

# RADIO INK

Vol. XXVI, No. 3 February 7, 2011 PUBLISHED BI-WEEKLY

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Michael McVay  
President,  
McVayMedia

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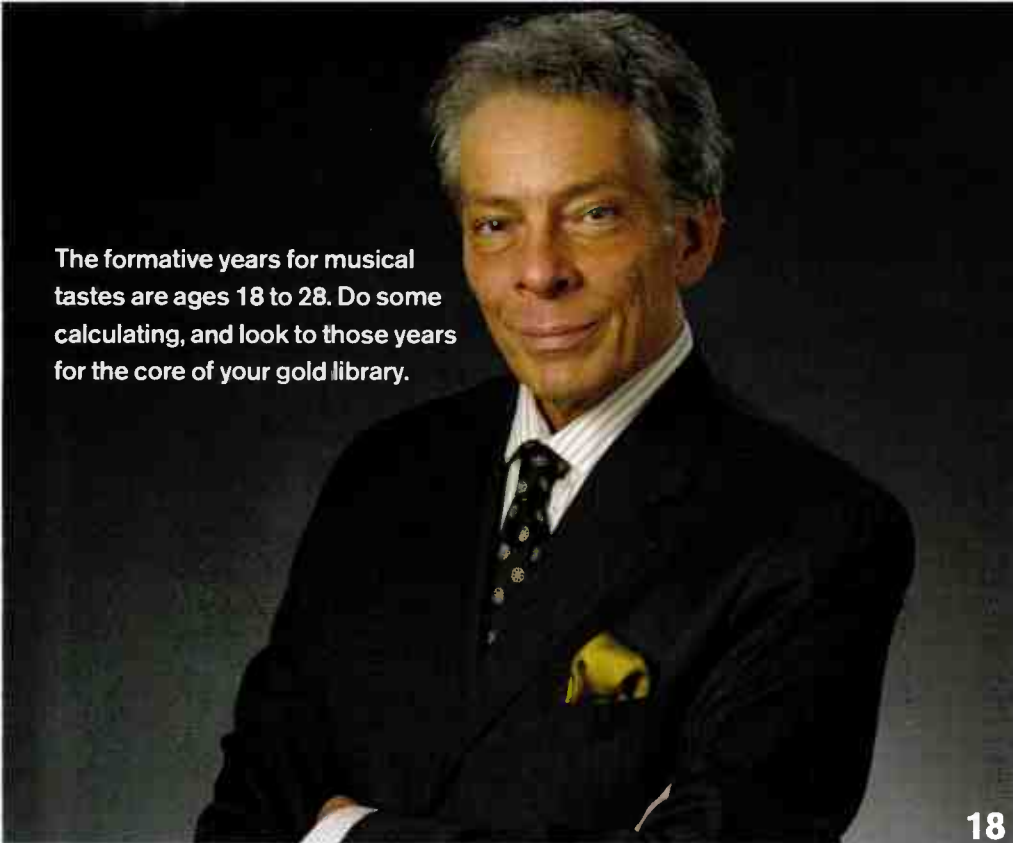


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The formative years for musical tastes are ages 18 to 28. Do some calculating, and look to those years for the core of your gold library.

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**POSTMASTER:** Send change of address to Radio Ink, Box 2, Winter Bch, FL 32787. Second-class postage paid at West Palm Beach, FL and at additional offices. Subscription Rate: \$249 for one year. All subscriptions, renewals and changes of address should include address label from most recent issue and be sent to the Circulation Department, Radio Ink, 2090 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd., Suite 300, West Palm Beach, FL 33409. Copying done for other than personal or professional reference without the express permission of Radio Ink is prohibited. Approval required for special permission to the Managing Editor. Reprints and back issues available upon request. Printed in the United States.



- PUBLISHER**  
B. Eric Rhoads      eric@radioink.com
- VICE PRESIDENT/GENERAL MANAGER**  
Deborah Parenti      deborah@radioink.com
- EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**  
Brida Connolly      brida@radioink.com
- TECHNOLOGY EDITOR**  
Judith Gross      judith@radioink.com
- MANAGING EDITOR**  
Wendy Bernstein      wendy@radioink.com
- CREATIVE DIRECTOR**  
Kenneth Whitney      ken@radioink.com
- PRODUCTION COORDINATOR**  
Nicolynn Kuper      nicolynn@radioink.com

- VP/ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER**      561-351-8639  
Lois Ann Chooljian      lois@radioink.com
- VP/NATIONAL SALES**      704-895-5483  
Chuck Renwick      chuck@radioink.com
- DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SALES**      916-721-3410  
Dale Tucker      dale@radioink.com
- MARKETING MANAGER**      937-371-8666  
Evelyn Yaus      evelyn@radioink.com
- MARKETING CONSULTANT**      646-808-6505  
Renee Cassis      renee@radioink.com



- CHAIRMAN/PUBLISHER**  
B. Eric Rhoads      eric@radioink.com  
twitter.com/encrhoads  
facebook.com/people/Eric-Rhoads/601906475
- VP/OPERATIONS**  
Tom Elmo      tomelmo@radioink.com
- WASHINGTON, DC, COUNSEL**  
John Wells King      Garvey, Schubert & Barer
- EXECUTIVE EDITOR EMERITUS/LOS ANGELES**  
Dwight Case

**Our Mission:** Radio Ink is committed to improving radio management by being more successful by providing fresh, accurate, timely content, resources, and education in a fun, easy-to-read, positive, pro-radio environment.

**EDITORIAL OFFICES:**  
2090 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd. • Suite 300  
West Palm Beach, FL 33409  
Phone 561-655-8778 • Fax 561-655-6164  
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**B. ERIC RHOADS**  
FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

# How To Prove Radio Doesn't Work

I usually love the creative and effective ideas clients craft for their radio ads. But sometimes their ideas are just plain stupid.

My favorite stupid idea comes from the client who decides to test radio to "see if it works." Testing radio is fine, and it will work if done properly. The problem arises when the person testing radio doesn't know how it works and refuses to spend money to compare radio fairly to a medium where a larger investment is being made.

A major department store in Salt Lake City once told me they would never advertise on our radio station because we didn't show up on their in-store surveys. "Hmm, where have you been advertising?" I asked. "And who does show up?" Amazingly, the stations the store was advertising on showed up on the in-store surveys. Some stations have top-of-mind awareness based on longevity. We were fairly new at the time, but we knew we had listeners.

The client agreed to do a promotion in which we sent people to the store for a special red Valentine's Day sweater. We were the only place advertising the special sweater, and it sold out in record time. But the in-store survey conducted during the promotion still showed we had no listeners. Even though we sold out the sweaters, the store still didn't buy us because they believed their own survey more than our ability to move product.

One classic test is to offer a 10 percent discount on a product if someone says they heard the ad on WXYZ. Pretty creative, huh? Yawn. First, consumers won't do it. It's begging. Second, the incentive isn't very good. They might ask for a special product that's been advertised if it's a compelling offer, but it's kind of embarrassing to ask for a dis-




count. And even if the customer is willing, employees forget to ask where they heard an ad, don't write down the answers, or even fill in their favorite stations. Another problem is that these promotions usually don't place sufficient frequency or budgets to move product, but they're being compared to 20 times the budget spent elsewhere.

Yes, you can be a money-grubbing fool and grab it when a client suggests the idea of testing radio, but understand that it won't work. You'll fail the test and never see a dime from that client again, and you'll pollute their impression of

radio. Just say no. It's better not to get their business than to lose it over an unscientific, harebrained idea that will sour the client on radio.

You want to test my station? Fine. I'll agree to it, if I can manage how the test is conducted, place the spots, determine the budget, and control the creative. But testing will still be a bad idea. (Unless it's the old, "Let me say bad things about your store on the air" test. They'll never agree to that, even though they claim no one listens to your station.)

If a client insists on testing, walk away. There are plenty of people who will appreciate your ability to move product. 

*B. Eric Rhoads*  
B. ERIC RHOADS, CEO/PUBLISHER

**To reach me, write:**

B. Eric Rhoads, CEO/Publisher  
RADIO INK  
2090 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd. Ste. 300  
West Palm Beach, FL 33409  
Phone: 561-655-8778  
Fax: 561-655-6164  
eric@radioink.com  
facebook.com/eric.rhoads  
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## JUDITH GROSS JOINS AS TECHNOLOGY EDITOR

This issue of *Tech Ink*, the monthly "flip side" of *Radio Ink*, introduces **Judith Gross** as technology editor, focusing on technology issues in both the broadcast and new media sectors

Judith brings three decades of journalism, radio, and production knowledge and experience to *Tech Ink*, as well as a style readers will find engaging, informative, and straightforward.

Judith began her career as a radio news reporter, anchor, and producer in New York, rising to the position of news director. She's worked at both commercial and public radio stations, winning the prestigious NYS Broadcasting Award and numerous Genesis awards over her radio career.

On the trade press side of the industry, Judith has used her sharp reporting skills and experience in "cutting to the chase" to explore, explain, and define issues and ideas important to broadcasters. Her work has appeared in publications including *Broadcast Week* and *Broadcast Management/Engineering*, and she has served as editor-in-chief of *Radio World* and *Radio World International*. She also launched the first newsletter covering digital radio.

Along with her media background, Gross has served as creative director at several ad agencies. Most recently, she was mid-day personality and creative director for Equinox Broadcasting/Binghamton, NY, and she now owns and runs JG Creative Media.

Judith will also serve as host of *Radio Ink's* 2011 Tech Summit, May 17-18, at the Microsoft Silicon Valley Campus in Mountain View, CA. The summit, focusing on engineering and technology, will take place immediately ahead of our annual Convergence conference, May 18-19.

So flip this magazine over and let Judith guide you through the maze of technology and how to better manage and maximize your digital assets, in this month's edition of *Tech Ink*.

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Kix Brooks performs for the troops at Camp Victory in Baghdad.



