



**THE BASICS OF INTERACTIVE PROGRAMMES IN
THE 21ST CENTURY BROADCASTING**

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ABSTRACT

One of the measuring sticks for the effectiveness of communication has always been the level of interactivity between the sender and the receiver. Broadcasting, more than other modern media of mass communication, provides a variety of opportunities for interaction between the encoder and decoder of messages in order to meet the intent of such communication. In realisation of this, many radio and television stations have striven to provide opportunities for their audience members to interact with presenters and producers of programmes, and thus enhance the active participation of the audience in the direction of a programme. This article discusses the *raison d'être* of interactivity, its elements and the various methods of achieving and maximizing interactivity on the air. The article calls for a

deliberate investment by broadcast stations on interactivity, particularly in the provision of the hardwork that makes for smooth production and presentation of interactive programmes. The paper acknowledges and discusses the pitfalls in interactive programme format, and offers general tips that can make broadcast programmes more audience-dominated than presenter-dominated.

1. Background of Interactive Programme

Advancements in information and communication technologies (ICTs) have greatly affected the process of mass communication, particularly broadcasting. Unlike in the early days of mass communication that audience participation through feedback would take sometime to occur, ICTs have brought the audience closer to the source of mass communication messages in a lively and productive relationship that has enhanced programming and programme contents. While delayed feedback is still a characteristic of mass communication, ICTs have generally minimised (not eliminated) the delay, such that the audience can interact with the sender of mass communication message and become an active participant in the communication process.

Interaction with the audience has become a feature of modern-day broadcasting. Watson and Hill (2006, p.137) emphasise this by asserting that technology enhances interactivity, allows the audience to respond to programmes in ways, “ranging from seeking further programme information to making contact with programme makers or providing instant feedback...”

Most producers and presenters design their programmes with audience interaction in mind. Interactivity has gained so much ground that any programme without audience participation is sometimes regarded as archaic, dull and out of tune with modern broadcast production format. This, perhaps, explains the 'craze' by producers and presenters for audience

participation, whether or not they have the facility to ensure smooth and meaningful interactivity. However, there is no gainsaying the fact that the growing importance of interactivity between the audience and broadcasters within the realm of contemporary broadcasting is increasing geometrically. Soon, as Eastman and Ferguson (2009) observe: “All kinds of programmes from education to cooking comedies may eventually avail themselves of the ability to ask viewers (audience) to respond in real time”.

An interactive programme, according to BBC Media Action (2012), is a programme format that allows the audience to participate in it, letting their voices to be heard on radio or their image to be watched on television, expressing themselves. Interactivity, in the views of Wilson and Ekanem (2006, p. 25), brings in the element of feedback. As a result, “communication looks less like giving a command or an injection or merely passing on information to someone else”. A good interactive programme therefore carries diversity in all respects. Such diversities include lots of voices, faces, mix of ages, mix of women, men, youths and children, different languages and language styles as well as a variety of interactive methods such as phone calls, text messages, e-mails, studio guests etc. Above all, a good interactive programme must be audience-dominated, not presenter-dominated. The beauty of an interactive programme is not in the presenter dominating or monopolising the air waves. The presenter should mainly give the insight, raise the issues, give the direction and give way to the audience to generate and articulate the rest of the content.

2. Essence of Interactivity

Right from the earliest days of mass communication, senders of information have always sought to get feedback from the receivers of information. The feedback, though delayed, ensured that both the encoder and decoder were in a dynamic and transactional process with feedback as the link (Akpan, 1993).

This enabled the source and the receiver of information or messages to appreciate the level of understanding of each other's message or information. Therefore, from the beginning, the interaction between the source of information and the target audience was important for effective and efficient communication. It cannot be less now. Interactive programmes do not only enhance understanding and meaning-sharing between the source and the audience, but also engender cordiality and bond between them.

An interactive programme encourages the audience to be part of the programme. Again, it is a privilege for a producer or presenter for an audience to tune into his or her programme, especially as audience members have the right to exercise their freedom to decide to watch or listen to a particular programme. This being so, it is necessary for the presenter or producer to sustain the interest of audience members in the programme, failing which he can lose them to other things, including radio or TV programmes on other stations. One of the most important ways to achieve this is to encourage the audience to be part of the programme through the process of interactivity.

