



## **DJ Application part 1: Pre-Demo Scripting and Tips**

Thank you for expressing interest in becoming a volunteer show host at 88.1 KDHX. If you are already a financial supporter of KDHX, there is no fee required to process this application. If you have not donated to KDHX within the past 12 months, you will need to submit a \$25 processing fee.

This first document describes what you need to know if you'd like to apply for a show on KDHX. It includes the essential programming elements to keep in mind when preparing your idea for a radio show, and how to prepare a demo script for approval - a requirement in order to proceed to producing a program demo. Our programming committee meets once per month to review new demos and applications.

This document assumes that you are proposing a music-focused radio show. If not, we'll want to discuss your idea in more detail before proceeding to the demo scripting stage. Please e-mail a short description of your concept to [volunteer@kdhx.org](mailto:volunteer@kdhx.org), and we'll reply with revised instructions.

### CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF GOOD ANNOUNCING AND PROGRAMMING

The elements detailed in A-H below explain the basic structure of music show announcing and programming at KDHX. There are many ways of approaching these elements and how the host sounds when handling these is what the programming committee is listening for in particular when reviewing demos. They want to hear good radio mechanics in addition to thoughtful music programming and the volunteer host information demonstrated in the written application (part 2).

A. INTRODUCTION: Setup the show, introducing the types of music you'll play, what you call the show, how you refer to yourself as host, how long you'll be on the air, etc. Keep in mind that our station's format varies from show to show, so it is important to catch up the listener and prepare them for what they will be hearing next.

e.g.: "Hello - I'm Steve, and I'm here every Saturday from noon til 2 with this program, 'the X show' which features all the new honky tonk music that's fit to hear, and a deep tip of the hat to the pioneers of the form."

B. ID, ID, ID: Whenever you turn on the mic, follow up with all the necessary IDs. Our station ID is: "88 one, KDHX." (no point, no fm) Our legal ID, required at the top of each hour is KDHX, St. Louis. Other important IDs are your name, as host, your show title, and the music you've played and will play - music IDs should include artist, song title, and album. And on occasion label and year of release, if historically significant to the genre.

e.g.: "This is 88 one KDHX, St. Louis. My name is DJ-Joe, and the show is called X. It's 10:35 in the St. Louis area, and now we're going to hear from...."

C. FORECASTING (Forward-announcing and teasing): Follow the introduction with a bit of forecasting and then specifically ID and set up the song you'll be playing first. Forecasting is a brief mention of artists you will feature later on in the program, without giving away the specifics. This essentially "hooks" the listener.

e.g.: "In this week's program (or "in this next set"), we'll hear from Joe Schmoie, the Brothers Green, and Joss Stone, who will be performing at the Live on the Levee series this Friday at 8pm, but we're going to start things off with X..."

D. CREATE CONTEXT: Give the listener a little something to think about while you play the next tune. A little bit of specific information goes a long way in pulling in the listener's attention. Consider these questions when deciding what to say:

- Why are you playing this particular song?
- Is the artist coming to town anytime soon?
- Does it connect with something else you played?
- Is there anything notable to mention about the recording process, the players, the lyrics' meaning, etc? Is the artist coming to town anytime soon?

Obviously, some of that info might need to be figured out before you talk. Don't try to give out info or form a thought that you don't fully have, while on mic. Any kind of context setup (preferably very brief and very focused) makes listening to the unfamiliar a more rewarding experience for the listener. Otherwise, we'd just always play the hits/the familiar, which is something we're deliberately trying not to do on KDHX. Try to vary breaks with context so they don't all sound the same (avoid the repetitive: "That was artist/song/album/label/year, and before that was artist/song/album/label/year." Mix it up a bit).

E. BACK ANNOUNCE: This is a really specific and crucial approach to telling listeners what they've just heard – and it **MUST** be in reverse order. Consider that typical listeners are in a passive mode, tuning in and out every 15 minutes or so. Give them the info in reverse order of the playlist to keep them up to speed with what you're talking about and what was heard last, in between, and then first:

e.g. "We just heard from Joss Stone with the song X, and before that we heard Y, and we started the set with Z."

