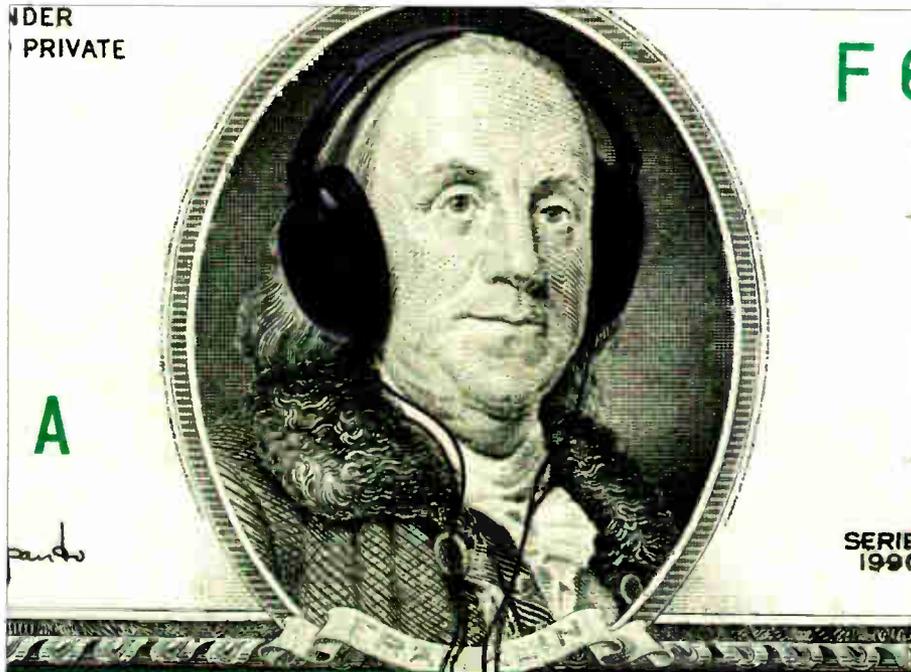


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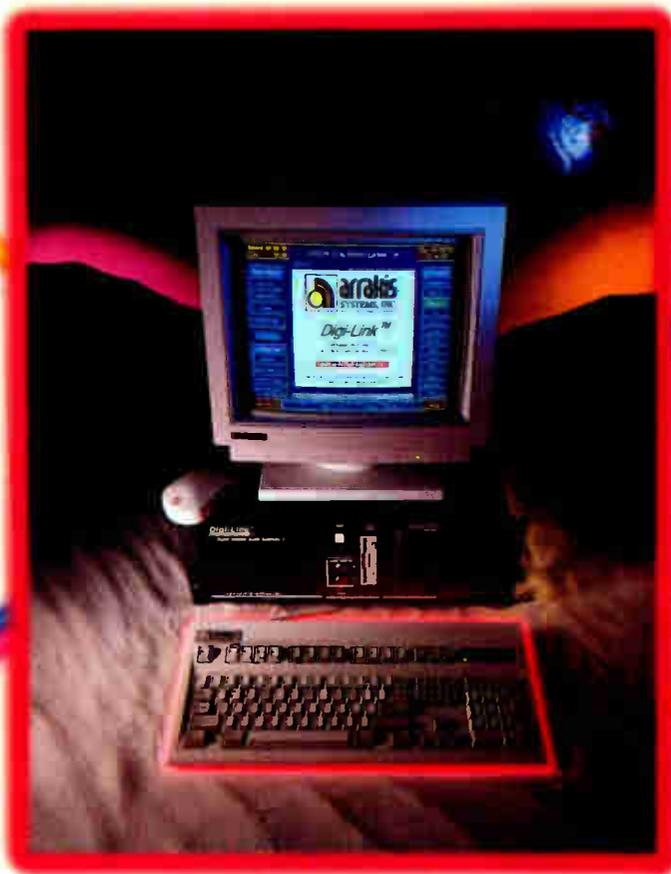
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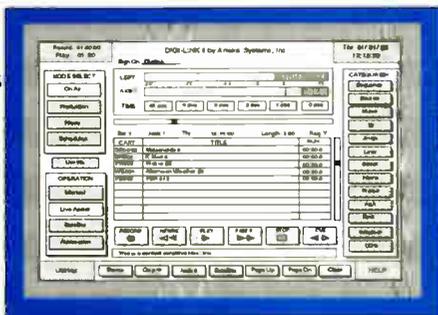
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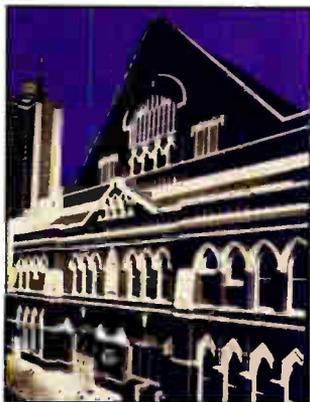
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Market Watch:
Sure enough, country dominates radio in Nashville, but that doesn't mean it's the only tune in town.

8

AccuRatings

26

Services: With its scope of qualitative data, AccuRatings is working hard to loosen Arbitron's foothold on the ratings game. Does it measure up?

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42 Technology at Work:
EAS. Another new acronym promises to spell out an easier way to warn listeners of imminent peril—and this time without losing them.



DOUBLE TAKE

“Then one day I saw an ad in the paper that said, ‘Run away and join the circus!’ So I did!”

—Karen Tobin, now ringleader of marketing at KIIS-FM/AM, Los Angeles

See profile, page 17.



Don't Go Changin'... Hmm, Too Late

.....
by Charles Taylor

Now, I'll be the first to admit that as a monthly publication, The Radio World Magazine isn't exactly reporting the industry's daily news. Indeed, our focus is directed at presenting the big picture you seldom find anywhere else—portraits of success in an ever-maturing business environment, reports on trends impacting the industry as a whole and the real dish on those technologies we foresee having a bearing on radio broadcasting in the near future.

But the fortitude with which the industry evolves leaves me dumbfounded at times. I just learned that the WDRE syndicated network, which Alan Haber adeptly profiled in January, has, in many ways, already redefined its future. Ron Morey, president/CEO of The Morey Organization, which licenses WDRE, tells me that in order to "keep its finger on the pulse of the alternative world," the syndicated entity has revamped as The Underground Network, including new talent and a grittier alternative musical edge.

"We went coast to coast to find our on-air people and did the same thing with production. These people 'get it,'" Morey says. "We found that musically, we had drifted toward the mainstream, while many top 40 stations today are dabbling in alternative music. People are fed up with hearing Pearl Jam eight times a day."

To battle the mainstreaming of alternative, "we have reworked, redefined and fine-tuned what we're doing," he says.

Perhaps even more significant, the "network" is retooling its computer capabilities with its own "Web site" on the Internet. By the time you read this, listeners will be able to communicate live with DJs over their home PCs and possibly even listen to the station over speaker-equipped computers.

So, in the two months between our coverage of WDRE's cutting edge and today, technology and the industry's ever-evolving musical landscape have rewritten their story.

Likewise, Judith Gross' report in January on the compelling issue of satellite audio services and their potential effect on tradi-

tional terrestrial radio is more relevant than ever. As Judith predicted might occur, the FCC, in January, took a first official step toward satellite audio services with allocation of the S-band for such broadcasts.

While there's a long way to go, the current commission appears inclined to embrace satellite audio. The NAB, however, has come out forcefully against the technology, claiming, among other things, that its implementation would displace the local service that is the foundation of terrestrial radio.

It's an interesting point, given radio's current love affair with syndicated programming. How many markets are without Howard Stern, Rush Limbaugh or some form of multi-hour nationwide programming? How about 24-hour satellite-delivered music formats? Or the scores of Christian stations that are 100 percent bartered? Has the industry not already taken momentous steps beyond community programming?

Don't get me wrong: Such long-form broadcasts, in most cases, contribute greatly to a station's appeal. But it proves the point that national programming can and does co-exist in a non-threatening way with local programming. Community radio will always have its place in our lives—traffic, weather, local news and favorite personalities are routine parts of America's daily regimen.

Let's not be naive by trying to shackle the forward steps of technology. The day has arrived for radio's leaders to capitalize on the medium's greatest strengths and formulate new competitive strategies. Radio has already held its own against television, cable TV, cassettes/CDs in automobiles and, so far, cable radio.

As long as the medium's leaders have the foresight to spend their energies competing instead of combatting, radio will live long.

Chuck

THE Vol. 2, No. 3, March 1995

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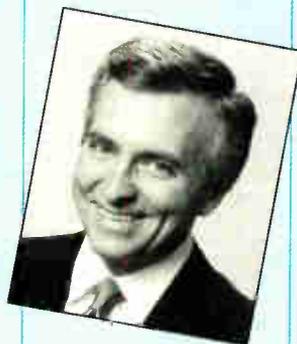
"Zephyr has allowed us to 'stretch' the production window," says Joe Cipriano, the voice of the Fox Television Network.

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Chris Clausen, who has lent his "pipes" to the NBC-Network, Federal Express, and Chevrolet, among others, quips "When it positively, absolutely has to be there the next minute,

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World Radio History



l.e.t.t.e.r.s

Credit where it's due

Your profile article on WDRE's syndicated modern rock format (RWM, January 1995) ignores the original source of the program material that has made this format popular and sellable: college radio stations.

Ron Morey's quote is egocentric: "(Modern rock stations) are popping up all over the country and that's our biggest problem.... It's nice to go into a market and be the first guy on the dial."

Let's give credit where it's due. College stations had him beat by at least a decade and are already in a hundred more markets than he'll ever be.

At best, he's the first commercial "guy on the dial."

Just remember, commercial radio doesn't do everything first or best.

*Glenn Gutmacher
Media Manager
Collegiate Advantage Advertising
Boston*

The real future

The Radio World Magazine's January Technology at Work piece, "PC Radio Charts Potential New Course for the Airwaves," is right on target.

In March 1994, I wrote in my own newsletter of the coming of the Interactive Revolution. I predicted that by the turn of the century, interactive computer online networks will impact everything from national elections to entertainment events to clothing purchases. Faculty and students will see each other without stepping inside a school building, the family doctor will make house calls via a video screen and you'll do price comparisons, have your credit approved and shop for your new home without having to get in your car.

By the year 2000, 40 percent of the nation's households will regularly use network-based interactive online computer services. Within a decade, interactive TV will sweep the nation as the "Internet Generation"—those who grew up with computers and video as a learning aid in

kindergarten—take their place in society. Radio will tie in with the online services and, using satellite delivery, will be even more of a factor than in the past.

Unfortunately, after publication of my views, I was told by most radio broadcasters that my view was just too far-fetched. With the exception of people like Alan Box, very few radio owners see the real future of radio.

Once again, thank you for another reason I eagerly await RWM.

*John H. Rook
President, KCDA-FM
Owner, Rook InterActive Media
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho*

It makes "cents"

After reading "PC Radio Charts Potential New Course for the Airwaves" by Page Chichester, I was delighted to see that three of the industry's most highly regarded radio broadcast executives—Alan Box, Jerry Lee and Skip Finley—are looking so actively into future technologies for radio broadcasters.

Over a year ago, Robert L. Fox, past NAB Radio Board Chairman, also had the astute vision to see the profitability and unique benefits that the CouponRadio program offers the radio industry—both as a PC radio and automobile radio broadcast data system—and quickly brought the technology to the NAB Board's attention.