Interactivity excites audience members to contribute to the content of the programme. They give their comments; they raise questions; they give their opinions. Interactive programmes give room for user-generated content, UGC (also known as audience generated content, AGC) a wide variety of media content that is produced by the audiences as opposed to content made by the producer or presenter. User generated content enables the producer or presenter to access and tap into the expertise and experience of the audience members.

It is vital to let the audience members realise how important they are to the success of a programme; interactivity ensures this. When someone's view is sought and received, and same is broadcast, it gives that person some sense of importance and relevance that encourages him to keep faith with the programme. If audiences are treated with some importance, they

become part of the programme; but if their concerns and relevance are overlooked, the producer ends up broadcasting to an audience that would have thinned out over time. Since audience members are indispensable to the success of a programme, it is quite necessary to sustain their partnership and participation.

Another essence of interactivity is to give the producer some insight into the interests of the audience members on issues. While it is common for some producers to think for the audience and assume what their interests are, often times such assumptions are faulty and could misrepresent the critical interests of the programme audience. Knowledge of the interests of the audience on a particular issue is a priceless input to the producer in designing the contents of the programme. A misrepresentation of audience interests could jeopardise listenership or viewership and trigger off avoidable confrontation between the audience and the producer or media organisation. When audience interests are ascertained, precaution would be taken to ensure that contents are not offensive in any way.

Interactivity is one way of impressing it upon the audience members that the producer is not 'a pharaoh' or 'an army general' that dictates to and imposes his will on them. As they contribute to the contents of the programme through their opinions and questions - and these are being incorporated into the programme - the audience members develop the consciousness that it is not the agenda of the producer that is being executed but theirs. To a great extent, it integrates them into the programme and makes them have a sense of ownership of the programme. It becomes their programme and not necessarily the producer's.

An interactive programme, as already mentioned, generates some contents from the audience. Such contents are vital to the sustenance of the programme. While the contents give the audience members a sense of belonging and integrate them into the programme, they also provide the material with

which to fill the airtime in the present and in the future. Such contents usually form a bank from which materials could be extracted and used in future. They bail out the producer on a 'rainy' day.

3. Elements of Interactive Programme

By elements of interactive programme we mean those things that such a programme should contain. That is to say, those ingredients that would give the programme an interactive outlook. It should be noted that an interactive programme is audience-based, not producer-centred. The elements should therefore reflect the audience. Interactivity requires that there be differing voices and/or images, differing opinions, different ages of participating audience members, a mix of gender, different languages with necessary superimposition and a variety of interactive methods.

4. Methods of Interactivity

There are a variety of ways available to a producer to make the audience to participate in his or her programme. One advantage is that the variety of ways prevents boredom resulting from the monotony of one or two methods. The different methods available similarly ensure that each audience participant avails himself or herself of the method that is accessible and convenient to him or her. These methods include, but not limited to:

(i) Letters

Although the introduction of the short message service has tended to reduce letter-writing, letters remain an old good way of expressing one's opinion on an issue. While the sms is constrained to be short and telegraphic, the letter could include all the details that the writer thinks are necessary to communicate his or her position effectively. Quite regrettably, many producers tend to ignore letters as an interactive method because of ICTs.

However, in a letter one can clearly express his or her thoughts in a literary manner that adds aesthetics to his or her expressions. The letters need not be read by the presenter; another voice, as a form of creativity, could be made to read the letters, leaving the answering to the presenter who may have need to bring in an expert on the issue raised. Encouraging letter-writing as an interactive method rekindles in the audience a dying literary culture and indispensable learning skill.

(ii) Vox Pops

Vox pop is an abbreviation of the Latin expression, *vox populi* meaning the voice of the people. This is a short collection of voices, with different people usually expressing an idea, opinion or comment about something. It is important that the audience members, whose views are sought, have a grasp of the issue at stake so as to give informed answers. However, if the vox pop was to ascertain the awareness level of the audience on a particular issue, the preceding point becomes unnecessary. Sometimes there is the tendency on the part of the producer to fit in answers into a prepared frame. In that case, the interactivity as a whole would have lost its flavour. Names of the participants may or may not be mentioned but it is necessary that their voices be clearly heard and their images clearly seen, as the case may be. This calls for good recording and editing equipment. It is instructive to note that, in most instances, the issues in vox pop are usually specific, and the respondents are usually expected to express their views based on the issues so raised.

