

Abilene Christian University

Digital Commons @ ACU

Landon Saunders Documents

Landon Saunders Papers

1979

Heartbeat: A Radio Program Reaching the Marketplace With the Hope of the Gospel

Unknown

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.acu.edu/saunders_docs



Part of the [Film and Media Studies Commons](#), [Practical Theology Commons](#), [Radio Commons](#), and the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Heartbeat: A Radio Program Reaching the Marketplace With the Hope of the Gospel, Box 5, folder Heartbeat Radio Description, How-to-Guides, Landon Brady Saunders Papers. Center for Restoration Studies MS #575. Abilene Christian University Special Collections and Archives, Brown Library. Abilene Christian University, Abilene, TX.

This Manuscript is brought to you for free and open access by the Landon Saunders Papers at Digital Commons @ ACU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Landon Saunders Documents by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ ACU.

HEARTBEAT

A Radio Program Reaching the Marketplace With the Hope of the Gospel

Heartbeat is more than just a radio program. It is a first step towards our dream of evangelizing the United States. . . an introduction to the hope found in Jesus Christ. . . an invitation to hear God's saving news that Jesus died on a cross and now lives again.

A lot of things go into making Heartbeat what it is. And a lot of time--and most of all, a lot of prayer.

This material has been sent to you because of your interest in getting Heartbeat on a radio station in your area. So, briefly here's what you get in this package.

1. An audition tape of Heartbeat. This includes samples of the three-minute and/or one-minute Heartbeat programs (sent separately).
2. How to approach a radio station. This gives you some guidelines and background on what to do and what to expect when you talk with radio station personnel.
3. Heartbeat: For a station concerned about its public. This section suggests some things you might want to say to persuade a station to carry Heartbeat.
4. Some answers to station objections. The station may be hesitant to broadcast Heartbeat. This section suggests responses to some of the most frequent objections.
5. General Information. This section outlines how Heartbeat is supplied and other general information.

Please go over all this information. It is meant to serve as a guide and as background material for you as you prepare to approach a radio station.

Heartbeat begins the process of evangelism. After people hear it, some will write. Those who do, begin a relationship with Landon--by mail. Letters will go back and forth for months, even years. And each letter from Landon will lead them deeper into God's Word and His will for their lives.

But it all begins when they hear Heartbeat the first time. So, when you get Heartbeat on a radio station you've done an important job--thanks.

HOW HEARTBEAT CAN HELP A LOCAL CHURCH

This is very important. The local congregation is the body of Christ. God gives no other example of how His family should get together. And there are at least four ways Heartbeat can be helpful to your congregation. Here they are:

1. By broadcasting Heartbeat, you provide outsiders in your community with an additional means of contact with Christians.
2. You provide your community with a personal service they will appreciate, respect and be helped by.
3. Christians can use it as a door-opener in talking with their friends. If you know a person you want to talk to about Christ, you say, "By the way, have you ever heard Heartbeat?" If they say yes, the door is open! If they haven't, tell them the time and station. Suggest they listen and then check with them later about their reaction.
4. You have an opportunity, if you choose, to attach a closing line after Heartbeat which says, "Heartbeat is sponsored by the Main Street Church of Christ."

* * *

One final word of introduction. . . Heartbeat is an evangelistic ministry. Our prayer is that it will help God's community grow. That is the only reason Heartbeat is produced. After you've read all these pages, please put Heartbeat in your prayers. God can do many things--we are only His tools which He uses to fulfill His plans and purposes.

HOW TO APPROACH A RADIO STATION

There is no simple way. No hard and fast rules. All we can give you is guidelines. Suggestions on what to do, where to go, who to talk to.

The first thing to realize is that, when you approach a radio station, you are entering a selling situation. You are the salesman; the station is the prospect. The object is to convince the station to add Heartbeat to its programming. There are two ways Heartbeat can be added:

1. Sustaining time
2. Sponsored time

Sustaining time is free. It costs you nothing. For that reason, you'll probably want to at least discuss sustaining time. However, don't be shocked or upset if the station says no. Time is all the station has to sell; so they are somewhat reluctant to give it away.

