

HISTORY

On June 12th 1998, in Timisoara took place the first Euro-regional meeting of independent radio stations from Romania, Serbia and Hungary.

Representatives from Radio West Timisoara, Radio 021 Novi Sad (Yugoslavia) and Radio Media 6 Szeged (Hungary) signed an agreement with the aim to stimulate the tri-lateral collaboration.

On July 4th 1998, at the end of a second meeting, in Szeged (Hungary), the representatives of the three independent radio stations signed a new Agreement stipulating the foundation of "Euro-media Danube-Maris-Tisa-Kris" project with the following goals:

a) to inform the public, media and international organizations about "Euro-media Danube-Maris-Tisa-Kris" project;

b) to establish the most suitable ways to accomplish the technical needs in order to exchange the audio and other materials between the studios and to create the basis for further development of the technical mechanisms used for communication already debated at the first meeting from Timisoara;

c) to analyze and decide the structure and the deadlines of the audio materials which will be broadcasted as a part of the project;

d) to establish the basic elements of a unique marketing strategy;

e) to debate and elaborate a project to inform the European Community, the European Union and international organizations who support quick Euro-regional development about "Euro-media Danube-Maris-Tisa-Kris".

On September 12th 1998, in Novi Sad, the participants signed The Novi Sad Agreement (see the Annex) with the concrete activities for the first common Euro-regional radio program.

In December 1998, the first 60 minutes Euro-regional radio program "Euro-media Danube-Maris-Tisa-Kris" was broadcasted simultaneously in Timisoara (by Radio West), Novi Sad (by Radio 021) and Szeged (by Radio Media 6).

The cooperation between the three partners continued at the beginning of the Kosovo war and in the 1999 summer (when representatives of the three radio stations participated at the First Edition of the Summer School for the Regional and Euro-regional Journalism organized by Radio West and West Foundation in Sebis, Arad County). The co-operation stopped in the 1999 Autumn, under the constraints of the Serbian regime hindering freedom of speech.

The Euro-regional cooperation was relaunched again on April 5-7th 2001, on the occasion of the Euro-regional Mass Media Meeting, organized by CED in Timisoara. The event aimed at bringing together journalists, press institution and media related NGO's and thus at increasing media's contribution to the establishment and/or consolidation of democracy in the region.

At this meeting did participate representatives from Radio 021 Novi Sad, VK Radio Kikinda & City Radio Senta, Radio Implus Vrsac, Radio Pancevo etc.

Debates focused on the results of "Euro-media Danube-Maris-Tisa-Kris" project.

All participants approved the initiation of the PROBITAS Project as an important step for the promotion of regional co-operation.

The participants agreed the Project objectives:

a) to train the future journalists;

b) to create a suitable framework for developing the interdisciplinary and co-operative journalistic activities;

c) to create an appropriate background for identifying and approaching the common problems from ex-communist countries.

The proposed project has to respond to this by:

a) identifying the common problems in Euro-region;

b) initiating young journalists and enhancing their technical and professional skills, through inter-operational training programs, in the utilization of modern equipments and technologies of communication;

c) an inter-operational journalistic network (consolidating the Euro-regional journalistic community).

PROBITAS PARTNERS

IJAS INDEPENDENT JOURNALISTS' ASSOCIATION OF SERBIA NUNS NOVIARA UDRUZENJE NOVINARA SRBIJE

Established on March 26, 1994 as a non-party and professional organization. Major objectives: free journalism and media pluralism; promotion of professional and ethic standards; protection of journalists' (media professionals') rights and interests, trade union and legal protection included; promotion of mutual cooperation between journalists and journalist organizations at home and abroad.

The Association was set up by a large group of professional journalists, primarily those left jobless because of political purges and repression by Serbian authorities.

At the end of 1999, the Association numbers 1,100 members. Most are freelancers.

In cooperation with the International Federation of Journalists, the Association provides legal assistance to journalists free of charge, in the cases of the regime's repression and in the domains of labor and professional rights. A Solidarity Fund has been established to financially assist the members in need.