(iii) Phone-in

This is very popular among programme producers, such that many producers feel their programme would be incomplete without it. This is erroneous though, as there are other methods of interactivity. Phone-in allows audience members to call in and express their views while the programme is going on live.

For an effective phone-in, the technical aspects must be

sound to avoid dropped calls or the undesirable element of a broadcast programme called noise. The producer would have researched into and understood the topic. It is also advisable that experts be in the studio to handle the topic. Additionally, the producer should not rely solely on live calls: they may not come for one reason or the other. The solution is to have a back up of pre-recorded clips of questions and vox pop.

The major set back associated with phone-in, especially when the in-coming calls are not controlled, is the tendency to cause some serious problems to the programme in particular and the station as a whole. Such problems usually arise from the callers' use of strong, foul or abusive language. Producers should always be careful and vigilant while taking such calls.

(iv) Short Message Service (SMS)

This method allows audience members to send text messages to the phone numbers given from the studio. For those who may be nervous to engage in phone-in, sms offers a ready solution for them to interact with the producer or presenter. If the phone number to receive the text is always dedicated to the programme and even after programme time, it gives the audience the additional advantage to text their opinions at their convenience. This would form part of the AGC. Now more relaxed, audience members can articulate themselves more clearly than if they texted in during the live programme.

A further advantage is that the sms is cheap and affordable to many. The fidelity of the message is somewhat assured. For the producer or presenter, it is easier to control or edit opinions or contributions from the audience via the sms than to control the live voice calls. Editing can even be done live on the air by the reader of the message.

(v) E-mail

The availability of laptops and sophisticated mobile phones has enhanced the use of e-mail as a method of

interactivity. The mail may be sent while the programme is live, before or after the programme. What seems to happen in most cases in Nigeria is that the mails arising from a programme are usually accessed after the programme and the content used as a basis for future editions of the programme. However, in set ups that have the personnel and technical infrastructure, e-mails are received and broadcast live on the programme. Just like SMS, sending an e-mail to a live programme may demand the sender to be relaxed.

(vi) Pre-recorded Material

As the name implies, this material is not live but prepared before the programme. The pre-recorded material could be an interview or clips of an event. Appropriately edited, the material comes in handy to fill the airtime.

In a pre-recorded interview, the interviewee, who is fully conscious that the interview is not live, is relaxed not under pressure and may amend his comments as he may want, knowing that the interview would be edited. Editing offers the producer the much cherished opportunity to do away with irrelevances.

(vii) Studio Guests and Experts

The producer can assemble experts as studio guests to discuss on a chosen issue, whether or not the organisation has the capacity to engage in phone-in. In this situation, the presenter takes the place of the audience by raising probing questions on issues that members of the public would naturally ask. For him to be successful in this, the presenter must thoroughly research into the topic to enable him to ask informed questions.

(viii) Social Media Sites

Social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Myspace, Youtube, Flickr, 2go, LinkedIn, Bebo etc provide opportunities for interactions with the audience using social

media, and such chats are often very useful in providing input which in turn serves as content for future editions of the programmes.

On the whole, a variety of ways of interactivity are available, but as noted earlier, listeners or viewers use the methods that in all respects are convenient to them. Audience participation, whether live or delayed, provides an acceptable spice in programme presentation by adding some aesthetic flavour that draws and sustains the audience of a programme as much as it generates useful content for the programme.

5. Production Format and Salient Production Tips

The format of every programme is usually determined by the programme's content, theme and philosophy. Programme production format is the general arrangement, plan and design used in packaging a programme based on the programme's content and the producer's intent. It entails a production approach adopted by the producer to effectively communicate the intrinsic message of the programme. Whatever the production format may be, the bottom line is arresting and retaining the attention and interest of the audience.

To attain this aim, interactivity proves indispensable.