If you forward-announced a song, you don't need to back-announce it. Don't back-announce more than 2-3 artists, as listeners won't remember more than that. You can refer the listener to your playlist online at [KDHX.ORG](http://KDHX.ORG) for prior song titles. (Tip: and when stating our web address, spell out O-R-G)

F. PROGRAMMING: A key element of song selection is what we refer to as "center lane programming" - playing something that will connect with the audience out of familiarity and weaving in and out of that center lane with things you think they might not know, but will like. This is part of your role as "curator" of the genre. If you had a blues set, and then a rock set, and then a jam band set, that would be like 3 different shows and more difficult to retain the same listeners. Keep a center lane focus throughout the show. If you would want to do a special (tribute, theme, etc.), consider if it would alter your format, or what your listeners are used to, too much. (Tip: that said, it is generally recommended to avoid theme shows)

Weaving in the local - a general practice at KDHX is to present local music when it fits format, but it should never be played merely because it is local. If it holds up in quality to the leaders of the genre, by all means include it, but don't air a poorly produced or recorded piece of music merely because it is local.

G. BREAK LENGTH/BREVITY: We ask that our DJs go on mic at least every 10 minutes to give station and show ID, and include any other hosting elements and pre-recorded announcements scheduled to play. Break length for a music show should generally stay at 2 minutes or less.

H. PERSONALITY: New applicants often want to find ways to insert their personality into their script and demo. While every host sounds different, in demo mode this tends to sound forced, especially if nervous during demo production. "Standing out" is not required by the Program Committee, nor should playlists be made particularly eccentric to impress: the Committee wants to hear what you most likely would sound like in an average show.

If you've read through the information above and are still unclear, listen to KDHX. If you haven't listened to KDHX much, it's a good idea to do so - get familiar with our sound before proceeding. Many of our show hosts incorporate these aspects into their programming consistently, while others don't do as good a job of it. We are hoping that consistent IDs and good mechanics become the norm on air, and are encouraging these ideas in order to do the best possible job we can of serving our audience.

## NEXT STEP: DEMO SCRIPTING

To move forward with applying for a show, begin by preparing a script for your show demo. Write out every word you plan to say, complete with a listing of the music selections. Choose 10 songs that will demonstrate the genre(s) and styles of music you intend to feature on the program, and block them in groups of 2 or 3, based on connection and continuity.

Send your script to [programming@kdhx.org](mailto:programming@kdhx.org). Word, PDF, Google Doc, or e-mail are all acceptable formats. Script length should include 4-5 talking segments including an intro and outro, and 2-3 songs in between each. This script, when approved, will act as the basis for the actual demo production. As the script is reviewed, we may respond with suggestions for improvement before moving on. When your script is approved, we will set up an appointment to produce the demo, and send you “DJ Application part 2: Host Information and Playlists” to fill out.

The demo you submit to the programming committee will be no longer than 10 minutes, and will essentially be a montage of your program’s material, as we’ll cut the music pieces down to 25 seconds or less, connecting them with crossfades. The verbal breaks will be heard intact, and are primarily what the committee is reviewing. The music clips are samples to give them a feel of the sound of the program. The use of instrumental music “beds” heard under your verbal breaks is optional, but encouraged as it gives life to a program.

NOTE: DO NOT proceed to producing your demo on your own. The programming committee will not listen to demos prepared for other stations, nor demos prepared without first receiving approval for production, and direct supervision from our staff.

## SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT: SHOW NAME

A show name is very important, and something that can take some time to think about. It's good to work towards not just one, but even 2 or 3 show names that you feel good about and think will resonate with listeners online and on air. Here are some things to consider:

1. Representation: The name should conjure up images or thoughts for the listener that best represent the bulk of the music genre(s) you play.
2. Uniqueness: Is the show name unique? If you do a search online of the name, what types of information comes up? Is it a show name that may be easy for people to remember?
3. Starting out: Think of some of your favorite artists, albums, and songs. Are there any titles, or lyrics, that resonate with you or sum up why you love this genre(s) of music?
4. Length/Readability: Please keep the name of the show to about 4 words or less, and avoid difficult to pronounce words, and stumble-prone alliterations.

5. Show description: Start thinking about how your show description (for on-air read by the previous DJ, and for web) would interact with the show name. For the description, avoid listing too many artists and cliché phrases.

Show name is not a deal-breaker in this initial application process - rather, we just want to make sure applicants understand that an initial application/demo's show name may or may not be preferred, and if a show time became available, may still be something that the committee would want to approve before moving ahead with a weekly show. It's not required that you spend a lot of time thinking about your show name just now, as much as may be something to revisit in the future. (Stick with one show name for the script and demo.)