

## Media Profile of The Bahamas

The Bahamian archipelago covers some 100,000 square miles of ocean between Florida and Hispaniola, with a total land area of 5,382 square miles.

The country's name derives from the Lucayan Indian word for the island of Grand Bahama— 'ba-ha-ma', or 'large upper middle land'. After the original Amerindian inhabitants were deported into slavery by the Spaniards who followed Columbus, the islands were mostly deserted until English settlers from Bermuda established a colony on Eleuthera in the mid-1600's.

Today, 353,000 people live here on 22 inhabited islands, with the population concentrated on the islands of New Providence (249,000) and Grand Bahama (52,000).

A British crown colony since 1718, the Bahamas became independent on July 10 1973, and are governed by a cabinet headed by a prime minister who is responsible to parliament. General elections must be held every five years.

The centre-right Free National Movement came to power in the general election of August, 1992, after 25 consecutive years of centre-left Progressive Liberal Party rule. The FNM was re-elected in March, 1997, but lost to the PLP in May, 2002. In May, 2007 the PLP lost to the FNM, but regained the government in the May 2012 general election.

Tourism is the country's biggest earner, with over four million visitors (mostly North Americans) spending a billion and a half dollars a year. Financial services account for about 15 per cent of the \$8 billion GDP. Agriculture and fisheries are a distant third, with about \$70 million in marine products exported annually.

Although the Bahamas has had a lively and relatively free press since the early 1800s, broadcasting was a government monopoly until 1992.

A national radio station was established in the 1930s as a hurricane warning service, using the call letters 'ZNS' (Zephyr Nassau Sunshine). In the 1970s, a statutory corporation was formed to operate ZNS' television and radio channels (TV was introduced in 1978). Today, the Broadcasting Corporation of The Bahamas is partly funded by advertising, but heavily subsidised by the public treasury, and remains under tight political control.

However, the government monopoly on broadcasting was broken in 1992 when the new Free National Movement administration licensed private radio stations, and again in 1994 when Canadian investors were licensed to develop cable television.

There are currently 29 private radio stations (operating on New Providence, Grand Bahama, Long Island, Exuma, Abaco, Inagua and Eleuthera) together with four private TV stations based on New Providence.

Cable Bahamas Ltd (now a fully Bahamian public company) began building an advanced fibre-optic network on New Providence in 1995. Family Island installations began in 1997. Today, over 90 per cent of Bahamian households on 16 islands have access to modern cable and internet services.

Cable Bahamas offers a 52-channel basic service plus premium movie channels, a pay-per-view service and digital audio service. Cable carries ZNS TV, the parliamentary channel and local radio stations, and also operates a community local programming and news. Local advertising can be inserted on a variety of foreign channels.

The exclusive license for cable television expired in 2009 and Cable Bahamas is expected to face competition soon from the newly privatized Bahamas Telecommunications Company (majority owned by Cable and Wireless Communications since early 2011).

Jones Communications, whose principal (Wendall Jones) also operates Love 97 radio and publishes the daily Bahama journal, was awarded a television license in 2006 and introduced JCN- TV the following year. The station distributes its signal via Cable Bahamas to most Nassau households.

The country's oldest newspaper is the Nassau Guardian, which has published continuously since it was founded in 1844 by an Englishman named Edwin Charles Mosely. Its chief competitor, The Tribune, was founded in 1903 by Bahamian Leon Dupuch. A twice-weekly tabloid, the Punch, was established in 1990 by Bahamian journalist Ivan Johnson. The Bahama journal began publishing in 1987, founded by former broadcaster Wendall Jones.

#### Television

Number of stations - 4. Penetration - 90% of population

#### ZNS Channel 13

Format: News, current affairs and general programming with some local productions. Broadcasting Corporation of the Bahamas  
P. O. Box N-1347. Telephone 242-322-4623.

#### JCN-TV Channel 14

Format: News, current affairs and infomercials.

Jones Communications  
P. O. Box N-3909. Telephone 242-356-4960.

Bahamas Christian Network

Adventist Broadcasting

Radio

Penetration - 100% of population

Commercial time per hour - average 6-12 minutes

Audience peaks - morning/afternoon drive time, midday talk shows.

ZNS-1 . National. News, Bahamian music, talk .

ZNS-2 . New Providence. Gospel music and inspirational talk.

ZNS-3 . Grand Bahama. Pop music and news (local and networked).

Broadcasting Corporation of the Bahamas  
P. O. Box N-1347. Telephone 242-322-4623.

100 jAMZ FM . New Providence. Pop music and news briefs.

First private radio station.

Tribune Radio

P. O. Box N-3207. Telephone 242-328-4771.

JOY FM . New Providence. Religious music and talk.

Managed by: Tribune Radio

P. O. Box N-3207. Telephone 242-328-4771.

COOL 96 FM . New Providence. Adult contemporary music, news and talk.

Managed by: Tribune Radio

P. O. Box N-3207. Telephone 242-328-4771.

CLASSIC FM . New Providence. Classical music, no talk, minimal  
advertising.! Managed by: Tribune Radio

P. O. Box N-3207. Telephone 242-328-4771.

Y98 FM . New Providence. Soft rock.

Managed by: Tribune Radio

P. O. Box N-3207. Telephone 242-328-4771.

LOVE 97 FM . New Providence, Grand Bahama. Oldies, news and talk.

Jones Communications

P. O. Box N-3909. Telephone 242-356-4960.

MORE FM . New Providence. Pop music and news.  
P. O. Box N-1347. Telephone 242-322-4623.