Sponsored time is time you pay for. The cost of the time varies with the time of day. The early morning and late afternoon (when people are going to and from work) are the most expensive. Followed by mid-day, evening and overnight.

Please read the section entitled, "General Marketing Information." It tells how Heartbeat is available to stations.

Who do you talk to?

There are three possibilities. Exactly which person you should go to depends on the size and location of the station. The three positions are:

1. Station Manager
2. Program Director
3. Public Affairs Director

If all three of these tell you "no" on sustaining time, you may end up talking with a salesman and looking at buying time.

What to do first?

Do a little research. Find out everything about the station. Answer questions like some of these:

Who owns the station? Do you know someone who knows this person?

What is the format of the station? News? Music? Talk? Why will Heartbeat be good for this station?

Who is the program director, or station manager?

What is the nature of the community? Why would Heartbeat appeal to these people?

Remember, the station is interested in three things--and please note their order--

1. Making money,
2. building and holding a large audience,
3. Providing a community service.

The last item helps achieve the second; the second helps achieve the first.

Now, read the section "Heartbeat: For A Station Concerned About Its Public." This is written as a sales approach for you. Some radio station people have a preconceived idea of what a religious radio program is. Most often, their preconception does not represent Heartbeat's approach. Sometimes, a station will refuse to carry a religious program that is a harangue or one that begs for money--but they will agree to broadcast Heartbeat.

The basic ingredient to all successful sales efforts is to show the prospect how the product will benefit him. This translates, in our situation, to:

Show the station how Heartbeat can achieve the three items we just listed.

* * *

These are guidelines. If you'd like to talk about them, ask questions, before you do anything; or if you're working already and have hit some obstacles--please call the Heartbeat office. Phone: 713/774-6437.

HEARTBEAT: FOR A STATION CONCERNED ABOUT ITS PUBLIC

A Sales Approach To Radio Stations

This statement explains how Heartbeat should be presented to radio station personnel and outsiders. As you read it, remember that for the most part outsiders have bad or at least neutral feelings toward religious messages. So this statement is written to avoid such prejudices. And thus to increase the chances that the station will agree to carry Heartbeat.

Heartbeat is a human-interest radio feature now syndicated on over 170 stations across the United States. This program is unique in the radio industry.

Heartbeat raises questions about persons. Why do we exist? What are we here for? Why are we lonely? How do we approach life? What makes us what we are? Why do we get up in the morning?

Heartbeat contributes to solutions by helping us to focus on the right questions.

The producers of Heartbeat believe that finding the right questions is the first step toward discovering their answers.

If you want to talk about the answers . . .

Listeners can write Heartbeat. The address is given on each message. And if someone writes, their letter is answered personally by Landon Saunders, the voice on Heartbeat.

No form letters. No gimmicks. No come on. If a listener writes Landon, all he gets is an answer to his letter. That's what Heartbeat wants to do.

We want to encourage people to search for answers to the questions of life.

Heartbeat does not sell products; we are not after any monetary gain by being on the air.

Heartbeat is produced by the Herald of Truth Radio and Television Programs, a non-profit entity supported by individuals and organizations who share the goals of Heartbeat. Herald of Truth Programs is operated by the Highland Church of Christ, Abilene, Texas.

Heartbeat has never--and never will--asked any listener for even a dollar.

What Heartbeat can do for your station.

Heartbeat has proven to be an effective audience builder for many stations. The program appeals to a broad range of age groups, economic groups, and both sexes. However, its greatest appeal is to adults 25-49. The audience is also very loyal.

Heartbeat is excellent feature type programming for easy listening, middle-of-the-road, contemporary music, rock, country/western, and news/information formats.

Here's what radio stations are saying about Heartbeat.

WLLH/WSSH, Lowell, Massachusetts

Driving to work this morning I was listening to our 8:30 a.m. newscast and was struck again as I have been many times with the impact of your message. I do believe your unique "commercial" is one of the most creative and distinctive uses of radio's special ability to communicate person to person that I have ever heard.