In 1993, Ralph Guild, chairman of The Interep Radio Store, recognized the value to broadcasters of CouponRadio's patented technology and formed an alliance between The Interep Radio Store and CouponRadio to help make the vision a reality.

For the past year, Bill Burton, COO of the Detroit Radio Advertising Group and a radio industry legend, has been determined and unselfish in his effort to convince the Big Three automobile manufacturers to build CouponRadio receivers in new automobiles.

At the very heart of CouponRadio technology, and much of what Mr. Box is proposing, are two United States patents

assigned to CouponRadio Inc., covering a "broadcasting system with supplemental data transmission and storage."

Did you ever imagine that while tuned to your favorite station, you could be listening to a radio advertisement for a new restaurant you want to try, and at the touch of a memory button on the radio, instantly save not only its name, address and telephone number, but receive a paperless, "\$5 Off" electronic coupon, as well? You will, and AT&T won't be the company that brings it to you—CouponRadio will.

Box's energy and experience is very valuable. For the good of the radio broadcast industry, I cordially invite him and any other broadcaster to look more closely at the CouponRadio project, and help build upon what has already been accomplished. Together, we can go a long way.

*David J. Alwadish
President, CouponRadio
New York*

All letters received become the property of The Radio World Magazine, to be used at our discretion and as space permits. Correspondence may be edited for length or clarity.

Why hold it in? Address letters to The Radio World Magazine, 5827 Columbia Pike, Third Floor, Falls Church, Va. 22041; or fax: 703-998-2966.

We Didn't Mean to...

The WMAL-AM "Paycheck Payoff" mailer used to illustrate the January article on Direct Marketing (p. 46) was produced by Creative Media Management Inc. of Largo, Fla. The Radio World Magazine received one of those official letters telling us that we neglected to inform you that "Paycheck Payoff" is a federally registered service mark. We apologize for the omission.



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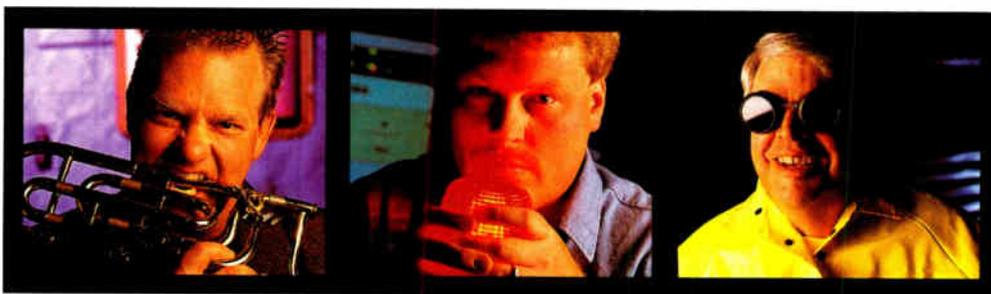
*John Buffalo... Chief Engineer
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MARKET WATCH

Nashville: Country to the Core



Music City Radio Tips Hat To Many Formats, But Lives Up To Rep as Country's Capital

.....
by Thomas Goldsmith

From the grandswell of country music's popularity to a business environment so prosperous that companies do battle to fill jobs, Music City USA is surfing an unprecedented crest of national acceptance and hometown excitement.

Adding new glass and substance to Tennessee's capital, Nashville currently has in the works a revitalized downtown, a \$100 million entertainment arena and the forthcoming headquarters for the \$16 billion Columbia/HCA health-care conglomerate.



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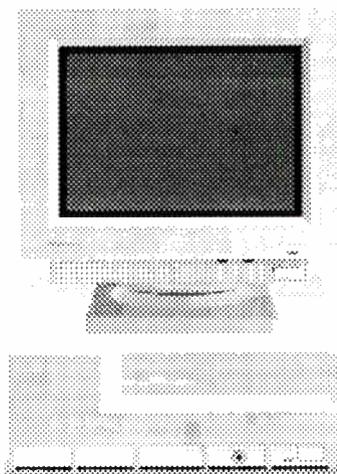
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and testing. Your assembled, configured and tested price for Audio Broadcast Group's DAW/1 is just \$2995.

For more demanding applications, we offer the DAW/2. This system features an Acer Acros 486DX2/66 computer with 8mb of RAM, 420 mb hard drive, DOS, Windows, mouse and 14" SVGA color monitor. Installed in the computer is the Digital Audio Labs CardD Plus professional quality sound card that features dual 16 bit Delta-Sigma A/D conversion and 64 times oversampling with software selectable sample rates and selectable input and output levels. Also installed and ready to run is the Software Audio Workshop (SAW) from Innovative Quality Software. 4 stereo tracks of nondestructive audio editing, fast cut and paste, vari-pitch for time squeezing, flanging and delay effects, simultaneous synchronized record and play and much more. The DAW/2 is even more powerful, but just as easy to use as the DAW/1.

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Undoubtedly, one of the cornerstones of the city's success is its built-in identity as the world's Capital of Country Music. So it only makes sense that country radio would rule here, right?

After all, the number 46 radio market is home to the Grand Ole Opry, Garth Brooks, all the major country labels and countless recording studios. And it's not unusual for a major star to up the level of excitement by dropping in to chat on any number of morning drive radio shows.

A hometown winner

The catch is that it took the national country boom of the late 1980s to make the format a winner in its own hometown. Until then, Nashville radio had been anybody's hall game, with the championship sometimes rotating from one station to the next.

"Up until four or five years ago, no format was able to have any sort of sustained dominance," says David Nichols, a Music City radio veteran and executive director of the Country Radio Broadcasters. "For most of the last five years, it's been WSIX number one and WSM number two. The other for-

Entertainment, which already owns country powerhouses WSM-FM and AM, purchased FM talk/news/sports station WWTN for \$3.8 million, marking its first duopoly. This, in addition to the company's other humble holdings—Opryland Hotel, Opryland USA, a passel of music publishing and the TNN and CMT networks.

Number one

The number one station in the market for most of the decade, country WSIX-FM, is also part of a potent new duopoly. Publicly traded owner SFX of Austin, Texas, recently purchased the only CHR in the Nashville market. Its WYHY-FM is one of the stations that revolved through the top spot during the latter part of the '80s.

"Duopolies look for some kind of compatibility," says John King, GM for both stations. "Most of the time you're selling demographic and my feeling is that I have a radio station that pretty much dominates 12-34 and another station that dominates pretty much everything else."

Among of the strongest elements of the personality-intensive WSIX-FM—number one in Fall 1994 with a 15.9 12+ Arbitron

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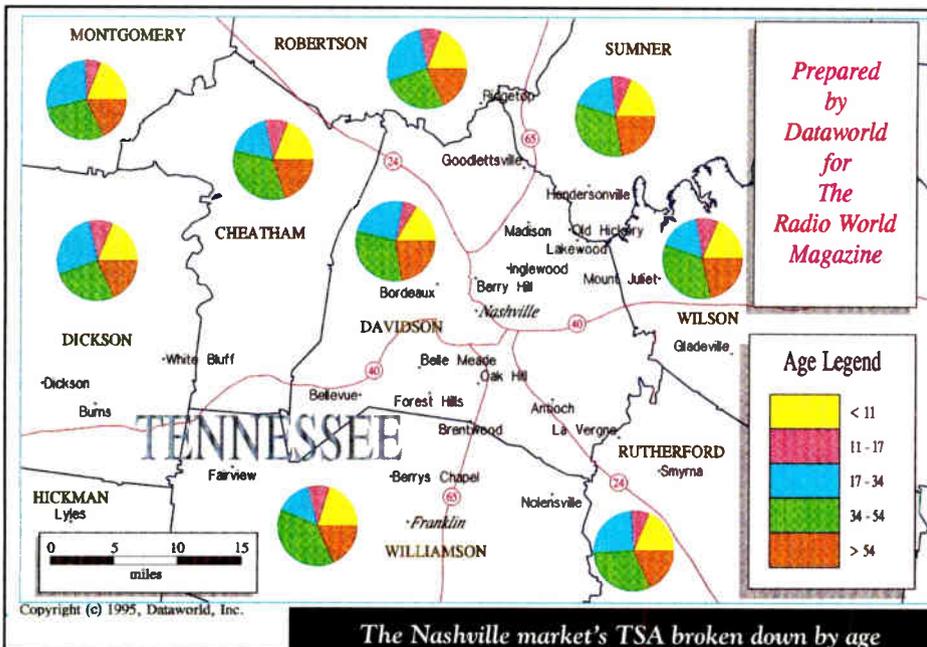
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The Nashville market's TSA broken down by age

mat are basically playing for third in most of the desirable demographics."

Nashville is paralleling other national industry trends, too. For one, revenues soared 13 percent in 1994 to \$41.6 million. The strong advertising market reflects a diverse local and state economy, showing steady growth since emerging early on from the recession of the early 1990s.

As well, the emergence of duopolies is filling the broadcast stage with a cast of dominant players. Most recently, Gaylord

rank—is Gerry House, whose in-the-know, funny morning show has won him awards, acclaim and a syndication contract with Premiere Radio Networks.

"House has some magic in Nashville that I personally have never seen in any of the markets that I have worked in," King says. "God bless him, he's the greatest." Afternoons at the station are the property of Carl P. Mayfield, another household name in Nashville. Mayfield often led the market during his years as a raucous, ▶

Nashville's SFX Broadcasting Puts Stock in Placing Personalities Before the Music

by Dan Springer

When Steve Hicks made his intention known in 1987 to purchase stand-alone Nashville country station WSIX-FM for \$8.5 million, many of Hicks' colleagues raised an eyebrow.

Some, in response, might just as well as have been singing backup for The Judd's "Mama He's Crazy."

Eight years later, 97.9 WSIX is the top-rated radio station among a market of 26, it has received one NAB Marconi, four Academy of Country Music Awards, the

Country Radio Broadcasters' Humanitarian Station of the Year award and a CMA award. Hicks and his staff might respond to those early deterrents in Music City with a chorus of Trisha Yearwood's "Mr. Radio."

Management team

Hicks, president and COO of SFX Broadcasting, the publicly held entity that owns the station, is quick to place the credit for WSIX's success on award-winning franchise personalities and its management team.

"The basic premise then and now is simple: Build a modern, hip, personality-oriented station that plays country. With some of the best business and air talent in the country, we've done that," Hicks says.

Based on Fall 1994 Arbitron ratings, WSIX commands a 15.9 share in 12+. Publicly traded on NASDAQ, SFX Broadcasting's stock price and revenues have seen a steady increase since the company went public in 1993. As of Jan. 24, the company's stock was trading at an all-time high of \$19 per share; 1994 revenues were an estimated \$60 million.

Formed in 1992 as part of a merger involving Capstar Communications and Command Communications, SFX currently owns and operates eight FMs and three AMs in six geographic regions.

Formats range from CHR to news/talk. Among them: top-rated KRLD-AM in Dallas, WSSL-AM/FM in Greenville/Spartanburg, S.C., WJDS-AM in Jackson, Miss., as well as other success stories in San Diego and Houston.

The company is poised for continuous growth, Hicks says, by engaging the same strategy employed at WSIX: strong on-air personalities.

