

RADIO

INK

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Townsquare
Media CEO
Steven Price

THE OUTSIDER

STEVEN PRICE QUIETLY BUILDS A RADIO EMPIRE

HOW TO GET
22,000 FACEBOOK
FOLLOWERS

YOU CAN VOICETRACK
A GREAT SHIFT

DOES SEX REALLY SELL?

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World Radio History



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Our Mission: *Radio Ink's* role is passionately to empower radio management to be more successful by providing fresh, authoritative, reality-based ideas, inspiration, and education in a quick, easy-to-read, positive, pro-radio environment.

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"The reach and frequency of radio is as strong as it's been for the past 30 years. There is still a tremendous number of people who wake up in the morning and think about their local radio station and want to affiliate with it."

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Townsquare Media/Tyler, TX, President/GM Johnny Lathrop hangs with Larry the Cable Guy backstage at a concert earlier this month.



Radio Disney kicked off its 15th-anniversary celebration with an in-studio performance by Disney Channel star Selena Gomez. She's seen here with (l-r) Radio Disney personalities Ernie D and Jake Whetter and SVP/GM Sean Cocchia, about to dig in to a very large cake.



ESPN Radio's Scott Van Pelt (c) welcomes retired boxers "Irish" Micky Ward (l) and his brother Dicky Eklund. The brothers' story was told in the Oscar-winning movie *The Fighter*.



Hundreds of KSTE/Sacramento listeners turned out to ask questions and hear Dial Global's Clark Howard talk "Clarkonomics" at a recent appearance at Sacramento's Arden Fair Mall.

Recording artist Nicole Mullen (c) with KSBJ/Houston morning duo Susan O'Donnell and Mike Kankelfritz during a recent visit ahead of the station's Brown Bag Concert. The show, sponsored by Chick-Fil-A, drew a crowd of more than 3,500.



ABC News Radio entertainment correspondent Hunter Kelly (l) meets up with country artist Jason Aldean (r) at last month's Country Radio Seminar in Nashville.



B. ERIC RHOADS
FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

It's Time To Break Something

The past three years have been among the most trying ever for the businesses we sell advertising to. Like you, I've heard a lot of businesses whining about how awful their circumstances have been. But I've also had clients, though very few, who are seeing record success and record sales. One client saw a 973 percent increase in sales last year. Almost 1,000 percent.

I couldn't resist asking this business owner, who used to be a business consultant for one of the big national consulting firms: What is he doing to get that 973 percent increase?

His answer surprised me. He said, "Most businesses don't reinvent until things begin to decline and business is bad. We reinvent every two years."

He went on to tell me that the world is changing so rapidly that he cannot rely on business practices that are two or more years old being relevant any longer. He and his team study every aspect of what they're doing, ask if it continues to be relevant, if it continues to serve customers in the environment those customers expect. Nothing is sacred. They want to break something.

What about you? It's important to look at the rules, the systems, and the way you do business — and break it. When was the last time you looked at the entire process of your business? Every touch-

point in sales — account assignment, the pre-selling process, the selling process, the order entry and implementation process, the follow-up? Can you write out every step, look to eliminate steps, and streamline the operation? Can you improve the client side of the experience?

Examine how you do business, why you do it, what your business accomplishes, who does it better and why, what your clients want, what they don't want, and what they don't yet know they will love. Examine every function of your station. Why do you run spots when you do?

What does your station sound like? What would be more effective for listeners?

Reinvention requires guts and a microscopic look both inward and outward, and if you do it early enough, it can change your world. Though the tendency is to assume your success will last, the best thing to do is break away and improve upon what you're doing, bringing the next big thing. Comfort breeds mediocrity. Reinvention reinvigorates an otherwise stale business. Try it.

Now, go break something. 



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Japanese Summer

You Can't Quit Knowing What You Know

"My name is Natsu, and I'll be serving you today." Pennie said, "Natsu — what a pretty name!" "Thank you. I was named after my grandmother. It means *summer* in Japanese."