Thank you for this enlightening use of our medium and for the example it sets for all of us. We're simply delighted to have you on WLLH.

Arnold S. Lerner
President

WOLF, Syracuse, New York

Your copy is crisp, concise and often includes a nice touch of humor. And most of all, Heartbeat deals with contemporary issues and they don't throw theology right in the listener's face.

Your method of offering an interesting discussion, which perhaps offers an answer to a problem and ending your talk with a really down home friendliness, which invites rather than condemns or forces a reply, is really fine.

I just thought you'd like to know that, yes, Mr. Saunders, even the jocks listen to your program, and I for one enjoy them.

A Disc Jockey

WVOR, Rochester, New York

We air Heartbeat on WVOR at different times during my 4-hour daily radio program (3-7 p.m.) along with adult contemporary album-tracks and hits. Heartbeat helps to add some intelligence to Rochester radio.

Robert Bittner

WQMG-FM, Greensboro, North Carolina

I listened critically to be sure it was good. It was . . . I listened . . . catching not only the message, but the construction and the delivery, too. Yes, you were good. You are good.

Barbara Bell
Program Director

SOME ANSWERS TO STATION OBJECTIONS

No sales effort is ever easy. So, the station people you talk with may give reasons for not carrying Heartbeat. Below are some of the most common objections you will hear, followed by how we feel they can best be answered.

HOW IS HEARTBEAT DIFFERENT FROM PUBLIC SERVICE SPOTS BY THE FRANCISCANS OR THE MORMONS?

The Franciscans and Mormon spots are basically institutional. They are produced primarily to build a strong positive public image for their respective churches. In contrast, Heartbeat is a one-to-one personal message designed to help people with their personal problems and needs. And we give an address, so if a listener wants to, he can establish an on-going personal relationship.

DO YOU ASK FOR DONATIONS FROM THE PEOPLE WHO WRITE IN?

No. Emphatically, no. Nor do we ever plan to. Heartbeat is funded privately and does not need contributions from the listening audience.

WE DON'T CARRY RELIGIOUS PROGRAMS EXCEPT ON SUNDAY MORNING.

Heartbeat is a human interest feature. It helps people. We talk about personal felt needs--such as loneliness, marriage troubles, depression, frustration, isolation. Doesn't every person who listens to radio have felt needs? Even the Station Manager or Program Director. They will tune in and listen to Heartbeat.

HEARTBEAT IS NOT COMPATIBLE WITH THE STATION FORMAT

Heartbeat has been and is now broadcast as part of virtually every kind of format radio stations can use. Here are some examples:

<u>Format</u>	<u>Stations, City</u>
Middle-of-the-road	WESX, Salem, MA WFAS, New York WMRY, St. Louis WTMR, Philadelphia . . . and 66 others now on the air.
Contemporary, Top 40	KWEB, Rochester, NY KDAY, Los Angeles WQMG, Greensboro, NC WSM-FM, Nashville KBEE, Modesto, CA KOLA, Riverside, CA . . . and 37 others, now on the air.

News, Talk Information

KTMS, Santa Barbara
 WAVA, Washington, D. C.
 KTRH, Houston
 KZIA, Albuquerque
 . . . and 34 others, now on the air.

Country/Western

WMAQ, Chicago
 WNBC, New York
 WBAP, Ft. Worth
 WSCM, Panama City, FL
 WGUS, Augusta, GA
 WRIT, Milwaukee
 . . . and 39 others now on the air.

And these other formats: Farm, Ethnic, Popular, Black & Soul, Golden Oldies, Adults, Beautiful Music, and others.

DO YOU BUY TIME IN OTHER CITIES? AND IF YOU DO, WHY DON'T YOU BUY FROM ME?

We do buy time on the NBC Radio Network. But NBC has no interest in the local community where you are. A radio station is interested and concerned about its community. Programming Heartbeat is an expression of a station's interest in the community--and as a bonus, Heartbeat is high quality programming that is often difficult to get on a local basis.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Currently there are two versions of Heartbeat--a three-minute program and a one-minute spot.