There are so many production formats; they include:

- (i) **Magazine** This is a programme with many segments and varieties. The replete of segments and varieties gives magazine programmes the special advantage of appealing to a broad spectrum of audience. The reason is, if a particular segment of the audience does not appreciate a certain segment of the programme, others may. A magazine programme usually deals with one central topic or subject, but with various subheads and segments.
- (ii) **Feature** A feature is special report which revolves around a specific issue. Many a time, a feature is presented as a segment within a programme. A feature is

- basically a factual report that is very specific.
- (iii) **Documentary** This is an actuality or reality report that is lengthier and broader in scope than the feature. A documentary is "not so much a single genre as an umbrella of related programme type, each seeking to represent versions of reality" (Hoffmann, 2007, p.106). Although a documentary is usually based upon recorded or observable fact, Watson and Hill (2006, p.85) assert that, "the documentary may aim for objectivity or propaganda". Howbeit, the emphasis is that the documentary is based partly or wholly on actuality: It is always a subjective presentation to support a version of reality.
- (iv) **Docu-drama** This is a documentary blended with drama. In other words, it is a documentary without actuality, in which drama takes the place of actuality. A docu-drama is a drama that is based on fact that combines documentary and fictional elements, which allow the creator or producer wide creative latitude.
- (v) **Drama** This is the acting out of the story. A drama is mainly characterized by fiction and exaggeration.
- (vi) **Discussion** A discussion is an extended form of interview. It is mainly in a studio or has studio-based arrangements. Thus, when guests or resource persons are invited to the studio for a programme and questions are raised for them to answer and explain, such a programme is a discussion programme, not an interview programme.
- (vii) **Interview** - This is a precise question-and-answer session. It is basically used as a tool for news gathering.
- (viii) **Talk show** - A talk show is a programme with a panel and a studio guest. The programme is usually moderated by an anchor. The studio guest addresses the questions raised by the panel or the presenter (anchor).
- (ix) **Musical show** This type of programme is mainly the playing of music, and the presenter talks intermittently.

To make a good presentation, the music presenter has to give some background information about the music and the artiste, avoid talking too much and avoid talking over or into music.

- (x) **Game show** A game show is a programme that involves a competition the audience member scrambles to solve the problem or question posed by the presenter. Unfortunately, many presenters of game shows on the broadcast media tend to over-mystify their shows and expect the participating audience members to do impossible things. For instance, a presenter would ask the audience to use only five seconds to spell-back lengthy and uncommon words such as incomprehensible, diarrhoea, etc. This is not the spirit and intent of interactivity. A game show mainly aims to generate audience interest and participation in the programme; every other thing is secondary. The producer or presenter must therefore raise intelligent puzzles or questions that can be easily solved or answered by the audience in order to attract participation in the programme. Ability to get the correct answer is, on its own, a motivation to the audience.

There also has to be honesty on the part of the presenter and sponsor. If the listener or viewer has got the correct answer, it should so be declared and the appropriate prize, as earlier prescribed, awarded. The anchor or presenter should be polite to the audience and avoid arguing with or 'lording' over them.

- (xi) **Personality profile** - This is an act of introducing and presenting to the audience, an individual who is very important to the programme. A personality profile is fact - and image-based. It presents the guest or personality as a celebrity and important resource. The profile must be factual and unambiguous.

It should be noted that depending on the

producer's creative ideas and effort, most of the production formats can, on their own, constitute a programme. In a similar sense, a producer can combine most or all of the above production formats to form a programme. In order to make a good production, two things are fundamental:

- (i) Research
- (ii) Running order

Research This is "an attempt to discover something" (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006, p.2). Research in programme production is of dual focus: audience research and programme content research. Audience research is an investigation into the audience to discover or ascertain facts about them, including their media content preferences. Not that an audience is a select group of people who are reached through a specific medium. The audience of a programme is therefore a group of people for whom the programme is designed or those who actually listen to or watch the programme.

There are three types of audience:

- (i) **Primary audience** This audience is referred to as target audience. It constitutes the people whom the programme's contents are aimed at, and who feel the direct impact of whatever the programme is concerned with (Shook, 2005).
- (ii) **Secondary audience** This is the audience who influence, directly or indirectly, the primary audience on the message being conveyed by the programme.
- (iii) **Tertiary audience** - Although the message is not targeted at them, they may also learn from it. Their actions or activities could drive the realisation of the intent of the programme, e.g. the government.

Knowing who constitute the audience helps the producer and the presenter to place the audience at the heart of the

programme. Also, audience research helps the producer to understand the demography and the context of the audience, such as the age, language, gender, geographical location, education, socio-economic class, occupation, religion, culture and media habits of the audience.

Programme content research, on the other hand, is the finding out of useful facts and information that would enhance the quality of programme content for it to be useful to the audience. After the research (audience and programme content), it becomes necessary to assemble the materials or items that would constitute the programme. This then calls for the programme running order.

