative and antique expressions of our religion with modern media and a more forward looking and proactive engagement with each other and the world.

Section 2 - How to start a Radio Program in your city :

1. Building a Core Radio programming team

Everything begins with one person committing to it, and taking the lead. It is very important to have a core radio programming team. The team needs to be committed to bring out programs week after week. The team should comprise of people who can look into the schedules, finance and actual programming. The roles will be explained in detail in later sections. To start a program, a minimum of 5 committed people are required. The team can be expanded over time.

It will be good, if at least one of the members of the team, has some prior experience with conducting or hosting a radio show. However, this can be be mitigated by training using the resources of the existing Radio station.

2. Identifying a Radio station (FM, AM etc.)

Generally in most big cities in US, there is presence of Indian/South Asians in local Radio stations. Typically they will be run by local Indian organizations, temples, local commercial

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organizations or people with interest in Media. These programs maybe either in a 24/7 dedicated radio station or aired for few hours in one of the local organizations. It will be advantageous to select a radio station that has programs already catering to South Asian community. They might have already established a good listener base.

If you do not know a local radio station that is airing Indian or South Asian programs, ask your friends or Google. Also research to find to the contact person for the Radio station. You should look for the person in the radio station who can help you in discussing the commercial terms and also help in giving a good time slot for your program. It is either the same person who can do both or it might be two different persons handing these roles.

Also consider the reach of the radio station in terms of the nearby cities. ormally AM covers longer distances, but the quality in the night maynot be good. The quality of FM radio station is better than AM. However it will cover less area geographically.

Also look for the popularity of the Radio station. Identify or short list the radio stations based on popularity and the quality of the programs. Most radio stations integrate with Web so that the program can be heard on-line. Consider if the radio station is offering this feature as well.

3. Finding an appropriate time slot

Once you have found a radio station or short listed radio stations in your area, find out the available time slots. Generally the events/activities are during the weekend. Hence, having a program on Saturday morning will be ideal. It will be good time to even make announcements of the Hinduism related activities in the neighborhood. Sunday morning is a good time too.

4. Buying time for the Radio program

The price of the airtime is also based on the time slot you are looking into. So, try to get prices for various timeslots the Radio station(s) can offer. Once you get the quotes for various timeslots and various radio stations. Also see if you can get the slot for a two-hour duration. A program with two hour duration is ideal. From our experience it may cost around \$1000 per month for a non-prime slot, for four two hour segments a month. The same segments may cost up to \$2500 per month for a prime time slot.

So we are looking at an expense item of around \$12,000 to around \$30,000 a year to support a Radio program in your city.

5. Raising money for the Start up Activities

The costs for running the radio station will include the cost for air-time, promotion, web-site, programming costs, software costs etc. Hindu money usually accumulates in two places. One is Hindu Temples. The other is around Hindu Gurus and Acharyas of various Sampradayas. We are recommending that every Temple, must develop the commitment, (Sankalp) to have a Radio program in the City. Or a few different Hindu Temples and organizations can come together, and sponsor the program. The core-team may not have all the finances. But it should be willing to look for sponsors to fund the program. Sponsors may be the business establishments or organizations. Some times, individuals with interest in Hinduism will also sponsor. Please consider securing funds sufficient for at least 3 months. That will give the programming team peace of mind, and a lead time, to secure additional funds for future months.

Duration of Radio Program contracts ...

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6. Setting a start date

Identifying the radio program, radio hosts, programming coordinator, securing funds etc may take 2 to 3 months. It will be ideal to set a starting date that is 2 to 3 months from the day you start considering the radio program. If you are able to get things organized quickly, you can do an early launch.

7. Promoting the launch of the Radio program

It is very important to ensure that the launch is done with a lot of publicity, and many community members are involved in the launch. Here are some tips to generating interest on opening day.

- Having the Radio program advertise about the upcoming program. Through a 1 minute or 45 second commercial, the Radio Station itself should build up momentum and enthusiasm for the launch day.
- Flyers in South Asian grocery stores, temples, events, concerts etc
- Emails to friends / Organizations and various mailing lists.
- Word of mouth invitations to friends and family members.
- Inviting a community leaders to a meeting over lunch/dinner to announce the program and seek their support, to popularize the program.

