



## Radio's social media decline: Facebook drops and X plunges

By Bob Papper and Keren Henderson

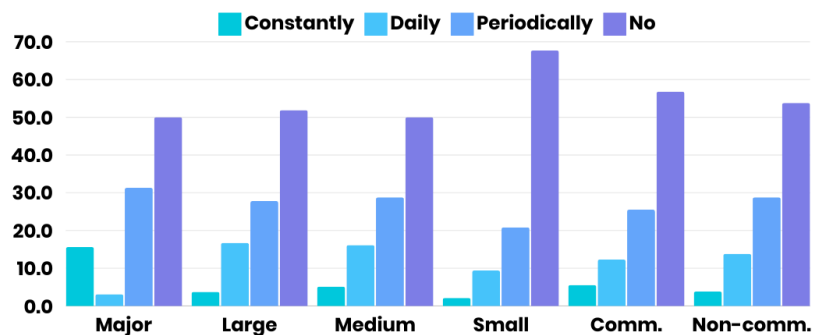
Aug. 27, 2024 – The latest RTDNA/Newhouse School at Syracuse University Survey found that the biggest change in radio social media came in the drop in use of Facebook and X, formerly known as Twitter.

### Is the radio newsroom actively involved with X?

	Constantly	Daily	Periodically	No
All Radio	5%	12.7%	26.3%	56%
Market size:				
Major	15.6	3.1	31.3	50
Large	3.7	16.7	27.8	51.9
Medium	5.1	16.1	28.8	50
Small	2.1	9.4	20.8	67.7
Commercial	5.5	12.3	25.5	56.8
Non-commercial	3.8	13.8	28.8	53.8

## MOST RADIO NEWSROOMS AVOID X ENTIRELY

Is the radio newsroom actively involved with X?



### INSIGHTS

- Radio's X usage plummeted, especially in larger markets.
- This year, for the first time, a majority of radio stations said they don't use X.

### RADIO & SOCIAL MEDIA



Radio's use of X plummeted in the last year. Overall, "constant" use dropped by over six points; "daily" use dropped by six-and-a-half, and "no" use rose by nearly 13. This year, for the first time, a majority of radio stations said they don't use X.

The bigger the market, the bigger the drop in using X. Last year, just 14.3% of major market radio stations reported they did not use X; now it's 50%. Large market non-use went up by over 20 points.

### Does the radio station or newsroom have a Facebook page?

	Yes	No
All Radio	84%	16.1%
Market size:		
Major	78.1	21.9
Large	81.1	18.9
Medium	85.5	14.5
Small	85.6	14.4
Commercial	80.9	19.1
Non-commercial	92.4	7.6

It's not an earth-shattering change, but virtually every group has dropped in the use of Facebook. Interestingly, the larger the market, the less likely that the station has a Facebook page. However, the vast majority of stations still have a Facebook page, and the decreases in numbers are relatively insignificant, except for major market stations, which experienced a 17

point decline. Commercial stations are down by five while non-commercial stations are up by less than a point.

## RADIO SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE **DECLINES**

- Facebook usage decreased slightly, with major market stations seeing the biggest decline.
- The majority of stations continue to maintain active Facebook pages
- Radio app usage also fell slightly, with non-commercial stations more likely to have apps
- Social media engagement numbers vary widely by market size and station type

RADIO & SOCIAL MEDIA

RTDNA

Syracuse University  
Newhouse School of  
Public Communications

### Apps

The percentage of radio stations with apps dropped by a couple points to 59.3%. A year ago, it was 61.7%. It had been as high as 63% a few years earlier.

Non-commercial stations are a little more likely to have an app, 64.1% versus 57.4%. The bigger the market, the more likely that the station has at least one app.

The average number of apps is 1.1 with a median of 1. Both numbers are largely unchanged from the past three years. Market size makes little difference.

### Number of social media engagements in the most recent month

	Avg. No. (in thousands)	Median No. (in thousands)	Minimum (in thousands)	Maximum (in thousands)
All Radio	69	38	<.1	300
Market size:				
Major market	58.6	58.6	35.1	82
Large market	146.7	100	40	300
Medium market	41	9.1	0.8	200
Small Market	89.7	59.8	<.1	250
Commercial	90.7	63.6	1	300

Non-commercial	19.4	2.8	<.1	82
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Seven years into this question, and most news directors and general managers still don't know the answers, so you need to view the numbers through that caution. Still, enough news directors and GMs filled in numbers but view everything below the "all radio" line with extreme caution.

**Percent of station web traffic that came from social media**

	Average	Median	Minimum	Maximum
All Radio	29.2%	24%	3%	96%
Market size:				
Major market	21	21	20	22
Large market	4.3	5	3	5
Medium market	27.4	25	8	50
Small market	55.8	50	27	96
Commercial	31.4	25	3	96
Non-commercial	18	22	5	27

The average and typical (median) numbers are fairly close to last year. But, again, even fewer news directors and general managers know these numbers than know social media engagement. View them with caution.

This is the third year we have asked about the number of listeners who signed up for a news or weather app. It's the first year we have enough response to report anything. The average station has 44,000 sign-ups but with a median of just 752. Specific group numbers are still too small to report.

The average radio station has 9,826 sign-ups for a station newsletter. The median is 2,000.

Major markets are those with 1 million or more potential listeners. Large markets are from 250,000 to 1 million. Medium markets are 50,000 to 250,000. Small markets are fewer than 50,000.

Web staffing numbers and newsroom participation in working on the web are included in the staffing article. Web profitability is discussed in the business of news articles. Paywalls are in the online article.

Note that there's a fine line between online and social media ... so be sure to check the online article.

**About the Author**

***Bob Papper is Research Professor of Broadcast and Digital Journalism at Syracuse University and has worked extensively in radio and TV news.***

***Keren Henderson is Associate Professor of Broadcast and Digital Journalism at Syracuse University.***

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**About the Survey**

The RTDNA/Newhouse School at Syracuse University Survey was conducted in the fourth quarter of 2023 among all 1,876 operating, non-satellite television stations and a random sample of 4,764 radio stations. The television response rate is different for every question, but Valid responses came from as many as 1,387 television stations (73.9%) and 631 radio news directors and general managers representing 1,902 radio stations. Some data sets (e.g. the number of TV stations originating local news, getting news from others and women TV news directors) are based on a complete census and are not projected from a smaller sample.