Around 70 percent of the IJAS membership have academic degrees and longstanding experience in journalism. Actually, the IJAS is a large labor exchange for the best journalists out of work. Therefore, the IJAS launched the Journalist Workshop Project aimed at educating journalists, from beginners to editors, and drawing a clear distinction between professionalism and propaganda. Together with Press Now, in 1997-98 the Association organized three courses that included around 100 journalists. The IJAS Workshop also cooperates with the Westminster Foundation, which provided a radio editing equipment, and the European Union, which gave TV equipment.

The IJAS intends to strengthen ties with journalists in Serbia, which will be based on professionalism and independence. Over past years, the Association has tried to protect individuals and media from the regime's repression, either by providing legal assistance or animating domestic and foreign publics.

Commensurate with its power, the Association has been attempting to influence media related legislation.

After the extremely restrictive Serbian Public Information Law was passed in October 1988, the Association convened an extraordinary assembly and initiated the law's annulment with the constitutional courts of Serbia and Yugoslavia.

The IJAS funds are based on donations and partially on membership fees.

As of 1994, the IJAS is a member of the International Federation of Journalists, Brussels.

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ETHICS

R.T.N.D.A. Radio-Television News Directors Association The Association of Electronic Journalists

The responsibility of radio and television journalists is to gather and report information of importance and interest to the public accurately, honestly and impartially.

The members of the Radio-Television News Directors Association accept these standards and will:

Strive to present the source or nature of broadcast news material in a way that is balanced, accurate and fair.

They will evaluate information solely on its merits as news, rejecting sensationalism or misleading emphasis in any form.

They will guard against using audio or video material in a way that deceives the audience.

They will not mislead the public by presenting as spontaneous news any material which is staged or rehearsed.

They will identify people by race, creed, nationality or prior status only when it is relevant.

They will clearly label opinion and commentary.

They will promptly acknowledge and correct errors.

Strive to conduct themselves in a manner that protects them from conflicts of interest, real or perceived.

They will decline gifts or favors which would influence or appear to influence their judgments.

Respect the dignity, privacy and well-being of people with whom they deal.

Recognize the need to protect confidential sources.

They will promise confidentiality only with the intention of keeping that promise.

Respect everyone's right to a fair trial.

Broadcast the private transmissions of other broadcasters only with permission.

Actively encourage observance of this Code by all journalists, whether members of the Radio-Television News Directors Association or not.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEWS

ACCURACY-news must be reported as accurately and as fairly as you can, no matter how unpopular the facts might be. Inaccuracy leads to mistrust by the audience.

IMPACT - news have to affect people they are addressed to and have to incite the audience's mind. They also have to create attitude for the facts presented.

STYLE - must be conversational, short, at the point. Let out the words that can turn away the listener's attention.

PROXIMITY - It's important to consider where a story occurred. Listeners are more interested in what affects them personally, directly and locally than in events happening in some distant location.

PROMINENCE - people want to know about other people, especially well-known or prominent people. The more prominent or visible the person involved in a story, the more newsworthy that story becomes.

ON THE SPOT - The radio is the quickest way for a story to get the audience. People expect to find out the facts, short after they occurred. Don't let them wait!

NEWSWORTHINESS - is determined by several factors that shape news judgment: proximity, prominence, timeliness, impact, conflict, suspense, human interest, uniqueness, controversy, drama.

NEWSWRITING

Let out unusual words.
Use only the active voice.
Use only common words.
Be careful when using the pronouns.
Be careful when writing negative sentences and phrases.
Use the same tense of the verb both in the principal and in the subordinate sentence.
Make the numbers and the abbreviations understandable.
Be careful when and how you attribute.

VOICE INSERTS

ACTUALITIES or **SOUNDBITES** - use the voices and sounds of the actual news event to help to tell a story.
Comments are recorded, edited into short statements and then melded into the news copy.

They can offer additional information and also can provide emotional reactions to some facts-.

ON-SCENE SOUNDS - are the natural sounds from where the facts occurred and they can help to place the audience in that place.

VOICERS - can help reporters meet deadlines quickly, and can add variety to the newscasts.

After a newscaster lead-in the reporter is heard giving the essential facts of the story.
WRAPAROUND REPORTS - combine the actualities and voices and are usually longer than both of them.

