



## National Programming Survey

Summer 2007

Ursula Ruedenberg / Pacifica Affiliates Coordinator

Data compiled by Doug George

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### Summary:

This survey was conducted between May and July 2007. Staff from 70 stations (out of 120 asked to fill out survey) completed this online. Those who filled out the survey expressed a high level of satisfaction. Some who did not fill out the survey may have abstained due to dissatisfaction, although staffing and time shortages was also a major factor. Major areas of inquiry in the survey included:

- Carriage of National Programs
- Carriage of National Specials
- Programs They'd Like to See
- Spanish-Language Programming
- Distribution & Technology
- Technology Priorities
- Feedback about Audioport.org
- Contrasting use of KU and Audioport.org for Distribution
- Suggestions from Affiliates about programs desired and general feedback
- Stations were also asked to identify producers at their stations who were interested in collaborating with Pacifica on national specials and headlines.

Affiliates expressed overall appreciation due to a positive perception of partnership and working together as a network. There was a desire for more communications and technical collaboration.

Distribution and technical issues were the primary concerns expressed and responses about these concerns were the most extensive. The two primary needs expressed were that: 1) Pacifica improve its distribution technology and 2) Pacifica help affiliates upgrade affiliates' own local technologies.

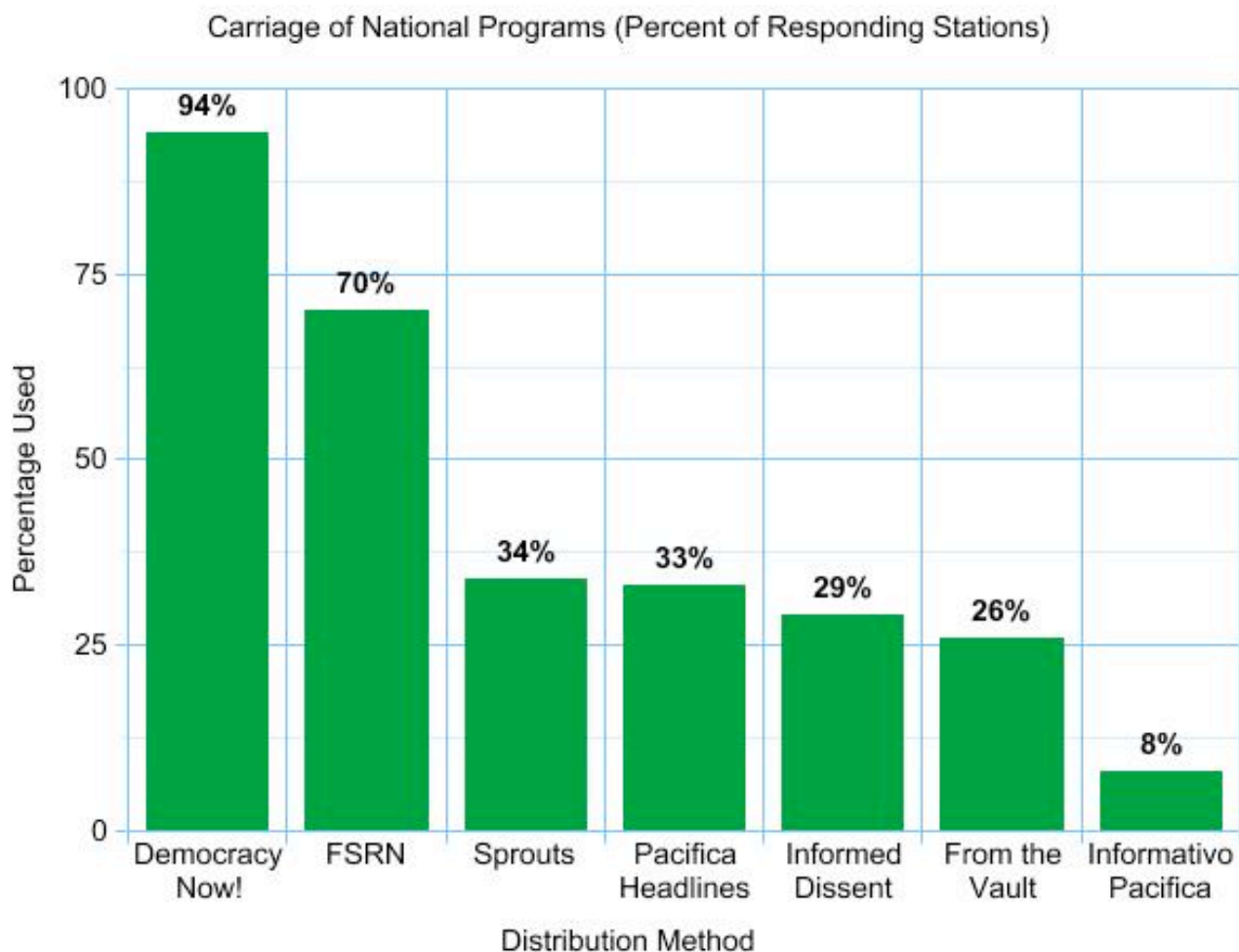
The survey shows that AudioPort has become the primary source of distribution. Automating the AudioPort was the most outstanding need expressed in the entire survey. Affiliates also want Pacifica to help them to be able to automate by providing them with low cost solutions and software.

