IKIMfm: A decade of educating and entertaining the soul

KUALA LUMPUR: "Sedekah mendidik dan menghibur jiwa." (A decade educating and entertaining the soul).

IKIMfm, the radio station sponsored by think tank Ikim (the Institute for Islamic Understanding). Its station, IKIMfm, was launched on July 6, 2001.

IKIMfm is the only radio station in Malaysia broadcasting Islamic Innovation Carnival (the Voice of Undergraduates), targeted for students of institutions of higher learning. The programme airs every Wednesday from 10am to 10pm.

For 2012, IKIMfm introduced a new slot called 'Suara Siswa' (the Voice of Undergraduates), a programme for students and intellectuals.

IKIMfm's programmes are educational, 20 per cent are entertainment and another five per cent are informative.

Nik Roskiman said the station is 'Islam Itu Indah' with Prof Dr. Mohd. Muhamad every Sunday at 6am, and is重复 at 8pm. It is a knowledge portal.

Another highly popular segment on IKIMfm is 'Tafsar Al-Quran' with Ustaz Dr. Zainal, which airs from Monday through Friday at 6.30am and is repeated at 8pm.

The 45-minute programme features Ustazah Noorhashim, a lecturer at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia and discusses steps to building happy families based on the teachings of the Al-Quran and Sunnah.

In 2011, loyal IKIMfm listeners would be familiar with programmes such as 'Mukmin Professional', 'Mahligai Kasih', 'Bicara Muamalat', 'Islam Agamaku' and 'Ad-Daurah', which airs at 5pm Mondays through Fridays respectively.

NIK ROSKIMAN said the station has been on air for over 10 years, it has been striving to better itself by improving the station is by monitoring effort. According to Nik Roskiman, the programme for teens, 'riba'(usury), can tune in to IKIMfm live by going to its website www.ikim.my for the benefit of listeners who are not able to tune into the programmes while it was airing live.

Those with iPads or iPhones are also able to download the IKIMfm application and tune in to the station live through their smartphone.

All those on the Blackberry or android platforms can tune in to IKIMfm live by going to its website in 90 counties around the world.

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The second wave of research in 2011 by The Nielsen Company (Malaysia) showed that IKIMfm ranked third of the 34 radio stations surveyed in Malaysia.

Nik Roskiman, the marketing and advertising research company, listed IKIMfm holding the seventh spot among Malay language radio stations. It estimated the listenership of IKIMfm's station, Qanun 89.9, to be around 81,100.

However, the station only covers Peninsular Malaysia.

"If we factor in listeners in Sabah and Sarawak and the neighbouring countries, the numbers may reach well over a million," said Nik Roskiman, who had been IKIMfm's director since April 5, 2009.

Since IKIMfm first went on air on April 10, 2001, it has strongly held on to the themes of educating, entertaining and informing when formulating its programmes.

Nik Roskiman said any deviation from a knowledge portal is not suitable for schoolchildren.

He said that was evident in that educating the masses, IKIMfm cannot resemble a religious radio station that is only suitable for schoolchildren.

To educate, the masses, teenagers and adults, we need different approaches. It calls for the 'adult learning' approach, he said.

Language programmes are designed to bring out ways to present a heavy issue in a manner that is entertaining and interesting.

He noted that 75 per cent of IKIMfm's programmes are educational, 20 per cent are entertainment and another five per cent are informative.

Nearly 90 per cent of the programmes on IKIMfm are interactive, to allow listeners to share their views, offer comments and ask questions, as well as to make these programmes more entertaining.

"For those needing counselling, the station may provide a good avenue to seek solutions," said Nik Roskiman.

Not only can IKIMfm listeners call in, they can also send SMSes, post their views on the station's Facebook page, and share comments via Twitter, e-mail or Skype.

Besides interacting live with programme hosts or guests, they can also post feedback on the programmes via Twitter, e-mail or Skype.

The feedback we receive is that our loyal listeners see IKIMfm as a knowledge portal.

"Those who love knowledge and tuning in for the first time would find it hard to switch to other stations," he said.

The programmes on IKIMfm target several age groups.

Programmes 'Alam Ria Siz Kecil' (The Fun World of the Little Ones), which airs every Saturday (2-4pm), and the Arabic language programme 'Dunia Atfal' (The World of Children) on every Sunday at 2pm, are for children.

Nik Roskiman said such programmes were designed to attract children to listen to IKIMfm from a young age.

IKIMfm also puts some thought into the time a programme is aired.

A programme for students and teenagers is slated after 10pm, when they have finished with classes and homework.

Radio deejays or programme hosts are also carefully selected. For example, the young and gifted DJ Fae hosts programmes for teenagers.

"The programme for teens, which airs every Tuesday at 10pm, would see us inviting teenagers to the studio to share their views and opinions. We also open the lines to get the comments of listeners and we invite motivational experts over," he added.

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IKIMfm is also working at getting the station to be broadcast via satellite TV and Telekom Malaysia’s Hypp TV.

Nik Roskiman said such efforts to take IKIMfm mainstream would definitely involve a high investment.

“We are a bit constrained in this respect, but we will continue to strive for the best. Our staff and DJ are all committed to bring IKIMfm to the forefront.

“Our goal for the near future is to place IKIMfm in the top 10 list of radio stations in the country, with an official number of listeners exceeding one million.” -- Bernama