RADIO'S PREMIER MANAGEMENT & MARKETING MAGAZINE



Vol. XXVI, No. 10 May 16, 2011 PUBLISHED BI-WEEKLY

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World Radio History

# Is Talk Radio Still Alive & Well?

# MR

Westwood One funny guy Dennis Miller now nearly 300 affiliates strong

> 000423 9/100

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## Should Your Clients Be On Your Facebook Page?

# Intelligence for Your Health with Connie Sellecca

3 Hour Weekend Show

"We've been a John Tesh Radio Show station for years. Tesh has knocked it out of the park ratings-wise (both diary, and now PPM), and when we had the opportunity to add "Intelligence For Your Health with Connie Sellecca", it was a no-brainer. Connie's show is the perfect compliment to our target demo, and category-wise, our sales team LOVES it!"

Tommy Austin Operations Manager KKCW/FM - Clear Channel Portland, OR



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THE WEEKEND



"When I meet radio people, I don't feel like I am meeting people who have their heads in the clouds. I have been kindly welcomed, even more so as I stay in there."

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# **Pandora Radio Is Not Radio**

hy would a company like Clear Channel invest \$60 million in Ryan Seacrest if jukeboxes or playlist services were all listeners wanted? Of all companies, Clear Channel would be the first to turn its radio stations into playlist services to save money if it could. But Clear Channel and other broadcasters invest hundreds of millions in local and national radio personalities because entertainers engage listeners and hold them longer, increasing ratings and ad revenues.

Radio has strong brand and personality loyalty, tremendous targeted audiences, and huge promotional power. Radio can turn on a dime to respond to the needs of tornado victims and relate to a community based on the buzz of the moment. Radio's content is dynamic, whether it's raising money for a local cancer victim or playing a rainy-day tune to go with the storms.

And radio has a personal bond with its listeners: In a recent Arbitron survey, 79 percent of listeners said they'd be very or somewhat disappointed if their favorite radio station were no longer on the air. Radio is also curated by experienced professionals and extensively researched so the music played is what the target audience most wants to hear. That is the magic of radio.

Enter Pandora Radio. As wonderful as it is, it's not radio. It's a playlist service.

Don't get me wrong. Pandora is a phenomenal success. Its IPO is expected to be one of the biggest of the year. It's hot and popular among investors who believe Pandora, with 80 million registered users, can take a good chunk of radio's approximately \$17 billion in revenue. But if investors are considering Pandora on that basis, they should perhaps look at the statistics:

In its IPO filing, Pandora claims to have more than 50 percent of all Internet radio listening. Not too shabby. But only 3 percent of all radio listening in the United States takes place online. The rest, 97 percent, is still over the air. And most of the Internet radio listening that doesn't go to Pandora is terrestrial radio streaming.

- Pandora claims to have streamed more than 3.9 billion hours of programming to its registered users in 2010. Seems like a big number, until you realize that annual U.S. radio listening is an estimated 179 billion hours. If Pandora had four times the registered users (320 million, more than the entire U.S. population), it would be doing 15.6 billion hours, or less than 10 percent of all radio listening.
- Pandora has impressive revenue numbers: \$90 million in fiscal 2010, up from \$50 million in 2009. But the two top-billing terrestrial stations between them brought in \$1

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trial stations between them brought in \$111 million last year: Hubbard-Bonneville's WTOP/Washington at \$57 million and Clear Channel's KIIS-FM/Los Angeles at \$54 million.

Additionally, 60 percent of Pandora's revenues go to music licensing fees, which grow as listening grows. In contrast, radio is paying no performance royalty, and current negotiations would put a royalty at about 1 percent of revenues. Furthermore, WTOP and KIIS are probably throwing off 40 percent-50 percent margins after all expenses.

To launch an Internet-only playlist service and have it generate gross revenues approaching the two top-billing radio stations in the United States is impressive. But the prospect of Pandora's stealing a significant chunk of radio's \$17 billion market may be an exaggeration.

I love Pandora Radio and find it an interesting phenomenon, but will it kill terrestrial radio? Only time will tell — but, despite its name, Pandora is not radio, and it can't do what radio can do.

B. ERIC RHOADS, GEO/PUBLISHER

At last — an attorney who's been there! 15 years of programming, sales, and management experience. **BARRAY SKIDELSKY, ESQ.** Attorney/Consultant Creative, cost-effective counsel for today's competitive environment. Legal and business assistance for those involved with traditional and new media: FC, purchase and sale, financing, A/P reduction, employment, IP, and more. Also an experienced bankruptcy trustee, FCC ownership trustee, and arbitrator.

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# Why Ads Fail

've never met a business owner whose advertising failed because they were reaching the wrong people. Let me say that again. I've never met a business owner whose advertising failed because they were reaching the wrong people.

Advertising fails when the public has:

No knowledge of the offer. The ad is easily ignored.
No interest in the offer. The offer is a) irrelevant or
misunderstood.

3. No trust in the offer. The claims made in the ad are not credible.

These problems can be solved by:

1. **Getting** the attention of the public with words and phrases that are new, surprising, and different.

2. **Offering** the people what they want to buy (instead of trying to convince them to buy what you'd like to sell).

3. **Supporting** your claims with examples that agree with the experiences of your prospective customers.

"But wait a minute, Mr. so-called Wizard of Ads. You said ads sometimes fail because the people who were reached had 'no interest in the offer.' Because I am an honorable advertising salesperson, I always begin by asking the advertiser, 'Who is *your customer*?' Now if I can offer this advertiser a higher concentration of those people, isn't that a better value?"

Your argument assumes an advertiser will be able to articulate their customer profile as a demographic cell. That sounds reasonable, but it's almost never true.

Let's put that to the test. I will ask the questions. You will answer them honestly:

1. Do your friends tend to be male or female?

2. Do your friends tend to be under 30, 30 to 44, 45 to 59, or over 60?

3. Do your friends tend to be married or single?

4. Do your friends tend to be Republicans, Democrats, or Independents?

These questions are perfectly reasonable, but you know in your heart that you have lots of male and female friends of all ages, married and single, and with political affiliations that span the spectrum. But all of them bought the same product: you.

I believe right customers exist. I do not believe they can be targeted according to income or demographic profile. If you target a demographic cell, it's because you believe in your heart that persons of the same age, sex, and marital status all think alike.

The right customer is targeted through ad copy.

When the ad copy is right, the format of the radio station almost doesn't matter. But when the ad copy is wrong, the format of the radio station absolutely doesn't matter.

Let's do one last test: I've listened to your old school pitch about "targeting the right customer," and I've decided "my customer" is a female from 25 to 34 years old. I sell



engagement rings. That's all. Nothing else. Just engagement rings. Now I want you to tell me what percentage of your weekly cume is women 25 to 34.