ISLAND FM . New Providence. Caribbean and world music, news and talk.  
P. O. Box N-1807. Telephone 242-322-8826.

96.9 FM  
Oldies, news and talk.  
Nassau Guardian 1844 Ltd  
P. O. Box N-3011. Telephone 242-323-5654.

HOT 91.7 FM  
Pop music and news.  
Nassau Guardian 1844 Ltd  
P. O. Box N-3011. Telephone 242-323-5654.

PEACE 107 FM  
Talk and news.  
McKinney Network, #6 Gibbs Lane, Fort Charlotte P. O. Box N-1220.  
Telephone 242-325-0235.

SPORTS RADIO 103 FM  
Talk and news.  
ZSR Media, Dewgard Plaza Palmdale. Nassau, Bahamas P.O. Box N 296.  
Tel 322-5065, Fax 323-6302

COOL 96 FM  
Adult contemporary music, news and talk.  
Freeport, Grand Bahama, P. O. Box F-40773. Telephone 242-352-7440.

RADIO ABACO FM  
Island music, local news and talk.  
Marsh Harbour, Abaco, P. O. Box AB20418. Telephone 242-367-4935.

SPLASH 89.9 FM  
Island music, local news and talk.  
Spanish Wells, Eleuthera, P. O. Box EL27495. Telephone 242-333-4638.

BREEZE 98.3 FM  
Top 40 hits, 80s and Bahamian music.  
Thane Media Group Ltd, George Town, Exuma, Telephone 242-358-7201  
Fax: 242-358-7203.

#### COAST 106 FM

Top 40 hits and Bahamian music.

George Harris. Matthew Town, Inagua. 242-339-2400

#### ISLAND BREEZE 106 FM

Top 40 hits and Bahamian music.

Jason Knowles and Adrian Darville, Long Island.

#### DOVE 103 FM

Gospel music, Adult Contemporary and local news.

Freeport, Grand Bahama, P. O. Box F-60032. Telephone 242-351-3683.

#### MIX 102 FM

Adult contemporary music and local news.

Freeport, Grand Bahama, P.O.Box F-44008. Telephone 242-373-2275.

#### BBN 102.3 FM

New Providence. Gospel music and talk.

#### GLOBAL 99.5 FM

New Providence. Gospel music and talk.

#### LYFE 90.9 FM

New Providence. Jazz and talk.

#### Newspapers

Nassau Guardian (broadsheet)

Circulation - 6-17,000 daily

Colour - spot & process

Format - national news/features/syndicated material.

Owned by Bahamian shareholders.

P. O. Box N-3011. Telephone 242-323-5654.

The Tribune (broadsheet) Circulation - 11-20,000 daily

Colour - spot & process.

Format - national news/features/syndicated material.

Family-owned.

P. O. Box N-3207. Telephone 242-322-2768.

The Punch (tabloid)

Circulation - 20,000-plus twice a week.

Colour - spot & process

Format - national news/gossip/syndicated material.

Owned by Bahamian shareholders.

P. O. Box N-4081. Telephone 242-322-7112.

Bahama Journal (broadsheet)  
Circulation - 2,000 daily (estimate)  
Colour - spot & process  
Format - news, political analysis and commentary.  
Owned by Bahamian shareholders.  
P. O. Box N-8610. Telephone 242-325-3082.

Freeport News (broadsheet)  
Circulation - 3,000 daily  
Colour - spot  
Format - national/local news/syndicated material.  
Owned by the Nassau Guardian 1844 Ltd.  
P. O. Box F-7, Freeport, Grand Bahama. Telephone 242-352-8321.

The Abaconian (tabloid)  
Circulation - 7,000 bi-monthly, distributed free.  
Colour - spot and process !  
Format - Local news.  
Owned by Michael & Nancy Albury. PO 80x AB 20551  
Marsh Harbour, Abaco. Telephone 242-367-3677.

#### Magazines

Bahamas Naturalist & Journal of Science (back issues available)  
Circulation - out of print  
Format - articles of scientific interest relating to The Bahamas  
Publisher - Media Enterprises Ltd, P.O. Box N-9240, Nassau, Bahamas

#### Financial Digest

Circulation - 3,000 monthly, distributed free  
Format - regurgitated pr/news  
Publisher - Symonette Marketing, P.O. Box N-4271, Nassau, Bahamas

#### Bahamas Investor

Circulation - unknown, distributed free  
Format - offshore banking news and views  
Publisher - Etienne Dupuch Jr. Publications Ltd. P.O. Box N-7513, Nassau, Bahamas

#### Internet

Telecommunications services are being liberalised in the Bahamas. The recently privatised telephone utility (BTC) is still the only mobile provider. Although the period of exclusivity for mobile has expired, a licensing auction has yet to take place. BTC already has competition in the provision of internet and fixed-line services.

Systems Resource Group was the first private company to offer fixed voice services in late 2004. It was later acquired by Cable Bahamas, which began offering IP voice services in 2011.

Cable Bahamas launched broadband internet service in 2000 and has over 50,000 cable modem subscribers. BTC's BaTelNet has over 40,000 subscribers. BTC is expected to introduce cable television services in the near future.

The total Bahamas market is about 103,000 households. Both Cable Bahamas and BTC provide telecoms services to 90% of these households over their fibre optic networks.

Cable Bahamas:

P. O. Box CB-13050, Nassau, Bahamas. ! E-mail: [info@coralwave.com](mailto:info@coralwave.com).

Telephone 242-356-2200

BaTelNet:

P. O. Box N-3048, Nassau, Bahamas. E-mail: [info@batelnet.bs](mailto:info@batelnet.bs).

Telephone 242-328-0990.