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Online radio or video: which plan, and why an ordinary hosting plan is not it

Resources & Limits

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Online radio or video: which plan, and why an ordinary hosting plan is not it

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An online radio station or a continuous broadcast **cannot run on an ordinary hosting plan**. A website hands a file to whoever asks and is then free; a broadcast keeps a connection open with **every listener for as long as they listen**, and that is what a streaming server was built to manage. For continuous audio we have the Streaming Server plans, with their own panel. For live video, the usual route is a video service, or a VPS if you want to build everything your own way.

Which route for which project

What you want to do	What fits
Online radio, around the clock, with a playlist and live shows	Streaming Server, with the SonicPanel panel and the AutoDJ that plays when nobody is live. See **Streaming Server: first steps with SonicPanel**.
Podcast episodes or recordings to download	An ordinary hosting plan is fine, if downloads are occasional and not hundreds at the same time.
Live video for many people	A video service, embedded in your site. Video is far heavier than audio.
A video platform of your own, with software you choose	A VPS, with root access and the administration on your side. See **shared hosting vs VPS**.

Choosing the streaming plan

1. **Listeners are unlimited on every plan.** What decides the plan is the size of your music library (AutoDJ space) and the quality you want to broadcast (bitrate).

2 **Pick the audio bitrate.** It sets the quality and also how much data each listener spends. High bitrates sound better but shut out people on limited mobile data or weak connections. Many stations broadcast at two qualities.

3 **Check the library space.** Music and recorded shows live on the server. The figures for each plan are in **Streaming Server: first steps with SonicPanel**, and the live list is on the product page.

4 **Keep the website separate.** The station's site (schedule, news) goes on a hosting plan and embeds the player. Each does its own job.

What a streaming server does for you

It receives the signal from your encoder (the program you speak through live, or the AutoDJ when nobody is on), converts it and distributes it to every listener. Each listener connects to a stream address, which you put in the player embedded in your site or in a radio app. The streaming server handles the distribution; your website stays a website.

! **Copyright.**
Broadcasting music to the public may require licences for the music you play. The server does not solve that, and the responsibility is the broadcaster's. Find out before you go on air to the public.

In our plans

Plan	Simultaneous listeners	AutoDJ library	Bitrate
Pro	800	10 GB	128 kbps
Plus	5,000	25 GB	192 kbps
Ultra	Unlimited	50 GB	192 kbps

Choose by the peak of listeners at the same moment, not by the daily total. The bitrate is the quality of the stream, and the library is the space for music and recorded shows that the AutoDJ plays when nobody is live. The product page is the live list.

Think of listeners on phones.
A high bitrate spends their data and breaks up on weak connections. For speech a lower bitrate is enough. See also **what you can host here: media, streaming, Windows and the limits**.

NEED A HAND?

Want to launch a station or a broadcast and unsure what to pick? Tell us how many listeners you expect and what you will broadcast.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- Streaming Server: first steps with SonicPanel →
- What you can host here: media, streaming, Windows and the limits →
- Shared hosting vs VPS: which one does your project need? →
- Ask for a quote →

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