"In each of our markets, personality plays an important role in the success of our stations," he says. "There is no replacement for great talent, so we sign long-term commitments with our talent, support them in their outside interests—and take out really good insurance policies." ◆



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—Phil Boyce
Program Director, WJR

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Such business acumen was most likely born out of the first steps Hicks took with WSIX in 1987.

"One of the first things that we did was hire a research group to conduct studies and focus groups to determine what the people of Nashville wanted," Hicks explains. "The majority of them kept talking about a guy who had left Nashville radio years before: Gerry House. They said for us to do great, we had to hire him. So we did. We knew he was something special

when there was a gathering of admirers that met him at the airport."

That decision proved to be pivotal. After signing a five-year deal with House and launching extensive direct mail and promotional campaigns, the station went from being, in Hicks' words, the "number eight station in a seven-station market," to number two after its first Arbitron book under new management. Six months later it reached the top spot in 12+ and 25-54—where it has pretty much stayed since.

In addition to House and his morning House Foundation—which is now syndicated through Premiere Radio Networks—WSIX maintains other "top-notch air talent" like Hoss Burns, Carl P. Mayfield & The P Team, David Crane, Hollywood Hendrix and Jami Mayberry.

"We ooze personality 24 hours a day," says WSIX GM John King. In hand, the station inundates the marketplace with high-profile promotional and direct mail campaigns, and well-planned, designed and executed media buys on television, billboards and in print.

An Offer to Radio World Magazine Readers

From John Schad, President, SMARTS Broadcast Systems
PO Box 284, Emmetsburg, IA 50536

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As President of SMARTS Broadcast Systems, I have been involved in the PC digital audio revolution since we installed our first system over 5 years ago.

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I promise you two things. First, this is not a sales pitch for our products. This is an attempt to provide expert guidance in wading through the morass of information on digital audio. If we can mutually see that our products can be of benefit, we will send you our literature, and our sales reps can follow up. Secondly, we won't be degrading the competition. If my company doesn't offer a product that will benefit you, we can try to point you to someone who does.

If you are stymied by the digital world, I can talk to you from the perspective of an owner/manager (I used to own a radio station), or from the perspective of an engineer (when I owned the station, I was also the engineer), or from the vantage point of our current business which pioneered digital audio five years ago, and continues to develop the future of digital technology.

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Call SMARTS toll free at 800-747-6278. International customers can reach us at +712-852-4047. Ask to set an appointment to talk with me, John Schad. We'll find a time that works for both of us, and go from there. We want to learn from you, and you can learn from us. I don't want to bill myself as the "Dear Abby" of the digital world, but I can give you honest information. I look forward to hearing from you.



Circle 78 On Reader Service Card

Looming variable

While these steps certainly go a long way in maintaining SFX's domination in Nashville, one prevailing question still looms as a variable: What if, like many other formats, country begins to erode as the premier sound over the airwaves?

Nothing doing, Hicks says: "Country is here to stay. Before it became a mass appeal format, it was still winning audiences. Even if it were to erode, Nashville will always be a powerful country market as the center of country. It will always be the hottest format as long as the industry is based here."

But just in case, SFX has a potential ace in its back pocket. The company recently completed the purchase of CHR WYHY-FM, a former number one station in Nashville.

"When you are on top, when you are the market leader, it becomes harder and harder to defend your position," Hicks says. "You don't want to get cocky and you try to take steps to protect yourself."

Another ripple in the market's radio topography came with the announcement in January that Gaylord Entertainment, owner of WSM-AM and WSM-FM—the latter of which consistently ranks number two 12+—paid \$3.8 million to purchase news/talk/sports WWTN-FM. While the station posted its highest ratings to date with a 2.5 in Fall Arbitrons, speculation remains that it could become a country complement to WSM.

Whatever the case, Hicks remains confident that WSIX has the edge to maintain its lead.

"While what we play is obviously important, this station is not driven solely by music," he says. "The personalities are so strong that some who listen to the radio are not even necessarily country music fans." 

Dan Springer is vice president and GM of Sound & Stations USA, and a free-lance writer based in Dallas. He covered the predominance of radio businesses in Dallas in the February issue of The Radio World Magazine.

KIIS VP/Director of Marketing Karen Tobin:

“Be Committed, Passionate, But Don’t Forget to Have Fun”



by Scott Slaven

With this issue, *The Radio World Magazine*, in cooperation with Promax, begins a profile series of the nation’s top radio promotions professionals. Each month, we will share the experiences and point of view of a successful executive who helps keep radio in the forefront of the competitive media marketplace.

Promax is an international association for promotion and marketing executives in the electronic media, based in Los Angeles.

Kicking off: Karen Tobin is VP/Director of Marketing at Gannett’s KIIS-FM/AM in Los Angeles, where she has worked since 1987.



Q: How did you get started in the field of promotions?

Well, I certainly didn’t go the same route as most people. I intended to become a veterinarian and received my undergraduate degree in Zoology and Physiology. However, while in veterinary medical school, I lost my father, who was my Rock of Gibraltar.

I took a leave of absence from school and reevaluated my goals. I’ve always loved the arts, theater, marketing—the kinds of classes you don’t take when you’re in veterinary medical school. So I went back and obtained an associ-

ate’s degree in theater production. I got to design light boards and take theater history classes.

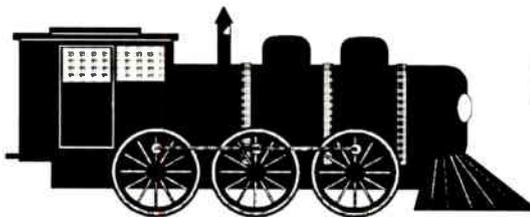
Then one day I saw an ad in the paper that said, “Run away and join the circus!” So I did!

Q: You joined the circus?

Yes, they had a slogan in the ad, “It’s not a job, it’s a lifestyle.” I became marketing director for Circus Vargas after two years. Cliff Vargas, who was one of the great promoters of all time, took me under his wing. He was one of my first mentors, who taught me everything about marketing. ➔

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Q: What did you learn there?

It was great training because I was able to wear different hats. Publicity, cross media and sales promotion and marketing in over 100 markets—every town was different, every market was different.

You know, sometimes you just have to look at things in a different way. Science teaches you that. When I was interning with a vet, I learned that you have to look at the big picture; there isn't one right answer, one treatment. You have to pick the right treatment for that animal. You have to see the forest through the trees.



Q: And what came after the big top?

I went to a promotions company where I gained sales experience; was part owner of a Hispanic agency, where I learned how to manage

daily operations while maintaining and seeking new business at the same time; and then joined KIIS-FM in 1987. I was promoted to vice president in 1992 by Gerry DeFrancesco, who is president of Gannett's radio division

Karen Tobin

Current position: vice president/director of marketing KIIS-FM, Los Angeles

Choice Morsels:

- ▲ 1992, promoted to VP, KIIS, Los Angeles, after joining station in 1987 as director of marketing
- ▲ Taught radio marketing and promotions, UCLA
- ▲ Senior VP, LJC Promotions, a division of Castellanos Latina, a full-service ad agency serving the Hispanic market, L.A.
- ▲ Sold sponsorships for Los Angeles Marathon with Janklow and Associates, a broadcast promotions firm, L.A.
- ▲ VP Marketing, Perry Marshall Advertising, the in-house agency for Circus Vargas, worked in more than 100 markets nationwide
- ▲ Regents Scholar University of California, Davis, Veterinary Medical School
- ▲ Regents Scholar and Phi Beta Kappa at University of California, Davis

Titles:

- ▲ Named Billboard's "Promotion Director of the Year" three times for top 40 radio
- ▲ Network 40's Chrome Promo Director Award for Promotion Director of a Major Market
- ▲ Board member Promax International
- ▲ Member National Promax Radio Committee
- ▲ Served two terms as president of Southern California Chapter of American Women in Radio and Television
- ▲ Received 1994 Chapter Merit Award for exemplary leadership skills

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Circle 64 On Reader Service Card

and another mentor.

It's actually kind of unusual to be promoted to that level in marketing. I always say, I'm a legend in my own shower!—which I stole from KIIS morning legend Rick Dees, the best talent in the USA.

Q: So what is it that draws you to promotions?

It's ever-changing. It's whatever is the hot topic of the day. There is never a dull moment.

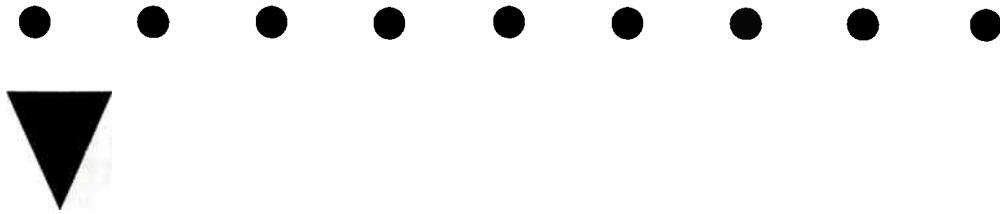
Q: Any suggestions for curing creative block?

I do a couple of things. I walk away from my desk, take a walk down the street or just get in my car and drive. It's important for me to get away from the environment.

Honestly, my best ideas come while I'm in the shower because the phone isn't ringing. And I get a lot of inspiration from my husband, who is also in marketing as a concert promoter and is very supportive, very understanding. Every once in a while, he'll stop me and say, "Okay, Karen, we have to go out on a date."

Q: Give us your definition of a successful promotion.

Obviously, a sales promotion succeeds if it's sales driven—if it has sales quality ➔



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and is a win-win for everybody. But the most important thing is buzz on the street.

Right now, we're doing the "KIIS Cash Call." I was at a restaurant and our waiter found out I was from KIIS. He came over and demanded, "Give me my money!"—which is part of the phrase you say to win. That's when you know it's working, when people are talking about it. That's the beginning.

Of course, the bottom line is ratings. But really, there are no new promotions. The Cash Call is as old as the hills; when I was growing up, an AM station, KFRC, called it "Break the Bank." It's putting a new twist on something old.

Q: What's the biggest mistake a promoter can make?

Forgetting the basics. Sometimes you can make things too complicated. We once had a campaign that was just too hard to explain on the air. We had people calling up, saying, "I don't understand how to play."

You only have a few seconds in radio to hook them. Internally, we like to say that KIIS stands for, "Keep It Irresistibly Simple."

Q: Any words of advice for your promotions colleagues?

Know your station's objective and target demographics. What are you trying to achieve? Answer that question and prioritize from there. In addition, be committed, passionate, but don't forget to have fun.

Also, in broadcasting, we can learn from each other. I call it "multi-dimensional thinking." Don't just learn from radio people. Look around, go outside and see what Nike is doing, what Coke is doing, MTV... We can learn so much from each other.

And since we're still in the shadow of the Super Bowl, I have something to quote from Vince Lombardi. He once said, "The price of success is hard work, dedication to the job at hand and the determination that whether we win or lose, we have applied the best of ourselves to the task at hand." 🌐

Scott Slaven is director of communications for Promax.

calendaR A D I O

..... a comprehensive listing of national and international events

1

Radio Advertising Bureau Radio Sales University, Richmond Marriott, Richmond, Va. Intensive, one-day seminar to sharpen skills of radio salespeople. Hands-on, interactive training from radio vets. \$139 for members. Contact the RAB in New York at 800-722-7355.

1

37th Annual Grammy Awards, Shrine Auditorium, Los Angeles.