Section III : Getting the Hindu community involved

The mere presence of the Radio program in a city does not guarantee that the listeners will come flocking to listen to the program. It is critical to ensure that the entire local Hindu community gets involved and begins the own the Radio program as a community resource. This will not happen on day one. But it can be built up over time, by using the following effective strategies.

1. Radio program as a platform

The Radio program must be promoted as a resource available to all Hindus. It must span all Hindu Sampradayas, Organizations, Sects and Sub Groups. It must serve as a unifying platform, or a rallying platform, around which the whole community can coalesce. Each local group or organization must be invited in turn to come and speak on the Radio program about their activities, and even use the Radio program for promoting their events and programs. This must be a free of charge service for them, so that they begin to participate easily without a sense that they will have to pay for the opportunity. Initially they may be surprised by this. But as they participate, and get to enjoy the benefit of the Radio show for the community, they will begin to appreciate the program, and even support it in many ways. Local people who are learned in certain Scriptures or teachings of the Bhagvad Gita or Yoga or Vaastu etc can be invited to the Radio program to promote and share their unique knowledge.

2. Generating audience for the Radio program

Audience cannot be assumed, and must be generated pro-actively using a variety of marketing strategies. Also, this should be a continuous activity, and cannot be ever assumed to have been done once and for all. For example, when the head or official of a local organization is invited to speak on the Radio program or participate in a group discussion, he or she in turn must be asked to promote their speech or interview on the Radio. People generally love to be on the mass media and every occasion to promote them and their organization or event is also an occasion to

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promote the Radio program as well. All manner of efforts must be made to generate wider audiences for the Radio program, by promoting it in various ways. This could be through other Radio announcements, about future programs, Flyer distribution at strategic locations, and ongoing publicity and awareness generation.

3. Involving children and the youth

Another strategy to getting the community involved is to involve little children and youth in the Radio program right from day one. When children get involved, parents get very excited about it, and they in turn tend to talk about their kids being on the Radio show, to their friends. In turn other parents also get interested in having their children appear on the Radio program. So slowly, awareness is built in the community for the fact that here is a Radio program that promotes the children and youth in the community. The children also tend to enjoy the experience and want to come again in the future.

4. Involving local Hindu organizations

Every city has numerous Hindu organizations. Some examples are Chinmaya Mission (Swami Chinmayananda), Art of Living (Sri Sri Ravishankar), Sathya Sai Groups (Sai Baba), Ammachi Satsang (Amrithanandamayi), Swaminarayan groups, Mother Karunamayi groups, Swami Dayananda Saraswati groups (Gita study groups), Barsana Dham groups (Kripalu Maharaj), Iskcon (Bhakti Vedantaswami Prabhupada) groups, Hindu Swayam Sevak (HSS) groups, Brahmakumari groups, Vedanta Society groups, Ramakrishna groups, Sri Aurobindo followers, Arya Samaj groups (Maharishi Swami Dayanand) and many others. The list can be sometimes endless, as new Hindu organizations keep popping up ever so frequently. A few more are Gayatri Parivar, Swadhyaya, Aim for Seva, Ekal Vidyalaya etc. It can become a fascinating exercise just to discover how many such organizations are there in your area ?

The ***Sankalp*** of the Radio program is to be partial to none, and allow all organizations to participate equally, or as much as they wish to in the Radio program. We can begin with each organization coming on the Radio program to talk about their local chapter, how it was started, what programs and services they have today, how many followers they have, and their hopes and aspirations. In course of time, we can put two or more organizations together in a group discussion setting. Many of the people in these individual organizations, do not know the others, and tend to strictly mingle only amongst the members of their own community. It will be an eye-opening experience for many of them, to find out that the other organizations are also teaching a philosophy that is fairly close to themselves.

