Broadcast Monitoring

What is Broadcast Monitoring?

Broadcast monitoring is a method that tracks the output of broadcast media, including TV, radio, and the internet. This type of monitoring can track mentions of a program of interest or track how often the TV/radio components of a program is aired. Additionally, this type of monitoring can track changes in targeted norms, perceptions, awareness, or behaviors related to outcomes of interest over time. In practice, broadcast monitoring generally involves a combination of technologies, software, and resources, including audio and video recordings of media, analysis software, and human analysts.

When conducting broadcast monitoring, it is essential to clearly define the specific type of media being monitored, the types of mentions or topics to be delivered, the time period of the monitoring, and the method of delivery to stakeholders. Type of media refers to the general media channel (e.g., TV or radio) as well as the specific programming on these channels (e.g., news broadcasts, TV show series, or radio show series). The types of mentions or topics refer to the specific programmatic areas or themes of monitoring interest. The time period is defined as the designated calendar dates a monitoring team employs to collect relevant media or mentions. Finally, the method of delivery refers to the format in which the media monitoring results will be packaged for dissemination to stakeholders.

While broadcast monitoring can be accomplished using in-house media monitoring resources, hiring an external media monitoring service is generally a more cost-effective and less labor-intensive option. Additionally, these commercial services often provide more extensive media coverage than an in-house staff that uses free online news monitoring tools, such as Google News and RSS feeds.

When Should You Use Broadcast Monitoring?

Broadcast monitoring is especially relevant if a program has a television or radio component. Broadcast monitoring is also ideal when a program or outcome of interest is often mentioned on TV or radio. Furthermore, this method is best utilized when a program either has the time and resources to conduct in-house media monitoring or has the funds for external services needed to conduct media monitoring. Most importantly, broadcast monitoring should be conducted only if there is a clear vision of how this data will be utilized for program monitoring, as well as a process to package and disseminate output to relevant stakeholders.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
• Can capture general community perception of a program as well as changes in outcomes of interest. • Does not require recruitment of participants or use of enumerators. • Ideal for real-time monitoring of broadcasting, and can provide continued, up-to-date information.	• Resource-intensive and time-intensive. • Often relies on availability and existence of established external media companies, which can be limited in countries with low resources. • Foresight is necessary to ensure records of radio or TV broadcasts will exist in order to accept retrospective monitoring.

Ethical Considerations

While this method does not directly collect data from humans, it can indirectly collect the thoughts and opinions of individuals speaking on TV or radio. Additionally, information from broadcast shows or programs is often collected without the explicit knowledge of the broadcasters. However, when broadcasting programs or ideas through TV or radio, organizations and individuals should be aware that programs or ideas are inherently available for monitoring and analysis once broadcasted. Nevertheless, it is essential to remain sensitive to and be aware of the potential implications that collecting, analyzing, and disseminating this data can have for organizations and individuals.

Resources

Media Monitoring: The Complete Guide
An in-depth look at, and explanation of, media monitoring. This guide also explores social media monitoring as a method.