

NEWS RELEASE

COMMERCIAL FRENCH-LANGUAGE RADIO INDUSTRY WANTS TO BE ABLE TO OFFER MUSIC PROGRAMMING THAT IS MORE IN LINE WITH THE LISTENING HABITS OF FRENCH-SPEAKING QUEBECKERS

To do so, broadcasters suggest adopting new quota for Canadian music in French and new initiatives to promote local French-speaking artists

Montréal, Québec, September 15, 2015—In its Notice of Consultation (CRTC 2015 – 318), the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission noted that the regulatory framework for French-language vocal music applicable to the commercial radio sector must become more flexible. Broadcasters share this opinion and, in a brief submitted yesterday, propose solutions for the issues identified by the CRTC.

“In the digital era, music consumers can choose between commercial radio stations and their highly regulated music programming and a host of new, unregulated platforms that offer an unlimited variety of music in all genres, often for free. The borders are gone: yesterday’s rules are outmoded and must evolve,” said André St-Amand, vice-president, programming, at Cogeco Diffusion and industry co-spokesperson on this issue.

Attraction Radio Inc., Bell Media Inc., Cogeco Inc., Leclerc Communication Inc., RNC MEDIA Inc. and members of the Association des radios régionales francophones have joined forces to ask the CRTC to redefine the way broadcast quotas for French-language vocal music are established. The broadcasters propose that the quota for French-language vocal music be replaced by a new quota for *Canadian* French-language vocal music in order to give priority support to local talent.

The broadcasters suggest setting this new quota at 35%, which exceeds consumers’ listening habits. Across all platforms, French-language music represents 26% of what people aged 18 to 44 listen to; this percentage rises to 30% among listeners aged 25 to 54. The data comes from a survey of 2,029 French-speaking Quebecers aged 16 and over, conducted by Substance stratégies between August 3 and 8.

“Commercial French-language radio is relevant and listeners appreciate it, but it cannot hope to continue being a central part of Quebecers’ lives if it is limited to music programming that gradually diverges from what they want to hear,” added Pierre Rodrigue, vice-president, Industry Relations, for BCE and Bell, and co-spokesperson for the association.

Adopting the means to stay relevant and serve as ambassadors for homegrown music

Directly associated with this proposal, the broadcasters propose significantly bolstering their support for presenting and promoting French-Canadian artists and music through two initiatives.

First, they suggest that MusicAction and the Fonds RadioStar be merged into a single fund managed primarily by representatives from the Quebec music industry. In addition to its current responsibilities, this single fund would serve to support the promotion of French-language

Canadian music. Its budget would be increased by about 40% through a new allocation of contributions to Canadian Content Development (CCD).

Second, they propose launching an unprecedented campaign to promote French-language music, for a renewable five-year term, with a commercial value as high as \$4.5 million annually. The 65 participating predominantly-music stations would present daily profiles of Canadian artists who sing in French.

“People who listen to private French-language radio stations want varied, entertaining content in French, but not at the current levels,” said Mr. Rodrigue. “With this request, the broadcasters are not relinquishing their role as ambassadors and promoters of music in French. Rather, they are adopting the means to stay relevant in the midst of highly attractive, unregulated competition that offers new ways to listen to music. It is crucial that we evolve if we are to continue to support the dissemination of culture and promote our artists and their music.”

About the Association des radios régionales francophones

Formerly known as ARPIF, ARRF has supported the development of regional French-language radio stations for 15 years and spoken on their behalf vis à vis the large players in the Canada’s radio broadcasting industry. The 38 member stations across Quebec, Ontario and New Brunswick represent almost all of the private commercial radio stations outside major urban centres. Solidly established in their communities, these stations are proud of their artists and their achievements, and see it as essential to protect them and further their reach.

About Attraction Radio

Established in 2012, Attraction Radio today comprises 10 radio stations: FM101,5 in Beauce, CJIT-FM 106,7 in Lac-Mégantic, Rythme FM 98,3 and 105,5 in Chicoutimi and La Baie, KYQ FM 95,7 in Plessisville, M103,5 FM in Joliette, Passion-Rock 101,5 FM in Victoriaville, Passion-Rock 105,5 FM in Thetford Mines and O97,3 FM in Victoriaville and Thetford Mines. Attraction Radio has a unique relationship with its listeners and partners in every region where it operates, through programming aimed at bolstering ties with local communities.

About Bell Media

With passion and an unrelenting commitment to excellence, Bell Media creates content and builds brands that entertain, inform, engage, and inspire audiences through the platforms of their choice. Bell Media is Canada’s premier multimedia company with leading assets in television, radio, out-of-home advertising, and digital media. Bell Media owns 30 local television stations led by CTV, Canada’s #1 television network; 34 specialty channels, including TSN and RDS, Canada’s most-watched specialty channels in English and French; and four pay TV services, including The Movie Network and Super Écran. Bell Media is also Canada’s largest radio broadcaster, with 106 licensed radio stations in 54 markets across Canada. Bell Media owns Astral Out of Home, one of Canada’s most dynamic and innovative out-of-home advertising companies with a network of more than 10,500 advertising faces in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Québec, and Nova Scotia. Bell Media also operates more than 200 websites; delivers TV Everywhere with premium subscription on-demand streaming service CraveTV, as well as its innovative GO video streaming services including CTV GO, TMN GO, and TSN GO; holds an equity stake in digital startup Hubub; is partners in Cirque du Soleil Media, a joint venture with Cirque du Soleil; and owns Dome Productions Inc., a multi-platform production company. Bell Media is

part of BCE Inc. (TSX, NYSE: BCE), Canada's largest communications company. For more on Bell Media, please visit www.bellmedia.ca

About Cogeco Diffusion

Cogeco Diffusion, one of Québec's largest radio broadcasters, is a subsidiary of COGECO Inc., a diversified communications company with subordinate voting shares listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSX: CGO). Cogeco Diffusion operates thirteen (13) radio stations across Québec including: Rythme FM, 96.9 CKOI, 98.5 fm, 92.5 The Beat and Radio Circulation 730 AM in Montréal; FM 93 and M FM in Québec City; CIME FM in Saint-Jérôme; Rythme FM Sherbrooke as well as Rythme FM Trois Rivières. Cogeco Diffusion also operates Cogeco News, one of Québec's largest news agencies, feeding 24 affiliate, independent and community radio stations and also owns Cogeco Métromédia, an out-of-home advertising company specialized in the public transit sector.

About Leclerc Communication

Leclerc Communication inc. is the proud owner of WKND 91,9 and BLVD 102,1 since January 2012 and is the only local and family broadcasting company in the Québec City market. True standard-bearer of a unique sound and format, Leclerc Communication continues to revolutionize the National Capital region's radio landscape.

About RNC MEDIA

Founded in 1948, RNC MEDIA INC. is a broadcasting company with major presence in the Montreal, Abitibi-Témiscamingue, Outaouais, Saguenay and Quebec City markets. The company operates 16 radio and 5 television stations, and provides high-quality advertising, production and programming services. As one of the largest broadcasting groups in Quebec, RNC MEDIA continues to pursue its mission to communicate with the same passion as it has for over 65 years.

-30-

INFORMATION:

Anik Le Marquand

NATIONAL Public Relations

Tel.: 514-843-2342 | Email: alemarquand@national.ca