5. Interviewing visiting dignitaries

Nowadays every month there are visiting dignitaries from India, including various Swamijis and Gurus, and Intellectuals and Scholars and Yogis and Yoga teachers and so on. Every visiting dignitary must be interviewed on the Radio program during their visit, so that awareness for the events are created, and the dignitaries themselves feel good about having participated in the Media. The local organization that promoted the visit of the dignitary must also be given an occasion to promote themselves, so that they begin to feel increasingly that the Radio program is an excellent service to the community.

6. Advertisement for Local Hindu events

Whenever there is an event in the community of some importance, such as a Yoga camp, or a Pravachan series being done by a certain group or community, it must be promoted on the Radio program. Even Temple events such as Abhishekam and Homam, which are considered important

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to the community, must be promoted on the Radio program. A time will come, when all local organizations begin to recognize the Radio program as an effective vehicle for promoting their own events, and will therefore come forward naturally, and offer to participate on the Radio program.

Section 4: A typical structure for the Radio program

It will be ideal if you are able to get a time-slot for two hours. This will help in giving a good coverage. The program can cover the local activities and also discuss the issues and topics in details. A typical schedule of two-hour radio program of Sanatana Dharma Foundation, Dallas is shown below, as guidance. Each city has to ultimately evolve their own style and substance.

Program Details:

1. Welcome and Guru Stotram
2. Kids Section; Local kids to chant Slokas/Bhajans
3. Local Content;
4. News and Events
5. Global content;
6. Conclusion and Poornamadham

Here provide a little contextual background for the "Local Section" and "Global Section". What do we mean by that etc.

- Local Content
 - Local talent
 - Children and parents
 - Music, Chanting, Culture
 - Music teachers, Hindu teachers
 - Local organizations
 - Temples
 - Visiting Dignitaries, Swamis, Gurus
- Global content
 - Interviews with important personalities
 - Intellectual debates / discussions
 - Opinions and Cutting edge topics
 - Theme based discussions

A lot more can be written here – Create more ideas, thought starters, get the reader engaged in the possibilities!

Give lots of examples of programs that we have had in Dallas. Some are:

1. Kown Banega Ramayan Expert (Children's Quiz)
2. Panel Discussion on Rama Sethu
3. Group Discussion on Amarnath Land Transfer Issue
4. Expert committee on Hindu Dharma and the Academia
5. Ekal Vidyalaya Fund Raiser event
6. Art of Living programs promotions
7. Others – TBD

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Section 5: Generating content for the Radio program

It is very critical to have quality programs. In order to sustain the quality and avoid burn-out of the individuals, it will be good to have a Program Director's role. The Program Director will be responsible to put together content for the program. The role may last for 2 months or 3 months and can be done on a rotation basis. Some of the tips and areas that need to be considered are below:

- Preparing the content ahead of time

It will be good if the schedules are prepared as much in advance as possible. They maybe maintained in a spreadsheet. They may also be maintained in a spreadsheet in GoogleDocs. Several people will be able to access Googledocs, if they have access to internet. It will be good if the core team is allowed to access this spreadsheet. This will help to plan.

Date	Section	Time	Duration	Topic	Speaker	Organization	Host	Co-Host
3/3/2007	Kids	7.05 - 7.15 AM	10 Mins	Kid Sloka Chanting	Master Sabarish	Kinder Garden, Freeman Elementary, Irving.	Tarun	Jayanthi
3/3/2007	Section I	7.20 - 7.50 AM	30 Mins	Hindu Cosmology	Raghupathy Poorla	President, DFW Temple, Irving	Tarun	Jayanthi
3/3/2007	Section II	8.15 - 9.00 AM	45 Mins	Relevance of Discovery of Sarawathi River to Bharat	Dr.S.Kalyana Raman		Tarun	Jayanthi

- Making the program entertaining

Select people and topics that will keep the listeners entertained. One may add some Hinduism trivia to make it more interesting. Some other suggestions are below.

- Engaging the audience in real time

Try to pick topics that will be of interest and relevance to audience. Having extensive discussions about an Upanishad maybe of interest to some people. However, having a topic that will help listener to take an action will keep them more engaged.