Thirty seconds earlier, Natsu looked like every other waitress. But now that we knew her grandmother was Japanese, we couldn't help but see the obvious signs of Japanese heritage in her face.

"Obvious" knowledge is the reason business owners are uniquely unqualified to write their own ads: They're unable to put themselves in the shoes of their uninformed customers *because they can't quit knowing what they know.*

This is a 30-second radio ad written for one of the clients of the Wizard of Ads office in Australia:

MALE: Sometimes, bigger is better.

FEMALE: Sometimes, bigger is *definitely* better.

MALE: Electricity bills are an exception.

FEMALE: No one needs big electricity bills.

MALE: Sunshine is free.

FEMALE: Sunshine is happy.

MALE: Sunshine is natural.

FEMALE: Country Solar turns *sunshine* into free electricity.

MALE: Talk to Country Solar. No pressure, no commitment.

FEMALE: Just *free* electricity.

MALE: Free electricity.

FEMALE: Get your free electricity at Country Solar dot com dot au.

Only 3 percent of all males will hear sexual innuendo in that ad. Only a few women per 1,000 will consciously hear the ad as "sexual."

DID YOU NOTICE? (Spoken by a female voice) "Sometimes, bigger is *definitely* better...." Free ... happy ... natural ... no pressure ... no commitment. By the time we say "electricity" for the sixth time, men are no longer thinking about electricity. But *they feel very good about the offer and want to follow up on it, though they can't really explain why.*

Now that it's been pointed out to you, the sexuality suddenly seems "obvious" and in bad taste, right? This is *why you should never reveal to your clients the subtle sexual suggestions you bury in your ad copy.* Once your client has seen the sexual suggestion, they can't believe other people won't see it immediately. You'll be sent back to the station to start all over. Your wonderful ad will never ride the air.

Ads are like people. They can be funny or sad or brazen or disarmingly honest. Ads can be tender and poignant, sappy and sweet, sharply satirical or bitterly edged. Ads can be straightforward. Ads can be deceptive. But seductive ads work best. You are unconsciously attracted, pulled, drawn



into the ad as it whispers your name, nibbles your ear, and tugs at your collar. "That's right. I'm talking to you. How 'bout we get together?" You have a hard time looking away.

FEMALE: People will say, "Your engagement ring looks like it's *completely* made of diamonds!"

MALE: The band is 18-karat white gold, the strongest and whitest gold on earth.

FEMALE: And inlaid in it are *eight* diamonds, sparkling like the stars above.

MALE: I've *never* seen an engagement ring get this much attention. And it's just *seventeen hundred and ninety-nine* dollars.

FEMALE: In the center is a *fabulous* half-carat diamond that looks *flawless* to the naked eye. *Nine* diamonds in 18-karat white gold.

MALE: The Stars Above....

FEMALE: A full three quarters of a carat total weight.

MALE: Come to Ramsey's and ask to see the Stars Above.

FEMALE: It's an overnight sensation.

MALE: An excellent price would be three thousand dollars. But *seventeen ninety-nine* is a *miraculous* price, a Ramsey's price.

FEMALE: Star light, star bright, first star I see tonight, (slower) I wish I may... (pause, then soft), I wish I might...