Running Order This is the list of every item or segment that would constitute the programme and the time or duration allotted to each of them. It is also known as the programme clock. For a good interactive programme, the producer should have a running order, no matter the duration of the programme. All components of the programme must be scheduled serially as they are intended to come on the air. Time or duration must be allotted. This ensures time consciousness, balance and logical flow of the programme.

There are other useful tips for producing interactive programmes. BBC Media Action (2012) enumerates such tips:

- Ensure that you do not raise topics that may whip up sentiments that could get you and or your station in trouble.
- Carry out research on the topics before going on the air.
- Draw a workable and dependable running order.
- Be sure your topics are balance.
- Ensure there is coherence (logical flow of the programme).
- Have pre-recorded materials ready as fillers for failed phone-in or other segments.

- Have a relevant guest on the programme.
- Source for guests that have confidence.
- Source for guests that have good knowledge of the issues on the programme.
- Seek new issues that will interest the audience.
- Have other voices on your programme.

6. Problems of Interactive Programmes

While interactivity is desirable and appreciated, it is not without problems. Some of them are discussed below:

(i) Technical deficiency and technological insufficiency

This is one of the greatest problems of interactivity. Quite a number of broadcast organisations that use phone-in as an interactive method are ill prepared for it. They neither prepare for it nor do they have the facilities to conduct a meaningful, hitch-free and technically sound phone-in. What often obtains on many broadcast programmes is a presenter using his ordinary mobile handset, provided it has the loudspeaker facility, to conduct phone-in, without the technical connections required for such an exercise. The outcome is often appalling faint voices, dropped calls, shouting by the presenter and some technical interferences generally described as noise. Sometimes, dead air is recorded. Since the right and appropriate infrastructure is not in place, it becomes difficult for the phone-in to be smooth.

(ii) On air ethics

It is quite regrettable that a number of on air personnel are neither aware of nor do they imbibe broadcast ethics. Phone-in in particular tends to expose this shortcoming more than any other interactive method.

When echoes arise as a result of the presumed proximity of the caller to his or her radio or TV set, many presenters often assume the position of a boss they shout and abuse the callers, rather than politely asking them to move a little away from the receiving sets. On many occasions, this has upset the audience members who sometimes respond sharply and angrily to this seeming discourteousness.

While not disputing that the host of a phone-in programme is a leader that should show the way, that very fact does not confer on him the right to be judgmental and abusive. Sometimes the caller may have missed the issue that is being discussed. In these circumstances, a polite redirecting of the mind of the caller to the issue on the card would be ideal, rather than the presenter making the audience member to appear foolish, unattentive and out of tune with current realities on a broadcast station.

(iii) **Individuality on Set**

A new but disturbing trend on some interactive programmes on TV is a situation that the programme presenter is all alone on set to discuss a topic with the audience through phone-in or text messages. When and if calls and short message service are not coming in, the presenter boringly attempts to discuss the topic by himself or herself and intermittently brings in music to break the monotony of a one-man discussion. Many a time, the presenter runs short of words and runs dry with ideas, and this becomes obvious and appalling to the viewers. If the presenter had a partner on set, they would not only set the tone for the discussion of the topic, but would deal with issues raised by the audience in the course of the programme. It does happen that some calls during live programmes are very few, for one reason or

the other. Without a partner on set, the presenter ends up engaging in self-dialogue and playing music in the name of interactivity. Except in situations where the audiences are expected to call in and give their views without such views being subjected to analysis, it is advisable for hosts of phone-in programmes to have a co-host or a resource person to keep the programme bubbling with interest from the audience.

(iv) **Gatekeeping Problem**

One of the greatest challenges facing interactive programmes that are live is gate-keeping, without which ethical and legal issues may crop up. Once a person picks up the phone to call, he is free to say anything without censorship. All the presenter can do is to advise him on the choice of words or at the extreme, discontinue with the call. The later action raises ethical questions, though. How can the host of a live phone-in programme man the gate of the programme to keep away libelous, indecent and unethical statements by the audience from the airwaves, since the programme host is culpable in the event that his or her programme is used to offend the laws of the land? Unlike text messages, e-mails, letters and other forms of interactivity, phone-in, in spite of its attraction, places on the presenter a burden that he is sometimes ill prepared to carry. The option for some hosts is to discontinue with the call, if the caller is persistent in his choice of offensive words. Inexperienced and temperamental hosts may be pushed to use strong, offensive words on the caller in an attempt to publicly show disapproval for the statements by the caller. This, no doubt, adds to the weight of ethical problems already on the laps of the presenter. In some stations that have the facilities, calls may be screened.