1-4

26th Annual Country Radio Seminar, Opryland Hotel and Convention Center, Nashville. Theme this year is "Taking It to the Next Level." Includes panels, presentations and showcases. Contact Dave Nichols at the office of the Country Radio Broadcasters in Tennessee at 615-327-4487. See show preview in this issue.

7

RAB Radio Sales University, Sheraton Portsmouth, Portsmouth, N.H. See March 1 entry for details. Contact the RAB in New York at 800-722-7355.

9

RAB Radio Sales University, The Plaza (Southfield), Detroit. See March 1 entry for details. Contact the RAB in New York at 800-722-7355.

14

Radio License Renewal Seminar, Louisville, Ky. Speakers include NAB attorneys, EEO specialists and outside experts. Contact Christina Griffin in D.C. at 202-775-3511.

15

RAB Radio Sales University, Marriott Syracuse, N.Y. See March 1 entry for details. Contact the RAB in New York at 800-722-7355.

23

National Association of Black-Owned Broadcasters 11th Annual Communications Awards Dinner, Washington, D.C. Contact NABOB in D.C. at 202-463-8970.

30-June 21

Arbitron Spring book

6

Radio Advertising Bureau Radio Sales University, Holiday Inn, Casper, Wyo. Intensive, one-day seminar to sharpen skills of radio salespeople. Hands-on, interactive training from radio vets. \$139 for members. Contact the RAB in New York at 800-722-7355.

10-13

NAB 1995, Las Vegas Convention Center. The usual barrage of new products and ideas will reign at the National Association of Broadcasters' biggest annual industry event. Contact the NAB in Washington, D.C. at 202-429-5409; fax: 202-429-5343. (Future shows are all in Las Vegas: April 15-18, 1996; April 7-10, 1997; April 6-9, 1998; April 19-22, 1999; April 10-13, 2000.)

29-may 2

RAB Spring Board Meeting, Four Seasons Clift, San Francisco. Semi-annual meeting of board members of the Radio Advertising Bureau. Includes committee meetings on membership, marketing, training and education, dues, research, sales and services, finance and national marketing. Contact Celeste Champagne at the RAB in New York at 212-254-4800; fax: 212-254-8713.

We want to know! Please fax event announcements to 703-998-2966; or send to The Radio World Magazine, P.O. Box 1214, Falls Church, VA 22041.

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World Radio History

A Penny for Your Spots...

.....
by Don Kennedy

Keeping Image Front of Mind Is Key for Marketplace Recognition

The best programming in the spectrum isn't going to help if listeners don't know loud and clear not only that you're there, but who you are, where you are and what you play. Whenever your audience is tuned in, your image must be positioned front of mind, at all times.

As general manager of Atlanta's WKLS (now 96 Rock) in the early days of the FM band, we went through our share of image building before we became an established

force in the marketplace. To become a leader, however, we had to learn a few lessons in humility.

Lesson one: A local electronics store agreed to advertise exclusively on our station. To help store owners pinpoint the effectiveness of their advertising, we agreed to place a pocket easel card on counters by the registers in their stores.

"Where did you hear about Blank Electronics?" it said, alongside a list of the top four FM stations in the city. Keep in

mind, ours was the only station Blank used for radio advertising. In our survey, however, the oldest FM with the most familiar call letters came in first. We were third. That told us something.

Lesson two: One of our minor investors in those early FM days was a pompous, self-absorbed attorney who liked being part of the "show biz" but was not involved whatsoever in day-to-day operations.

The best-known station

I happened to overhear a conversation he had with a fellow attorney. "Oh yes," he said, his chest getting a trifle larger and his finger rising to punctuate the point. ➔

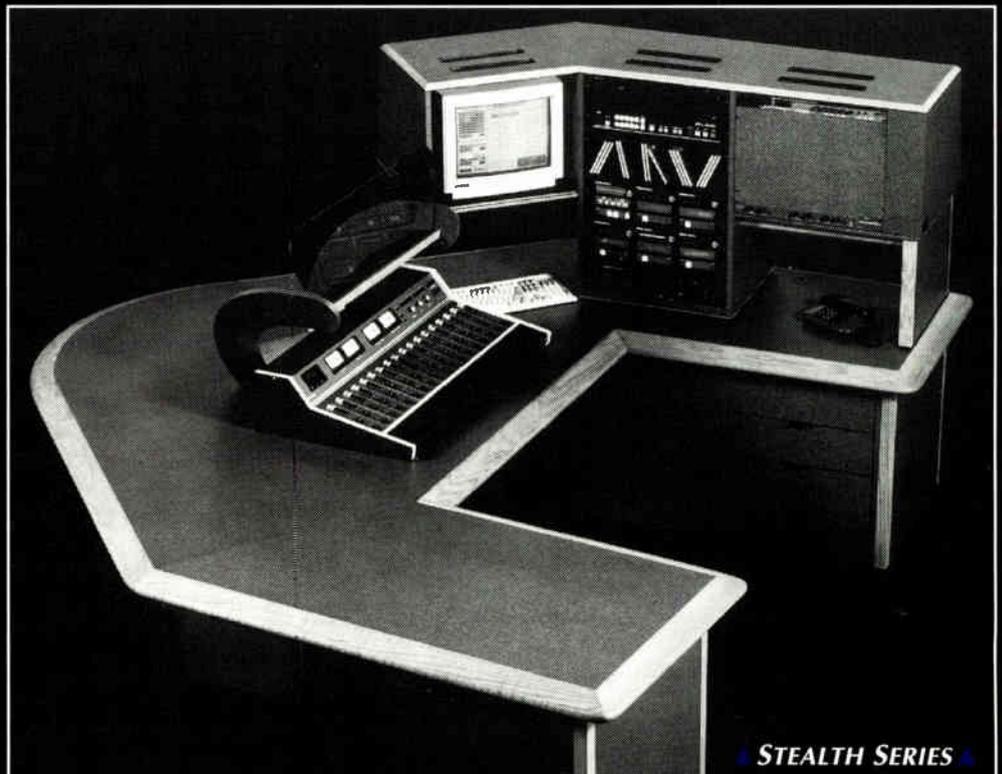
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World Radio History

"I'm a major stockholder in..." the best-known station, not ours.

Same lesson: We needed to be better known.

Overlook the basics

While these incidents occurred years ago at the infancy of FM popularity, the point is as true now as it was then. It's a basic tenet, but sometimes we overlook the basics in our day-to-day attention to the details of immediate business. Your image must be as clear to listeners as it is in the minds of your promotions people.

Here's what we did to overcome our image problem. As with most stations at the beginning, we had plenty of air time and very little capital, so we traded out billboards around the city with our call letters and verbal on-air logo repeated in print: "Easy listening, familiar music."

We also rededicated the station when it became the first stereo outlet in the city, circulating a mailout with a picture of the mayor talking into our mic with the call letters on the flag.

Never mind that we had to take the mic to the mayor's office to get the picture. We ran his brief comments (under :60) every

couple hours on the air and sent every ad agency and business we could think of a copy of the picture.

The card was the traditional 4x6-inch postcard size, with the legend, "FM is growing in Atlanta," along with the call letters and logo line. We then mailed a series of five progressively larger cards, the last one nearly as large as the front of a tabloid newspaper.

You've earned your buck

Mail seemed to work, hitting a specific group we wanted to sell, so we next sent a letter to our list with a penny attached, asking, "A penny for your thoughts" (corny, but it got attention). We followed it with a letter, nickel attached, saying, "Your time is worth more now that you're acquainted with our station," along with a key fact about the station's salability.

Next came a dime, a quarter, a half dollar and finally a dollar bill, each time with an additional fact about the effectiveness of advertising on the station. "By golly, you've earned your buck," the last letter said, followed by a phone call for an appointment. Few turned us down; they were curious, if nothing else.

Consistency is important. Always maintain a similar style, with the same sell line and

keep using it, in print, television and on the air. Because we're so close to the repetitive use of such material, we think the audience gets too much of it. Chances are they don't, but even if they do, they'll certainly remember it—which ultimately gets your call letters checked on the pocket easel card at Blank Electronics and gets your investor bragging about involvement in your outlet.

Of course, none of this can take the place of excellent programming. When listeners do tune in, they have to like what they hear and want to stay. Nor can it take the place of an aggressive, imaginative sales force. But it's absolutely key that the agency person and business owner are familiar, even intimate, with your call letters, your station and your image in the market.

With careful planning and coordination between your programming, promotions and sales departments, you can achieve that familiarity. 

Don Kennedy is president of the Atlanta-based Crawford Houston Group, which syndicates the weekly "Big Band Jump" to nearly 200 radio affiliates nationwide.

He was a former partner/president and GM of WKLS-FM in Atlanta.

Some listeners like Newt...

Some listeners like Bill...

BE GREEDY!!

The Michael Reagan Show

"Mike has a great major market track record and he's better connected than any host!!"

San Francisco - KSFO - Jack Swanson, OM

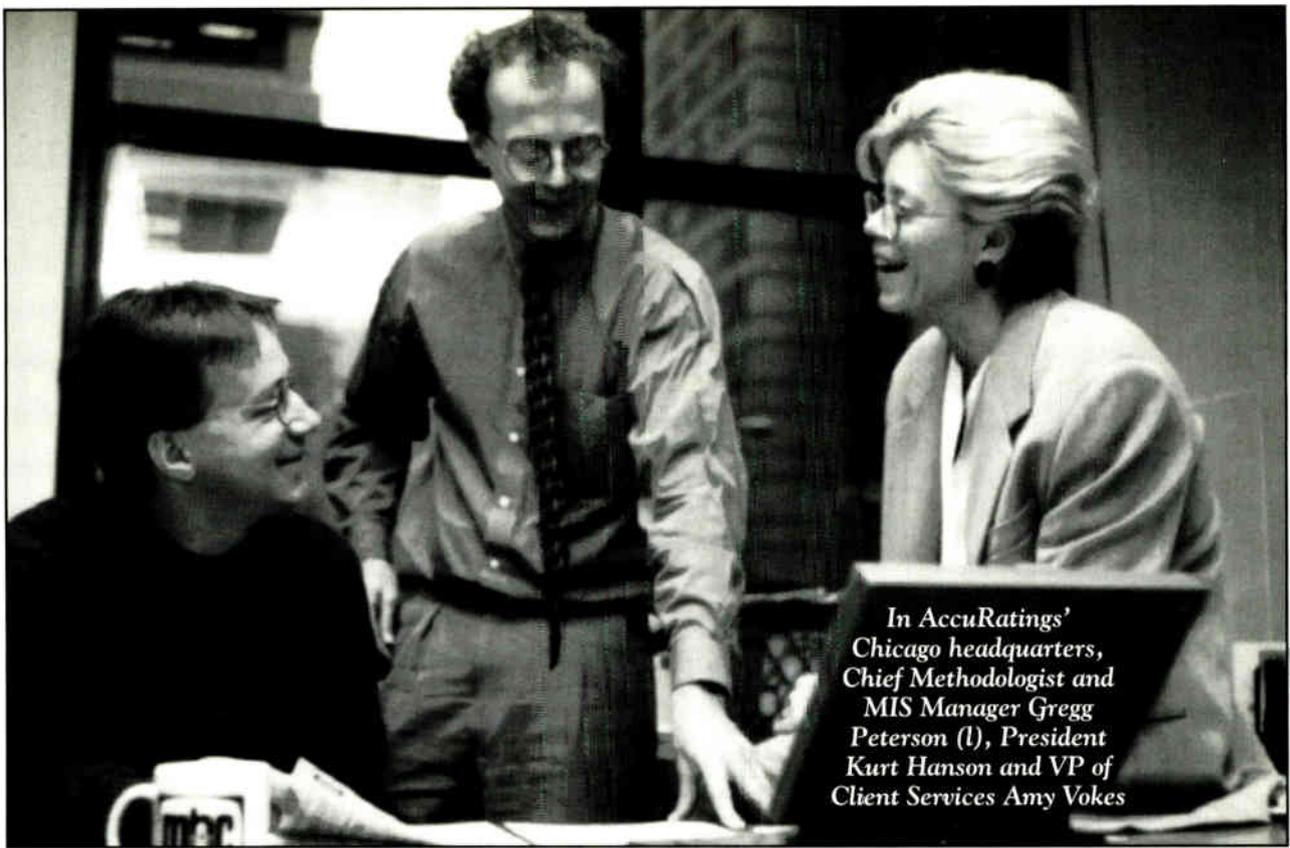
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SERVICES

Can AccuRatings Measure Up?

by Cara Jepsen

Three-Year-Old Ratings Service Provides Qualitative Info It Says Arbitron Can't Match

It's not earthshaking news that working women in Chicago listen to WGCI-FM, that modern rock WKQX listeners watch MTV or that all-news WBBM-AM partisans also watch CNN.