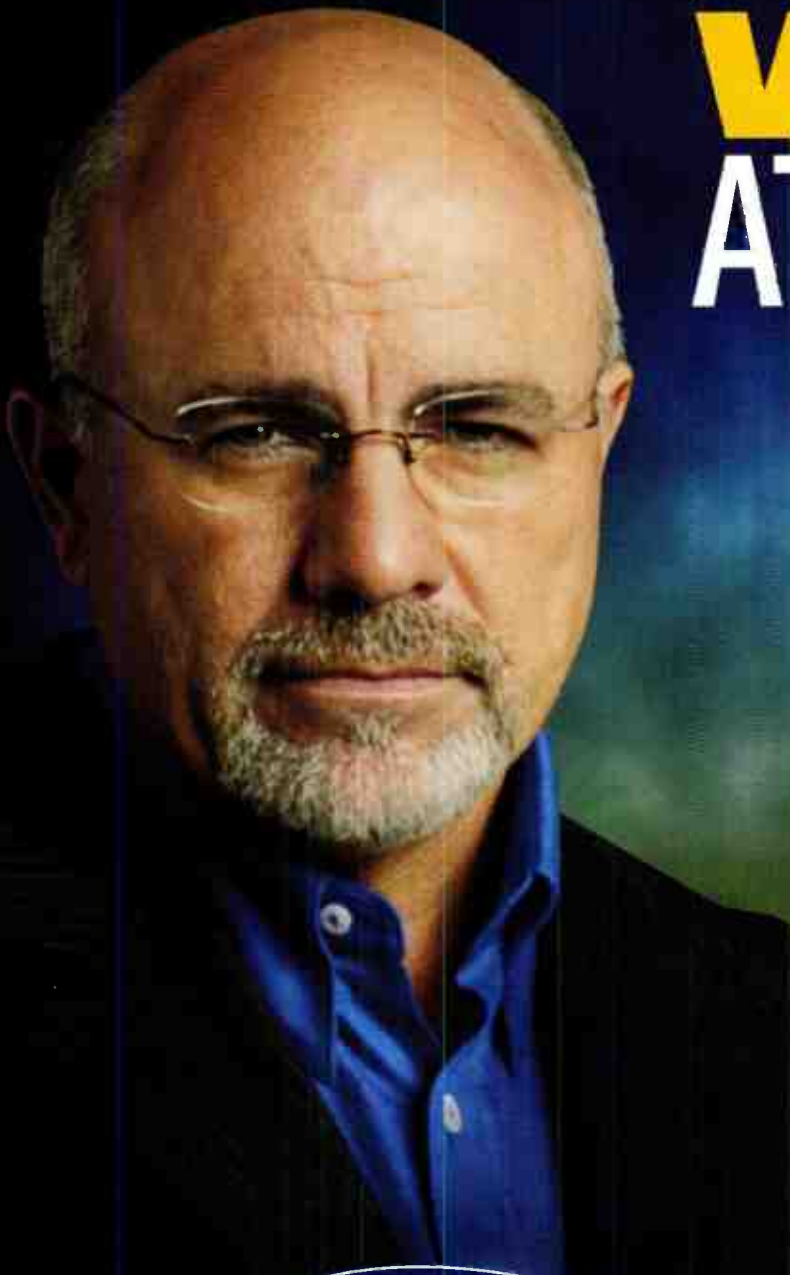
MALE: ...see the Stars Above. Exclusively at Ramsey's Diamond Jewelers.

FEMALE: Engagement rings are what we do.

DID YOU NOTICE? Strongest, naked, overnight, sensation, (female voice whispering softly) "Tonight, I wish I may, I wish I might..."

Ads that tease openly are porn. But ads that tease below the level of consciousness are soft on the ears, astoundingly effective, and hard to beat. **INK**

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



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#1 TSL **#1 TSL**[†]



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*Growth shown month over month Jan-Feb 2011, M25-44; **Growth shown from Sept-Feb 2011, M25-44; †Growth shown month over month Jan-Feb 2011, M25-54; †† Time spent listening February 2011, Adults 25-44



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KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Michael Robertson
Founder & CEO,
MP3tunes



Shel Israel,
social networking
author, social
media consultant



Jim Cady, CEO,
Slacker Radio



Rob Curley,
Las Vegas Sun

WHO SHOULD ATTEND:

- Radio CEOs and Senior Executives
- Radio Managers, Sales Managers and Program Directors
- Radio Advertisers
- Radio Digital and Tech Executives



Entertainment provided
by Allen Stone



CONVERGENCE DIGITAL AWARDS

Radio Ink is proud to announce the very first Radio Ink Digital Media Awards, recognizing excellence in digital media from broadcast and online radio. We are very excited to be able to honor those who have done so much to push the envelope in our business, and we look forward to debating who are the most innovative minds in the radio industry.