- Giving away goodies and prizes

Giving away goodies and prizes is another nice way of keep the listeners engaged. Local Indian restaurants will be normally willing to give away lunch buffets. They will be glad to get some publicity for their business.

- Audience participation

Try to take callers on air. This maybe done while discussing about a topic, having an interview with eminent person. This will allow listeners to express themselves.

- Music, Talk, Bhajans – Standard Filler materials

It will be good to air some nice Bhajans and music in between. They can be used to entertain listeners. They can also be used while transitioning between segments. They can also be used as fillers. Try to build a good repository bhajans and music. Try not to repeat the same bhajan or music very often.

- Promotions and Advertisements

At any given time, there will be some distinguished Hindu personalities like Swamijis visiting Temples or homes in any city. The radio program will be a good medium to promote such activities. A five minute interview with the organizer or a brief interview with the visiting personality maybe done. Also the local businesses will be willing to sponsor a part of the program or just have their advertisements aired during the program. You may reach out to businesses and organizations.

- Pre-recorded content versus Live content.

It maynot be possible to have all the content generated live. There might be instances where one might have to pre-record an interview. This generally happens when an eminent personality has to be interviewed. The person's schedules maynot be suitable. Pre-recording also helps in ensuring that the right content is aired. It will also help in trimming the interview to fit into the schedule. Various tools are available for recording interviews over phone. One such tool is www.audoacrobat.com. There are several tools available to edit the recording. One such tool is Wavepad (www.wavepad.com).

Section 6: Typical Roles and skills involved in managing a Radio program

- Program Director Role

- Selecting a Program Director (PD) – Key Characteristics

A program Director's role is a very critical role. The PD has ensure that the content for the duration of the program is scheduled. That means the all the segments in the radio program, like the kids section, local organization section, interviews with the eminent personalities, news and events segments are addressed. This happens if the typical schedule in section 4 is used. If any other template is used, the PD should ensure that all the segments are covered. The PD should also put together a team of hosts (Radio Jockeys, RJs) that will host the program.

One of the key characteristics for the PD is to understand the role the Radio program plays in the local Hindu Community. The person should be grounded in the organization's philosophy. A well networked person is a good quality. But that is not mandatory. The person may not be well known in the community. But should be willing to reach out to people in order to fill the slots in the program.

- Guidelines for Program Directors

It maybe good to schedule atleast two to three weeks in advance. This will help is having quality programs. If the schedule is finalized in the last couple of days consistently, then the quality of the program is likely to decrease.

People always have emergencies. Hence it will be good if PD can train others to be PDs. This will help others to take up the PD role in case of emergencies. This will also help transition to the next PD once the agreed upon duration is completed.

The PD should also look for back-ups for RJs, in case there are emergencies. Sometimes, the speakers may have emergencies and will not be able to make it to the program. It will be good to have an pre-recorded interview be available in such situations.

Constantly communicate with the Community so that you get solicitations for having people in your program.

- Duration of accountability

The PDs role has lot of accountability. In order to avoid, burn-out it will be ideal to rotate it every 2 or 3 months with another member in the Core team.

- Transitioning from one program director to the next
It will be ideal if the PD trains another member during the duration of the term. If that is not possible, it is suggested that the next PD maybe trained at least in the last month of the term. That will give sufficient time for the next PD to understand the role. It is also suggested that the PD still be available to help when the next PD takes up the role.

- Program Host Role

- Selecting a Program Host – Key Characteristics

A program Host, also called Radio Jockey or RJ for short has an important role. The RJ needs to understand the whole context of the radio program. Previous knowledge of hosting will definitely help, but not necessary. Like any other role, willingness to learn is the key characteristic. They should also be fluent in the language the program will be aired.

- Guidelines for Program Hosts

The hosts should be on time to the radio station. They should be few minutes early to radio station. They should have all the information about the program. They should have the Bhajans, fillers if any, contact info of people whom they will be interviewing over phone, pre-recorded interviews (if they are being aired), back-up CDs with Bhajans (if the computer crashes).