Onstage at Camp Victory (l-r) Lance Armstrong, Kix Brooks, Bob DiPiero, Robin Williams, Kathleen Madigan, and Lewis Black.

Kix Brooks, host of *American Country Countdown*, spent part of December performing for members of the U.S. military serving overseas. Kix was part of the USO's annual holiday tour and joined Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. Mike Mullen in traveling to Afghanistan and Iraq. Also joining Admiral Mullen to spread holiday cheer to the troops were seven-time Tour de France champion Lance Armstrong; comedians Robin Williams, Lewis Black, and Kathleen Madigan; and country songwriter and performer Bob DiPiero.



*America's Most Wanted* host John Walsh chats with Broward Sheriff Al Lamberti during taping of *All Points Bulletin With Sheriff Al Lamberti* radio show. Seen here are (in back) APB co-host Cmdr. Michael Calderin, BSO Fugitive Squad Sgt. Abby Tiger (in front) Lamberti, and Walsh. Photo: Mike Jachles/Broward Sheriff's Office.



Brandon Heath recently stopped by Z88.3 in sunny Orlando to promote the release of his newest album, *Leaving Eden*. While in town, Brandon performed a free-concert with his band. The show drew more than 1,700 Z listeners. Pictured here is Heath with Dean O'Neal, Tyler McKenzie, Ellis B. Feaster, and Jeff Cruz from Z88.3.

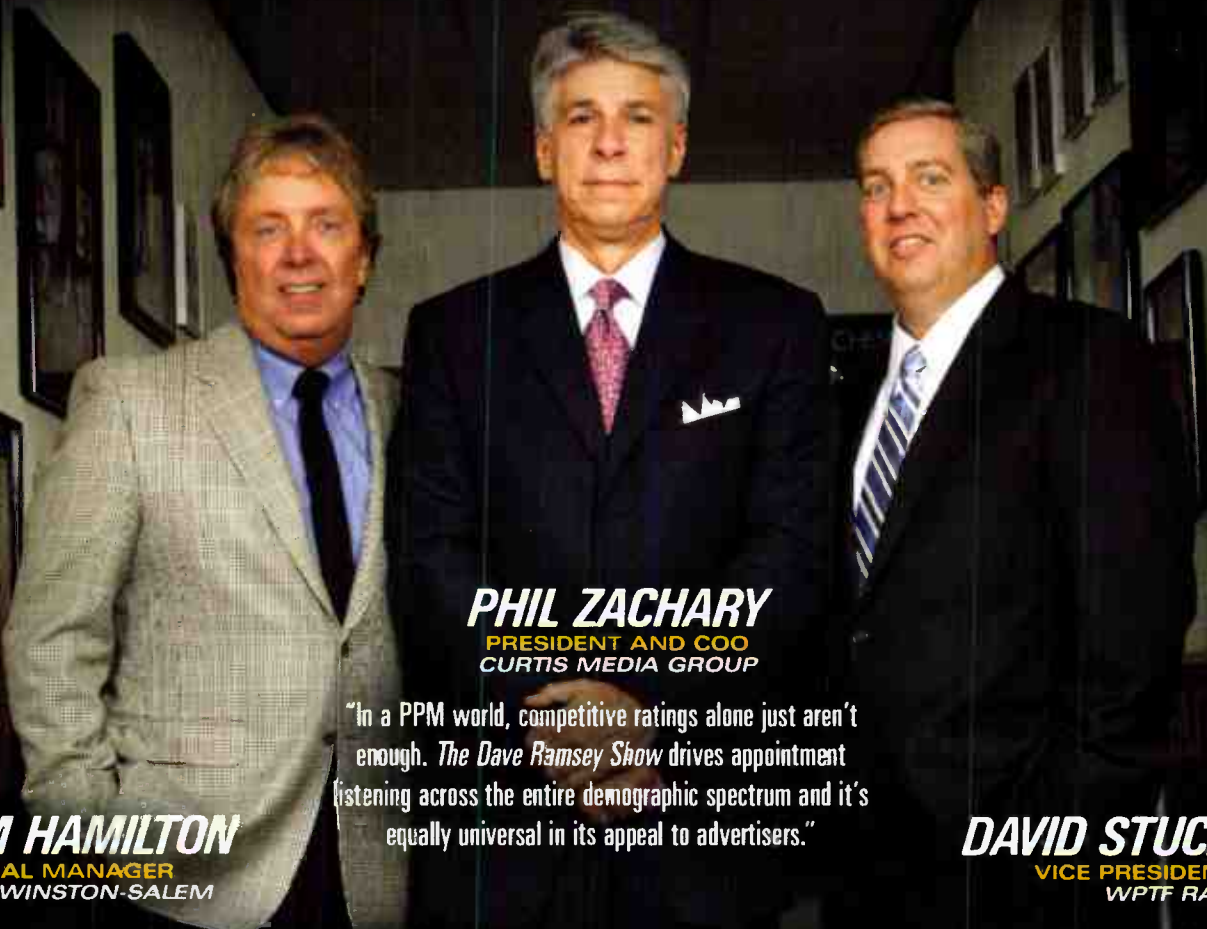


Syndicated Solutions Inc.'s *Rick & Bubba Show* broadcast live from the University of Phoenix Stadium in Glendale, Arizona, site of the BCS Championship Game between the Auburn University Tigers and the University of Oregon Ducks.



The BBC picked up the story of the retirement of New York State Broadcasters Association President Joseph A. Reilly, leading to this image in New York's Times Square.





**PHIL ZACHARY**  
PRESIDENT AND COO  
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**TOM HAMILTON**  
GENERAL MANAGER  
WSJS WINSTON-SALEM

"From a product perspective, having *The Dave Ramsey Show* within our station lineup is like having an umbrella with you during a light rain ... you know you're protected."

**DAVID STUCKEY**  
VICE PRESIDENT/GM  
WPTF RALEIGH

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# Random Entry

## The Key To Getting Attention: A Guaranteed Cure For Writer's Block.

**A** recent Yankelovich study established that Americans are confronted by more than 5,000 messages per day — radio, television, magazines, newspapers, and billboards, floating on an ocean of store signage, posters, point-of-purchase displays, and product packaging — each hoping to attract our eyes, ears, and attention.

No wonder we've become so adept at filtering ads from our consciousness. Those piranhas are out to eat us alive. And they do it so painfully predictably.

In an overcommunicated society, predictability is the enemy of effective writing.

Predictable ads are spawned when an AE asks predictable questions: "What makes you different and better than your competitors? What makes you special?" Having focused your approach inward, on the client, instead of outward, on their customers, your conversation will accelerate in an ever-tightening spiral as you both circle the drain.

I have a love-hate relationship with a certain bit of stagecraft I use when speaking publicly.

The stagecraft begins when I ask everyone in the room to write down a statement that would catch the ear of anyone who overheard it. "The statement doesn't have to make sense, it just needs to be larger than life, evocative, difficult to ignore. The kind of statement that would make a passing stranger turn and say, 'Huh?'"

I then ask six volunteers to bring their statements onto the stage. "I'm now going to craft real ads for real businesses using the statements written on these papers as the opening lines for the ads. Do I have any business owners in the room?" Six business owners take the stage. I randomly pair them up with the colorful-statement holders. I have no idea what businesses are onstage or what statements are written on those papers.

I owe Tom Robbins (not to be confused with Tony) for this little bit of stagecraft. In a magazine interview that accompanied the release of his novel *Fierce Invalids Home From Hot Climates*, Tom said, "Everything in the universe is connected, of course. It's a matter of using imagination to discover the links, and language to expand and enliven them."

"Business owner number one. Tell me about your business."

"I have a plumbing company."

"Name a profit center you'd like to improve."

"I'd like to get more calls for our 24-hour emergency service."

"Crazy person number one. What did you write on your paper?"

"I came home and the dog was bald."

The room roars with laughter as I walk to the front

of the stage and balance there, my toes hanging over the edge.

"I came home and the dog was bald. I haven't been that surprised since I woke up at 2 a.m. to pee and stepped out of bed into an inch of water. Thank God Martindale Plumbing never goes to sleep. At 2 a.m. they were just sittin' there, hoping someone would call. They fixed the problem while I made coffee. Great guys. Plumbing, 24 hours a day. But I still got no idea what to do with a bald dog. You got any suggestions?"

That whole thing smelled like a setup, right? Along with the fact that no one believes THEY can do it, half of them don't believe I can do it, either.

But not only can I do it, you can, too. "Everything in the universe is connected, of course. It's a matter of using imagination to discover the links, and language to expand and enliven them."

The keys to chaotic ad writing are:

- Randomly force upon yourself a colorful opening statement BEFORE you know what you're going to write about.
- Look for the defining characteristic(s) of that statement.

"I came home and the dog was bald." (surprise)

"I really need to fart." (embarrassment)

"Her funeral was a day late because the cement vault for her coffin didn't arrive." (death, loss and mourning, dark, claustrophobic enclosure)

By the way, those are three actual statements I was given in a single city.

- Interview the business owner. Learn what he most wants to sell. Use the defining characteristic of your opening statement as the angle of approach into your copy.

"The dog was bald." (surprise)

"I stepped out of bed into an inch of water." (surprise)

The business to which I needed to connect the fart line was a 156-year-old historic wedding chapel. No problem. I just placed that thought into the mind of the groom as he stood at the altar with his bride. His moment of relief comes when the organ begins blasting the traditional wedding exit music.

The business to which I had to connect the coffin line was "Florida's Space Coast, 30 miles of pristine beaches and Johnson Space Center, with an IMAX Theater inside." The goal is tourism. Convince people to vacation there.

Go ahead. Give it a shot. **INK**

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads, Inc. E-mail: [Roy@WizardofAds.com](mailto:Roy@WizardofAds.com)



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# The Census And Tomatoes

**M**ost people assume I like tomatoes. With a name like Parenti, I'm supposed to like tomatoes. So when I fork them out of a salad, the typical reaction is, "Aren't you Italian? Don't you like tomatoes?"