But thanks to AccuRatings, radio stations and ad agencies in Chicago and 40 markets also know what beer their listeners drink, what neighborhoods they live in and what kind of cars they drive.

Like Arbitron, AccuRatings is a quarterly ratings book. But unlike Arbitron,

AccuRatings provides single-source qualitative research on listeners based on six-minute phone interviews rather than log books. And in today's world of target marketing and specialization, some stations testify that AccuRatings' qualitative research is the ideal tool for pinpointing radio audiences.

"The fact that radio is fragmented into 35 or 40 or 50 different formats means there's an ideal radio station for almost everybody's taste," says Accu-

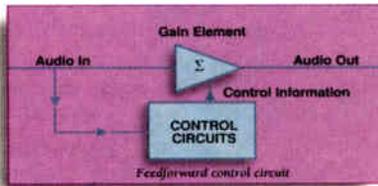
Ratings President Kurt Hanson. More consumer choices mean that radio, in turn, is a really targetable medium for advertisers.

"You can zero in and reach almost everybody, and you can pick and choose little 2 and 3 percent segments of the population for your advertising message," Hanson says. "For example, if you have a message aimed at women in their 20s, you can make a four or five station buy and effectively reach most of your

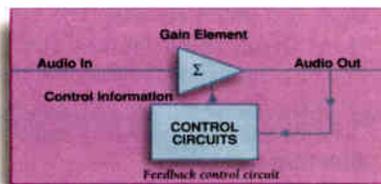
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In feedforward dynamics control, the input audio signal to the gain-control circuits is monitored and, if necessary, adjusted before the gain element. The resulting control information is then "fed forward" to the gain element. This produces dB-linear gain control at a consistent ratio that remains constant regardless of the amount of processing employed.



Feedback systems, found in most other broadcast processors, have "sweet-spot" windows that narrow with the changing of ratios as the amount of processing

varies. This is why most, if not all, feedback processors develop a thick, dense, mushy, and unnatural quality to their sound as they are driven deeper into gain reduction. With the Unity 2000i, you have a

system that will maximize your audio quality and fulfill your competitive requirements. It's a difference that you and your listeners can hear.



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conceptual research and behavior research.

"For years one of the biggest frustrations when working with clients was that we had constructed a really comprehensive program of ongoing research for them, and the station would be going nicely and making gains in audience. Then they'd go down a half a point or a point with Arbitron," Hanson says. "It would contradict everything we had learned with repeated studies using much larger sample sizes.

"The client would often ask us to explain why they went down in Arbitron. Quite often we would find that they hadn't actually lost audience at all. We speculated that it was simply a margin of error wobble on Arbitron's part."

Then when Birch went under in 1991, "there was a six-month period right after where it became clear that radio didn't like the fact that Arbitron was in a monopoly position. Our clients were telling us this," Hanson says. "We thought we could offer an alternative to Arbitron that would incorporate large sample sizes, which would reduce the book-to-book wobbles.

Strategic Radio Research's experience was in doing weekly updates to clients, so Hanson figured this could be part of the approach. "We thought we could

wanted it.

"What killed Birch as an alternative to Arbitron is when they wanted to be in every market in America at the same time. Our approach was to design it affordably and roll out only in markets where we could break even or make a small profit."

A couple hundred

When AccuRatings was launched in 1992, it surveyed just three markets: Chicago, South Bend, Ind. and San Diego. Now it has "a couple hundred" stations and a thousand agencies subscribing in more than 40 markets and eight of the top 10 metros. As a general rule, the company adds three or four markets per book.

Hanson has opened regional offices in New York and Los Angeles, and there are plans for one in the southeast. AccuRatings has 50 full-time employees and 150 part-time interviewers who work out of the Chicago phone center.

"It's good for us and for radio in general," Hanson says. "We are putting pressure on Arbitron to improve service and keep a lid on pricing. We are giving stations

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Strategic Radio Research

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do it at a really competitive price, which would apply price pressure on Arbitron. And based on our experience, we thought we could provide an easier-to-read, easier-to-use report. When you put all these things together, you come up with AccuRatings," he says.

Core management team

The service was developed by a core management team of Strategic Radio Research. It built on existing software and rolled AccuRatings out only as fast as markets

an alternative set of numbers to sell when they have a wobble in Arbitron. We help advertisers see what an excellent target advertising media radio has been. Programmers can see which experiments work and which don't. It seems like a win-win situation to me." 

Cara Jepsen is a staff writer at New City in Chicago and media editor of the Illinois Entertainer. Her work has also appeared in Request Magazine and the Chicago Sun-Times.

Jepsen wrote the Chicago Market Watch for The Radio World Magazine in October 1994.

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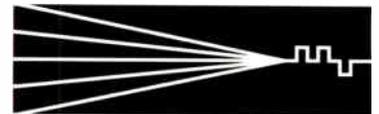
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need adequate debt service and collateral coverage and for subordinated investments we need excellent growth opportunities."

Important distinction

Another important distinction between SBICs, SSBICs and traditional lenders is the interest rate that is charged. As a general rule, venture capitalists charge a higher rate of interest than traditional lenders.

Since they are prohibited by the Small Business Administration from charging interest rates beyond their cost of money plus a fixed margin, Suarez estimates that interest rates generally range from 8 percent to 14 percent on investments ranging from \$50,000 to \$1 million.

You might also expect venture capitalists to take a greater interest in how stations are run. Frequently, SBICs and SSBICs are familiar with the broadcasting industry in ways not commonly found with traditional lenders. Therefore, detailed market analysis and suggestions regarding marketing and format are not uncommon.

SBICs and SSBICs grew in popularity during periods when financing capital was scarce for modest transactions. Since SBICs and SSBICs get much of their money from the Small Business Administration, they provided a way for small broadcasters to get access to SBA funds during a time when SBA rules prohibited broadcasters from being eligible for SBA loans and loan guarantees.

However, last year, the SBA repealed its longstanding "opinion molder rule" that made radio broadcasters ineligible for SBA loan guarantees. As such, radio broadcasters may now apply directly to the SBA for loan guarantees.

Rule change

It is uncertain how this rule change will impact SBICs and SSBICs. It is possible that this new accessibility to SBA funding will make SBICs and SSBICs less attractive to potential borrowers who would rather seek financing with an SBA guarantee from their local lender at lower interest rates and without the need to grant stock options.

But Duane McKnight of Syndicated Communications Venture Partners (SYNCOM) notes that venture capital firms like SYNCOM deal primarily as subordinated lenders and/or equity investors and that there has traditionally been a void at the senior lender level. He believes the repeal of SBA's opinion molder rule will have little or no impact and could conceivably fill that void and therefore increase the number of transactions in which venture capital firms can participate.

Moreover, Preston with Allied Capital Financial notes that SBICs and SSBICs are not bound by the lending caps that limit SBA guarantees. Currently, SBA guarantees cannot exceed \$750,000.

McKnight sees a bright future for radio. "Radio is a good business for the foreseeable future," he says. "There is nothing in the communications industry, including television or cable, that can displace radio. With increasing numbers of advertisers looking to radio, the future looks bullish."

Because of a lack of familiarity with SBICs, SSBICs and other privately funded venture capital groups, many broadcasters have been reluctant to look to them for

capital. However, SBICs and SSBICs account for many of the best-known radio success stories among small and minority-owned broadcasters and, in times when sources of capital had all but completely dried up, they were frequently the only game in town. 

Frank Montero is a communications attorney with the Washington, D.C. law firm Fisher Wayland Cooper Leader and Zaragoza, L.L.P. He is a regular correspondent for The Radio World Magazine.

Contact the firm regarding finance and FCC-related matters at 202-775-5662; or fax: 202-296-6518.



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(See also "E-Mail Yields Instant Interaction With Colleagues, Clients and Customers," *Management Journal*, *The Radio World Magazine*, January, 1995.)

Lessons from Front-Line Companies: Fact-Based Management Creates Path to Desired Business Objectives

Reaching a set of desired goals and objectives efficiently and effectively is a primary goal of every business owner and manager today. This is especially true for America's new local multi-station radio owners and operators looking to gain a significant foothold among select demographic groups or listeners, and among select advertising customers.

Enter fact-based management, a structure in which an organization or company's leadership aligns its goals around a common set of customer-driven objectives.

According to Kerry Shapansky, former director of client services for the Xerox Consulting Group in Toronto—an independent business management training unit of Xerox Canada—fact-based management is tying every person's mandate in an organization to an "agreed-upon set of objectives."

For radio, this applies to a group of commonly owned stations, a network and/or a national representation company or companies under the same ownership.

Shapansky details this management philosophy in the January 1995 edition of *CMA Magazine*, published by the Society of Management Accountants of Canada. He notes that "no organization possesses the resources—time, money, people—required to address all the things that they would like to change at once. Determining the 'vital few' actions that will positively impact customers and the bottom line, provides a focus for an agenda of change."

Bearing in mind that change is a constant variable in the broadcasting industry as new information technology systems streamline the programming and advertising processes, the proper business alignment for a station has become extremely critical.

This means providing employees with appropriate training for process improvement, such as problem-solving skills to enhance customer satisfaction through the development of solutions as well as work-group communication.

In essence, a fact-based management approach incorporates the strategies of the customer-first and team-work management models addressed in the February installment of the *Management Journal* and links it to business excellence. It is a results-driven philosophy. Fact-based management is now an integral part of Xerox's worldwide business strategy for the 1990s.

Says Shapansky, "If an organization is aligned properly, (then) its people have the skills and knowledge to get

the facts, communicate them, use them to improve business processes and then measure the impact of their decisions."

Employees and managers need to apply an improvement process to their own work situations and understand the importance of customer satisfaction (For radio sales executives, it's the advertiser or media buyer; for radio programmers, it's the listener) and how it is connected with their work. In this way, Shapansky says, everyone in the organization "shares a common philosophy and approach to business excellence."