Morning headlines were the most requested item in the area of programming. Also, 81% of respondents wanted a pod-safe music version of Audioport. Affiliates expressed interest in more Pacifica programming in the areas of: news, headlines, and a new program parallel to Democracy Now! with more debates and variety of viewpoints. Satisfaction was expressed for the level of diversity. 50% expressed interest in Spanish programming, particularly news.

To ensure that the survey was easy to fill out, we made most questions optional, allowing participants to proceed without answering all questions. As a result, respondents did not answer every survey question. Generally, as the survey progressed the response rate went down. For example: towards the top of the survey, 69 out of 70 survey participants responded to questions about carriage of Democracy Now! Later in the survey, responses to questions about Pacifica Headlines dropped to 63.

We have chosen to provide statistics relative to **the number of respondents** for each survey question. Remember that the total number of respondents varies so that the results are statistically valid but imperfect. For more detailed information contact Ursula Ruedenberg at [Ursula@pacifica.org](mailto:Ursula@pacifica.org). This is an abbreviated report. For the full report that includes affiliates' comments and suggestions, go to: [Pacifica.org/about](http://Pacifica.org/about). There will be a link to staff reports.

■ **Carriage of National Programs:**



⊕ **85%** of stations currently carrying Pacifica Headlines are interested in Morning Headlines.

⊕ **54%** of stations that don't run Pacifica Headlines are interested in Morning Headlines.