Well, I am — but I don't. The same holds true for many stereotypical assumptions, especially those related to culture or ethnicity. As global reach continues to expand with each new digital platform, such conventions can no longer be depended on to neatly define people and populations. Characteristics that once distinguished us are now likely to have morphed into the mainstream.

The 2010 Census reflects significant shifts in our nation's population, including continued Hispanic growth. Beyond numbers, however, the data implies a sea change for positioning not only toward Hispanics specifically, but

to the general market as well. The influence of Hispanic culture and how that influence alters the dynamics of mass marketing is something any station may want to consider, especially in diverse cultural markets.

I asked Rosa Serrano, president of ReSults Media and Marketing, to offer her perspective on post-2010 Census marketing tactics.

## What is the most significant census data that will impact the Hispanic population, and how should marketers adjust their messages to best reflect it?

Rosa Serrano: The new census will be a wakeup call to marketers that the general market is now a multicultural market, where minorities have become the majority populations in top U.S. DMAs.

The census data will not only continue to affirm the need for a Spanish-language marketing strategy, but will drive home the message that English-language communications to Hispanics must also be relevant and grounded by cultural insights.

The greatest frustration in the past 30 years has been how glaringly English-dominant and bilingual Hispanics are ignored by marketers. Essentially, a Hispanic who is able to understand English and consumes any amount of English-language media is considered to have the same cultural cues as the mainstream. Among Hispanic youth, to some extent, this is true. Hispanics are trendsetters and therefore contribute to mainstream culture. However, research shows that Hispanic youth are also very aware

and proud of their Latin uniqueness.

Bilingual/English-dominant Hispanics also want to be spoken to, invited, and celebrated. This is of particular interest to those of us who are parents and struggle to find role models for our children in mainstream media.

## What advice would you give to general-market stations in terms of reaching Hispanic consumers?

The single most important message to a general-market radio station is to show respect for their Hispanic listeners. It is not about creating a special Cinco de Mayo package and event, adding stereotypical Hispanic characters to the on-air team, or making Hispanic jokes. It is about truly reflecting their listeners and their communities by hiring and nurturing Hispanic talent. There are many subtle ways of showing respect for Latin culture on air by partnering to promote culturally relevant events, venues, films, cuisine, personalities, books, art, music, and holidays (such as Three Kings Day and Day of the Dead).

Being aware of a station's Hispanic listeners is not only for top youth-oriented stations, but for stations of virtually every format.

## What aspect of the Hispanic lifestyle has transcended ethnicity to the extent that perhaps it is no longer distinguished as such?

Hispanics contribute to mainstream culture through fashion, art, music, language, and affirming traditional family values. However, the one absolute, no-longer-distinguished as-separate Hispanic lifestyle contribution to mainstream is Latin food.

For example, *Bobby Flay Cooks American* is a cookbook filled with recipes that celebrate Mexican flavors and ingredients. Latin food fusion is hugely popular, allowing us to enjoy Japanese sushi with jalapenos, Korean tacos, and kimchi quesadillas.

## What digital platform is most embraced by Hispanics?

Hispanics embrace all digital platforms, but the most important has quickly become the mobile phone. We text, we talk, we share, we download, and we use the Internet — all on this evolving great little device. Hispanics are early adopters of new technology, spending more on their phones and connecting to friends and family in the U.S. and Latin America. The phone is the fastest way to connect with someone anywhere in the world and access information on absolutely any subject. ■■■

Deborah Parenti is VP/GM of Radio Ink.  
E-mail: [deborah@radioink.com](mailto:deborah@radioink.com)



Rosa Serrano  
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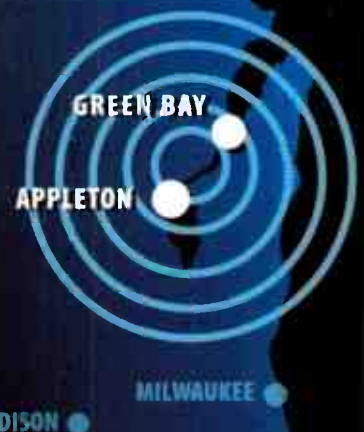
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\*Source: Eastlan Ratings Fall 2010-Appleton, WI

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[www.timelesscoolmusic.com](http://www.timelesscoolmusic.com)

# Incorporating Mobile Into Your Hispanic Marketing Strategy Is A Must

**M**obile marketing is increasing in sophistication and likely will move from being a smaller piece of marketing budgets into a major line item. This is particularly true — and necessary — for businesses targeting Hispanic consumers. The percentage of Hispanic adults who use a cellular phone has grown 26 percent since 2005, versus 18 percent for all adults. And Hispanics continue to be a fast-growing consumer group. Taken together, this information points to new truth in media and marketing today:

- This is no longer an “emerging” consumer group.
- Hispanic marketing strategy that does not include mobile is missing a powerful, personal medium Hispanic adults interact with throughout their daily lives.

In the radio industry, it's important to focus on Hispanic marketing and mobile marketing. Whether you are a radio broadcaster or have a syndicated program, you need to find ways to connect with your listeners across multiple platforms. Hispanics represent an advertising sales opportunity in mainstream formats, too. You can show your clients the power of Hispanic shoppers and ways to market to them as part of your business strategy.

## Current trends on Hispanic mobile marketing:

- Hispanics use mobile phones for entertainment as well as for communication. Twenty-two percent of Hispanic cellular users download or listen to music via wireless devices, versus 15 percent of all wireless users. Nineteen percent of Hispanic cellular users play games on their wireless devices, versus 15 percent of all wireless users.

In terms of communication, Hispanics are more likely than other cellular users to text-message. Sixty-four percent of Hispanics who use a wireless phone text-message, versus 56 percent of all cellular users. This group is also more likely than other cellular users to use their wireless device to access social networking. Twelve percent of Hispanic cellular users social network via a wireless device, versus 10 percent of all wireless users.

*Turn Insights Into Action: Use social networking and texting contests to create a community for your listening audience. Create listener promotions that rely on mobile usage to participate.*

- The Hispanic smartphone growth rate is outpacing that of the total population. Nineteen percent of Hispanic adults currently live in a household that owns one or more smartphones — such as

Blackberries or iPhones — versus five percent in 2005. Twenty-three percent of the general population currently has these devices in their household, growing from nine percent in 2005.

*Turn Insights Into Action: The app world provides a new realm for your listener to interact with your brand. Consider creating e-commerce, or a local news or weather app.*

- Hispanic mobile users listen to the radio and have distinctive listening profiles. Eighty-five percent of Hispanics who rank among the most avid radio listening audience<sup>1</sup> are cellular users, meaning that the top Hispanic radio listeners are also mobile device users. The radio formats Hispanic mobile users listen to are diverse. Regional Mexican is the top format for Hispanic mobile users; 38 percent of Hispanic mobile users listen to this format. The other top formats for Hispanic mobile users are rhythmic CHR (33 percent), Spanish contemporary (32 percent), and adult contemporary (28 percent).

*Turn Insights Into Action: The appeal to both Spanish-language and mainstream formats gives broadcasters opportunities in bilingual areas of websites — both traditional and mobile.*

- The Internet habits of Hispanic mobile users provide digital marketing insight. Hispanic cellular users are 13 percent more likely than Hispanic adults overall to have read or contributed to a blog during the past month, and 13 percent more likely to clip digital coupons. They are 13 percent more likely to read local news online, 11 percent more likely to check the weather online, and 10 percent more likely to listen to the radio online.

*Turn Insights Into Action: Is your mobile website ready with the features Hispanic mobile users want? Going online to read blogs, clip coupons, and catch up on the local news and weather are all of interest to Hispanic mobile users. Be sure to feature these on your station's or program's website.*

- Know your locals. The Hispanic listening audience and mobile audiences will continue to grow, but you can't paint the marketplace with a single brushstroke. Mobile habits will vary based on locale. Dig deeper and show your local advertisers about the benefits of targeting Hispanics, and mobile Hispanics, in your market.

\* The top 20 percent of adults in the country in terms of time spent listening to the radio. **INK**

Howard Goldberg is senior vice president of radio services at Scarborough Research.  
E-mail: hgoldberg@scarborough.com



Source: Scarborough Research, Scarborough Hispanic Multi-Market Study, Release 1 2010 (current six months).



# Wake Up And Smell The Café!

**C**onsider this fact: The United States today is the second-largest Spanish-speaking country in the world, and it is estimated that the total buying power of the U.S. Spanish-speaking population will top \$1 trillion.

Simply put, companies that haven't started a marketing campaign aimed at reaching the Hispanic marketplace are dangerously close to missing out on what could be the next marketing gold rush.

Some have already seen the promise of this marketplace and have invested their time and money wisely. Companies like P&G and McDonald's have seen the market for what it is and have reaped the benefits. These companies have decided to treat the marketplace with respect and have valued the returns that it has yielded.

Some advertisers have tried to address the Spanish-speaking market by using Spanish-dubbed general-market commercials, or by simply using their general-market spots on Spanish-language media. That approach doesn't work. P&G and McDonald's know the Hispanic market is important enough to warrant an intelligent and planned approach. By doing that, they've endeared themselves to the Hispanic community and inspired great brand loyalty.

Why are some companies still hesitant about advertising to this incredible audience? It could be fear — fear of the unknown, or fear of communicating in a language that many at these companies don't understand. Linked to that is the fear of making a mistake and alienating a key marketplace forever. So rather than taking the plunge, these companies are paralyzed into thinking that no action is the safest course.

They couldn't be more wrong. Their concerns can be alleviated by simply reaching out to the professionals already in the field. The pros on the media and agency levels are ready, able, and willing to help. They speak to this market every day, in their own language. The important message here is to DO IT.

Another reason more companies haven't taken the plunge could be a heartfelt bias, based on a reluctance to communicate to this marketplace in any language other than English. In my 30 years in broadcasting, I have often heard that companies that continue to communicate to Hispanics in Spanish are thwarting Hispanics' assimilation into American culture.

