

Dundalk FM Guidelines for Guests and Presenters on Commercial/Business Interviews and Competitions (1 October 2013)

Radio has strict guidelines about commercial interviews. If a presenter endorses a product or service or allows the guest to self promote, this is an infringement of Dundalk FM's broadcasting licence as regulated by the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland. The BAI regularly checks for adherence to the Commercial Code by listening to samples of broadcasting.

Note for Presenters

Anything you say that encourages a listener to visit a premises, buy a particular product or check out a website is a breach of the code.

Other words or 'calls to action' not permitted are call in, drop in, check out, visit, call, go online, call this number. You must not mention items or services that are for sale, the price of items for sale, offers e.g. 3 for 2, 20% off etc. Do not say how fantastic an item is, would make an ideal present, great value item, etc.

Note for Guests

As a person in business you naturally want to talk about your product or service. Using airtime to encourage listeners to buy from you is an advertisement. In this case, the presenter may decide to finish the interview. The station is limited to six minutes advertising per hour. We sell 30 second ad spots and sponsorship deals. We have advertising and sponsorship packages from €50 - €2,500.

So, if that is not allowed, what CAN you talk about?

Talk about how a person got interested in the business? What are the trends in the market?

What was the town like when they started in business? How many people they employed? What the working hours/conditions were? When were the busiest times?

Why is there a restriction on what can be said?

Section 3.3. 2 of the BAI General Communications Code states that:
Presenters and other on-air personnel shall not advertise or endorse products or services during editorial content.

Section 3.3 Guidance Notes

Presenters or guests inappropriately describing the products and services of a sponsor, providing price information and encouraging purchase are likely to result in breaches of the Code.

This rule is not intended to limit legitimate editorial comment where products or services may be reviewed and about which opinions (positive or negative) may be given. For example, comment in the context of a consumer type programme or a review of cultural matters (books etc) is legitimate once the restrictions of the Code are adhered to.

Section 6.2 Sponsorship

A sponsorship announcement or reference shall not directly encourage the purchase or

rental of a product or service, in particular by, inter alia, making special promotional references to a product or service, by the inclusion of advertising copy, prices, endorsements or calls to action, or by affording undue prominence to a product or service of the sponsor.

Guidance

Broadcasters are permitted to rotate sponsorship stings/taglines once individual stings/taglines comply. Individual Sponsorship stings/taglines may contain:

- i) the sponsor's name;
- ii) appropriate reference to a single product or service of the sponsor;
- iii) a generic branding slogan which does not include advertising content, and;
- iv) contact details e.g. address, phone number, website, once it does not constitute advertising content.

Examples of content that individual sponsorship taglines/stings should not contain includes:

- i) reference to more than one product or service;
- ii) references to prices, sales, discounts, special offers, test drives, money back offers etc;
- iii) advertising copy i.e. copy that encourages purchase and copy used in advertisement campaigns of the sponsor;
- iv) calls to actions i.e. an invitation to take a specific action typified by words and phrases such as 'check out our website for great offers' 'get a free bet in this week's edition', 'talk to our advisor' 'take a test drive today' or equivalent words or phrases.

Contact details should be restricted to neutral, factual information e.g. "more information on www...", "You'll find us on the Long Mile Road" etc. Contact details should not be linked to a call to action e.g. "phone", "visit" or contain advertising copy or content.

Sponsorship stings/taglines must not afford undue prominence to a product or service of the sponsor. There is no prohibition on the inclusion during ad breaks of advertisements for a programme sponsor. However, care be taken to ensure sufficient separation between formal programme sponsorship announcements scheduled before or at the end of advert breaks and adverts for the products and services of the sponsor carried in a separate advertisement break.

Competitions

Sponsored competitions shall not constitute advertising.

Guidance

In this regard, the inclusion in competitions of questions related to the products or services of the sponsor are problematic. In addition, mechanisms that, for example, require audiences to visit the premises, websites of sponsors, or to purchase the products or services of the sponsor in order to participate in the competition, are also problematic.

More generally, competitions may contain short factual descriptions of prizes that are on offer but shall not contain advertising content. This includes a prohibition on references that directly encourage the purchase or rental of a product or service, in particular by, among other things, making special promotional references to a product or service, by the inclusion of advertising copy, prices, endorsements or calls to action, or by affording undue prominence to a product or service of the sponsor.

10. The value of sponsored competition prizes may be generally stated. However, prices shall not be quoted.