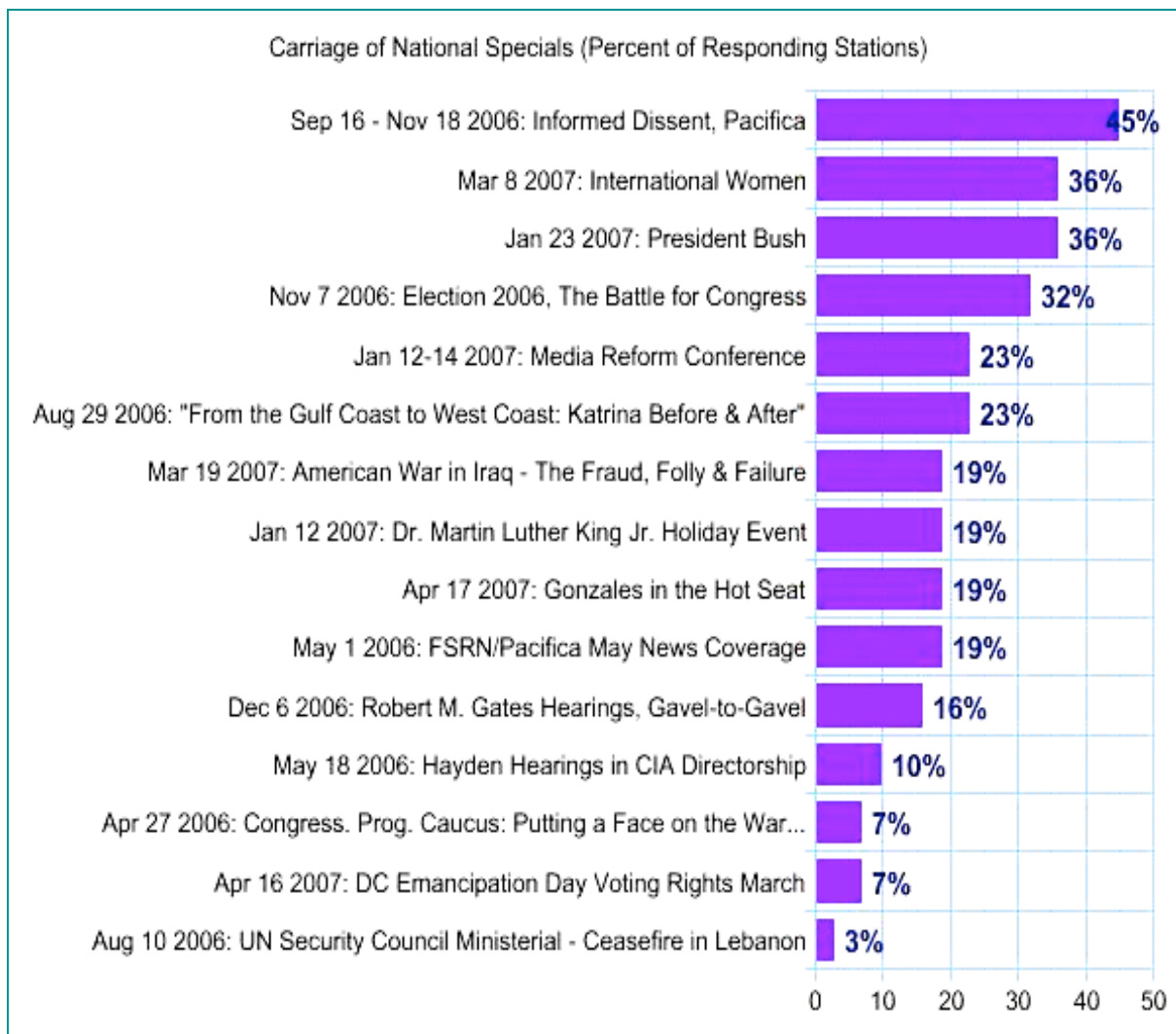
"I would greatly appreciate morning headlines posted by 6:45 AM EST. From a marketing perspective, the morning is by far a more superior time to air news, because I want my listeners talking about what they heard on my station while they are standing around the water cooler at work. Word of mouth is the best advertising a radio station can get, and that opportunity is wasted when all the current news stories are airing during the drive home from work. I was so desperate for morning headlines that for several months I was airing yesterday's 3PM headlines the following morning. "

A majority of respondents (65%) also expressed an interest in Labor Headlines. Indeed survey responses repeatedly reflect a demand for more news services, particularly headlines.

