Article Response Paper

Bureau of Labor Statistics: Broadcasting

Throughout the course of Radio/TV Production class we have had the opportunity to gain hands-on experience with radio air shifts, camera work, directing skills, and various forms of editing. Beyond these skills I thought it would also be interesting to know more about the broadcasting industry and what a career in this field would entail. So the article/informational website I found is from the U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics. It provides up to date information on radio and TV as well as the outlook for the future. Though there are many elements in this article, I would like to focus my summary sections on working conditions, training and advancement, and outlook. Lastly I will try to explain the article’s relevancy to the Radio/TV Production course here at MC.

The section on working conditions explains that there are various ways one could be involved in broadcasting beyond just taking part in production responsibilities. Many stations also have job opportunities in advertising, sales, or marketing. While the article states that a reporter’s work is usually not extremely hazardous, they may be subject to a number of different environments. I gather from this section that many different jobs such as broadcast technicians or field service engineers have overlapping responsibilities. Technological advancements have allowed for greater versatility in this area.
As a student who is looking to get a job in the area of TV broadcasting, I found the area of training and advancement to be particularly helpful. As expected, those who have completed an internship prior to looking for their first job have a definite advantage as less on the job training will be required. Though no statistics were provided, the article states that many employees who are just starting out in the radio/TV broadcasting industry will begin at a smaller market. Competition among experienced applicants can be much more intense in larger markets. It seems that in this type of career, timing is everything. If a person just starting out can spend some time in an entry-level type of position and then someone in a higher position leaves at the appropriate time, this can lessen the need to move around in order to advance. However this isn’t always the case and many small market stations see a great degree of turnover.

The outlook section describes the factors that contribute to the competitiveness of this industry in both radio and TV. The article states that, “Employment in broadcasting is expected to increase almost 9 percent over the 2002-12 period, more slowly than the 16 percent projected for all industries combined”. Reasons provided for this slow growth include industry consolidation, new technologies, and competition with other media outlets. Services outside of the broadcasting industry such as satellite connections can also lessen peoples’ need for radio or TV. Also better technology causes less need for workers in certain positions. Smaller radio stations are especially at risk due to things like car c.d. players and satellite radio.

This informational website is very applicable to this class and the students that will soon pursue an occupation in this field. The statistics pertaining to job outlook and advancement show that this is a very competitive field, however the more experience you
can get under your belt, the better chance you have of getting the type of job you want. Also the information doesn’t only pertain to the on-camera jobs. It refers to technicians and other behind-the-scenes jobs as well. There were also charts that mapped out income for the different broadcasting occupations. What could have made this even more interesting and informative would be some real life examples of how some of the more high profile people in this profession got their start. Overall I found this to be an interesting article that takes the type of knowledge we have gained in the class and applies it to careers in the broadcasting industry.