Does this not amount to prior restraint? Many a

caller uses the opportunity of phone-in to vent his spleen on government or its officials or even the programme host or the station. In these circumstances, some stations drop phone-in programmes and only encourage the use of sms and other non live methods of interactivity to be able to control the content. Others go to the extreme of 'fixing' the phone-in programme such that only calls from persons earmarked prior to the commencement of the programme are taken during the programme. For others, the calls would never go through the blame would fall on services providers!

(v) Problem of Access

Sometimes the question is not whether interactive methods are made available, but whether the audience can access them. The starting point of effectiveness of any interactive programme is accessibility, whether from the rural or urban area, by both urban and rural users. Access to communication channels, and indeed all utilities, is essential to the functioning of a democracy. This point is emphasised by Eastman and Ferguson (2009, p.258): "...Communication technologies are viewed as essential to the proper operation of a democracy for both their informational and their educational capacities. Thus, access for all the public, irrespective of household income or geographic location, is a policy goal".

Access implies a two-pronged action: the media organisation should put in place methods of interactivity while the public should have the means to avail themselves of such facilities. In Nigeria, however, this two-pronged action is deficient. Neither the broadcast organisations are able to put in place effective means of

interactivity that reach out to where their audiences are located nor the audiences able, perhaps due to geographical location or household income, to access the methods of interactivity a station has made available. The general epileptic, unreliable systems of communication in the country may be remotely blamed for the poor and unsatisfactory level of programme interaction between the audience and the producers and presenters.

In view of the above, it becomes necessary to note where lack of interaction is more a function of inaccessibility than willingness of the audience, the interactivity is somehow flawed, although it may be difficult to ascertain who did not interact due to one reason or the other. But where those interacting cut across age, gender, economic status, geographical location, religion and ethnic affiliation, the broadcast programme would have achieved a reasonable level of credibility.

(vi) Problem of overrated and egoistic experts

A number of times, studio guests presented as experts to the audience turn out not to be what they are assumed to be. Their knowledge of the subjects under discussion often times is shallow, which in the end will leave the subjects not well treated and the audience fuming with dissatisfaction. The producer may face a confidence or credibility crisis from his once-beloved audience members. It is a case of rising expectation without the capacity to satisfy the expectation (Dowse and Hughes, 1986). If this situation persists, the consequence in terms of viewership or listenership would all be too predictable.

Some experts are full of ego. In an attempt to demonstrate their expertise, some step over the bar of courtesy to belittle the audience for their seeming ignorance, and portray themselves as a one-stop solution to problems or a final bus stop in the solution to the problems discussed. It is important, though, that professionals should demonstrate their expertise and authority in their fields as this would help to convince the audience and mitigate the problem generated anyway. But without modesty, the sway of expertise and authority can push the professional down the cliff of ego and self-glorification.

7. Conclusion

Despite the myriads of problems that affect its effectiveness and smoothness, interactivity has come to stay. The problems notwithstanding, it offers broadcasting a refreshing and welcome break from the boring format of presentation where the audience member is merely on the receiving end and cannot be said to be an active participant in the communication process.

In Nigeria, interactivity on the airwaves can still be said to be at its infancy. It is expected that as broadcast stations and individuals continue to acquire new ICTs, the level, effectiveness and smoothness of interactivity will improve. It is necessary for stations to take interactivity very seriously, and therefore deploy resources into it, with a view to minimising the odds, particularly technical, against it. It should not be left to individual presenters or producers.

The problems with interactivity are not insurmountable. At best they are problems associated with infancy. Yet they cannot be solved on a single day. However, with commitment

from both the presenter or producer and the broadcast stations to address problems relating to that programme format, interactivity would be more ingrained in the system.

Perhaps it should be stressed that any station that treats interactivity with levity is not in tune with the realities of 21st century broadcasting, where the audience is king and where programmes are audience-dominated, not producer- or presenter-centred. If broadcast programmes are meant for the audience, the audience should be partners in what is given to them. Interactivity offers this opportunity which should be taken from the level of pastime and perfected into an art.

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