## ■ Carriage of National Specials

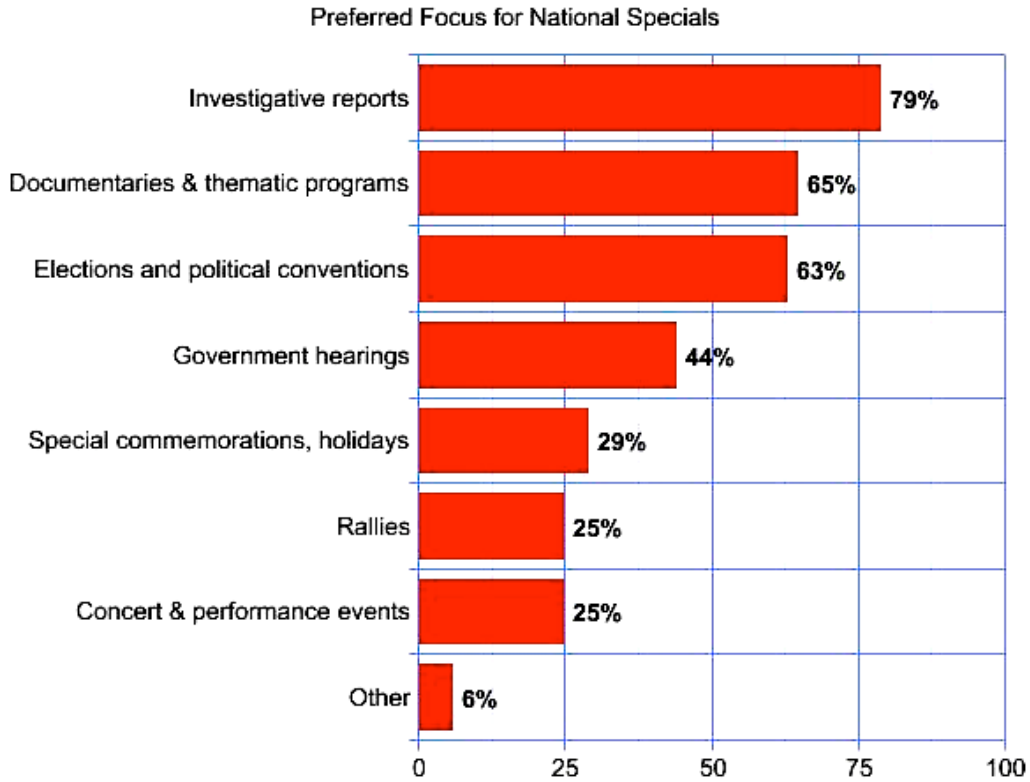
The demand for election coverage was high in 2006-2007; nearly half of all respondents carried some parts of "Informed Dissent," making it the most popular Pacifica National Special. Additionally, "The Battle for Congress" ranked among the top five specials.

Other popular specials were coverage of International Women's Day, analysis of President Bush's State of the Union address, Pacifica's live broadcast from the Media Reform Conference in Memphis, and April 2007's gavel-to-gavel coverage of "Alberto Gonzales in the Hot Seat."

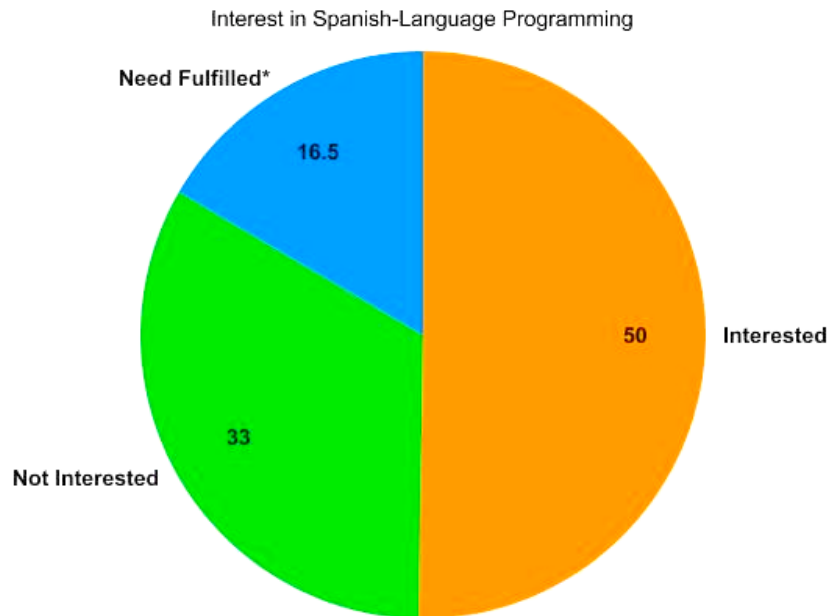


Format preferences for national specials: a clear majority (70%) of Pacifica affiliates prefer a 1-hour end-of-day summary (as opposed to 33% for gavel-to-gavel).

Preferences for future national specials: in-depth issue coverage and investigative reporting (see graph at right). Again the desire for election and convention coverage is clear; 63% of respondents indicated this a preferred focus. It's worth noting that rally coverage ranked towards the bottom, favored only by 25% of respondents.