(Editor's Note: Xerox also has a business management training company in the U.S., Xerox Quality Services, based in Rochester, N.Y.)

Trendformation: Radio's Entrepreneurial Opportunities for the '90s

During the 1980s, radio broadcasting witnessed the rise of a new breed of station and network owners—that of emerging entrepreneurs who helped to grow the industry.

After the economic credit crunch of the early 1990s and radio's financial rebound in this new era of station duopolies and ownership consolidation, the industry is once again bracing for the next wave of entrepreneurs.

This time, however, more entrepreneurial opportunities will be occurring within the advancing technologies for radio. They include harnessing the capabilities of the Radio Broadcast Data Systems (RBDS) subcarrier technology, which will be radio's own information super-highway; database design; digital studio systems; digital broadcasting; and the initiation of business and program alliances with foreign media companies.

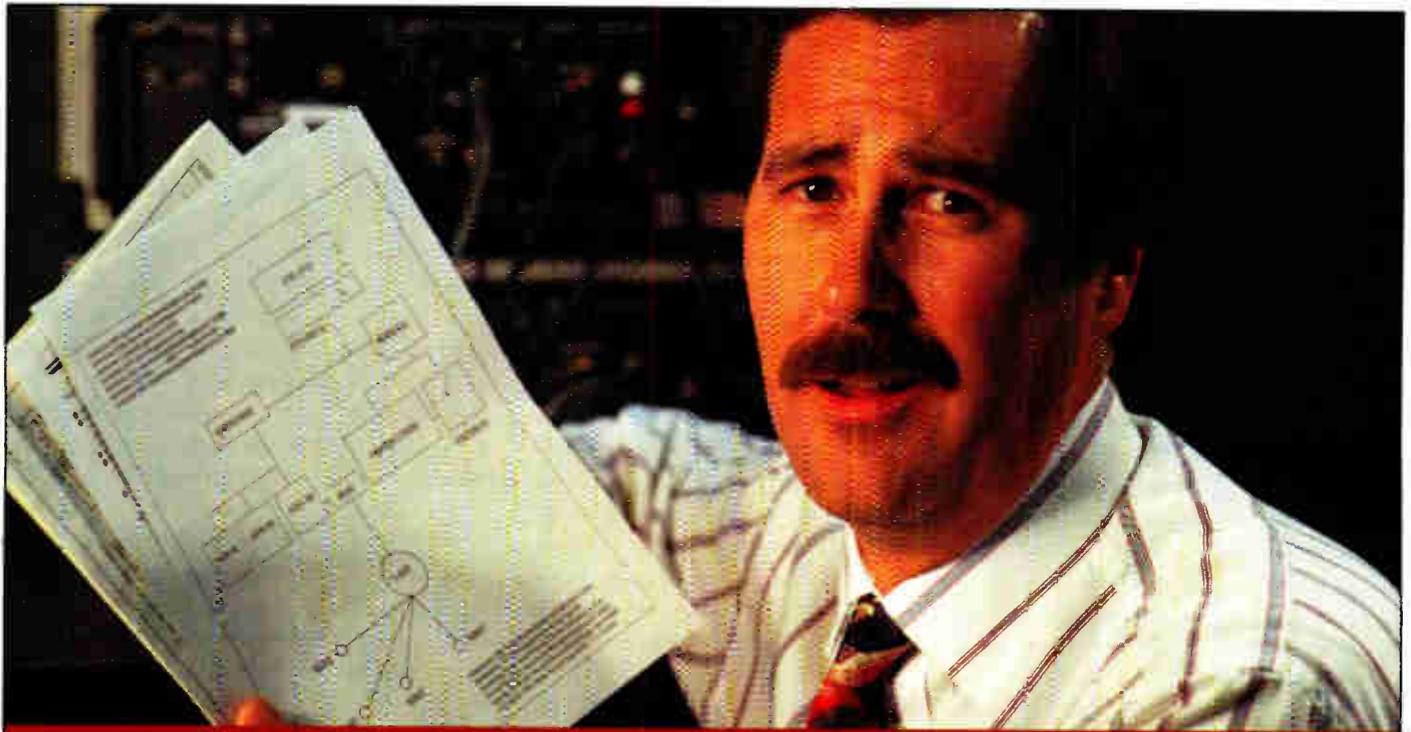
With that in mind, *Management Journal* reviewed a new three-year study conducted by Purdue University's Krannert Graduate School of Management on early predictors for new business success. In essence, the study, "Initial Human and Financial Capital as Predictors of New Venture Performance," concluded that success and growth were more likely in companies started by entrepreneurs with higher education levels, greater capital and industry know-how.

The study's findings also underscored the advantages to business partners. "There are many benefits associated with having partners," says Arnold Cooper, professor of management at the Krannert School and co-author of the study. "More financial capital, varied expertise and more management experience are all essential."

Vincent M. Ditingo is a business writer and media consultant, as well as an adjunct assistant professor of communications at St. John's University in New York.

He authored the Focal Press book, The Remaking Of Radio, which addresses the restructuring of the radio industry during the 1980s and early 1990s.

Management Journal appears monthly in The Radio World Magazine



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This (Was) a Test... of Patience

by Gary Timm

New EAS System Designed to Simplify Broadcast Emergency Regs—Really!

On Jan. 28, 1995, the FCC made history as the first stages of a replacement for the well-tread Emergency Broadcast System (EBS) became law.

While you're free to review the commission's 127-page document containing these new rules—along with an extensive explanation of their implementation—the fol-

lowing summary outlines the highlights of that document in rather simplified form.

Foremost, the only change the FCC is making in 1995 is in shortening the current EBS tone. By July 1, 1995, your station's EBS decoders must be modified to react more quickly, activating after receiving only three to four seconds of EBS tone. In addition, you have the option to modify encoders to cut the 20- to 25-second tone you now broadcast weekly to only eight seconds—yeah! These modifications require only a minor component change in most EBS units.

By July 1, 1996, broadcast stations will be required to install the new EAS encoder and decoder. TV stations, meanwhile, will be required to have a means of visually broadcasting the data from incoming EAS alerts. Cable TV will be required to follow the same rules as TV stations, but not until July 1, 1997.

The one-year span from July 1, 1996, to July 1, 1997, is dubbed by the FCC as a "debugging" period. During this time, the old EBS equipment must remain installed and working, along with the new EAS gear. Alerts for that one-year period will be received by both systems as a way to verify that the new EAS gear is working properly. On July 1, 1997, the old EBS equipment may be removed... but wait, you may want to keep it. Read on.

The cost

By now, you're probably feeling pretty good that you'll no longer have to deal with 20+ seconds of test tone that often summon listeners to turn the dial. No doubt, though, you're wondering just how much you're going to end up paying for this privilege. Actually, it's surprisingly reasonable.

Estimates for a combined encoder/decoder are: low-end unit—\$600-\$1,000; medium-priced (more sophisticated)—\$1,500-\$2,500. These projections are from manufacturer comments received by the FCC. Mass production will hopefully bring costs down.

There are ways to affect your own cost savings. First, co-owned/co-located stations

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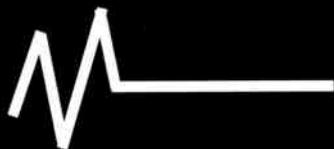
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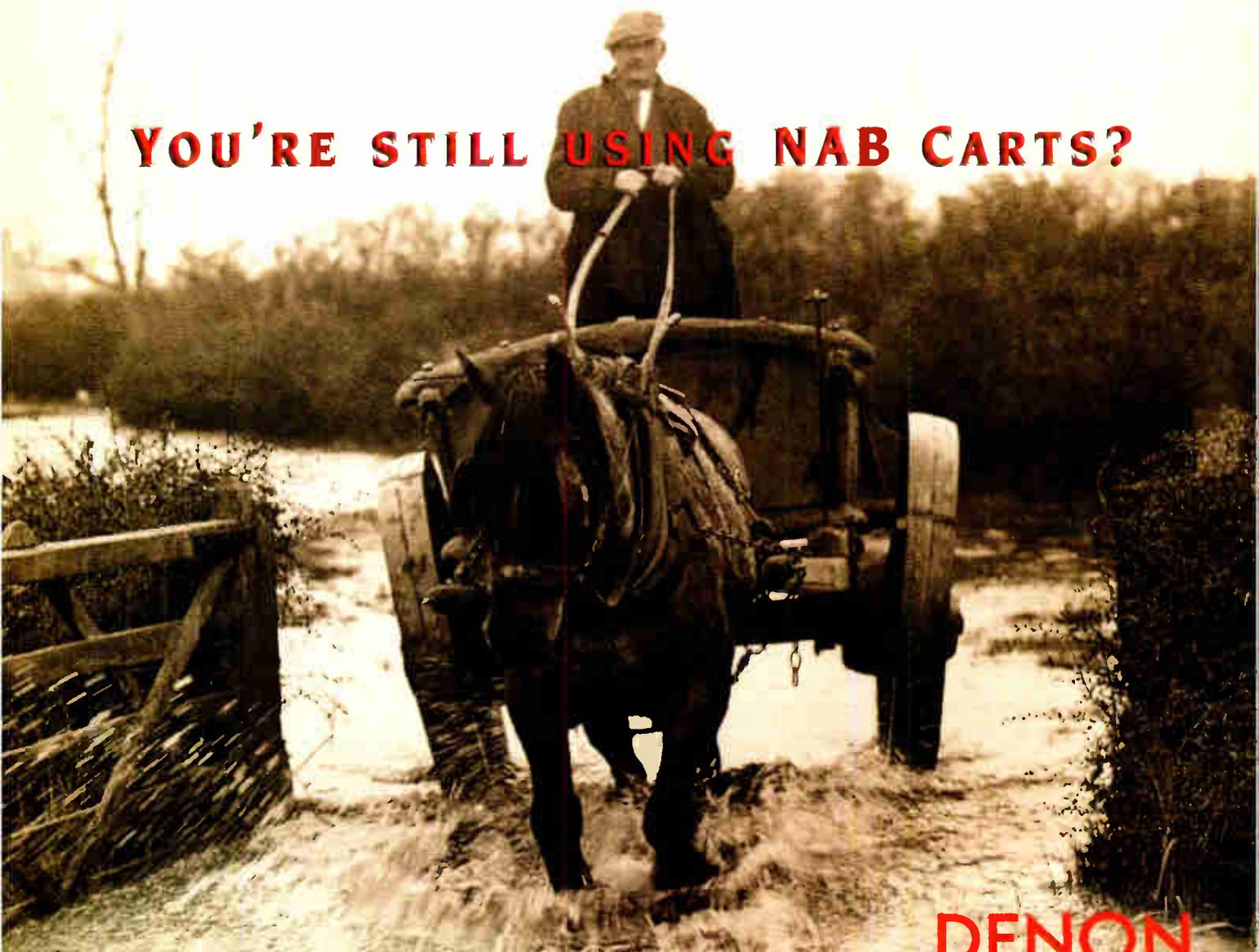
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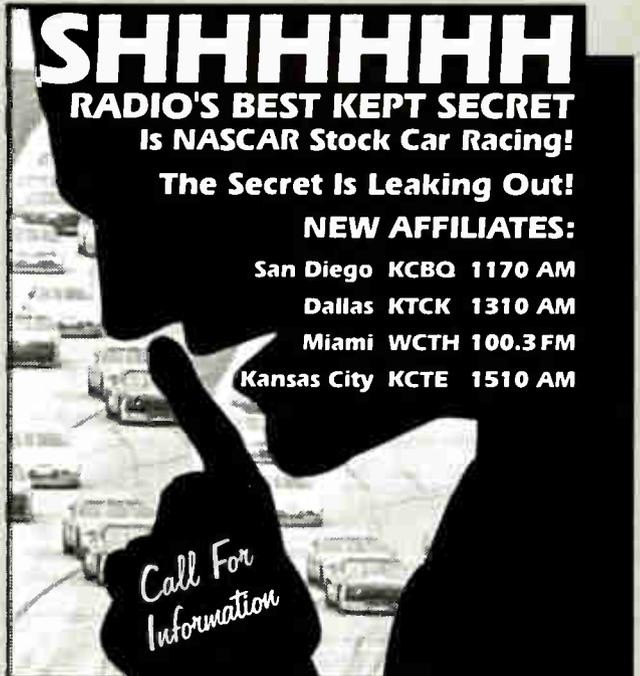
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are permitted to share one encoder/decoder. Second, you may use part of your existing EBS gear to perform new EAS functions.