Oh, your station is number one in the market with women 25 to 34? A whopping 19 percent of your weekly cume is "my customer"? Wow, that's impressive. According to your theory of "targeting the right customer," I'm wasting only 81 percent of my ad budget if I buy your station.

Hey, I've got an idea! Why don't I just buy some truly targeted ads from Facebook! They can give me women 25 to 34 in my area who are in relationships. Thanks for the lesson about targeting.

Listen to me, AE. Radio is called "mass media" for a reason: It reaches the masses.

By the way, the two most successful sellers of engagement rings in the U.S. and Canada are both clients of my silly little ad firm. They became the kings they are today because I made them quit targeting "their customer" and began spending 100 percent of their yearly ad budgets on radio, nothing but radio, 52 weeks a year. We buy the most efficient adult 18 + schedules we can find that offer us the highest weekly reach with a 3 + frequency.

It would rock your world to know how many people buy engagement rings who are not 25 to 34, or even 25 to 49.

Say to the advertiser, "Is there anyone you don't want to impress? Is there anyone out there whose opinion doesn't matter? Think about it; everyone who is deeply impressed with your ad becomes an evangelist for you. Radio is the world's most efficient mass media. Let's win the masses with it."

The most successful local-direct AEs don't sell radio. They sell advertising. And they say to the advertiser, "Target through your ad copy, and you will be amazed at the wide variety of people who suddenly become 'your customer.'"

This idea resonates in the heart of the business owner because, deep down, he or she knows it to be true.

And so do you.

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads Inc. E-mail:roy@wizardofads.com



FOR TONS OF ARTICLES ON SALES, MANAGEMENT, MARKETING, AND PROMOTION, VISIT WWW.RADIOINK.COM/MANAGERSTOOLBOX

#### ONE BOOK YOU SHOULD READ

#### THE ULTIMATE ONLINE CUSTOMER SERVICE GUIDE

#### By Marsha Collier

In the Ultimate Online Customer Service Guide, Marsha Collier gives you the keys to authentic and engaged service to customers through social media. Social media is an unparalleled vehicle for engag-



ing with an unlimited number of customers, but it's different from other, more impersonal ways to connect. With social media, reps become part of their customers' lives. They follow back. They handle complaints immediately. They wish customers happy birthday. They grow their brands by involving themselves in communities.

#### **AUDIO YOU SHOULD LISTEN TO**

Rethink how you run your business, with Dan Pink from TED. Pink examines the puzzle of motivation, starting with a fact that social scientists know but most managers



don't: Traditional rewards aren't always as effective as we think. Bidding adieu to his last "real job," as Al Gore's speechwriter, Dan Pink went freelance to spark a right-brain revolution in the career marketplace.

#### Listen at:

www.ted.com/talks/dan\_pink\_on\_motivation.html

#### **TRAITS OF GREAT LEADERS**

#### By Coach Paul Anovick

1. Great leaders get people to do more than they believe they're capable of doing.

- 2. They have the courage to admit mistakes.
- 3. They have the vision to welcome change.
- 4. They have the enthusiasm to motivate others.

5. As a leader, if you don't believe in yourself, everyone knows it. Believe!

Coach Anovick can be reached at paul@anovickassociates.com.

#### MANAGEMENT BLOGS YOU SHOULD BROWSE EVERY DAY



#### TIM SANDERS

www.timsanders.com

Sanders writes about strong business relationships, both internal and external. "Get them right," he says, "and you'll grow your business during good and bad times alike."

#### STEVE FARBER

www.stevefarber.com

If you like extreme, Steve Farber is your guy. Farber is the president of Extreme Leadership, an organization devoted to the cultivation and development of "extreme leaders" in the business community. His latest book, Greater Than Yourself: The Ultimate Lesson in Leadership, is a Wall

Street Journal and USA Today bestseller.

#### **FIVE REASONS SOCIAL MEDIA WORKS**

#### By Jessica Northey

I recently began working with a new client, and we've gotten immediate results. She's a celebrity/pundit/author and uses social media to connect to others with the same beliefs, values, and issues. The bottom line: We can have relationships and do business with people we would never have met before social media. Social media levels the playing field.

1. Anyone can reach out of their comfort zone to connect with others based on interests, hobbies, or locality.

2. Social media is easy to use, no matter what your online experience/knowledge is.

- 3. The user controls the information he or she wants to receive or look for.
- 4. It's constantly changing to meet our needs as our needs change.
- 5. The opportunities are endless, limited only by our imagination.

We are the key to social media's continued success. If we respect one another on these different platforms and "Tweet others as we would want to be tweeted," we will keep building relationships and trust and making business connections.

#### Improve Commercial Focus With Specific POV

By Jeffrey Hedquist



Writing your commercial from a specific point of view gives it focus and believability.

1. Pick a typical customer for your advertiser, or someone related in some way to that customer audience — a spouse, distant relative, paper boy, driving instructor, English teacher, parent, boss, future offspring, doctor, etc.

2. Tell a story about the advertiser from that person's point of view. How would that person describe the experience of visiting and buying from the advertiser?

3. As you write, become her. Create a conversation she might have in her head, or with store

employees or other customers, or with her friends as she relates the experience. Use her speech pattern, her phrasing, ner expressions.

4. Whether you create a narrative, dialogue, or multi-voice ensemble spot, it should still be an emotional story about the listener.

5. The more specific you make it, the more powerful it will be.

Jeffrey Hedquist is the CEO of Hedquist Productions; reach him at jeffrey@hedquist.com.





# ONAIR

#### PEOPLE, EVENTS, LETTERS, NEWS, PRODUCTS & MORE



Radio Ink VP/Assoc. Publisher Lois Chooljian receives her INKY award as Kick Butt Sales Rep of the Year. The annual awards are presented to media covering media technology; other categories include Excellent Editor, Fab Freelancer, and Stupendous Staff Reporter or Writer. Seen here are (I-r) LOI International President Lauren Darr, Chooljian, Hipcricket CEO Ivan Braiker, and Cella Vine LLC President Deanna Kennedy.



Steve Harvey recently hosted the second annual Steve Harvey Foundation gala at Cipriani Wall Street in New York, supporting the Steve Harvey Mentoring Weekend for Young Men. Hundreds of friends and supporters were on hand to honor Tyler Perry, Chris and Malaak Rock, and Ford Motor Co. with the foundation's Helping Hand Award. Seen here (I-r) are Malaak Compton-Rock, Chris Rock, Ford Motor Co. CEO Alan Mulally, and Steve and Marjorie Harvey.

ABC Radio News correspondent Alex Stone reports from Rainsville, AL, on the tornadoes that devastated the region in April.



Rock god David Coverdale, back on the road with Whitesnake, spends some time in studio with Carol Miller of *Get the Led Out*. The two talked about, among other things, Coverdale's days teaming with Jimmy Page.