- Duration of accountability

Listeners listen to certain programs based on who the RJ is. It is good to have an anchor or anchors to be available consistently. However, it is not always possible to have RJs forever. It will be good to have them RJ on alternate weeks or once in three weeks.

- Training and developing program hosts

Some online resources to help them do their job better are below:

<http://www.voiceartistes.com/article7.html>

The best training is however done in person. It will be ideal if the RJs train new RJs while doing live shows.

- Understanding the technology

The technology varies in various Radio stations. It will be good if the RJ gets familiar with the technology used in the Radio station. It is suggested that the RJ visit the Radio station a week or so early to see the technology that is being used in the Radio station and get trained in using the equipment (mixer), taking phone calls, playing CDs, playing from computer etc

- Handling breakdowns

The best way to handle breakdowns is staying calm. Always have some back-up plans when the technology breaks down. Have back-up CDs to play bhajans if the Computer crashes. Have some info readily available to entertain listeners if the phone line fails (while interviewing a person on phone). The key thing is to stay calm and looks for ways to keep the show go on.

- Interviewer Role

- Selecting an Interviewer – Key Characteristics

The most important characteristic that an interviewer must possess is a commitment to bring out the best from the person being interviewed. This is reflected both in the quality of questions that are being asked of the person, and the quality of attention being paid to the answers during the interview itself.

Very often the answers being given by the person being interviewed themselves lead to new questions that deepen the subject matter, and allows the person to cover new and deeper ground.

The second most important characteristic that an interviewer must possess is an adequate knowledge of the subject, area of expertise of the person being interviewed. This provides the context for the interview. Some research might have to be done in order to do an effective interview.

- o Preparing for an Interview

An online course on how to do interviews is below:

<http://www.bbctraining.com/onlineCourse.asp?tID=2555&cat=2772>

- o Understanding the subject area

Find out more about the subject the person you are interviewing will speak about. Also research about the person that will be interviewed. Collect information that can be used in introductions. Audience will continue to listen based on the way the subject/person is introduced.

- o Preparing questions

Consider the subject, context and the person in preparing the questions

- o Tips – Do's and Don'ts for Interviews

Do consider the amount of time that is available for you interview. Try to get the best within the given time.

Do pay attention. Do not repeat the question or ask a question that was already answered differently.

Do not ask a very long question.

If the interview lasts for more than 30 minutes, plan to take a break and play a bhajan. This will keep listeners interested. This will also give you an opportunity to re-introduce the person/subject for the benefit of late tuners.

- Program Participant Role

- o Selecting participants – Key characteristics

The program participants should be chosen based so that they fit into the program. Kids and Children must be encouraged to chant slokas or bhajans, or even tell interesting stories from our Puranas and Itihaasas. The speakers should be chosen so that their contribution strengthens the Hindu community and fits into the background context of the Radio program.

- o Preparing them for their Radio program appearance

The participants should be told about the principles or goals of the organization of the radio program. They should be told what is okay and what is NOT okay to say. They should be told about the time available to them. Plan to discuss the questions that will be asked in the interviews.

- o Tips – Do's and Don'ts for a Program Participant

Ensure that the participant is available at the Radio station few minutes before the scheduled time.

Do not let the Program participant lead the program. The RJ is always in control.

Section 7: Being part of a Network of Hindu Radio programs

Our Vision is that ultimately, we can together create a network of Hindu Radio programs around the country and even around the world.

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1. Sharing content with other radio programs (in other cities)

While local content is generally of interest to the local community, there are certain issues that are global in nature. For example, the struggle to save the Rama Sethu from being destroyed by the Sethusamudhram Ship Channel project (SSCP), in which the Hindu community around the world was galvanized and energized, is a global issue that impacts all Hindus. Another example is the recent struggle by the Jammu Sangarsh Samithi to get the land promised to the Amarnath Shrine Board, be allocated to them, was a major Hindu issue that once again charged up the Hindu community. It was good to see the Hindu community fight for its dues, and not succumb to bullying. When we have a large network of Radio programs which are working together in concert, then interviews done by one program in one city, can be re-broadcast in other cities. Interesting programs can be broadcasted in many cities.