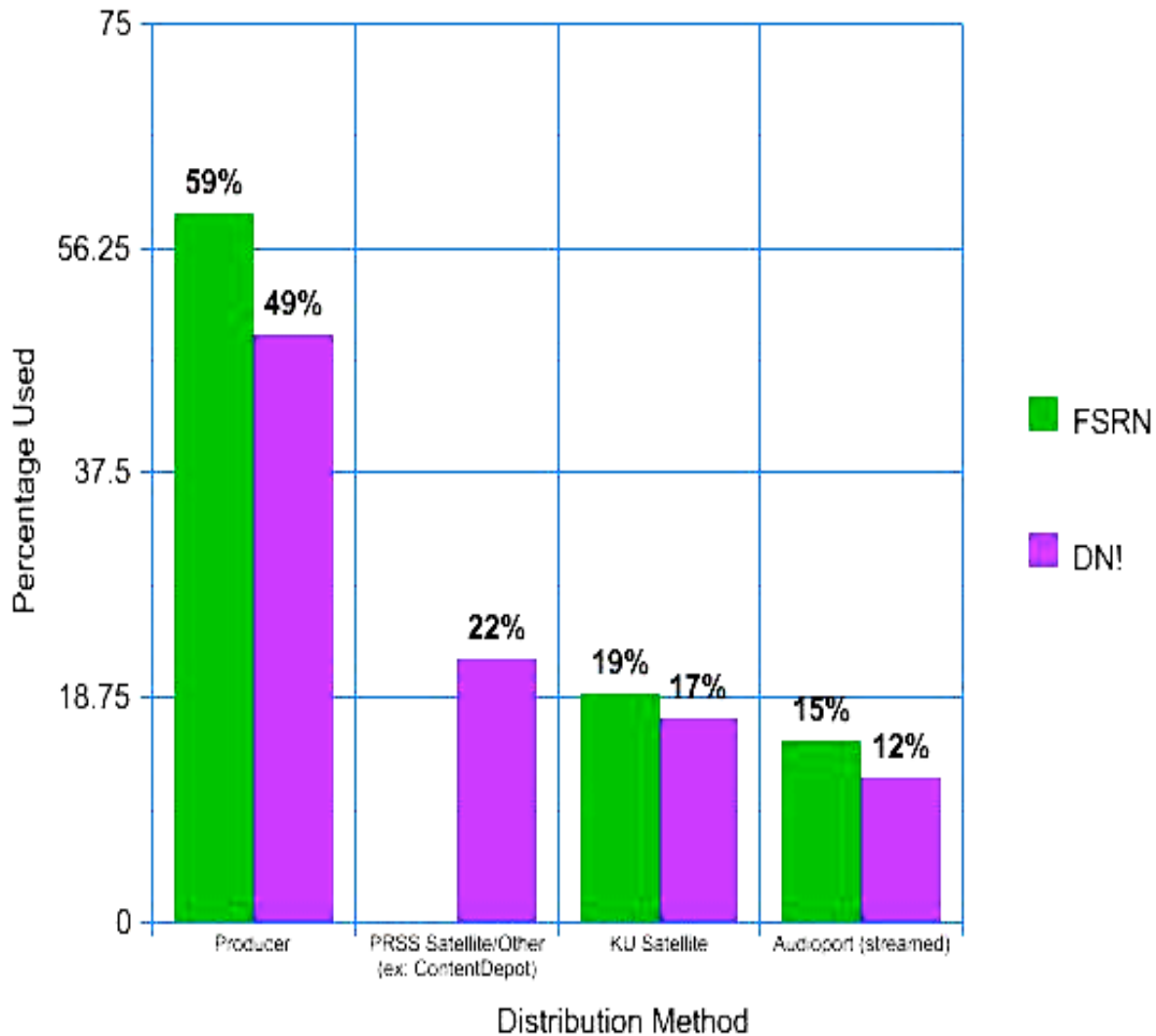
**Spanish – language Programming**



\*Respondents who are fulfilling their need for Spanish-language programming by picking up DN's Spanish headlines, or Informativo Pacifica

**Distribution & Technology**

Distribution: FSRN & Democracy Now!