KTYL (Mix 93.1)/Tyler, TX, recently held its annual Women's Night Out, with the cast of *Kidd Kraddick in the Morning* and Derek Hough from *Dancing With the Stars*. Plctured are: Kraddick show members Kellie Raspberry and J-Si, Hough, Townsquare/Tyler Market President/GM Johnny Lathrop, and Kraddick teammates Jenna Owens, Psycho Shannon, and Big Al Mack.



# **GREAT PPM INCREASES**

### **ATLANTA WSB**

Persons 25–54 Men 25–54 UP 14.3–16.2 UP 18.9–20.6 Women 25–54 UP 8.7–11.5

### **ORLANDO** WFLA

Men 25–54 UP 1.8–2.9

Women 25–54 UP 1.7–2.6

# SALT LAKE CITY KNRS

Persons 25–54 UP 2.5–4.2

All increases are Feb-March PPM exact times.



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# Fourth And Long As he marks an anniversary, Dennis Miller's

sharp mind and stand-up's instincts are a touchdown for Westwood One

{By Editor-In-Chief Ed Ryan}

ith Westwood One's recent sale of Metro Traffic to Clear Channel Communications, Westwood One President Rod Sherwood said the company plans to focus more on its "leadership position as the premium content provider of news, information, talk, music, and entertainment programming in network radio." On that entertainment roster is talker Dennis Miller, whose show just celebrated its fourth anniversary with the network and who is poised to cross the 300-affiliate mark — as of press time, he was heard on 292 stations.

Dennis Miller is more than just a radio talk show host. He often appears on Fox News with his witty political commentary, and he still does stand-up comedy all over the United States. Known for his deep understanding of the English language, Miller credits his vocabulary to learning one new word from the dictionary each day (something his mother taught him to do).

The Dennis Miller Show veers toward politics, but Miller is not as ideological as many other talk hosts. And, for sure, there is no yelling or screaming or hanging up on callers. He also brings to the table a deep knowledge of sports, football in particular; you may remember he did two years with ABC's Monday Night Football before John Madden took his spot. We spoke to Miller about his Monday Night Football gig, his thoughts on Glenn Beck, why he got involved in radio, and why general managers should consider picking up his show.

#### "I DON'T FEIGN ANY OF MY BELIEFS, I JUST SAY THEM, AND ENOUGH LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE SORT OF GRAVITATE TOWARD IT."

www.radioink.com

#### Having been in television for so long, why did you decide to get into radio?

I'd always thought that I work best in brief bursts, as a stand-up comedian. I was used to doing Letterman and Tonight Show, and I thought maybe 10 or 12 minutes is the way I work best.

But once I did this show with Phil Donahue on the old MSNBC network. I sat with him for the entire hour, and we had a nice, relaxed thing. I remember feeling it wasn't all punch line, setup, punch line. I thought maybe I need more of a relaxed sort of form. They had pitched radio to me a while back, and I hadn't been interested. Then when they said it was three hours a day, I said, "I can't come to L.A. If I can do it in my house, I'll try it." Then I found out I liked it.

#### Is it everything you thought it would be?

I think it's like opening a New York restaurant. I don't think you can be a hit right away, but I can see a million ways it can blow up in your face right away. It's a hard gig. If you have this key moment when you figure out you can't pre-figure it, at some point you have to trust that you can go on air for three hours a day and just sort of talk and relate your life.

My thing is political, like anybody else's, but not to the same degree. There are other things I try to talk about. I think you have that moment and decide to take the plunge. I certainly can't pre-write this every night, so I might as well find out if I can do it or not. You come out the other end and realize if you relax a little, it's not as taxing as you would think.

#### On TV and doing stand-up comedy, there's an audience right in front of you. Now you're sitting at a microphone, with no one in front of you. How is that different for you?

That's why I give myself credit right off the bat. I said I need one person, not to co-pilot the show, but because, when I listen to a show, I want to hear the

guy who's doing it. I need a Greek chorus guy, as a comedian, who I can try to make laugh.

I was smart enough about that. I have had two sidekicks now, one for the first couple of years, a guy named Sal, but he wanted to move on. For the last year and a half or so, it's been my producer, Christian. I just need to hear that laugh once in a while when I've scored. I am Pavlov's dog.

#### Do you ever find yourself sitting in front of the microphone, thinking, "What am I going to talk about today?"

Never. At some point you realize you can talk about not having anything to talk about, if you want. As long as you don't sweat it, as long as they don't turn the button on in their house and hear a guy at the other end who's making them uptight.

#### Are you happy with the growth of the show?

I never thought I'd make 300 stations. They tell me they have a few irons in the fire to take it to 300. I don't think the last four years of



radio have been exactly a bull market. So to make it up to 300 from 60 in four years, yeah, I am happy.

#### Tell us about your education. Obviously, you have a wicked vocabulary. Where did that come from?

I was a shit student. I do remember my mom, when I was a kid, who didn't ask me to do a lot, asked me to try to learn a new word every day out of the dictionary. As you look back on your life, there are things in the moment that seem not thunderously consequential. That was a good gift my mother gave me, to learn a new word. That's my monkey trick — weird references.

#### That's how deep it is? The dictionary?

I was a 2.4 [grade point average] student. I wasn't exactly knocking it out of the park in college. But I did read.

#### I thought it was going to be a little more exciting than that.

Sorry to disappoint you. I am a series of disappointments.

#### "I AM A STAND-UP COMIC. I LIST IT AS MY OCCUPATION ON MY TAX RETURN."

## On a recent show you were talking to Rich Eisen about the NFL. Obviously, you know a lot about sports. Is your show political, or is it a sports show?

Mostly political opinion. Sports, movies, food, phone calls, and guests. I try to do a Regis Philbin thing about what I did the night before. The guest list — and I have to give credit to the staff, I stay out of the booking. Some of these people are my friends, and they have been nice enough to come on. For our anniversary show, we had Michael Douglas, Steve Martin, and Tom Hanks, and I'm thinking, "I don't know how they're pulling this off."

#### If you could put them in order, what are your favorite topics to talk about?

My mind doesn't usually work like that, so I'm up against the wall with you now. I don't want to be dis-interesting again. I would say number one is, oddly enough, King Tut. I know he's not en vogue, but that would be my first one. Second, the current president. I try to talk about anything, whatever anybody wants to call in and talk about.

#### That's a cool answer, but I meant sports, politics, the major topics.

If you are going to be in this business right now, I think 75 percent of it, at least, has to be politics. People feel pissed off, and they find whatever show can vent their pissed-off-ness, on either side of the aisle. I don't have any ax to grind with Barrack Obama, but there's this whole thing about if you disagree with him, you are a racist. I am not a racist, but I think he's doing a crap job. So I guess other likeminded people who think he's doing a crap job will find you if it syncs up with the voice in their head.