Requirements of the new system are: the ability to encode and decode the new EAS digital signal (requires new equipment); generate the eight-second "old EBS" attention signal (your existing gear already does that); and monitor two EAS alert sources (your old gear has one receiver already—you will need to acquire a second monitor. The type depends on how your state chooses to distribute its EAS network).

Perhaps purchasing a "stripped-down" version at first, and upgrading to new components as your old EBS gear wears out, would ease the initial financial burden. The FCC's EAS office has no problem with you using the old gear as long as it continues to meet specifications.

Local, state, national

All radio, TV and cable TV operators must participate in the national-level EAS, except those that request and obtain from the FCC a new "Non-participating National (NN) Authorization." Participation at the state and local levels continues to be voluntary for all stations, as it was with EBS. As

before, even "non-participating" stations may participate in the state or local area EAS without prior approval.

The EAS encoder can "pass on" decoded alerts, or create its own. The digital EAS signal it puts out will be heard on the air, and will sound similar to the "bleeps" that some radio networks now use. The EAS digital signal identifies the sender, type, length and county location of every EAS alert sent.

The EAS decoder will have two modes for reacting to an incoming EAS alert: manual and automatic. In manual mode, it signals your operator, who then makes the decision whether or not to air the alert. In the automatic mode, you pre-program the decoder to react to only the alerts you choose. If it receives one of your chosen alerts, it interrupts your programming to put the alert on the air.

The EAS system sends an "end-of-message" signal after the alert, returning your programming to normal. Using automatic mode will release remote-controlled stations from the requirement of having someone to monitor for alerts, as with the old EBS system, something broadcasters have requested for years.

With this automatic feature, the commis-

sion has released a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking regarding unattended operation. Comments and reply comments were wrapped up in early February.

Cry wolf

The new EAS minimizes one of the other primary problems with the EBS, the "cry wolf" syndrome. First, since the digital code identifies the county of an alert, stations can weed out the alerts that aren't for their area.

In addition, when consumer alert receivers become available, the public will be able to program their decoders for alerts affecting only their area. The public should hear a lot fewer "false alarms."

Secondly, the attention signal that precedes real alerts will no longer be used for the regular weekly test. In fact—you're going to like this—the new weekly EAS test, which doesn't even use a voice message—just the digital "bleeps"—lasts only a total of 10.5 seconds, including a one-second pause going into and out of the test!

The attention signal and a short announcement will run only once

a month. All stations in a given area must run this monthly test within a pre-determined 15-minute window on test day. This will eliminate listeners dialing around and hearing the tone on different stations at different times throughout the week, leading them to feel that they hear the tone "all the time."

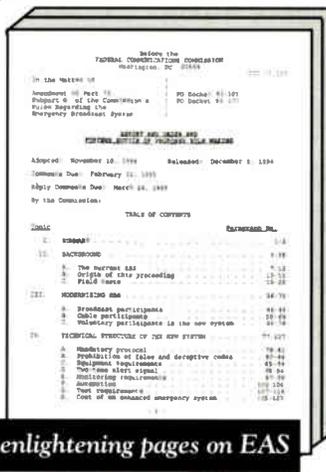
Foreign-language stations, under the new rules, can use their primary language for all announcements, including all national, state and local area tests and activations. No English announcement is required. In addition, now that the new rules have become law, these stations may begin doing the current weekly EBS test script in their primary language.

More detail

Those are the highlights. If you're interested in more detail, I will provide you a copy of my "The New EAS Made EASy." Write me c/o WTMJ-AM, P.O. Box 693, Milwaukee, WI 53201, and enclose a SASE.

You can contact the FCC's EAS office in Washington at 202-418-1220. ☎

Gary Timm is chairman of the Wisconsin State Emergency Communications Committee and has served as the Southeast Wisconsin Area EBS chair since 1981.





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Pam Shane
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“Every format has ebbs and tides. Is country radio riding its highest wave yet?”



Jay Albright
General Manager
BP Consulting Group, Seattle

There's a stall in country shares and it's stimulating lots of metaphors. As the GM at one of our stations told me, "The car's not as exciting as it was when it was new."

Now, *The Radio World Magazine* asks about an ebb. Our metaphor: High tide is over, but the tide's not out. Country is at a plateau, but not ready to plummet.

We've been calling 1995 the year for consolidation. The rush to play new music has caught up with the radio industry. Country audiences want to keep up, but more than anything, they want familiarity. Our research from all parts of the U.S. and Canada shows songs from a year or two back are the most important songs country radio can play.

There's no call for old music generally, but there's considerable appeal for specific older songs that combine strong lyrics and core country artists.

The trends that brought country radio into the mainstream are still factors today—basic values and the backlash to the 1980s. Those trends make country the soundtrack to peoples' lives.

The question about cycles and tides is appropriate, however, because the boom is over for country. To continue the tides analogy: There is no indication that country faces low tide. Shares will not drop back to the pre-Garth levels. The size of the country pie will remain larger than it was in the mid-'80s.

Stations with marketplace and format heritage will do just fine. They'll mix the most familiar songs with the right new sounds to create an exact balance. Nonetheless, expect continued slow erosion of country shares.

Judging Fall 1994 Arbitrons, it appears that the country radio format is down very slightly from 1993 audience levels. Don't misunderstand—country is still in a very strong position, with an average national share of 12.7 percent.

But it certainly does appear that new formatic choices like '70s, alterative/new rock, and in some places, reinvigorated CHR and AC, have the capacity to erode country's time-spent-listening, cume and AQH audience.

Heightened competition is also taking its toll; listeners have a choice of two or three country FMs in almost every city in North America. It's shrinking even winning stations' exclusive cume audience, a measure of listener loyalty.

We believe that there are currently two viable formatic approaches that can do very well against a broad-based 25-54 target, one centered between 30 and 50, the other focused between 20 and 40.

The "target 39" approach is 30 percent gold, 33 percent current and 37 percent recurrent; 18 percent of all golds are from the '80s. Only one in 20 songs is a new current and no album cuts are used.

The younger target has a smaller library by at least 10-15 percent, meaning a tighter playlist with higher current and recurrent category turnovers; 80 percent of the music is currents and recurrents; 97 percent of the station's gold library comes from the '90s; one in 10 songs played is new music or album cuts.

Other difference: The younger approach is slightly higher energy, ballads more readily fit the 30-50 target approach; sound coding and song types are almost identical; 66 percent of library titles are classed as core/mainstream in sound, 26 percent are "twangy" and 9 percent were categorized as pop/AC in style. Interestingly, the average length of the mainstream library song is one second longer than the younger target. In 1995, the average country hit is 3:16.

A clue to the positioning fragmentation that is also occurring is provided by position statements now playing: CJJR, Vancouver: "Vancouver's only radio station playing fresh new music..."; KNIX, Phoenix: "Today's country and all-time favorites..."; KZLA, Los Angeles: "Just because we play Garth's latest doesn't mean we forget Garth's greatest..." (used as a separator between Garth's current hit and an oldie); KWJJ, Portland: "Better country, hotter country..."



PROGRAMMING PROFILE

It's Enough to Keep You Up at Night

by Frank Beacham

WCBS-FM Veteran Max Kinkel Turns Overnights into Gold

East side, west side, all around the BIGGG town... New York, New Jersey, Connecticut... This is the Max Man... Max Kinkel on "All Night Radio"... WCBS-FM....

It's 2 a.m. and Max Kinkel is as wired as the lights on nearby Times Square. Once inside the high security bunker of a studio

complex at CBS's "Black Rock" headquarters in Manhattan, there is no sense of night or day.

The mood is all business—show business, that is. Max Kinkel, 47, a quarter-century veteran of big city radio, is playing to the largest all-night audience in the world.

There are 4.5 million people working

during the night in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, the largest radio audience in the world. Kinkel, who regularly competes first in his time period, hoasts over two million cumulative listeners each week.

"In essence, I have three different audiences," he says. "You've got people coming off of working 4 p.m. to midnight. Then you've got the people working from midnight to 8 a.m. and then you have the people getting up at 4:15 in Fairfield County, Conn., that have to do that commute for an hour and 10 minutes into New

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When spots, promos, PSAs, or any other digital audio events are recorded, they're immediately playable in **all** your Scott System air studios. Nobody wastes time carrying carts down the hall or redubbing spots for additional stations.

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York City.”

Though the pulse of the city slows in the wee hours, there's constant activity in some unexpected quarters. Take the line of seven limos with drivers that wait throughout the night in front of the “Black Rock” building. These cars are instant transportation for lawyers who come and go at one of the city's 24-hour-a-day law firms located in the CBS building.

“This city doesn't sleep,” Kinkel says. “There are people down on Wall Street right now trading with Japan. We are less than a half hour away from London opening up. That's what the attorneys are doing. That's why people love working this time

of the night. They can come in like I do with jeans on and they don't have to wear the suits. And they get paid a premium. Let's keep this secret going!”

What happened last night, man? Good gracious. Looks like the Knicks need some surgery. Pat Riley is probably sitting there saying I've got to connect the dots and make this picture work.

Twenty seconds to go before the buzzer and here's Armon Gilliam... whoof... I don't believe these Knickerbockers lost. What's going on here? I want it to stopppppppp!

Kinkel adjusts his ancient Kloss Pro 4AA

headset. It's falling apart, held together only by some aging Scotch tape. The station is searching high and low to find a replacement.

“Bruce Morrow and I are the only two old dogs that still like these things,” Kinkel says lovingly of the ancient cans. “They sound great and work perfect.”

But when the conversation turns to a question that uses the phrase “late night shift,” Kinkel becomes vexed. “You use the word ‘shift.’ I don't do shifts. You know who does shifts? People who work hard for a living. The guy who is working midnight to 8, gets a 20-minute coffee break and half hour for lunch—he's working a shift.

“I can't really prep my show. I walk in here. I yank stuff out of the newspapers and use it for tidbits here and there, but I don't rely on it. I work improv comedy with people on the phones. I play off the moment. We hit and we run and we move and I'm in and out of the music.”

Kinkel expresses amazement that so many in and out of radio don't understand that the job of a successful disc jockey is one of entertainer.

