

Writing and Recording a 30 Second Radio Commercial

SETUP Workshop: Tuesday February 24th, 2009 9:00 a.m. to 10:45 p.m.

Facilitators: Loyalist College Teachers
Rick Chesworth rcheswor@loyalistc.on.ca and,
Sandy Ramsey sramsay@loyalistc.on.ca

The Task:

Students were asked to write a 30 second radio commercial on a topic of their choice.

Groupings:

Students were asked to form a group of two and produce a “2 Voicer” radio spot.

Background Information:

The students were given the following guidelines by Rick and Sandy before they began writing their scripts.

Lead in – This is the “catch” that is at the beginning of the radio spot which is targeted at listeners to get their attention and to keep them listening. It can be music, sound, or words and catchy phrases.

Sound Effects/Music – Loyalist College purchases licenses at a cost of \$3000.00 per year to provide their broadcasts with professional sound and music.

Type of Radio Spot – This spot was a “2 Voicer” where only two voices will “say the lines” in the radio script.

Writing Content – a 30 second radio spot will need to mention the event topic or product or concept at least 4 times during the 30 seconds.

A 30 second radio spot has about 70 words which works out to about 7 sentences. [Between 6 to 8]

A 60 second radio spot has about 140 words or 14 sentences [Between 12 to 14]

Write the script like you would “say it” - - not formal language. Make it fun and humorous.

Write pauses in the commercial and not that by having a dot-dot-dot “...”

In a 30 second, 7 sentence commercial you may wish to write 2 lead-in sentences, 3 for the main body of the commercial, and 2 closer sentences.

The Recording Process

1. Determine who says which lines in the commercial. You may wish to have the last line or two read together.
2. Find a musical track to act as a lead in to the commercial. It may also be played as background music for the commercial.
3. Test voice levels before you begin recording.
4. Record the voice track for the commercial.
5. Alternate voices between 1st and 2nd person as students read script.
6. Add sound effects or music after voices are recorded.
7. Do edits and mix all the tracks down into one file.
8. Save file as a .wav file.
9. Convert to a .mp3 file.
10. Burn to DVD.