Talk radio is cathartic. I don't feign any of my beliefs, I just say them, and enough like-minded people sort of gravitate toward it. People have some sort of ideological divining rod that allows them to find the pull for them. Then they hang on for three hours a day. Just like when you used to tell your shrink something and think, "This is going to be crazy." The shrink would look at you and say, "My 9:15 has that too." Then you think, "OK, I'm not nuts." I think when people find the right radio show for them, they think, "OK, there's somebody else thinking like me."

#### What is your overall opinion of the radio industry?

I find they're nice people. I married a Canadian girl. I sometimes think of radio people as very Canadian in their manners. They are hard-working and sweet. When I meet them, I don't feel like I am meeting people who have their heads in the clouds. I have been kindly welcomed, even more so as I stay in there. I think at first, they are fearing that maybe you are a kind of strip-miner coming in. I dig it. You can never predict if you are wanted or needed. But four years in, I hope it's my last job.

#### What do you think of the whole Glenn Beck thing?

When you name your company Mercury Theater, that's Orson Welles' company. I think he's got bigger goals. I think he wants to captain a network. I guess he's going to shoot for something like Oprah's OWN Network. He's very savvy. He knows how to work the electronic media. I think most people would get to Fox and think it's the biggest thing. He's looking at even bigger things. Given that, I don't get it every day when he does the frog voice. I sometimes go crazy and think, "Shut up with the frog voice!" You have to admit this, at 5 o'clock in the evening, he's knocking out numbers that nobody saw in that industry. So he's on to something. I don't know the cat. I've never met him. I wish him well. I can see bigger games for him. I think he wants to build an empire.

#### Who is your favorite guest of all time on the radio?

I would have to say Marty Short. When he comes on, I dig that. Orson Bean sits in a lot. He is a good guy. Charles Krauthammer, I find him to be super smart. Mark Steyn — since he hosts Limbaugh, he has great radio chops. I like hanging with him on the air. When Hanks comes in, he's always cool, and we are friends, so that's relaxed. Peter Noone, who lives near me, he comes in the studio once in a while. He has great Beatles tales from the Herman's Hermits days.

#### Who was the worst?

David Carradine.

#### Do you miss Monday Night Football?

No. It was fun for two years. I remember, when Madden left Fox, I thought, "I am so getting whacked." Madden is the best who ever did it. When he wants that job, he's going to get it. I was happy to have two years there, but it was time to take the bullet. I was like G. Gordon Liddy: Just tell me what corner you want me on so innocents don't get hit in the crossfire. I miss Al [Michaels] and Dan [Fouts]. I just don't operate that way, where 10 years later I'm thinking, "God, I miss that job." Would you? What were you doing 10 years ago? I liked it when I was doing it, but now I don't think about it.

#### Why do you still do stand-up comedy?

It's what I am. I am a stand-up comic. I list it as my occupation on my tax return.

#### Why should GMs in the radio industry add you to their stations?

If I pitch one thing about the show that I am proud of, it's that it's not rancorous. I do think we live in a Hatfield-McCoy culture right now. I am amenable to listening to anybody's point of view, and I am not lighting them up in the first 10 seconds. I just don't want to fight every day, if they are looking for something like that.

I state my case and I'll volley back and forth with somebody, but I'm not going to go nuclear right off the bat if somebody disagrees with me because that's good radio. I can't do that. It might be great radio, but I can't live my life where I am fighting with strangers about politics. I'll try to dissuade them if I think they are ill-minded, but I'll listen to them. I try to have a little fun with it. I guess I would say that this show is a little bit lighter than some of the things that are out there right now.

For more information on *The Dennis Miller Show*, contact Westwood One VP/Marketing & Communications Peter Sessa at 212-641-2053 or peter\_sessa@westwoodone.com.



# The Big Questions

A special report on the state of news/talk radio

By Kipper McGee

#### It is the best of times. It is the worst of times. With apologies to

Dickens, those classic lines speak to the state of news/talk radio in 2011. Happily, the operative attitude remains "upside potential" — if the industry makes the right moves, *now*.

Spoken-word formats continue to be a dominant ratings force, with revenue power ratios to match. The content flow of news/talk creates a unique and highly effective environment for traditional advertiser messages, at a time when the entire model of commercialized music radio is increasingly being brought into question. Additionally, as one of the original "social media," talk radio lends itself to the new media age, where content must be digital, discoverable, and ready to share.

However, like all formats, news/talk faces several key challenges, not the least of which is doing more with less. In many cases, that's meant decreases in local content (with smaller news and online staffs), marketing, and even sales teams.

We reached out to a variety of news/talk veterans, some in America's largest markets and some of them forward-thinking practitioners in medium and smaller markets. Those taking part: Scott Lakefield, PD of Buckley Broadcasting's WOR/New York; Tom Langmyer, VP/GM of Tribune's WGN/Chicago; Ryan Hatch, PD of Bonneville's KTAR-FM in Phoenix; Neil Larrimore, PD of Entercom's KMBZ-AM & FM/Kansas City; Jerry Bader, national news/talk PD and multi-market talk host for Midwest Communications; and Scot Bertram, PD of Cumulus Media's WROK-AM in Rockford, IL. We were also fortunate to have one of the format's leading researchers join the panel: Richard Harker, founder and president of Harker Research.



Scott Lakefield PD, WOR/New York

"I THINK YOU'LL SEE A CONTINUING OF THE EVOLUTION AWAY FROM NEARLY 100 PERCENT CONSERVA-TIVE POLITICAL TALK."

- Scott Lakefield



Tom Langmyer VP/GM, WGN/Chicago

#### How do you see the news/talk format changing in the next three to five years? Do you see a change in the prevalence of so-called "rightleaning" political talk?

Harker: Every format goes through cycles, including news/talk. As the format grows on FM, I think you'll see a younger format emerge. It will still be right of center, but it will be more free-flowing and faster-paced. Think of it as the content of a talk station, but at the pace of a news station.

Lakefield: I think you'll see a continuing of the evolution away from nearly 100 percent conservative political talk. Don't get me wrong; that will still play a key part. But, for instance, the ratings success we've seen with some of the tweaks we've made to John Gambling's show on WOR proves that while there's still an appetite for that, there's an appetite for much more as well. News/talk is the great water cooler topic, and people talk about more than just politics at the water cooler.

"RADIO IS THE NEW MEDIA IF WE MAKE IT SO. ACCESS TO MORE PLATFORMS HAS ALREADY AFFECTED THE NEWS/TALK MIND-SET FOR THE BETTER."

- Tom Langmyer

Langmyer: In addition to the established stations, expect to see more segmented talk, much of which won't be as politically driven. While males have historically been a strong driver of the format overall, there will be more programming targeting females. Enlightened broadcasters will also need to innovate and evolve beyond a formulaic approach to news and talk. Expect new operators, and those we're lucky to have returning to the business, to develop stronger local talk brands across multiple platforms.