Both versions are available for broadcast in any market. The following is a summary of general marketing information, and specifics that will help you in planning to air Heartbeat.

Specifications on production and distribution of both programs.

Length:	One-Minute Three-Minute
How Supplied:	5 programs per week on reel, mailed 4-6 weeks before airdate. Return of tapes requested.
Cost to Stations:	FREE

THE THREE-MINUTE PROGRAM

The three-minute version of Heartbeat has two major advantages: new and fresh material for programming is continually produced, and the three-minute allows time for strong development of content.

The three-minute program is designed to be broadcast daily, Monday through Friday. Although most stations broadcast it only once a day, some have broadcast it up to four times a day with very positive response from their listening audience.

Several stations have inquired about broadcasting the program on a seven-day per week basis. We have no objection to this, but because the programs are sent in sets of five, we recommend the re-run of two programs from the set for Saturday and Sunday. Weekend audiences are generally different, and repetition is not a problem.

We do ask that the tapes be returned to us. We re-use them; and this cuts down on our expenses.

THE ONE-MINUTE PROGRAM

We also have a one-minute version of Heartbeat which is designed for use in public service time or in an advertising mode. They are very effective in capturing the audience's attention with a capsule message. At this time there are about 75 rotating spots.

How much do the programs cost?

Nothing. They are absolutely free to any radio station or church who will use them on the air. If a local congregation could make a contribution to Heartbeat to help with costs, we are grateful.

Should the programs be tagged locally?

They can be. In fact, some radio stations even require a local tag.

Here are some observations you should consider as you reflect on this question:

First of all, when the tag includes the church's local address it creates a problem for the listener. If he is unsure where to write--to which address--the possibility increases that he will not write at all.

Further, a local tag tends to reduce the number of people who write and receive follow-up correspondence. We've seen this happen in several places. This doesn't mean that Heartbeat is not effective when it has a local tag. Rather, it means Heartbeat with a local tag is effective in ways that are not so readily measured as mail response.

If you choose to add a local tag, simply arrange to have the radio station announcer say something like this, after the program:

"Heartbeat is sponsored by the Main Street Church of Christ."

If Heartbeat has a positive response in the minds of listeners, they will actually seek you out, when they are ready. And it is important they be ready. Because if they are not ready, there's nothing we can do to force Christianity on them.

We do have some promotional spots, 20 and 30 seconds long, to help build the listening audience for Heartbeat. Contact our office if your radio station would like to have these.

A POSTSCRIPT

The ultimate goal of Heartbeat is to confront lost souls with Jesus Christ and bring them into a covenant relationship with Him--to save them.

This is an on-going process. It begins with the programs, and takes a step forward when someone writes in response to what they hear.

Response to Heartbeat--that is, letters from listeners--can be slow in coming. When listeners do write, they are usually very seriously in search or in need of something, so we can really help them.

Therefore, if Heartbeat goes on the air in your area, don't expect a lot of mail initially. It takes time to build confidence with people.

The strategy of Heartbeat understands this. We are programming--not simply for numbers--but for seeking people. Seeking people you can talk with. They'll listen and not shut you out so quickly. Seeking people are open to the truth.

There are many people who are not seeking. Their minds are closed. Keep an opportunity before them? Yes, always. And with Heartbeat and other outreaches, we are doing that.

So, Heartbeat tries to identify people who are open and willing to search for the truth. These people are hard to find and slow to reveal themselves. Response is often not immediately visible. As Heartbeat goes on the air in your area, we should be prayerful and patient as God works through us.

TO SIGN UP A RADIO STATION FOR HEARTBEAT JUST COMPLETE THIS FORM AND MAIL IT TO THE HEARTBEAT OFFICE:

To: Heartbeat Programs
8700 Commerce Park Drive
Suite 200 Houston, TX 77036

Please begin sending the Heartbeat radio program to the following station:

_____ 3-minute _____ 60-second

Call letters _____ Power _____

Address _____ Frequency _____

City, state, zip _____ Start date _____

Station contact _____ Time of broadcast _____

title _____

phone _____

From: name _____ phone: _____

address _____

city, state, zip _____

church _____