This argument starts with the history of past great migrations to this country, when immigrants arrived eager to accept their new American culture and language. Why should this new immigration class be treated any differently than immigrants that came before?

The truth is, this immigration is different from anything this country has ever seen, because of its size and enduring time span (we are still in the midst of it, with no signs of slowing down). The flow of these new immi-



grants is coming from many different countries that are bound together by similar culture, customs, religion, and, most importantly, language. Other waves of immigrants came from different parts of the world, with each country having a different language and culture.

Another major difference is that while many other immigrants came here on a one-way ticket, we did not. The ease of travel and communications affords people the ability to remain in touch with their roots on a daily basis, which keeps our customs, traditions, and language alive. This is a jet-set migration, with one foot in America and the other in our native countries. This is why companies have to treat this market differently.

The important message here is that as sales professionals selling this marketplace, we need to know that fear and bias do exist, and the only way to combat them is to confront them head-on. Talk openly about the way the advertiser feels. Deal with the facts. Talk up the potential payoff, and get the client to focus on the bottom line. The numbers are so impressive that they will make your argument that much more compelling.

Leave emotions and feelings behind, and start looking at the facts. The facts say you are staring at a marketplace of gigantic proportions, and it's growing. The facts say that it's here, and it needs to be addressed differently than the general market. No time to lose.

I think I smell café. don't you? **INK**

Frank Flores is the owner of Flores Media, Sales & Marketing.  
E-mail: [radiofflores@yahoo.com](mailto:radiofflores@yahoo.com)



# Buzz-Worthy Takeaways From The 2011 Consumer Electronics Show

**A**fter experiencing the fever-pitch excitement of the 2011 International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, two questions are rattling around my brain. Why is the CES so buzzworthy? And what does it tell us about radio? The answer to both: Consumers really are the focus. The CES crowd thrives on that. Consumers drive their innovation, not electronics. And the more we remember that in radio, the more our culture will embrace change and adapt to a whole new social order.

The CES is all about hype, glitter, bluster, and pizzazz. Nametags fly by at a dizzying pace. Thought leaders and high-tech innovators are everywhere. Where is radio? We are represented, but imagine if we saw more radio-affiliated names at the event — or, better yet, imagine if we were on the vanguard of change and invention!

Most of the products on display won't change the world, but if you listen to the exhibitors talk about their products, it's as though no products exist other than their own. That can teach us a lesson about radio's culture: Enthusiasm breeds creativity, which fosters success.

## INNOVATION INCUBATOR

I love tracking the success or failure of some of the products seen at the previous year's CES. In 2010, Microsoft announced a phone called the Kin, aimed at younger demographics. It failed quickly. And 3D TV also failed to attract mainstream interest.

What will be this year's clunker? What will soar?

CES is a barometer of our times and a predictor of the future. If the vibe of this year's show is any indication, we'll continue to see positive economic signs in the months ahead. Event officials estimated that attendance was up approximately 140,000 people over last year and came close to 2007's all-time high.

CEA President/CEO Gary Shapiro said in his keynote that CES has "more innovation and cause for celebration than at any event in our history." And part of that cause for celebration is the pace of innovation in the electronics business.

But what fosters a mindset of innovation?

Google uses the term "Fail fast." To me, that means we need to recognize the success that resides in "failure." It means being daring and unafraid to fail. It reminds me



of learning how to ride a bike: If you think you're going to fall, you really start to wobble.

Radio needs to emulate Silicon Valley by teaching our internal teams how to develop their own research and development process. Here are a few thoughts to consider:

- Our approach to HD content.
- App development for tablet devices, especially considering items like the Visteon iPad dock for the car. The Visteon dock lets the iPad communicate with the vehicle's computer via a wireless network and makes control of the HVAC, radio, phone, and navigation system possible from any seat in the vehicle.
- Radio app development for the many TV platforms that allow apps.
- Content delivery via the multiple platforms our audience uses (remember the consumers!). One of the major themes of CES this year was mobility.

When I asked brand guru Jack Trout about the mobility of FM radio and smartphones, he boiled it down with characteristic clarity: "It's just turning your phone into a portable radio."

In the smartphone category, Motorola made a very strong showing with the Droid Bionic, which will be Verizon's first 4G LTE network release. The device has a beautiful 4.3-inch HD display, Skype videoconferencing, and a built-in radio. Also impressive, the phone user can connect the device to an HDTV to view all the HD content happening on the phone (like video, gaming, or videoconferencing).

Last year, the big buzz at CES surrounded netbooks. Another example of how quickly things change this







year: That buzz transferred to a new product category called tablets. Forrester Research is predicting 82 million iPads by 2015. There were some 80 tablets displayed this year at CES, but apparently most of those companies don't believe in product differentiation. It's still all a blur!

But one highlight in the crowded tablet category is the Motorola Xoom, which was named best in show. This is a slick device, with front- and back-facing cameras, a gigantic 10-inch display, and a sweet connection to Verizon's 4G network.

## SO WHY DOES CES ENERGIZE ME?

I love being around smart people who provide action takeaways. My five key items are:

### 1. Personalization and customer focus (consumers, consumers)

Radio has to learn from the technology business and insist that we never hurt the customer experience. We need to keep asking if we are truly getting it when it comes to listeners and potential listeners.

When I asked Gary Shapiro for ideas on radio innovation, he echoed the theme, suggesting robust ideas centered on delivering what listeners want. These could include:

- Develop online, call-in, or write-in contests to learn what listeners want your radio station to do or cover.
- Use citizen guest hosts, or even sell time to guest hosts to enhance revenue and monetize what radio owns — the ability to make people local celebrities.
- Get local by inviting police, teachers, and athletes on air to talk about issues or preferences that are consistent with your format.
- Use the Web. Develop apps across platforms for your station. Use it to drive listeners, stay current on local information, and expose talent. Use RDS and streaming wherever and whenever possible, in every format.
- Elevate customer/listener focus to priority one.

## 2. Urgency

We must act with competitive urgency to improve our game. Automakers have created a battle for the dashboard, and our content has to be impeccable.

There are add-on devices like the Livio Radio, which creates listening opportunities for 42,000 broadcast and Internet radio stations via WiFi, so there is more battle for attention.

## 3. Research and Development

Radio must take the lead from the technology companies and get into the business of research and development. Let's break down the internal barriers and expand our horizons.

## 4. Strategic Partnerships

We should emulate Ford and welcome strategic partnerships to enhance our brands. Ford has developed partnerships in an open-source manner with its in-car apps, reaching out directly and saying, "Become a Ford app developer and partner."

## 5. Clarity and Focus for Who We Are

We need to re-evaluate the clarity of our branding message and resist mid-'80s radio jargon. Let's use pride, passion, and plain language. Even a dash of emotional connection wouldn't hurt!

I love the Ford Sync branding line: "Nirvana for control freaks." We can all learn from branding expert Guy Kawasaki, who told me, "I think the big lesson that radio can take from CES is that you have to innovate and evolve, or you're dead. You can view the Internet and Pandora and all of those things as threats, or you can view those things as an opportunity."

But none of that innovation matters if we forget who it's for: consumers. After all, it's the CES, not the ES.

See you there next year. What will radio bring to the table — or to the tablet? **■**

Buzz Knight is VP/program development at Greater Media.  
E-mail: bknight@greatermidiaboston.com

# State Of The Format

Expert advice on the challenges and opportunities ahead

**F**or this issue's focus on formats, *Radio Ink* asked some of the most respected consultants in music radio to talk about what they see ahead in their areas of special expertise. They touch on what's hot now, the competitive landscape, and what lies ahead — especially in the ever-more-crucial arena of digital and social media.

First up, McVay Media President Mike McVay talks about the state of AC, and what he calls today's "heated, head-to-head battle" with Top 40. We also asked McVay to tell us a bit about his own hopes and plans, and got some surprising responses.

## AC CAN WIN AGAINST RED-HOT CHR

**I**t's the official start of the second decade of the 2000s, and AC and CHR are once again in a heated head-to-head battle for female listeners. They both want young moms and their kids. The music in the two formats is nearly identical; the difference is the gold they play, the rotation or frequency of the new songs they expose, and the content from the air talent.

The music available to CHR right now is very palatable to adults. It's uptempo, bright, and fun, at a time when we need uplifting, positive energy. Every time North Americans face tough times, CHR and classic hits (oldies) attract listeners looking for an escape.

AC, meanwhile, is in its truest sense contemporary music for adults. CHR is providing us with some tremendous music right now — Katy Perry, Lady Gaga, Beyonce, Bruno Mars, Michael Buble, John Mayer, Miley Cyrus, Daughtry, Pink, Kesha, Black Eyed Peas — and CHRs are growing the ratings that attract more stations into that arena. AC stations are facing a challenge, but it's only momentary; as the trend

trackers change format to CHR, the increased competition among them will benefit the heritage ACs in the market.

### Forget Traditional Demos

Most AC radio stations remain upper-demo in their markets despite their efforts to make their music and image more contemporary -- hot ACs and ACs are by nature still positioned as being older than CHRs. The target for a hot AC should be a 30-year-old woman, and for a mainstream AC, a 40-year-old woman.

Forget traditional demos, and target the ages 30 to 40 as the battlefield for hot AC and 35 to 50 for mainstream AC. The formative years for musical tastes are ages 18 to 28. Do some calculating, and look to those years for the core of your gold library.

