



Tips for Placing a Radio or TV Advertisement

1. To place an advertisement that will run on the radio or television promoting your medical research study, you will need an IRB-approved radio or television spot. Radio spots are generally 60 seconds in length, while TV spots are generally 30 seconds in length.
2. Most radio stations now accept an electronic media file of your radio spot, like an MP3 file. Most TV stations will accept a Beta-SP tape, while others will accept a spot on a CD if the format is compatible. Consult with your TV station to better understand their requirements.
3. Radio advertising is purchased in “points,” or “GRPs,” which stands for Gross Rating Points. Television advertising is purchased in “points,” or “TRPs,” which stands for Television Rating Points. Basically, GRPs/TRPs are the number of times (frequency) an amount of your target population (reach) hears and/or sees the spot.
4. The cost per GRP/TRP varies based on the population in your Designated Market Area, or DMA. Larger DMAs—such as Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Atlanta, and Miami—are more expensive because the population is larger, and more people in your target audience hear the ad.
5. “Target audience,” is the specific group of people you are trying to reach with your message. For example, an hormone replacement therapy study of post-menopausal women would target women ages 45-75, so you would want to place your radio spot on stations that have high ratings for this demographic (women 45+). Likewise for television, you would run your ad during shows that have high viewership that matches this target market. Don’t be swayed by an ad sales rep who claims “We’re the number one top 40 station in the city,” or “we have the top afternoon TV line-up.” Your target patient population demographic should determine the best formats and shows throughout the day for your media campaign.
6. Be sure to specify program placement as well. Again, your radio or TV salesperson can make recommendations about the programs appropriate for your target audience.
7. Typical media buys range from 80-150 GRPs/TRPs/week, and can be spread across several stations to most effectively saturate your market. Your goal for radio is to ensure that listeners hear the ad several times, as it usually takes at least four exposures to an ad for the listener to call for more information. For TV, viewers need to see your ad a minimum of three times to have the best chance for success.
8. Before agreeing to any media schedule or contract, make sure you ask your rep for various media scenarios and budgets so you may consider which will be the best use of your media funds.