“I started out in show business (as a singer/musician) and that's exactly what this still is,” he says. “I find it mind boggling when I talk with kids at schools and I ask them who wants to be in show business. A few of them raise their hands. Those are exactly the ones that are going to go on to success in this business. The rest of them don't understand what a radio show is. Radio is the original mass medium of show business. All your great stage stars, like Benny, Hope, Crosby, Abbott and Costello, worked on radio.”

Petland Discounts is giving you a free hamster. How 'bout one of those furry little critters... right there... there you go. Look at that little guy. He's right here in the studio, right on my desk here.

Wait a minute! That's not coffee that spilled there. Wait a minute! Wait a minute, little guy! Maybe he's excited. Petland Discounts—giving a free hamster, a parakeet, an iguana or tropical fish with selected purchases... .

When Kinkel started his All Night Show more than a dozen years ago, he had one Crazy Eddie electronics commercial in the entire program lineup. Now, there are a wide range of spots each night, many ad-libbed with the help of a fact sheet. Kinkel considers many of his sponsors personal friends and socializes with them regularly.

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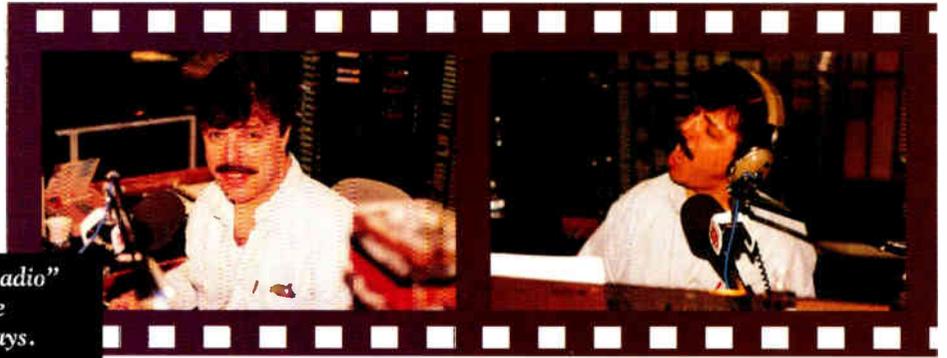
late night franchise, Kinkel says, goes to Joe McCoy, WCBS-FM program director. McCoy and Kinkel come from a proud radio fraternity that formed years ago in what's called the Drake era.

"Bill Drake used to be president of RKO programming," Kinkel says. "Back in the old days there were great RKO stations in New York, Boston, Detroit, Los Angeles and San Francisco. These stations created a genre of radio—the Boss jocks and that

style. In the '60s and '70s they owned the country. I was a Drake jock."

While other New York stations were

writing off the late night hours, Joe McCoy set out to make a success of the time period.



Max Kinkel's "All Night Radio" airs on WCBS-FM live from 2-5:30 a.m. weekdays.

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"Other people are looking down the road five minutes," Kinkel says. "McCoy is looking down 10 years. He wanted to own this time period and now he owns it. Five a.m. is the hardest broadcast hour of the day in any metropolitan city, but you are talking about New York, number one in the world.

"At 5 a.m., your upscale demographics—the people you want listening to you—are accessing news and information. They are going to dip in and out. What you've got to do is grab at least one, maybe two quarter hours out of the hour."

To demonstrate how upscale the 5 a.m. audience is, Kinkel reviews his spot log. Gone are the small businesses.

"Twenty-two minutes past five in the morning, I have an American Express commercial," he notes. "I have others like Mercedes-Benz and Lexus... all the top lines. These convert into big-time dollars. A lot of stations write off the night hours. They don't realize that they're blowing it."

Kinkel's opinion is supported by Chris Gable, president of Chris Gable Broadcast Services, a consultancy in Gretna, Penn. "It's really a shame that a lot of stations write off the late night because you have a lot of folks available to you," he says. "That audience is a combination of morning drive, mid-day and afternoon drive all wrapped up into one.

"The only thing is, they live on the wrong side of the clock. If there's ever a daypart when people use the radio for companionship, it's the late night," Gable says.

Max: Here's Zarrilli at the Deli with the Take 5 numbers. He's up Irvington on the Hudson in New York.

Zarrilli: Free coffee for everybody... come on up. Whoops, I better not say that. I remember what happened the last time. Ha! Ha!

Max: I'm ready to have the big one right now. They are going to have to jump start me
WCBS concludes on page 57...

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...WCBS from page 54

with a *Sears Die Hard*. I can't believe you actually said that. We will hold you to that. Oh, no! It's too late, you're on the Memorex. Give us the take five.

Zarrilli: OK, Max Man... 7, 10, 12, 28 and 35. Did you get the spelling of my name right?

Building a late night franchise offers another distinction, says Kinkel.

"You can't get on my show for a bonus. Other radio stations will bonus the overnight period. They don't realize they are making a big mistake."

To bonus, Kinkel explains, means the station throws in some free (bonus) overnight spots when an advertiser purchases a package of spots that cover morning drive, mid-day and evening.

The rates for spots on Kinkel's show begin to increase after 4 a.m. and reach peak at the 5 o'clock hour. "After 5 a.m., the spots are around \$1,000 each," Kinkel says. "I'm doing in the neighborhood of \$1 to \$2 million a year in inventory. I'm generating revenue. The talent should be at least valued at 10 percent of that inventory."

Behind the console, Kinkel, the entertainer, blends seamlessly with Kinkel the engineer. Since most major market jocks

shed their engineers a decade ago, Kinkel has become a master of the production process. He works alone in a brightly lit, windowless security fortress. To reach Kinkel's studio, one must first hold a specially encoded card up to a wall-mounted scanner. If all documentation embedded in the card is in order, a door silently opens. A second door requires the user to enter a series of numbers to activate an electronic combination lock. It then opens into a corridor leading to the studio.

As he works, Kinkel moves rapidly back and forth between two boom mikes—one for live talk, the other to build tightly edited comedy bits "to the Memorex" with callers from the night.

The night hours are peppered with call-in requests for oldies, the venerable format that has served the station well for the past 22 years. There's Mike from Food Town, Karen from Germany and Thomas from Rockland County. These listeners might be security guards, deli workers, food jobbers, hospital employees, computer programmers, construction workers, taxi drivers and a range of financial specialists working the graveyard shift in the concrete canyons of Wall Street.

A manager from the New York Times calls to say hello; a mystery writer phones

to say Max stirs her imagination as she sits at her computer terminal in the nocturnal hours.

"Sometimes things get out of control. I get extremes. A person going through a divorce. I get propositioned a lot. Some get a little carried away. But it's usually all cute. A lot of people want to tell me their problems. I extend a lot."

It's 5:30 a.m. Max turns the studio over to the Harry Harrison, the morning mayor. He quickly packs his carts and headphones for the trip down the hall to the jock lounge.

Reporter: What's next? Do you go home and go to sleep?

Max: Twice a day I nap. Whenever I feel like it. That's about it.

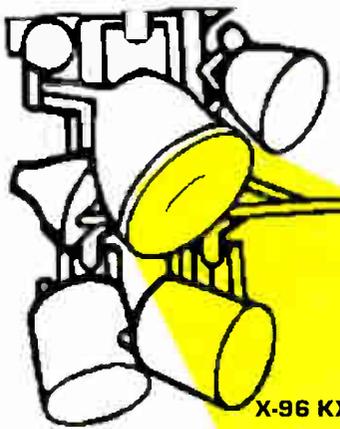
Reporter: So you don't like, lie down and go to sleep?

Max: No. I never been one of those kind of people.

Reporter: Do like working these hours?

Max: I like the money they pay me. If they want to keep paying me this kind of money to do this show, I'll keep doing it. 

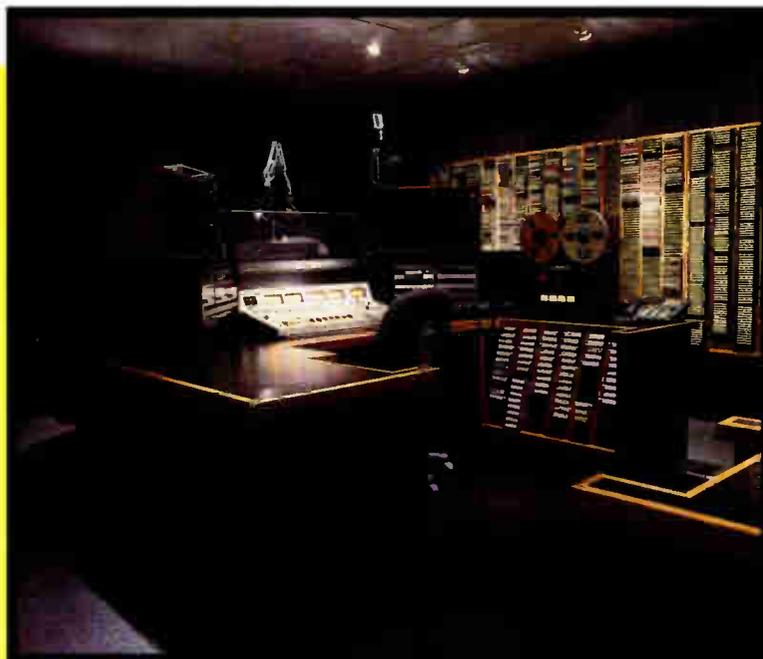
Frank Beacham is a New York-based writer, director, producer and consultant. He is a regular features correspondent for The Radio World Magazine.



Facility Spotlight

X-96 KXRK-FM, Salt Lake City
Owner: Acme Broadcasting
Format: modern rock

Jim Facer, general manager
Leslie Reagan, sales manager
Kristen Young, promotions director
Mike Summers, programming director
Mario Hieb, chief engineer



Ted Boucher

When modern rock X-96 KXRK-FM in Salt Lake City decided to unite its sales and on-air staffs—located an arduous 45 miles apart—station Chief Engineer Mario Hieb found the perfect location—in a downtown hotel built in 1909.

But don't be deceived by appearances. Inside the four-story overhauled structure is a set-up that staff fondly refer to as the "Starship Enterprise."

"If anything, I'd say it's futuristic," Hieb says. Each of three 300-square-foot studios—on-air, production and engineering—along with public areas, was designed on a CAD system. "You can get extremely precise with the computer. It was scary when everything came together, just how snug the pieces fit together."

In all, the project cost about \$150,000, and includes any number of high-tech features designed to keep X-96 staff comfortable and up to date. The on-air studio (pictured here), for instance, has its own AC system completely separate from the rest of the building. As well, halogen track lighting with dimmer switches allows each DJ to set the mood for his or her shift, while a cockpit design keeps all music, commercial carts and counter space within easy reach. Also, all audio equipment, including consumer-grade gear, is standardized to a +4 dBu audio level in all three studios.

There were other considerations as well. The station's studios are located next door to one of the hottest live clubs in town, allowing instant access for interviews and spontaneous acoustic on-air sets after the band warms up. Such a convenience, however, also meant extra soundproofing considerations to keep the occasional sound of a pedal drum from entering the station's playlist. "Our on-air studio is basically a room within a room," Hieb says.

All of this aside, Hieb admits the biggest advantage of the new studios may have nothing to do with the cutting edge of station design: "They don't have to drive as far. They really like that."

Facility Spotlight offers a look at innovative radio facility renovations. Share your cutting edge with us. Call Editor Charles Taylor at 703-998-7600.

advertiser index

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the way we think.” *Albert Einstein*

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