The musical and production energy level of AC is brighter today for both hot AC and mainstream AC, and it will get brighter. We believe hot AC will be an oasis away from rap and hip-hop while mainstream AC will be more

**At last — an attorney who's been there!**

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Attorney/Consultant

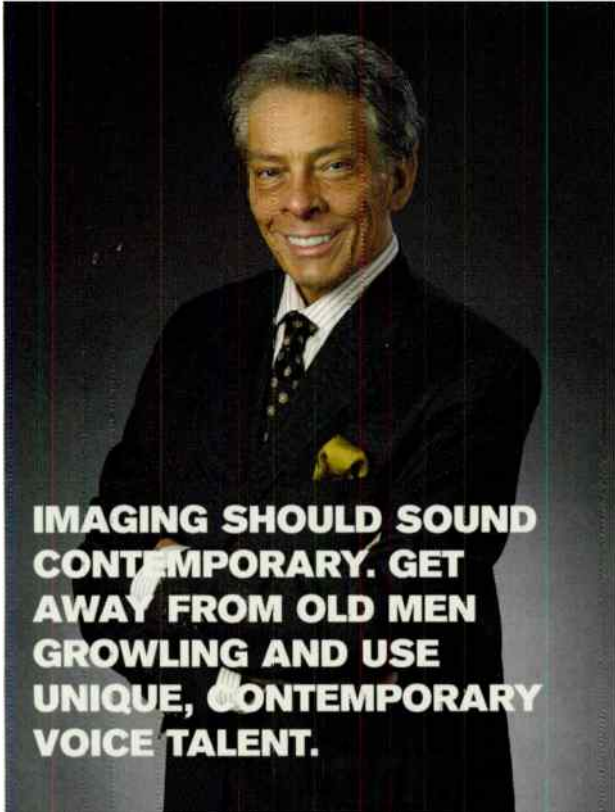
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gold than hot AC and much more familiar than CHR.

Imaging should sound contemporary. Get away from old men growling and use unique, contemporary voice talent. Consider females and males combined in your imaging. Bring back jingles — they're a musical way to image the station. Produce a memorable radio station.

Your talent and news content should connect with the audience. Newspapers must sound as if they're living the lifestyle of the 25-45-year-old female and provide that connection, while your talent need to maximize music quantity and entertain in short bites of content.

You must still target at-work listening, but remember that at-work listening is not necessarily in an office. The correct phrase is "Listen WHILE you work."

The most successful AC client stations are involved in creating, or co-opting, events that endear them to the audience. Stations like WRAL-FM/Raleigh have become embedded in the fabric of their listeners' lives with events like Girls Night Out. Creative contests tied to specific days are attractive to listeners and are PPM-friendly: Mani-Pedi Mondays, Shoesday Tuesday, Win a Wii Wednesday, Thursday Ladies' Night, Facial Fridays. Give the women in your audience a break. Make their lives better and easier, and they'll give you a button on their radios. Fight for that preset on their iPods.

### Maximize Social Media

Marketing is critical if you're endeavoring to truly lower your station's average age. You'll need to build new and younger come among 35-44-year-olds. The tactics you use should include social media, with your talent on Facebook, using Twitter, and writing weekly blogs for the station's website. Train your talent in how to maximize the digital platforms available to you.

Television is the best way to provide your audience with a sample of what you present on the air, and you can use your website to present online videos and encourage online listeners to share your station with others. Direct mail is still a tangible marketing tool, but couple it with online marketing and you'll tremendously magnify the exposure for your station. **INK**

Mike McVay is president of McVay Media. E-mail: [mike@mcvaymedia.com](mailto:mike@mcvaymedia.com)

## SIDELINES

**What are your hobbies?** Exotic cars, exercise and sports, collecting wine.

**Recommended reading?** *The Primal Blueprint* by Mark Sisson

**Who are your mentors or role models?** Ed Salamon, Larry "JB" Robinson, Tom Embrescia, Lew Dickey Sr.

**Who is the most interesting person you've ever met?**

Ringo Starr is the most interesting person I've ever had dinner with, and WBEB/Philadelphia owner Jerry Lee is the most intriguing and complex person I've met. My wife, Doris, interests me because of her intelligence and perspective on life. She's refreshing.

**If you had 30 minutes to sit down and talk with someone, who would you choose?** Chuck Knoll, the coach of the Pittsburgh Steelers during their 1970s Super Bowl dominance. I'd love to learn how he motivated his team of maulers and yet remained above the fray. He was the consummate gentleman, at the helm of a destroyer.

**If you could be granted any wish, what would it be?** To introduce my deceased parents to our grandchildren, Elle and Avery. I'd also love them to meet our now-adult daughters and their men, too. I think they'd be proud.

**If you could go back in time, where would you go?** I've never been the kind of person who lives in the past. I like the present. I'm excited about the future. I don't want to rush through my life, but I can't wait to see how it turns out. Maybe 1957 — then I'd buy a '57 Chevy Bel Air convertible for \$1,200 and keep it forever. I had one in perfect condition. Rosie was her name. Sold her two years ago for much more than \$1,200.

**What radio station did you listen to as a kid?** KQV/Pittsburgh and WIXZ/McKeesport, PA, were the two biggest. They were both Top 40s. Jim Quinn was the night jock (now mornings on news/talk WPGB/ Pittsburgh) and WIXZ had a morning man using the name Jeff Christie. Today he's known as Rush Limbaugh. You never know who's listening to you when you're on the air.

**What did you want to be when you grew up?** I wanted to be a DJ. I built a pirate radio station in my parents' attic when I was 14. I actually started at WHJB/Greensburg, PA, when I was 15.

**What is your pet peeve?** Sloppy, unprepared air talent who are phoning it in. Be a professional. You're an entertainer — ENTERTAIN! Great talent don't just show up and happen to do a show. They make it look easy, but it's hard work. I have zero tolerance for anyone who does anything halfway.

**What is the most embarrassing thing that's happened to you in your radio career?** There are too many to keep track of. I'm not very politically correct. I sometimes say things without my filter being engaged. I should have a built-in seven-second delay.

**What has been your most elusive goal?** It will surprise some to know that I've not yet accomplished my goal. While many see me as successful, I've not yet enjoyed the success I desire. Maybe that's what drives me. I'm not going to tell you that goal until the chase has ended.

**Is there anything you would do differently?** I don't have many professional regrets. Perhaps hang on to the radio stations that I once owned. I would have passed up on some investments that I made, and I wish I'd have become involved in others that I didn't make. My advice to the young people in our company and to my children has been to buy tangible assets that have value and can be sold. Most of my earnings have come from operating a personal services business. The value of a practice is less than that of businesses that generate passive income.



# AC Trends: Digital + Research

**W**hile everyone is worried about digital strategy, I worry that they're ignoring over-the-air strategy. Our on-air product is what still propels 99 percent of revenues. Let's get back to research and development for the terrestrial frequency and pay more attention to succeeding with the number one revenue producer we have.

Competition for Web traffic is enormous, but most radio sites are, quite frankly, boring at best. (If you think listeners want to see what the DJs look like, you may be on the wrong track.) Without a compelling online presence, your digital strategy will fail.

essarily experts on how to handle Facebook conversations and Twitter tweets.

The music on AC radio is evolving. When my wife told me Eminem and Rihanna's "Love the Way You Lie" is her new favorite song, I knew something big was going on! PPM is clearly showing AC changing at a record pace. Look for AC to continue moving more contemporary. What was a format of Phil Collins, Billy Joel, Whitney Houston, and Rod Stewart now also includes Lady Gaga, Daughtry, Nickelback, and Taylor Swift. Don't be afraid of this music. Embrace it.

Since PPM measures actual listening, we can now learn what needs to be done to grow and keep listeners. Not in a PPM market? Put PPM tactics to use in your diary market and watch your ratings go up.

More focus belongs on the on-air product, and on promoting it. Unless we get back to the basics, we may be looking at yet another tough year, not to mention declining listenership and ratings. Research and marketing should be part of the basic strategy of every radio station, regardless of format.

Two thoughts: 1. If you are a music station, you can no longer guess what the best music is. To win, music needs to be researched. 2. We are in the advertising business. How can we possibly promote advertising when we ourselves don't advertise?

Radio is designed for Main Street, not Wall Street. Please don't misunderstand: It's OK that large public companies own the stations. What I advocate is allowing stations to run like local companies. Serve your local community with great music, fun personalities, and a great civic presence, and see what happens to your ratings.

Take a hint from national restaurant groups such as McDonald's and Panera Bread. Most of the menu is the same nationwide, but the stores each offer something specific to the local community.

And remember, competition is everywhere you look! I recently played an aircheck for my 20-year-old son, Corey. It was from my on-air days at WPRO-FM in Providence. PRO was fast-paced, it had tons of reverb and jingles, and the jocks played a major role in the presentation. After listening to it, he said, "Wow, that was a great-sounding station. It's really too bad radio isn't like that today." Interesting observation from a 20-year-old. **INK**

Gary Berkowitz is president of Berkowitz Broadcast Consulting. E-mail: [gary@garyberk.com](mailto:gary@garyberk.com)



Ask your listeners what they want from your website, and give it to them. You may be surprised at what they say. Hint: For AC, think more coupons and less pop-tart show business news.

In 2011, successful digital operations will be run as separate departments at radio stations. Hire young people who grew up online. They know what consumers are looking for and how to get them to react. DJs are not nec-



# CHR: Pop On Top

It's been a nerve-racking few years, but this decade looks like it's going to be a glorious time for radio. For the entertainment business, and especially radio, 2011 will be more and more about broadcasting digital content that can be viewed on multiple platforms. The music and artists that get that kind of exposure have the best chance of becoming the most popular.

Great digital platforms like Clear Channel's iheartradio and CBS's Radio.com, as well as Facebook and Twitter, are paving the way for radio to secure its foothold in the digital landscape.

Leading the way for radio is mainstream Top 40, which does best of all formats during the pop-rebirth phase of the music cycle I discovered back in 1991 – that is, a repeating 10-year pattern of musical changes, from extreme rhythm/rock to pop to doldrums (softening), that has held true for the last 60 years.

Mainstream Top 40 hasn't been this hot in a decade. In the top 10 markets, stations like WHTZ (Z100)/New York, KIIS-FM/Los Angeles, and WIHT/Washington are among the leaders in their markets 12-plus and winning in their target. Other Top 40s, like KHKS/Dallas and WXKS/Boston, dominate 12-plus overall.

And there are other reasons mainstream Top 40 stations are doing so fantastically in both PPM and diary. The country is obsessed with entertainment and pop culture, movies, TV, news, and the artists that make the hits, and there isn't a format that does a better job of capturing pop culture than mainstream Top 40.