Hatch: Within the next five years, I would be shocked if the remaining largemarket AM standalones don't find a new home on FM or, at minimum, simulcast programming on an FM stick. News/talk is one of the top mass-appeal formats in the country, and roughly 80 percent of the available radio audience is listening on the FM band exclusively. From the ratings numbers I see around the country, and the leaders in the format I speak with regularly, the consensus is that news/talk desperately needs to grow a younger audience, and that's just not going to be able to happen on AM.

Larrimore: I think that from a content standpoint, we need to understand that the uber-conservative/Tea Party model of the past seven to 10 years isn't going to hold forever. In fact, it's my opinion that the paradigm is already shifting. I believe the conservative model will still be the model we want to use, but we can't live in the world with the Neanderthal, "Obama bad" mentality.

Bader: Let's pit what I think is going to happen against what I'd like to see happen. My prediction for what will happen is that more and more news/talk stations will simulcast on FM, believing that's all it will take to grow cume and make it younger. I suspect content will change little. I do expect the format to continue to warm up to the various digital platforms, which is a big key for the long term.

What I'd like to see happen is to have the

"content debate" between conservative talk and more diverse topics settled once and for all. I believe this is the answer: There will always be interest in political topics. But something won't attract an audience just *because* it's political. I have always tried to have a diversity of topics on my show.

Bertram: I think we'll continue to see a steady increase in news/talk stations, but the individual formats will become more compartmentalized. Already we see conservative and liberal talk stations all over the country. Business talk is a format I think will be a major player in the near future. Past that, the possibilities really are endless. I can see "female talk," "lifestyle talk," or "entertainment/TV/movie talk" all working on some level. As some of the current heavy hitters migrate to FM, these new talk formats could begin to populate the AM band.



Ryan Hatch PD, KTAR-FM/Phoenix

#### "FM TALK HAS A DIFFERENT, MORE DIVERSE AUDIENCE THAT WANTS A NEW KIND OF NEWS PRODUCT THAT IS RELATABLE AND RELEVANT IN THEIR LIVES."

Ryan Hatch

"WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE UBER-CONSERVA-TIVE/TEA PARTY MODEL OF THE PAST SEVEN-10 YEARS ISN'T GOING TO HOLD FOREVER."

Neil Larrimore - Neil Larrimore PD, KMBZ-AM & FM/Kansas City

markets, where the proclivity to use AM is lower for a number of reasons, a move to FM can be the answer to compete.

I'm watching these moves with great interest. In some cases around the country, we're seeing heritage news and talk brands tossed on signal-impaired FMs and translators. You have to wonder how good that is for the "bigness" of the brand, or how you can truly measure the success or failure of moves like those.

Hatch: Absolutely inevitable! It's all about growing our audiences and influence in our communities and for our advertisers, and that's going to take place primarily on FM. The challenge most broadcast groups will face is the harsh reality that a show that was wildly successful on AM will most likely face serious challenges garnering strong numbers on FM. It's a different, more diverse audience that wants a new kind of news product

#### Is the increase of FM news/talk stations inevitable? If so, how will these stations change the playing field for the format in general, and AM standalones in particular?

Harker: Yes, there will be more FM news/talk stations. The first step was to just port over AM stations as is. But ultimately, FM stations will evolve differently. NPR has exploited FM's fidelity, and more commercial talk stations will begin to exploit FM. The quality of FM will make them sound even more different from existing AM talk stations. I think there's room for both AM and FM talk stations.

Lakefield: I think music radio will be here for a while, but it's also the format that is most susceptible to "radio replacements," like Internet radio, iPods, and the like, not to mention the looming threat of royalties. You can't replace the personality of talk radio, particularly local talk radio. So you'll absolutely see a continued movement of FM stations away from music in the future in favor of FM talk. It'll change the playing field from the standpoint of creating more options, meaning we've all got to be more on our game than ever.

Langmyer: Chicago remains a very healthy AM radio market — three of the top five stations in the ratings are on AM. Spoken-word AM stations in the market are driving more than 4 million in cume. Of course, in other





that is relatable and relevant in their lives. I can tell you from my experience at KTAR in Phoenix and KIRO in Seattle, the most successful FM news/talk stations in the future are not going to be built around politics. There's an entire world of interesting, broadappeal stories outside of politics.

Bader: There is an entirely untapped audience for news/talk on the FM band that would have an interest but scarcely knows the AM band exists. So, yes, I think you'll see that growth continue. As for AM standalones, it's difficult to answer. Evidence suggests that in adding an FM to WTAQ/Green Bay, WI, we did grow cume and young it down, but AM listeners haven't moved over all that much. But if they do, it might open up the AM band for more talk diversity — liberal, lifestyle, more ethnic formats, etc.

Bertram: The increase is already happening. Right now, I'm learning about two more FMs flipping to news/talk, in Memphis and Ft. Pierce. I'm wondering, though, if the migration of sports talk stations will happen even faster. If you're not an AM blowtorch, you're

likely dealing with a significant power-down at night. And since that's when the majority of professional baseball, basketball, and hockey games take place, it impacts the pool of available listeners.

FM at night provides a cleaner, crisper signal and could open the format to a larger number of younger male listeners during the day as well. In the major markets, with 50,000-watt clear channel properties, it's obviously not as much of an issue. But I think we could see it become more of a factor in small to midsized markets.

#### How do you see the role of local radio news changing at news/talk stations in the next few years?

Langmyer: Radio, done right, is still the most immediate

mass-media source for local news, traffic, and weather. And smart leaders in the format know that news drives talk. While the sound and presentation of local news will evolve, the concept of local news driving talk in local radio is timeless.

Hatch: Headline news is becoming more of a commodity every day. What's important is not falling into the trap of merely regurgitating the massive amounts of available information, and maintaining an enterprising spirit with the goal of creating meaningful, unique content.

Larrimore: That's a tough one. I would like to say local radio newsrooms will grow in size and scope, but I don't see that being a reality. Local will always be the strength of a news/talker. For us at KMBZ in Kansas City, our local news department is truly what sets us apart from every other radio station in the market. The question will be, how do we improve our online local news product without taking away from what we're able to do on air? How do we incorporate digital into



Jerry Bader News/Talk PD, Midwest Communications

"THERE IS AN ENTIRELY UNTAPPED AUDIENCE FOR NEWS/TALK ON THE FM BAND THAT WOULD HAVE AN INTEREST IN IT BUT SCARCELY KNOWS THE AM BAND EXISTS." - Jerry Bader our everyday radio-reporting lives? And, oh, yeah, how do we do all this in an economy that, although improving, is not necessarily strong enough for expansion of resources?

