Did you know...?

A market is considered "covered" if at least one station appears in that market, even if the only reported listening in the market comes from spill-in, and (optionally) even if the only stations in the market are all unreported (i.e., if your lineup had only one reported station appearing in each market, you would have 100% coverage). As you can see from this example, Coverage Percentage is not a measurement of the strength of your audience, but rather an indication that the stations in your lineup(s) which are not unreported can be heard in every market.

If a market is covered, its market population (for the demo you are using) is taken into account, and summed together with the populations of other covered markets to create a **Coverage Population**. If a market is not covered, its market population is not added to the Coverage Population. The **Total Population** of markets included in the report is then computed (e.g., Total U.S. population when including all markets in a DMA-based report). The Coverage Population is divided by the applicable Total Population to arrive at the Coverage Percentage, which tells you the percentage of applicable Total Population that comes from covered markets. However, there are report options that can impact which markets are considered.

The Exclude Unreported Option: In the Audience Options tab, there is an option to "Exclude markets from coverage pop. totals if all stations are unreported." If this option is checked, any markets that only have unreported stations (i.e., they have no reported audience), will not be included in the Coverage Population. In the example below, only three unreported stations appear in the NY market:

With the exclude option unchecked, NY will still be considered covered (and its 18,315,600 market population will be added to the Coverage Percentage), even though the market has no reported listening. With the exclude option checked, this market will not be considered covered (its 18,315,600 will not be added to the Coverage Population).

Limited Markets, Any Spill-In vs. Limited Spill-In, and Limited Populations Option: In the Audience Options tab, there is an option to "Base summary totals on limited markets (instead of USA pop)." If this option is checked, and you limit markets, the Coverage Population will only be based on the markets that appear in your report (based on both the included markets and spill-in settings described below).*

In the Survey/Markets tab, you have the ability to limit the markets used in the report and control spill-in settings. If you limit markets (say, to just NY), and choose "Spill only to limited markets," only the populations of the limited markets (NY, in this case) will be evaluated. If you instead choose "Any spill-in," you also add the populations of any *excluded* markets that contain spill-in audience (such as the populations of Philadelphia and Boston being added to the Coverage Population, because the limited market [NY] stations are spilling into those two excluded markets).*

Coverage Percentage and Lower MRS (and Spill-in for Nationwide DMA): As of Spring 2014, Nielsen lowered the Minimum Reporting Standards (MRS) for the Nationwide DMA Summary Data Set, which typically results in more reported stations showing up in both home and spill-in markets (meaning markets are appearing in reports now that did not appear before). Depending on your spill-in settings, this can potentially result in less Coverage Percentage prior to SPR14 DMA, and more Coverage Percentage in SPR14 DMA and beyond.

Applicable total population is influenced by this option.