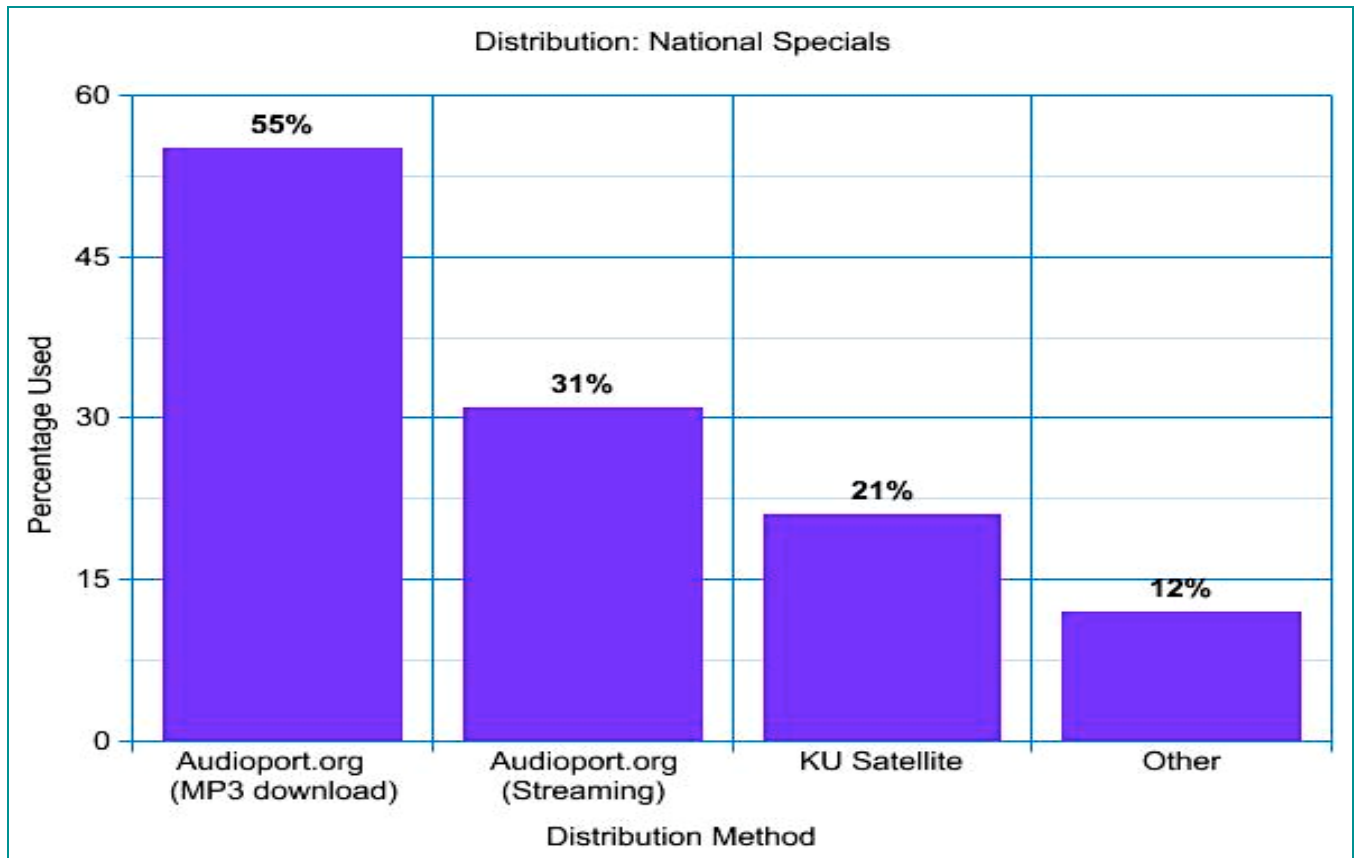


The Categories of Distributions Methods (shown from left to right) are:  
 Producer's Website | PRSS Satellite/Other (ex: Content Depot) | KU Satellite | Audioport (streamed)

In above graphic:  
 The left bar for each distribution method represents FSRN;  
 The right represents Democracy Now! Where there is only 1 bar, that bar is DN!

Producers' websites were the most widely used distribution method for Pacifica's top two national programs, Free Speech Radio News (FSRN) and Democracy Now!

For all other national programs however, Audioport.org is by far the most widely used method. For example, 69% of responding stations pick up **From the Vault** via Audioport, compared with 6% from the producer's website, and 25% via CD.



Some stations that use the KU satellite (see section on "KU Satellite Usage") express a preference for downloading the mp3 off of Audioport.org, citing this method as easier and more reliable.