CBS Radio VP Dom Theodore observed that the old model of a radio station as an appliance that dispenses music is dead, and I couldn't agree more. Radio can't compete with every music appliance, but it can create exclusive content, with great personalities seamlessly woven together with great production values and imaging.

Radio's future is about getting this content onto any device, whether it's audio on radio or audio and visual content on the Internet or an iPhone, with all of it keeping listeners deeply connected.

Mainstream Top 40 radio has an amazing advantage it hasn't had in years, with talent like Ryan Seacrest and great morning shows like Clear Channel's Elvis Duran on WHTZ (Z100)/New York and in syndication and *Matty in the Morning*, based at WXKS/Boston, propelling stations to the top of their markets. And the top-rated mainstream Top 40s, especially in major markets, have exceptional air talent in all dayparts.

Radio has never had the advantages it has now for creating deep connections with its listeners. When Clancy

Woods and our team launched hot AC KHMV/Houston in 1990, it was our dream to create a database with the name of every listener and to make deep and lasting connections with them through faxes, phone calls, mixers, and exclusive events. Exceptional promotions director Joe Pogge helped us create the magic that made Mix 96.5 a success. But never in my wildest dreams could we have imagined the possibilities available today through social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr.

Clear Channel's New York cluster is an amazing example of social networking excellence, especially at Z100. Radio hasn't been nearly as important to listeners who've grown up in the last decade as it was to the generations before them. But radio can now go where those younger listeners live, through the Internet and social networking. These platforms will be critical as we fight to regain a foothold with the under-25 generation. **INK**

Guy Zapoleon is president of Zapoleon Media Strategies. Email: [guy@zapoleon.com](mailto:guy@zapoleon.com).

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# Country Leads Into 2011

**A**rbitron's "Radio Today 2010" makes it official: Country was America's number one format during the past year.

Two thousand, six hundred and twenty-six U.S. radio stations program country music full-time, and country remained the nation's top-rated format as of fall 2009, with a 13.4 12+ share. And it's not only number one nationally, but in most dayparts and among most age groups.

Country gained in national audience share for the second straight year and reached more than 64 million consumers each week, second only to AC.

Country ranked number one in the growth of college-education attainment and in increased affluence (\$50,000-plus in household income) between spring '02 and fall '09, was the undisputed leader in many states, and was broadcast on more terrestrial radio stations than any other format — including nearly twice as many FMs.

Some storm clouds did appear on the horizon when Arbitron released the 2010 edition of "Hispanic Radio Today," showing country with a 5.3 share in diary-based national averages but only a 2.3 in PPM panel stats. And PPM appears to be treating country stations that are alone in their markets a lot more kindly than in PPM metros with two country stations.

But very attractive Hispanic demos await the country leader who can attract Latinos in those markets. Fifty-three percent of country's 12-plus audience is female and 48 percent is male; 19.9 percent is 25-34, 18.5 percent is 45-54, and 17.9 percent is 35-44.

The total (ethnic + non-ethnic) audience for country is 53 percent/47 percent female/male, but the audience skews older, with the largest cell being 45-54 (20 percent), followed by 35-44 (16 percent) and 25-34 (15 percent).

Two percent of country's audience is black and just 7 percent is Hispanic, so it would seem that a challenge for the format in the near future will be to grow younger by appealing to a more diverse audience without losing the traditional, upper-demo core.

Fortunately, country's superstar artist base has been shifting for the last few years, with little polarity, low levels of dislike and burn, and extremely high positive passion across all segments of the target audience as exciting new performers like Miranda Lambert, Lady Antebellum, Zac Brown Band, Billy Currington, Luke Bryan, Josh Turner, Blake Shelton, Carrie Underwood, and Jerrod Niemann produce exciting songs that are testing at the same levels as longtime music and concert-ticket sellers as Alan Jackson, Toby Keith, Brad Paisley, Tim McGraw, Reba McEntire, and Kenny Chesney.

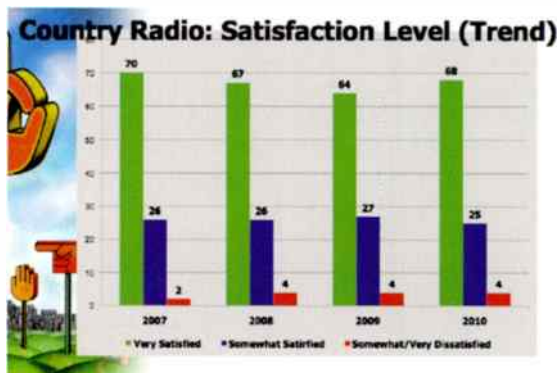
The output of this new class of country acts is rapidly displacing the previous high-water mark in the history of the format, the "Class of 1989," as the current favorites of narrow segments, both male and female, from 18-34 to 45-54.

Country's audience favorites, as ranked in a December 2010 A&O online gold and recurrent test, by average net positive:

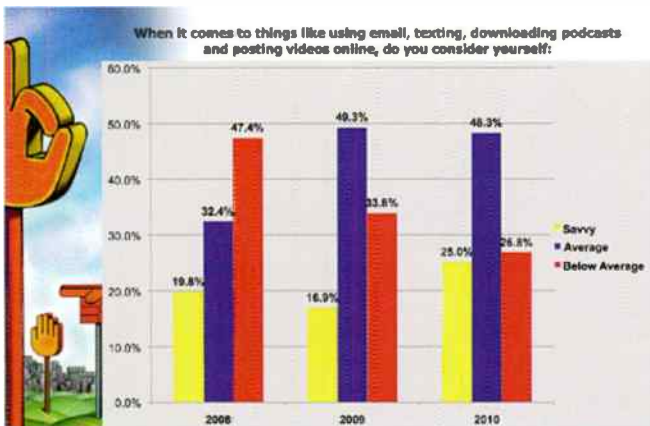
- Josh Turner/Your Man 80.6 percent
- Trace Adkins/You're Gonna Miss This 75 percent
- Toby Keith/You Shouldn't Kiss Me Like This 74.4 percent
- Alan Jackson/Remember When 74.3 percent.
- Brad Paisley featuring Alison Kraus/When I Get Where I'm Going 73.7 percent
- Billy Currington/Good Directions 72.7 percent
- Brad Paisley/He Didn't Have To Be 72.3 percent
- Joe Nichols/Gimme That Girl 72.2 percent
- Billy Currington/People Are Crazy 71.2 percent
- Jo Dee Messina/Lesson In Leavin' 71 percent

Each year, Albright & O'Malley measures preferences and attitudes of our client stations' listeners as a part of an annual "Roadmap" perceptual study. In 2010, we surveyed 8,867 people at stations from all sections and market sizes throughout the United States and Canada.

Respondents who reported listening daily for more than two hours and for between one and two hours has been holding steady for the last several years, but there has been some erosion in daily usage by folks who listened for under one hour daily. Satisfaction levels, after slipping slightly last year, recovered in the latest report. Those who were less satisfied singled out song repetition and high commercial loads as their reasons for feeling that way (see graph below).



These country listeners now consider themselves as being about average in adopting digital technologies (see graph next page).



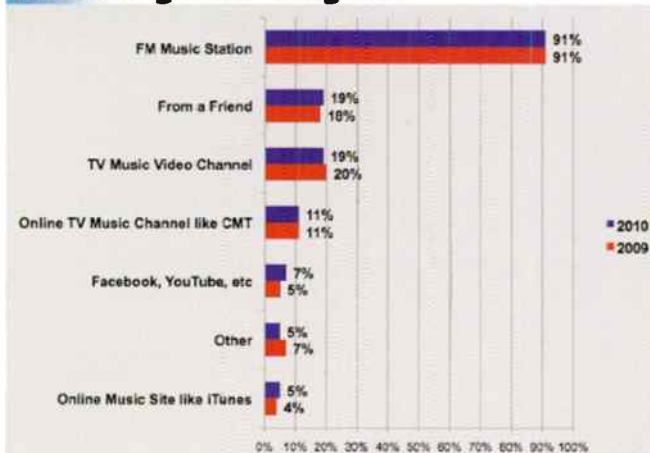
Almost six in 10 respondents report having listened to a local country station online in the last six months, and the amount of time they spend listening is growing: One third listen for an hour or less online per week, 25.9 percent listen one to three hours per week, 11.1 percent say they listen for three to five hours weekly, 6.6 percent listen for six-10 hours, and 11.1 percent listen online for more than 10 hours each week. Twelve percent say they never listen to local country radio online.

Three out of four respondents use a computer to hear local country stations online, while about 10 percent listen on iPods and MP3 players, 6 percent on cellphones and smartphones, and 20 percent on other devices. So it's become increasingly important to a significant portion of our audience that country radio stations be available online on all platforms — and that online listening increases the amount of time these folks spend with their favorite country radio stations.

Listeners also have specific expectations of a country station's website: Sixty-three percent say they want to buy concert tickets early, 59 percent look for country music news, 54 percent want discount coupons, 46 percent want info on things to do in town, and 45 percent cite CD reviews and songs to download.

The "Roadmap" survey also found that FM radio remains the primary source of new music discovery for today's country music radio audience (see graph below). **INK**

## Where do you most often discover new songs and singers?



Jaye Albright is a consulting partner at Albright & O'Malley. E-mail: [jaye@albrightandomalley.com](mailto:jaye@albrightandomalley.com)

## AS PART OF OUR FOCUS ON FORMATS, POLLACK MEDIA GROUP'S JEFF POLLACK PROVIDES SOME CROSS-FORMAT INSIGHTS.

**A**s we all lock forward to improving conditions in 2011, the two biggest trends this year, regardless of format, will be the PPM and the growth of digital.

The PPM is the biggest radio research project in history, and we're learning a lot about how people really use radio. The problem is, we know what they're doing, but we don't always know why.