Bertram: Teamwork and coordination! For example, at WROK we use three different sources for our newscasts throughout the day. Mornings are serviced by Virtual News Center, which does a tremendous job of following our local beat and integrating itself into the news flow. I have a part-time in-house midday newsperson who writes and updates stories and leaves voicers for the next morning.

Finally, we've developed an amazing partnership with WTVO-TV. Their lead anchor delivers our afternoon casts via MP3 and weather through the day. All three sources write, share, and develop stories and sound bites. Taken all together, the combination gives WROK a huge sound, with different voices, actualities, and talent. It's a delicate balance, though, and one that took time to develop. The days of a massive newsroom are in the past for most stations, so PDs must find innovative ways to cover stories that matter to listeners.

#### How do you see new media affecting the traditional news/talk mindset — both for stations and consumers?

Harker: News/talk listeners are news junkies. They can't get enough of it. Smartphone apps, Internet news sites, and streaming services all raise the bar for every news/talk station. The best way to think about it is to use what's happening with television news as an analogy: CNN's television ratings plummeted as viewers found they could get the same information faster and better customized on phone apps and online. In contrast to CNN's approach, emphasizing news, Fox's ratings have grown because its content has emphasized opinion. You can't get Fox

> information any place but at Fox. More and more, news/talk radio will have to provide unique information that listeners can't get anyplace else.

Langmyer: Radio is the new media if we make it so. It's a matter of matching our available platforms properly with solid, branded content, served up in a way that makes sense. Access to more platforms has already affected the news/talk mindset for the better.

Hatch: Good content is good content, whether it's audio, video, or written. We need to continually push our best content online and make it easy to find and sharable.

Larrimore: New media is forcing radio's evolution. In the old days, we were only concerned about what was coming out of the speakers. Marketing was largely external and based on a strong message being delivered to the masses. Now, with SMS texting into the studio and the advent of social media, especially Facebook, Twitter, and Foursquare, we are shifting from a mass-communication

– Scot Bertram

Scot Bertram PD, WROK/Rockford, IL

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marketing model to a one-on-one communication micro-marketing model.

While maintaining the stewardship of the on-air radio product, we are communicating to individuals via our overall station brand, as well as the station's sub-brands, the show hosts. I would hope that this change in thinking concerning how we "talk back" to the talk radio consumers will create a stronger bond of loyalty with the station and the hosts.

Bader: If you can podcast it before the next show, do it. Then tell them via social media that you have a podcast, but you'll talk a lot more about it tomorrow. Another quaint notion: Radio news directors who 10 years ago didn't want to put weather-related cancellations on the Web because it would "steal from the on-air product."

If news/talk is done well, provides unique local content, and embraces the new digital platforms, I think it will be the most resilient terrestrial radio in meeting the challenges of the new media world.

Bertram: New media allows us to stay top-of-mind to listeners and consumers in

the market. That means more work to maintain all those platforms, but in the end it's what is needed in this day and age. Website, streaming audio, Twitter, Facebook — they all help put WROK on the computer or cellphone or iPad of listeners every day. It helps brand us as a news/information/opinion source that will continue to provide content even when the consumer is away from the radio.

#### Final thoughts on the state of the format and the future of news/talk?

Harker: Commercial left talk has failed because it has been poorly executed, not because there isn't a market. Thirty million people listen to NPR each week. It attracts both left- and right-leaning listeners not in spite of its political lean, but because of it. There is an opportunity



Richard Harker President, Harker Research

#### "LOCAL CONTENT WILL CONTINUE TO GROW IN IMPORTANCE AS STREAMING DIMIN-ISHES THE VALUE OF NATIONAL/INTERNA-TIONAL NEWS ON LOCAL STATIONS."

– Richard Harker

for a daring operator to create a successful commercial center-left talk format if it is entertaining, educational, and not too ideological. (Explaining why the right can succeed while being ideological and the left cannot is more a sociological issue than a radio programming issue.)

Larrimore: We are able to provide the listeners and visitors to our websites and social media pages more depth and the ability to relive some of the moments they hear on the air via our mindset of always including digital in our news and talk brands. The more fresh content we can provide the consumers on a daily basis, the better!

Bader: Many railroads went out of business because they were in the railroad business and not the transportation business. I believe there is a future for traditional radio, but we also have to remember we're in the communication business, not the radio business. Newspaper and, to a lesser extent, TV are struggling because they are simply repeating their existing product online. The challenge is for radio to use print and video formats to grow the on-air product to the new platforms, not just move them over.

Bertram: Something I always ask our sales staff is: "When was the last time you actually watched a TV commercial?" The answer is usually, "I can't remember." Outside of live sporting events, many watch TV in a DVR world, where you can zip by the spots without thinking twice. News/talk programming has a huge advantage in this arena. Our listeners are engaged and active; talk shows are rarely background noise. Our content is unique and timely. On any major topic, listeners want to know what our hosts are thinking, and there's only one way to find out: You have to be tuned in. Listeners are passionate and loyal and paying attention to our message. We have a great story to tell as news/talk PDs. It's up to us to get the word out. That aspect of our business will not be changing any time soon.

Kipper McGee is chief media brandwidth specialist at Kipper McGee LLC. E-mail: kippermcgee@gmail.com



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# **Time-Honored Basics**

e've all heard of a marketing campaign so clever, it failed — where the creative got in the way of the message it was supposed to deliver. Likewise, technology has provided some game-changing tools, but successful sales results still require basic, well prepared strategy, something that transcends tech and time. Jon Horton has been preaching that for more than 40 years, as an AE and sales manager in markets from Los Angeles to Winchester, KY. He recently compiled his wealth of experience in a book, Selling Fundamentals — Radio. Here are a few of his tips you may want to include in your next sales meeting. Jon can be reached at jon@sellingfundamentals-radio.com.

#### What are five important selling fundamentals even good reps sometimes overlook or ignore?

Numbers. Account executives write more business by increasing numbers — more appointments, more CNAs, more presentations, and more attempted closings. Sellers improve closing ratios by mastering better sales techniques.

Client needs analysis. Account executives are relentlessly under the gun to write business today! That pressure makes them reluctant to "waste" a precious appointment just asking questions, without some attempt to make a sale. But going for the close during the first meeting means the seller has no idea what marketing campaign best meets the client's needs.

Prospecting. Attrition — bankruptcy, mergers, retirement, or any of the myriad other reasons advertisers disappear — is a certainty. Still, too few AEs make time for identifying and developing new clients. Prospecting may seem like dreary business, but it's the only way to prepare for the business that will inevitably be lost.

**Presentations.** The first and largest portion of an effective presentation should include a detailed analysis of a potential advertiser's business, but many AEs skip this material. Maybe they can't write this part because they didn't complete a client needs analysis, or possibly they are content to merely follow an advertiser's request for "a spot schedule and cost." But an incomplete presentation will fail to establish the vital connection between client needs and a proposed marketing campaign.