"I don't see the point of Pacifica getting involved in the next generation of satellite delivery. Go with the net and make a simple but secure system for us. The cost is surely lower and there's no rain fade."

The survey yielded ambiguous data about which of the programs on the satellite are still being received by affiliates via satellite (as opposed to Audioport), reflecting the ambivalence of a network in transition from one type of technology to another. A study focused specifically on this question would be useful.

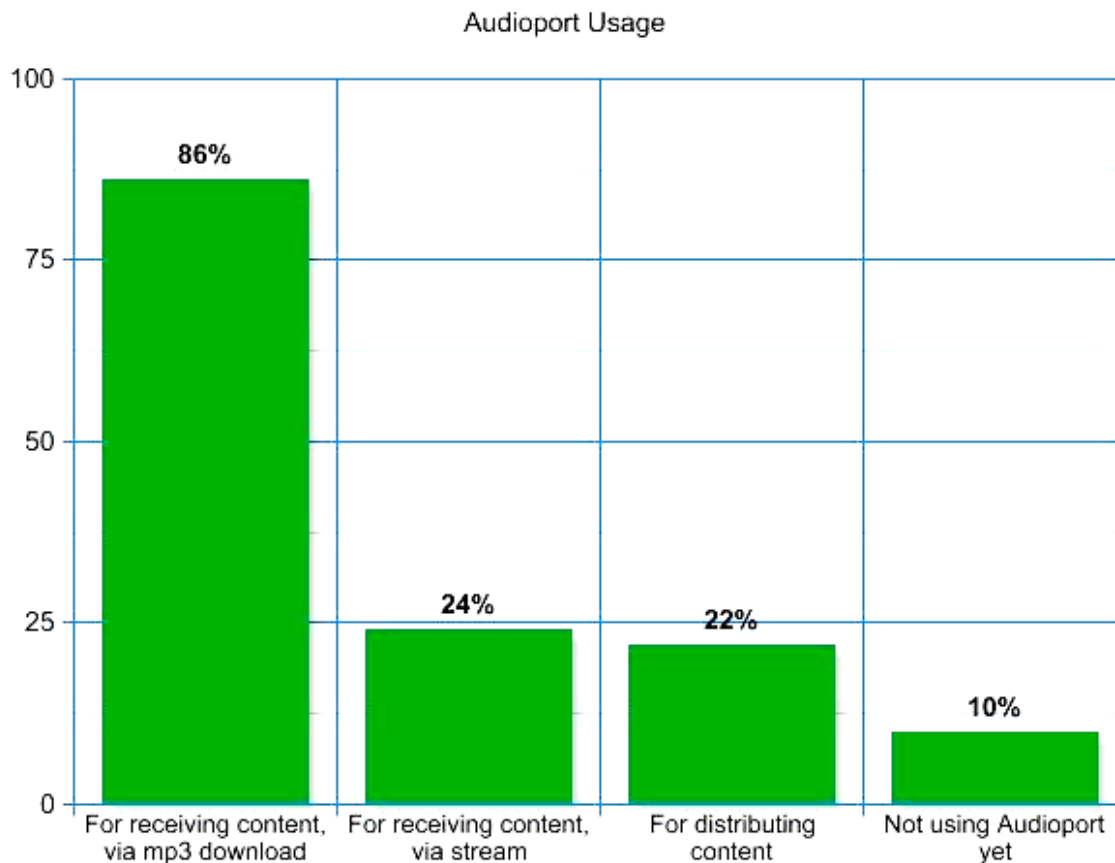
### **Technology Priorities**

**81%** of affiliates would like to see the development of a music version of Audioport (i.e. a site for sharing copyright-free music)

57% of respondents would like to be provided with automation capabilities - specifically through the provision of show-specific pod cast feeds on Audioport.org. Overall survey responses reflect a desire for low-cost and accessible solutions via the web; some respondents pointed out that continued Audioport development should be prioritized over satellite distribution (see next section for more information about Audioport usage and preferences).

Although AudioPort provides access to live programming on the satellite by streaming the satellite, streaming is still a problem for some stations. Live programs remain one of the primary reasons for stations that have satellite equipment to still use it.

## Feedback about Audioport.org



The survey reveals widespread usage of Audioport and a strong interest in expanding its functionality.