Still, we're gaining a lot of valuable information that is just as applicable to diary markets as it is in PPM markets. There are few, if any, tactics being adopted by stations in PPM markets that won't also help you win in the diary, and stations that realize this will have an advantage — for a while. But soon those that don't adopt PPM-friendly tactics will be at a competitive disadvantage.

The other key word is *digital*. Every company realizes that radio has to do a better job of getting digital dollars. Online is now a bigger market than radio, so why isn't radio aggressively focusing on getting a big share of it? Local advertising dollars are leaving traditional media for digital sources. With the PPM, we now know that virtually every station has a much higher cume (better reach) than we previously thought, so we have the power to drive a lot of eyeballs to other platforms.

And digital encompasses a lot more than a website. A successful digital strategy also includes social media, database marketing, texting, and mobile apps. We have to realize that our stations must be on the same platforms as our listeners, and we must make it easier for listeners to find us on their preferred devices and screens.

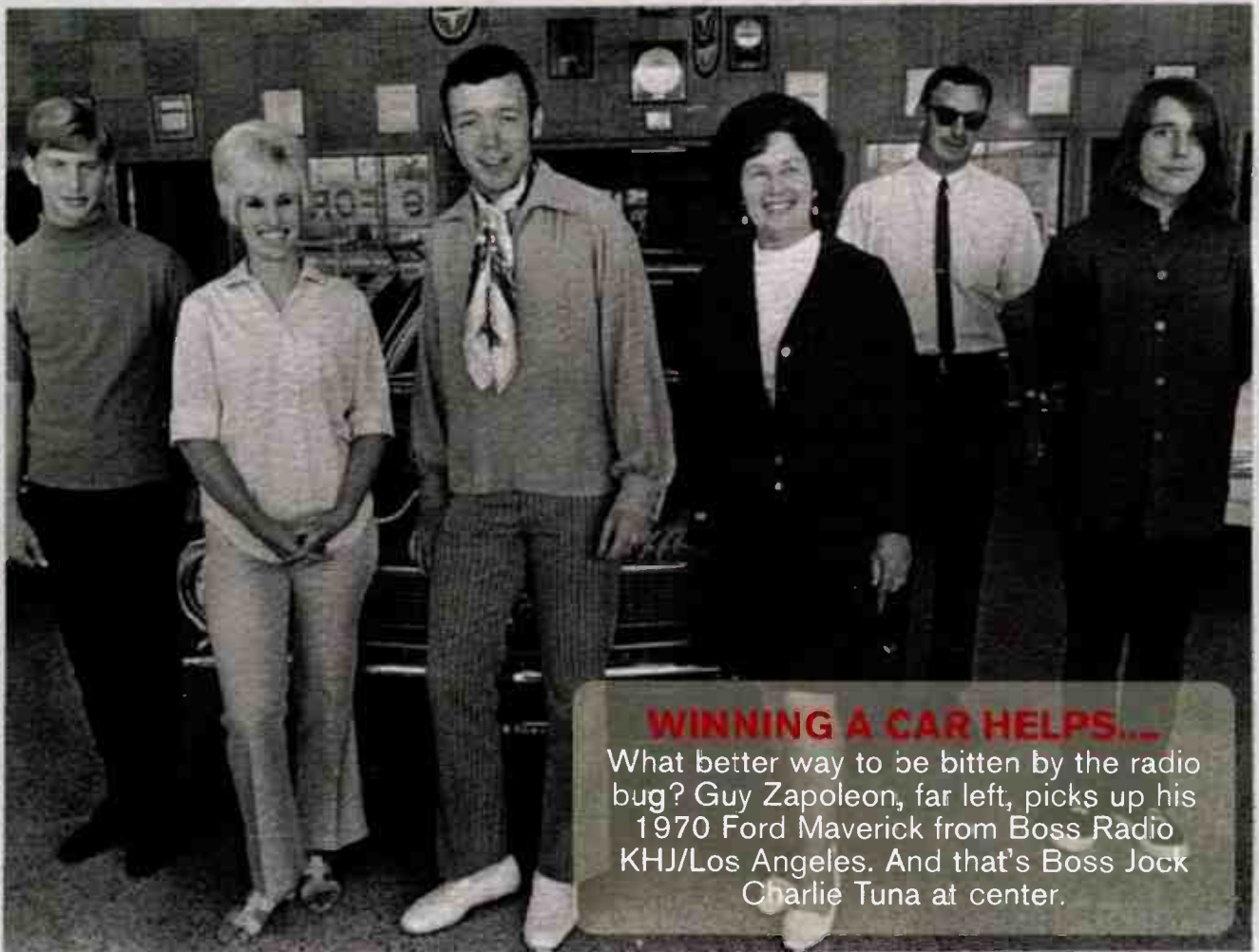
Right now we're asked more for guidance on using social media than about anything else. Rates of adoption for Facebook, Twitter, and other platforms may vary by demographic, but stations must be in the lead with these technologies. You don't hang back and wait for them to be adopted by the majority of your listeners, you get out in front of them, then increase your focus on the ones that listeners adopt.

Stations have to be prepared to answer these questions:

- Does your app do more than just stream the station's audio? You now have real estate on personal devices. Be sure to take advantage of that, without abusing the privilege.
- Are you using your database properly? These are your biggest fans. Are you cultivating a relationship with these fans, or are you just pushing out birthday e-mails and monthly newsletters?
- What are the biggest mistakes you can make with social media? This isn't the same thing as answering the request line. Listeners have specific expectations about how they want to interact with people, media entities, and consumer brands.
- How can we use digital assets to get more revenue out of our clients, instead of cannibalizing spot revenue?
- What are the possibilities for using location-based services?
- What other strategic partnerships do you need to develop to ensure robust technology, open new revenue possibilities, and provide a steady stream of new content?

Jeff Pollack is chairman/CEO of Global Media & Entertainment for Pollack Media Group.

# 5 MAVERICKS! 6 WINNERS?



## WINNING A CAR HELPS...

What better way to be bitten by the radio bug? Guy Zapoleon, far left, picks up his 1970 Ford Maverick from Boss Radio KHJ/Los Angeles. And that's Boss Jock Charlie Tuna at center.

KHJ Maverick-A-Day winners: Guy Zapoleon, Helen Denis, DJ Charlie Tuna, Marsha Clearwater, Ed Brinkley, and Kevin Fahrer.

We just made five of our listeners winners of 1970 Ford Mavericks. They made us a winner too. A winner with the influential 18-49 age group. Our contests are designed to appeal to everyone, especially the 18-49 year olds. The Maverick-A-Day contest is a good example. The five winners, ranged in age from 16-43 . . . from student to housewife.

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# What Are You Doing To Your Signal?

**W**hy do radio stations need to use processing? At first, stations used processing to compensate for limitations in technology. Think about all the pathways sound travels through, from studio to eardrum. The earliest role of processing was to reproduce audio at the fullest volume possible.

The bandwidth limitations of first AM, then FM, provided another set of problems to be overcome. The range of human hearing is generally 20-20,000 Hz. But AM radio's bandwidth is 100-5,000 Hz and FM's is 50-15,000 Hz. Processing a signal can overcome some of those limitations as well.

Then there's concern about over-modulation. As more and more stations populated the FM dial, it became more important than ever not to have your station bleeding over into the next station's signal.

But the popularity of audio processing for radio owes at least as much to the competitive environment of radio as it does

to technology. Along with the rise of higher-fidelity stereo music, on home hi-fis and on the radio, came the need to stand out on the radio dial. The psychology of radio listening dictated that if several stations were playing the same type of hit music and you wanted listeners (and ad revenues) to be attracted to your station, you had to be louder on the dial. In the great modulation wars of the late 1980s and early 1990s, before deregulation came into full force, loudness was the goal.

How can you be loud without overmodulating? The pioneers of audio processing found unique ways to accomplish that, sometimes with level compression—reducing the dynamic range, sometimes applying different techniques to different frequency bands, sometimes even clipping—brutely cutting off the high and low peaks to fill up the bandwidth with sound.

I remember a group of radio engineers showing a newbie — an audiophile whose

experience was in produced sound — what a station's FM signal looked like on an oscilloscope after all those manipulations.

"They do that to their sound voluntarily?" he asked, incredulous.

The emergence of digital audio has given rise to new ways of accomplishing the original tasks, processing the digital signal instead of altering the analog. And there are new challenges to be faced in the world of processing audio for radio. There's streaming to be perfected, overprocessed CDs to deal with, processing for HD Radio, and imagining all the listening environments from which a listener might demand you deliver that perfect sound.

Though there are 19-year olds content to hear their iTunes downloads in MP3, a format that used to make analog purists cry with alarm (it's lossy!), thanks to digital, radio signals can strive to reproduce the cleanest audio possible. Now it's not just about being loud. You also have to be good. ■

## Quick Reference: Audio Processing

Product	Company	Website	Phone
Omnia.11	Omnia Audio	<a href="http://www.omniaaudio.com">www.omniaaudio.com</a>	216-241-7225
Optimod FM 8600.	Orban	<a href="http://www.orban.com">www.orban.com</a>	510-351-3500
Vorsis Air Aura	Wheatstone Corp.	<a href="http://www.vorsis.com">www.vorsis.com</a>	252-638-7000
Model 718 DAVID III	Inovonics	<a href="http://www.inovon.com">www.inovon.com</a>	800-733-0552
AirTools Broadcast DSP	Symetrix	<a href="http://www.symetrix.co">www.symetrix.co</a>	425-778-7728
CP-803 Composite Processor	Modulation Sciences	<a href="http://www.modsci.com">www.modsci.com</a>	800-826-2603
Silver 48 Mini-FM	Audemat-Aztec	<a href="http://www.audemat-aztec.com">www.audemat-aztec.com</a>	305-249-3110
Podblaster	Audessence	<a href="http://www.audessence.com">www.audessence.com</a>	+44(0) 870-850-2237
Sound4FM2 (4)	Sound4	<a href="http://www.sound4.biz">www.sound4.biz</a>	+33 (0) 413-415-540
B40 and B41	Junger	<a href="http://www.junger-audio.com">www.junger-audio.com</a>	+49 (30) 677-721-0

Have you ever read product reviews or seen an ad for a certain category of product and thought, "I wish there was a simple list of the companies that make these products?"