Practice makes perfect! Account executives rarely take the time to grab a friend and rehearse an important presentation or challenging negotiation. Those who do discover that the repetition serves to smooth rough edges, increase confidence, and reduce nervousness.

#### How has technology changed the sales approach, for better and for worse?

Technology puts additional advertising arrows in a rep's quiver. Sellers now offer multi-faceted marketing campaigns that include on-air commercials, separate streaming messages, links and websites, text and instant messages, dedicated Facebook pages, and targeted tweets. Good AEs master the nuances of all these choices. In addition, increased computer speeds, slick software, and email combine to facilitate the development and immediate exchange of marketing information between sellers and buyers. That's good news.

It's critical, however, that account executives treat tech advantages as supplements, not substitutes for good selling practices. To the extent that e-mails and text messages replace the warmth of face-to-face meetings and leisurely phone calls, seller-client relationships will suffer and marketing partnerships will be weaker.

#### Collection issues are often not addressed until they become a problem. What proactive advice can you offer?

Account executives should stay abreast of financial news about a client's business. If an industry begins to suffer nationally, the bad news will work its way

down to the local level. Sellers should also pay attention if a client gets new competition, particularly a competitor that markets aggressively. Finally, AEs should notice either reduced inventory or fewer employees when they visit a client's place of business. Both are signs of hard times.

Discuss payment terms and station policies during the very first meeting with a client. Doing so will make subsequent payment issues easier to approach. Identify and establish an independent relationship with the business managers for all clients; if this is done early in the selling process, most payment challenges can be addressed without even talking to the ad buyer.

#### In a world of bullet points, any advice for effective e-mail communication?

Business e-mails should be:

Short (just the facts, in a clear, concise manner) Professional (form should be formal, not casual) Necessary (don't clutter a client's in-box)

And keep in mind that, as a medium, e-mail does not easily lend itself to subtle humor or sarcasm. Remarks intended to be funny or clever are often offensive to a recipient.

Deborah Parenti is VP/GM of Radio Ink. E-mail: deborah@radioink.com



Jon Horton

STEPHANIEWINANS



# Integrating Your Clients On Facebook: Should You Do It?

he news broke in late 2009 that Kim Kardashian was being paid \$10,000 per sponsored tweet. While some followers were amazed at the price tag, most were disgusted that they couldn't tell which of her tweets were real and which were paid ads. That got companies thinking about their own policies. Is social media a great opportunity to build digital revenue? Or is it territory better reserved for building the company brand?

Do clients belong on your station's Facebook and Twitter pages? If your sales and programming departments haven't had this conversation yet, they will, so get ready. Clients are pushing AEs to promote them on Facebook or Twitter. National clients send written commercials to use as status updates, and local clients want all their events and remotes posted. Programming makes a convincing case that clients don't belong in social media, but pressure to increase digital revenue pushes radio managers to consider ways to sell it.

Revenue from social media should be viewed as a side dish to your client's entrée of spots, sponsorships, or Web advertising, not an à la carte option from the digital menu. The goal is to make clients happy by giving them results, not by giving in.

#### Two scenarios:

**À la carte scenario:** Burger Castle just placed a buy for Q2. Included in the added-value notes are dates for a Facebook post with the copy "Hungry for lunch? Stop by Burger Castle and try their new bacon cheeseburger."

You make the post and get a backlash from fans: "I know you need to keep the station running, but a Facebook commercial, really? Thanks for the ad. Not why I like your page." The comments are disgusted at the "sellout," not excited about the brand or product you were pushing.

Side dish scenario: When Burger Castle's secondquarter buy comes with the Facebook copy, you make suggestions to improve their request. You ask for coupons for the new bacon cheeseburger. You upload a picture of the burger to Facebook before lunch, with the post "Doesn't Burger Castle's new bacon cheeseburger look delicious? We're giving away lunch for two at Burger Castle to the next five people who comment 'Yum!'" Now your comments are from fans who are excited to win lunch from Burger Castle, who will visit their location, and who will hopefully have a positive experience with the brand and the new product. You've given your client a positive result.

The side dish strategy is about weaving clients into your social media without diminishing the integrity of your



brand. Here are five effective ways to use social media as a side dish:

**1. Offer your fans something**, and you'll have interested people opt in without annoying the fans who aren't interested. Listeners love to win, so if the prize appeals to your demo, give it away, regardless of the monetary value. Set your contests up for success by keeping them simple for the less valued prizes. Timing the give-away during the client's spot schedule reinforces their marketing message.

2. Have your client sponsor an on-air promotion and agree to mention their name in tweets and posts you make on Facebook. "Listen to win free gas in 10 minutes from WRNK and Mercedes."

**3. Draw your next promotion's winners** from your Facebook fans or Twitter followers. Just be specific when you write the liners. There's a fine line between saying, "Please like us on Facebook to win," and, "We'll be drawing our winners from Facebook, so if you haven't become a fan yet, no big deal. You still have time to do it before Friday at 7:35." The key is to sell the inside scoop for your fans and followers, not look like you're desperate for more online friends and this is the only way you can get them.

**4. Have listeners upload fan photos** that relate to the client's brand. This requires more participation, so make sure the prize is a big one.

**5.** Send your street team on a scavenger hunt, posting clues to their whereabouts on Facebook and Twitter. Determine the copy for the clues, and sell the stops to clients. You've provided a fun game for listeners while reinforcing the brand for your client and providing foot traffic to their business.

Stephanie Winans is the webmaster at WABB/Mobile and a self-employed online marketing and social media strategist. E-mail: stephaniewinans@gmail.com.

**AWARDED THE TWO GREATEST HAIRDOS OF 1961** Joe Reilly (in front) and Pat Parson were a force to be reckoned with at WERA-AM in Plainfield, NJ. Among other accomplishments, Reilly went on to become president of the New York State Broadcasters Association, and Parson teamed with Ben Farnsworth on CBS News Radio 88 in New York City. After more than 30 years, Reilly retired as the president of the NYSBA in 2011.

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- Charles Kelley, Lady Antebellum

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Dur Mission: Rucho Julia nole is passionately to empower radio management to be more successful by providing fresh, activitable, multity-based ideas, inspiration, and education in a quick, wary-to-read, portible, pro-radio antercontrient.

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#### PEOPLE, EVENTS, LETTERS, NEWS, PRODUCTS & MORE

ONAIR

WNDB (Thunder 101)/Jeffersonville, NY, held its annual Thunder Blood Bowlin January, with almost 100 listeners braving bad weather to donate blood to the local American Red Cross blood bank.





Radio Disney SVP/GM Sean Cocchia (I) and Disney VP/Music Production Jay Stutler with members of the Never Land Pirate Band during an exclusive event at Radio Disney.