A majority of stations use Audioport (**83%**), and of those most (**83%**) use it once or week or more, primarily (**86%**) for receiving content via mp3 download. **24%** use Audioport for receiving content via stream and **22%** for distributing content.

Many respondents indicated being highly pleased with the current functioning and ease of use of Audioport.

### **Concerns:**

Typical problems include: unpredictability as to when programs are uploaded, lack of notification when programs are not uploaded as scheduled, uneven audio levels, producers not filling out MP3 metadata forms, Stereo files are sent for mono programs, producers not providing enough information.

In other words, there is a need for **a) reliability** and **b) professional communication**, which includes both status reports and promotional information to inform program choices. Upon the foundation of widespread technical satisfaction with Audioport.org, improved communications can be built. This may include:

- A more extensive system for categorizing programs and producers
- Revised forms for entering program metadata
- More widespread usage of Pacifica Announce list serve and other public channels for updates on technical problems, or provision of program descriptions.

## Contrast Use of KU and Audioport.org for Distribution

- 21 stations out of 33 respondents (64%) take programs from the KU (or streamed via Audioport.org).

Programs Taken Off Audioport.org (Download) On Regular Basis	
This Way Out	8
Counterspin	6
Explorations in Science	6
Your Own Health & Fitness	6
Building Bridges	5
Earth Beat	5
Radio Nation	5
Writer's Voice	5
Between the Lines	4
Making Contact	4
Midweek Politics	4
Uprising	4
WINGS	4
Media Minutes	3
Sierra Club	3
Talk Nation Radio	3
Voices of Our World	3
Alternative Radio	2
Bookwaves	2
Century of Lies	2
Cultural Baggage	2
Flashpoints	2
Law & Disorder	2
Media Matters	2
UC Radio	2
Unwelcome Guests	2
What's at Stake	2
Worker's Independent News	2
Against the Grain	1
American Activist	1
Bioneers	1
Compost Pile	1
Corporate Watchdog Radio	1
Echoes of a Century	1
Empire Notes	1
Guns & Butter	1
Logic Amen (KCBS)	1
OTE	1
Sex in Cars	1
Taking Aim	1
Upbeat Gardner	1
Venezuela Headlines	1
World of Possibilities	1

Programs Taken Off KU or the Audioport KU Stream On Regular Basis	
This Way Out	5
Counterspin	3
Explorations in Science	3
WINGS	3
Between the Lines	2
Cultural Baggage	1
Radio Nation	1
Workers Independent News	1

"We have stopped using KU - the downloadable mp3's are much more convenient for shows. Live coverage, on the other hand is better via satellite than stream. "

"We don't have a KU satellite system, otherwise we would likely air every special made available. ... We do download and air For Your Own Health & Fitness, Cultural Baggage, Century of Lies. We used to air others, but just don't have the time on dial-up to download them. "

"There should be some audio on the stream -- WWV, USNO Master Clock, tone -- when there is no program scheduled. This would enable us to make sure that the dish or stream receiver is actually working and receiving a signal and that our in-house distribution system is working. A tone would also be extremely useful for setting levels on a routine basis. There needs to be SOMETHING there. There should also be some redundancy at the uplink and at least a silence sensor that could alert local personnel if there's a problem. Impairment e-mails should be sent as soon as possible after a problem is noted. I met a couple of months ago with Jon, and there are relatively low cost ways to do this, which I'm always happy to share. "

"We stream the live satellite through Audioport. It's the only way we can get timely updates of Pacifica shows. Too often, pod casts are later than we would like. The satellite feeds via stream are perfect for us. "

"[We stream KU programs off Audioport] as we are all volunteer and don't have the time for many of the options you offer."

"We are very glad to be a part of the Pacifica family. Your support means a great deal to us at a difficult time. If we can rebuild, we hope to increase the number of Pacifica programs we carry, particularly ones that aren't carried on WBAI. Thanks also to Ursula for an always friendly voice, Jon for technical assistance when there's a problem, and Pete for the Pacifica logo he put together for our web site!"

—Tim Buller, GM of KBCU in North Newton, KS

"I'm new and learning. Thanks for being there."

—Terry Green, GM of KUSP in Santa Cruz, CA