Good idea.

This quick reference chart is by no means intended to be exhaustive. It provides an at-a-glance look at the major players in the category of audio processing for radio stations. The products represented are for processing the station's audio signal at the transmitter.

This list does not include the plentiful product offerings in the realm of audio production, including equalizers and microphone processors. Broadcast delay and effects are also a separate category.

What *Tech Ink* hopes to do with Quick Reference charts in the coming months is provide an all-in-one-place resource for obtaining more information about products in a specific category.

Additional products, detailed descriptions, and product literature are available on each company's website or by calling the numbers listed. The chart is in no particular order, but, U.S. companies are at the top of the chart, with those headquartered outside the U.S. on the bottom of the chart.

If you would like your company included in future Quick Reference charts, please contact Tech Ink Editor Judith Gross at [judith@radioink.com](mailto:judith@radioink.com).



processing, the 8000 sounded loud and open, but when it was used to create a signature sound or do gain control, the Optimod-FM couldn't prevent heavy bass from changing the midrange loudness with every kick-drum hit. That was a problem, since the disco craze had arrived.

It was time to take the next step. With the attitude that "Good enough is not good enough," I formed Gregg Laboratories in 1976 in Los Angeles and started providing my own multiband audio processing, built with a custom audio crossover/combiner plus audio compressors.

This system was then fed to an Orban Optimod-FM 8000 with the single-band compressor disabled. To ensure that all Gregg systems sounded identical, we developed our own VCA-based precision compressors.

While at an AES in Anaheim, I mentioned to Bob that I had a multiband compressor design he might want to hear for the up-and-coming 8100 design. The combination of our experience inspired the design of the Orban Optimod-FM 8100, which to date has sold more units than any other broadcast audio processing system in the world.

As FM powerhouse stations became the stars of radio and competitive stations started seeking a unique sound that would be, first of all, loud, my design evolved into an FM system.

It first appeared at CKLW-FM but made its mark at KPWR (Power 106) in Los Angeles and WQHT (Hot 97) in New York, shaking up the status quo. It was at this point that I signed a formal consulting agreement

with Bob Orban. The world's first commercially successful broadcast audio processor, Optimod-FM 8200, emerged from a collaborative effort between us

As the world grew increasingly digital, the powerhouse FMs in the major markets that were so much a part of the '80s and '90s gave way to the demand for pristine digital quality. Then lossy compression formats such as MP3 gave rise to even newer challenges.

Today's audio processing tasks include dealing with overprocessed CDs and with coded audio sources sent to digital destinations such as HD Radio and Internet streaming.

After all these years, the goal of audio processing is still to deliver a substantial, consistent, aesthetically pleasing sound that will attract and hold listeners. New media such as netcasting require processing for the same reasons radio did.

Even though netcasting has no legal modulation or bandwidth limits, it still needs audio processing to prevent overload

distortion and to achieve consistency by controlling levels and tonal balance, especially when you consider the wide range of quality in the speakers used to hear it.

Programs are often consumed on the go, in mobile environments like autos or public transportation, and that trend is accelerating. Because of the high background noise in these settings, failure to use audio processing is an audience irritant that can drive listeners away. Appropriate audio processing holds audiences by making listening comfortable and effortless.

Today, Orban Optimods are still popular and widely used in stations everywhere. And a radio owner would no more consider not using an audio processor than he would consider not using a transmitter. My contribution to this technology all started with hearing the hits. Inspiration works! ■

*Greg J. Ogonowski is VP of product development at Orban.*

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# The Roots Of Radio Processing

*How today's technical sound of radio was shaped.*

**A**s anyone who's listened to radio over many years knows, the technical sound coming from your receiver has changed dramatically.

If you were around in the '60s, you'll recall listening to AM on tiny transistors. What we heard, and what our ears tolerated back then, was the result of limitations on technology from the microphone or phonograph to the antenna and receiver.

Having studied piano as a child, I began to appreciate the sound quality and musicality of various sources. It was my ear candy, and my infatuation with commercial Top 40 radio would eventually help shape the way radio audio processing sounds today.

It was the summer of 1967. The 5th Dimension had a hit with "Up, Up, and Away," and I noticed it had a fresh new sound, thanks to engineer Bones Howe. Through a fluke of Top 40 programming, one day I managed to catch the song simultaneously on CKLW and WJR in Detroit. I switched between the stations, fascinated by how different the two sounded.

Why did WJR sound so inferior to the big, full sound of CKLW, whose audience share was growing daily? That question was about to change my life and alter the sound of radio broadcasting and, later, audio on the Internet.

My first radio gig had been when I was in high school, at WWWW/Detroit, a.k.a. "W4." W4 used a CBS Audimax/Volumax combo for audio processing. It was considered to be the best at the time, but it pumped excessively on bass and dulled the audio when processing for loudness.

I learned that designing a good audio processing system requires a delicate balance of science and art. The science can be dealt with by disciplined design, but the art is trickier, since "one man's art is another man's trash." A winning system is one that provides the radio audience with a loud, consistently high-quality sound that can be tailored to various programming formats.

Since the CKLW format had its roots in Bill Drake's 93 KHJ Boss Radio in Los



Angeles — where many hit groups of the day were recording — I knew I had to be where all this cool stuff was happening and make my mark in the world of sound.

It took several years of hearing the hits from Motown and the L.A. Wrecking Crew before I finally understood what was needed to create a broadcast audio processing system that could produce that big, consistent sound and make the music shine over the air.

In 1973, as I left Detroit, it was time to seriously figure out all this audio processing stuff. I soon met Mike Dorrough, who was selling what he called a discriminate audio processor, or DAP. The DAP operated independently on low, middle, and high frequencies. As a tireless

evangelist for the concept, Mike had a lot of success selling DAP units out of the trunk of his car. He was on to something, but when I suggested improvements to his design, Mike wasn't interested.

In 1975, I met Bob Orban at an NAB Show, at the Belar booth, where he was demonstrating the first Optimod-FM 8000 processor. The 8000 was the first audio processor to address the peak control problem that plagued other FM processing solutions. What Bob had done allowed an incredible, and I do mean incredible, increase in loudness.

The 8000 would go on to become the next FM processing standard, displacing all those Audimax/Volumax combinations and most DAPs. When run using light

# Recasting The Vision

**N**ormally, I'd start by saying it's good to be back in the radio industry. But you can't really come back to an industry you never left.

It's been a few decades since I last devoted myself to following the latest technology, talking with the players, and working through the issues that surround the technical side of creating good radio. The industry has gone through a tsunami of change since then, mostly due to the digital convergence. Radio is not unique in that respect.

What is unique is that the kinds of day-to-day operations that mark successful stations everywhere are especially suited to the love of all things digital. It's almost as if radio was waiting all along to be reborn in the digital age.

Think about it: Portability, convenience, being ubiquitous — doesn't that describe the very essence of radio?

OK, perhaps today's engineers are programming code instead of soldering wire. Perhaps product development researchers are not so much designing a completely new product as they are getting the most operability and networking out of existing product. Perhaps we have platforms instead of mere products.

The basics, for all the state of the art, have not really changed.

## Still listening

Whenever I'm in within shouting range of a group of 20-somethings or teens, I do a little informal research and ask them if they listen to the radio. The answer, for the most part, is yes. When I ask them why, they talk about staying up on the latest music, the element of surprise in not knowing what's coming next, and their affinity for a certain on-air personality.

Sounds a lot like me, circa the Beatles era. They may buy their favorite song on iTunes and download it to their cellphone instead of rushing out and grabbing the 45 at the record store, but, as the song says, "The fundamental things apply, as time goes by."

Not everything remains the same, of course. There are fewer full-time engineers at individual stations. Over the past two years there's been an economic paring down — as has happened in nearly every industry.

You, managers, no longer rise up the ranks exclusively through station sales. You are more likely to understand the techie side of radio than your predecessors were. And you insist that every dollar spent bring you a return.

You, engineers and engineering managers, have learned or are learning that you need to educate those in the chain of command who sign the checks for equipment purchases. And that radio staffs are more hands-on than ever, thanks to the fact that they are comfortable around computers, which has been both a blessing and a curse.

And you, equipment manufacturers and vendors, realize that you no longer have



to sell only an engineer on your product's technical merits, you must bottom-line it for a busy manager without too much tech-speak.

Which brings me to my new position, as editor of *Tech Ink*.

## Info, controversy, and fun!

Over the next few months, I hope to recast the vision for what this magazine can be and how valuable it will be to all three of the above-mentioned groups, and beyond.

We'll pay close attention to the current technical issues and connect them to what you work with every single day. There is more media vying for your attention than ever before, so we won't take up valuable time by rehashing what you might see in the techie publications.

I'll be encouraging product manufacturers and vendors to "bottom-line" their new product info in a way that will be easy for you to understand and will tell you what you most need to know.

But we'll be interesting and provocative, too. Everyone likes a good story. There are a lot of them still untold, and I'll make it my task to ferret them out and keep them as fascinating as they can be.

And controversy? Anyone who has followed me in the past knows I like a good debate as much as the next guy. There are lots of points of view out there, and we'll be encouraging respected

industry pundits to let loose when called for.

I don't intend to do any of this without staying closely connected to you, the reader so I'm looking forward to hearing from you as we recast this vision. E-mail, phone calls, or in person when possible, let's get a dialogue going and see where it takes us. We're going to have fun — and it's great to be back. ■

Judith Gross is technology editor of *Radio Ink*. Email her at [judith@radioink.com](mailto:judith@radioink.com).

## Coming Next Time in techINK In the March 7 issue:

- Spotlight on networked audio— what are the challenges?
  - Consolidated vs. Distributed networks
  - Hotspot: a new point-counterpoint on radio's hottest technical issues
- And more!



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