WKIS/Miami air personalities Kenny Walker (I) and Matt Walker with traffic reporter U-Tum Laverne backstage at WKIS' annual Chili Cookoft.



WKIS/Miami took advantage of the warm Florida to hold its annual Chili Cookoff in January. Hanging backstage is one of the show's headliners, Trace



WKIS/Miami evening personality Eric Brandon with up-and-coming act The Band Perry. Seen here at the WKIS Chili Cookoff are (I-r) Reid Perry, Kimberly Perry, Brandon, and Neil Perry.



Matt "Money" Smith (I) and Petros Papadakis of Fox Sports Radio Network's *Petros & Money* talked basketball with Los Angeles Lakers EVP Jeanie Buss during a recent in-studio visit.





# **Radio Needs A Long-Term Plan**

How Country Became Today's Top Format

**O** ver the years I've heard about how country music and country radio became a significantly changed industry. Long gone are the days when country music was a second-class citizen on radio, and just as long gone are perceptions that the country radio audience has green teeth and no money to buy products. Country radio is dominant in station count and in listening, national television networks broadcast country music events, and country

stars are crossing over to the mainstream. I started hearing about the changes to come a couple of decades ago, when Frank Mull, then head of the Country Radio Seminar, told me about a 20-year plan for country music. I reconnected with Frank before a Merle Haggard concert in Texas and talked with him more about that plan, and my curiosity led me to discussions with executives from the labels, radio, and various industry associations.

Through those discussions, I learned about a program called "Leadership Music," established in 1989 to help young people in the industry understand country music and culture. And alongside that program, as I understand it, was a long-term plan to move country music into the mainstream.

These leaders told me they'd discovered that each faction in country moved on its own path, often not considering or caring about the concerns of other factions. Leadership Music forced members of the industry to learn about each part of the country ecosystem, helping them relate to issues and problems faced by other factions and to be more responsive to the industry as a whole. If you've become part of the country ecosystem within the last couple of decades, you probably went through this program at some point in your career.

Not only should the we applaud the leaders of the country radio industry for having the guts and patience to build a plan, we should



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view what they've achieved as a lesson for the entire industry. Good things don't happen overnight.

I encourage industry leaders, board members at the RAB and NAB, and radio CEOs to take a long-term view of our industry. Where do we want to be in 20 years? What challenges do we face? What perceptions need to be changed? What would happen if radio stations, advertisers, record labels, industry associations, and others were to unite with a common purpose?

The country industry's leaders brought in outside consultants to help herd the cats of the various factions, then communicated the plan, measured its progress regularly, made adjustments based on the market, and trained young people coming into the industry.

Radio's conditions today, good and not so good, are a result of decisions made by others in the past. As industry leaders, we must not think only about today. We must do our best to leave this industry in better shape once we

are long gone. We need a 20year plan.

R. Enic I pload B. ERIC RHOADS. GEO/PUBLISHER

# Sun & Fun Media Nashville Vacations for Country Stations

Our 5 stations in the Greenville, NC market have used Sun & Fun Media on an annual basis for many years. These trips have been featured in numerous on air promotions and used profitably for client and seller incentive programs. The Sun & Fun staff handle trip processing without any hassles and our travelers always love their trips.

Larry Wiess, GM NextMedia Group Ratings Promotions Client Incentives Listener Contests

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# Wrangle Powerful Copy From Your Client. Here's How

he success of a radio schedule depends primarily on the offer made by the advertiser. You need an offer that compels your listeners to respond — an offer unique to your station, so you get credit for everyone who responds, regardless of whether they say, "I heard your ad on blah-blah radio."

You want response, and you want credit. So get face-toface with your client and ask:

**QUESTION 1:** What percentage of your sales volume comes from repeat or referral customers? Give it your best guess.

QUESTION 2: What percentage of your sales volume is triggered by your location, its signage and visibility? Again, give it your best guess.

Add these two percentages. Most retailers will estimate about 80 percent of their traffic count to be repeat, referral, or location-driven. Deduct the combined percentages from 100.

"The remaining percentage, 20 percent, is your 'advertising-driven' traffic, new customers who came to you solely because of your ads. I'm betting that percentage is a lot lower than you would have guessed. Am I right?"

**QUESTION 3:** How many unique customers have you served in the past 12 months? You may need to consult your records.

You continue, "Now apply your 'ad-driven traffic' percentage to the number of unique customers you've sold in the past 12 months. That will tell you how many new customers came to you solely because of your advertising. If you sold 10,000 unique customers during the past 12 months and you estimate 20 percent of those to be addriven, your ad-driven customer count is 2,000.

"Divide that number into your annual ad budget. The result of that division, the quotient, is your cost of customer acquisition. It's how much you're spending on advertising to bring one new customer through your doors.

"Write your cost of customer acquisition LARGE on a sheet of paper. Stare at it for a moment.

"The point I'm trying to make is this: Your cost of customer acquisition is a reflection of the public's interest in your message. The more powerful your message, the lower your cost of customer acquisition.

"The primary goal of advertising is new customer acquisition. Your future repeat and referral business depend on it. Good customers move to other towns, or die, and you never see them again. It happens to every business, and it happens every year.

"About 20 percent of the population in the average American community didn't live there a year ago. How are you reaching out to these newbies?

"We can drive your cost of customer acquisition way,

way down, I guarantee it. All we need is a powerful message, an offer so irresistible that a large of number of people will respond to it. What's hot? What is everyone is hoping to find?"

Show your client how offering the hot item at an extraordinary price, even at a loss, is far less expensive than paying for ads that don't work.

Let's assume a jeweler spent \$500,000 in advertising last year and sold 10,000 unique customers. He estimates about 20 percent of his 10,000 customers,

2,000 people, were advertising-driven. \$500,000 divided by 2,000 customers indicates a cost of customer acquisition of \$250 per customer.

Now you convince the jeweler to promote a highly desirable item that usually sells for \$100. (His cost on the item is \$50. Competitors sometimes discount it to \$75 or \$80.) Purely to drive traffic, you advertise this item heavily for two weeks before Valentine's Day for just \$40. The jeweler is losing \$10 on every sale.

A thousand customers buy the item for \$40. Half of them were "old" customers, half were new. The jeweler feels like he "lost" \$10,000 but admits he brought 500 new customers into his store for the first time.

The same ad budget that brought in 2,000 new customers last year is bringing in 2,500 new customers. The cost of customer acquisition has already dropped from \$250 per customer to just \$200. And you've only made one powerful offer, for two weeks. Can you imagine what will happen when you do this four or five times a year? Traffic will explode as everyone begins saying, "That store has great prices."

Some advertisers will want to argue about the wisdom of this strategy. Smile at them, walk out the door, and drive directly to their biggest competitor. When you've driven the fool into bankruptcy and made his competitor fabulously wealthy, drive past the fool's store occasionally and spit on his grave.

But never quit smiling.

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