2. Inspiring other cities to start their own Radio programs

The objective of this paper is to provide some guidance or help in having cities create a radio program based on Sanatana Dharma. This will benefit the people in the respective city. But it should not stop there. The ideas and experience of one city should inspire other cities to start their own programs. For the other cities to be successful, it will be very helpful if content is made available to them. This will help them in reducing the efforts to put together content.

3. Creating a central clearing house of recorded materials

Sanatana Dharma Foundation has already created a Web Site where Radio program archives, and select interviews are available. Many of these Radio program segments can be heard directly from our Web site, and may also be downloaded for rebroadcast in other Radio programs. We will be glad to operate as a clearing house for programs and Audio content, for various Radio programs around the Country.

When musical segments, interviews, interesting clips and songs, bhajans and chanting audios are made available centrally for sharing much of the work of collecting these things together can be eliminated, and the start up activities for other cities can be reduced.

We are committed to being a resource and guide for every city which wishes to have a Radio program in their city.

4. This can become a world-wide phenomenon

Ultimately Radio is a relatively lower cost medium when compared to Television, and requires less sophistication. Small groups of committed people can easily start their own Radio program which they can begin to sustain in their respective cities. While our interest is to create a variety of these Radio programs in numerous cities in the US, there is no reason, that similar programs cannot be started in cities in India, Europe and Australia. The internet is an easy medium that breaks down historic barriers, and when used in combination with a local 2 hour Radio program every week, we can make a difference for the Hindu community around the world. Content recorded in one corner of the world, can be rebroadcast in another corner of the world, and an exciting new era of networking and sharing can be launched.

We are sure that there already are many Radio programs catering to the Hindu community in various cities. But these are un-coordinated, and often have been put together at the initiative of a few individuals. If the Hindu Temples which often have the financial wherewithal to start an initiative like this, can take the initiative to co-ordinate these activities, then, we can quickly

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launch a major Mass media presence around the world, quietly and unobtrusively, without a significant cost of entry or investment by any one group.

Section 8: Sustaining the programs over time

It is very important to have the program sustain over a period of time. This will be the key to success and have a channel to continuously help community to understand the issues, promote events and work unitedly. For this to happen, some of the following things need to be considered.

- **Fund Raising – the key to sustainability**

Fundraising is not a one-time activity. The Radio station has to be paid month after month for airing the programs. There will be costs in maintaining the website and procuring tools for the program. These are some of the costs even if everyone is volunteering their time. Fundraising can be done in several ways. Apart from seeking advertisements from businesses, individuals can be contacted. If the organization is already a 501c3, it will be beneficial for the donors to get tax-benefit. If the organization is not under 501c3, it might be worthwhile to get the status to get the tax-benefit.

Fund raising can be done by organizing fundraising dinners, seeking individuals to commit to certain amounts on a month to month basis or by any new creative ideas. The bottom line is to understand that the fundraising is an ongoing activity and not a one-time activity.

- **Volunteers – We need lots of them to avoid burn out**

It will be good to have Volunteers engaged to help them contribute. The roles might have to be rotated to stop burn-out and also to keep them interested. It might be a good idea to organize some team-building activities to forge relationships and keep the group intact or increase.

- **Leadership – Another key to sustainability**

This is a key quality of the organization. The leadership team should be strong, consistent and committed to have this program sustain over a period of time.

- **Ideological grounding of the Volunteers**

Ideological ground of the volunteers should fuel their enthusiasm. If the volunteers are not grounded on the philosophy or the reason for having the radio program, then the program will start to weaken. It will be good for the leadership to look for strong volunteers. It may not be possible to find them right from the day one. However, the search should not stop.

- **Advertising and Promotion**

The Radio program has to be consistently advertised and promoted. This can be done by doing a 30 sec advertisement to be played in the Radio station at various times. This will let listeners know about the program. Flyers at various stores, groceries, businesses, events, temples will help. Partnering with the publicity groups of big Hindu events in the community will also help.

- **Managing conflicts and transitions**

Like in any organizations, there will be conflicts and transitions. The leadership should be sensitive and respond appropriately at such situations.