THE HEAD

The first paragraph of the news must give an answer to the following questions:
WHO did something
WHAT happened
WHERE the facts happened
WHEN happened
WHY happened
You can begin your story with any of these "5 W's".

BUILDING THE NEWSCAST

When selecting the news, besides the common sense, take in account: newsworthiness, coverage area, target audience, time of day, newsroom philosophy and policy, availability of news items as well as availability of sound, newscast format used, commitments the newsroom has made, and the lead story in the newscast.

Building or planning a newscast involves three key steps:
- becoming informed about the day's news events
- calculating available newscast time
- writing copy and the lineup.

FEATURES

Feature stories offer insights about the people, places, things or events that surround us each day.
We relate to them because they often expose human emotions or feelings and are generally told in an engaging manner from a personal point of view, the reporter's or some other person's.
NEWS FEATURES - are stories that are newsworthy but are not as immediate and do not require the concision and precision expected in a breaking news story. They could also be follow-ups to previous hard news stories.
SIDEBARS-are stories that cover in detail one aspect of a larger breaking story. Each sidebar should be a meaningful part of the breaking story and should explore in greater detail only one part of the larger story.
SPECIAL EVENTS FEATURES - are similar to sidebars, but the main story concerns a one-time-only situation
NEWS BACKGROUNDERS - trace the development of a significant current news story. Background information and a brief chronology can be presented to help the audience understand how a story progressed to where it is now.
HISTORICAL FEATURES - attempt to show the importance and relevance of significant past events. Such features review what has happened and asses the current and future impact of the events.
HUMAN INTEREST STORIES - offer the odd, unusual, humorous and offbeat incidents and personalities that help keep life in perspective.
PERSONALITY SKETCHES or **PROFILES** - in these types of features the reporter tries to determine what motivates, excites or discourages one individual to provide a better sense of who or what this person is.
DESCRIPTIVE FEATURES - focus on places to visit and see and events to participate in or enjoy as spectators.
SESONAL FEATURES - spotlight specific annual events or observations
Do not forget that effective feature stories use additional approaches and techniques, including flexible, creative story structure; a focus on the human aspects of the story; a noticeable and consisted tone, mood and point of view.

THE SOURCES

Reputable reporting and news-writing is not based on unconfirmed rumors from unidentified sources or unfounded assumption made by careless reporters. It is based on accurate reports or information that can be confirmed from a variety of reliable, reputable news sources.

We can divide the sources in two major categories: *in door* and *out door* sources.

IN DOOR SOURCES - reporters don't have to leave their office to get the information. Press releases come by fax, mail and e-mail, by telephone ore are sent by different press agencies.

OUT DOOR SOURCES - good reporters don't sit at their desk. It's necessary for a reporter to go out in the field and talk with people, in order to understand the message before writing and presenting it to the audience.

We can divide the sources as it follows: *public*, *private* and *internal*

PUBLIC SOURCES - include reference work: government records, documents and reports and public safety communications

PRIVATE SOURCES - include people, various groups and organizations, audio and video news releases, surveys and polls, newspapers, databases and bulletin boards, stations and networks, commercial news services etc.

INTERNAL SOURCES - include the material that a newsroom already has (previous stories, call-sheets etc) and correspondents, stringers and tipsters.

THE STRUCTURE OF A NEWSCAST

In a radio program we may have:
FLASH NEWS - no more than 2 minutes
NEWSCASTS - around 5 minutes of news with no more than 3 paragraphs
JOURNALS - around 10 minutes, containing vox-pops and voice inserts of maximum 3 minutes each.
NEWS PROGRAMMES - around 30 minutes and very appropriate for educational radio stations. Contains complex materials and commentaries, sports, weather and traffic information.
SUMMARIES - are broadcasted usually at night and contain information about what occurred on that day.

THE DOCUMENTARY

Is longer than a feature but more temperate and much more documented than a feature. It gives the audience the story including the facts, the causes, the consequences and the background.
Both the feature and the documentary aim to create an attitude.
The documentary is appropriate for an educational radio station.
Commercial stations use only very short types of stories.

