

INTRODUCTION TO THE UK COMMERCIAL RADIO INDUSTRY

The growth of commercial radio is a great British success story. It reaches 39.7 million listeners each week with a mix of music, trusted news, travel and local information. The industry generates £683m in GVA to the UK economy and supports over 12,000 jobs.

DELIVERING PUBLIC VALUE

- **Record audiences** – Commercial radio audiences remain strong, reaching 39.7 million people each week. With more choice than ever, this enduring popularity is testament to the investment from broadcasters in world-beating entertainment, which is accompanied by trusted news and information.
- **Trusted news** – Commercial radio stations are an important source of trusted local and national news and make a significant investment in journalism across all parts of the UK. They broadcast over 10,000 bulletins every week and employ hundreds of journalists based in major national and regional news centres around the country.
- **Force for good** – Providing entertainment and companionship for audiences, as well as raising over £23m in 2022 for charities and good causes. Commercial radio also closely supports the fundraising work of the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC), donating airtime and helping to raise millions for its campaigns.

DRIVING ECONOMIC GROWTH

- **Value to UK economy** – Audio is an important part of the UK’s creative industries, with commercial radio alone generating around £683m in GVA and supporting 12,340 jobs across the country. Radio’s revenue contribution to advertisers is estimated at over £5.5bn (based on an average return on investment of £7.70 for every £1 spent). Radio continues to play an important role in supporting the UK music industry. Value to music sales is estimated at over £100m (in addition to around £60m in music rights payments).
- **UK creative industries** – Radio is at the heart of the UK’s creative industries. World-leading broadcasters invest heavily in UK audio, with jobs and talent nurtured across a wide-range of specialist areas which reflect the technological changes and opportunities in radio and audio.
- **Driving innovation and economic growth** – Through investment in content, technology and a highly skilled workforce, commercial radio is leading the audio revolution in the UK. Broadcasters continue to develop the skills of their workforce in order to grow audiences and ultimately fuel economic growth in the radio and advertising industries.

SECURING THE FUTURE

1. **Secure access to radio online:** As a greater share of radio listening continues to move online, ensure that measures in the Media Act to support access to UK radio, on devices like smart speakers, are implemented by Ofcom as soon as possible, while keeping the scope of the legislation under review (for example, by extending the current powers and ensuring radio remains available in internet connected cars).
2. **Safeguard BBC distinctiveness:** In order to guarantee a thriving UK radio industry, re-affirm the importance of distinct BBC radio/audio services and robust external regulation by Ofcom, maximising choice and quality for audiences, as the BBC’s funding and future Charter renewal are both considered. We do not support an advertising or subscription funded BBC, given the expected detrimental impact on the entire UK radio sector.
3. **Opportunity for economic growth:** Champion improved consumer communication by updating rules on garbled terms and conditions (Ts&Cs) in radio ads to support listener protection and boost economic activity around the country.