World Radio History



CONVERGENCE

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RADIO'S DIGITAL MEDIA CONFERENCE

AGENDA WEDNESDAY, MAY 18

1-1:15 p.m.
Conference Start

1:15-1:30 p.m.
Opening Remarks
B. Eric Rhoads, Publisher/CEO, Radio Ink

1:30-2:45 p.m.
Keynote

Session One: 2:45-3:30 p.m.
The Socialization of Radio
Twitter, Facebook, and other social media have become major forces in society and business. This session will focus on how radio stations can use these tools to their benefit to enhance revenues as well as advertiser and listener interaction, with specific examples of stations using them to the fullest.

Moderator: Jim Kerr, VP/Strategy, Triton Media
Michele Laven, SVP/Strategic Partnerships, Clear Channel Radio
Jessica Northey, Owner/CEO, Finger Candy Media
Jimmy Steal, VP/Programming, Emmis Communications
Fred McIntyre, Vice President, CBS Interactive Music Group

Session Two: 3:30-4:05 p.m.
The Changing Face of Video
The combination of YouTube and Google TV has changed advertising and communication forever. How can your station best implement video strategy, and how can you make it pay volumes in revenues?
Moderator: Jim Lauderback, CEO, Revision3
Shira Lazar, Co-founder, Disrupt/Group & Web Personality/Producer

Session Three: 4:05-4:40 p.m.
Riding the Mobile Momentum
Explore the latest mobile trends in the hottest and fastest-growing segment of digital media. What's hot in mobile — and how can you better integrate this platform into your business model to create greater consumer appeal and drive more revenue to the bottom line?
Moderator: Fred Jacobs, President, Jacobs Media
Paul Jacobs, VP/General Manager, Jacobs Media
Tim Murphy, VP/Digital Strategy & Enterprise Platforms, Entercom

4:40-5:25 p.m.
Keynote

Session Four: 5:25-6:00 p.m.
Are You Still Hiring Like It's 1999?
Sadly, radio programmers and managers are still thinking "great pipes" first, when they should also be thinking about social media skills, video editing, etc. Times have changed. Who's the social media quar-

terback in your operation? Who is setting and implementing social strategy? This session will delve into the criteria you need to consider in hiring today.
Moderator: Mark Preston, VP/Digital, Bonneville International
Russ Hill, President, Owned Media Group

InfoPod: 6:00-6:10 p.m.
Sponsored by MediaSpan

6:10-6:40 p.m.



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6:40-7:40 p.m.
Cocktail Reception

8:15 - 10:00 p.m.
Birds of a Feather Dinners
Pick from several subjects of interest and join a dinner group (Dutch) to spend time with experts in that category. Each group is limited to 20 persons; first come, first served. Sign-up is available at the registration desk.

THURSDAY, MAY 19
7:15-8:00 a.m.
Continental Breakfast

Session Five: 8-8:35 a.m.
Busted: Knowing the Regulations and the Traps to Avoid
Last year, U.S. advertisers spent an estimated \$25 billion on Internet advertising — including millions on radio station websites. Meanwhile, the Federal Trade Commission is considering ways to limit how digital companies track Internet habits and use that information to target advertising. What's the impact of this and other potential pitfalls to radio's digital initiatives? Find out how to use the strategic data that comes with the clicks while avoiding the traps that can hinder.
Moderator: David Oxenford, Partner, Davis Wright Tremaine LLP

Session Six: 8:35-9:10 a.m.
Sales 2.0 and Other Winning Strategies to Sell Digital
Selling has changed. The old basics have been replaced by new, critical tools and techniques. How smart stations are "making money with interactive, and how you can bring your online revenues in for a landing."
Moderator: Sheila Kirby, SVP/Professional Development, Radio Advertising Bureau
Cari Jacobs, Marketing Strategist
Jennifer Williams, Corp. Interactive Marketing Director, Greater Media

Darryl Miner, Director/Digital Sales & Strategy, Entercom Sacramento

Session Seven: 9:10-9:45 a.m.
How Listeners Are Driving Radio Listening and Content
Are you ignoring Pandora, Jelli, Slacker, and other listener-driven platforms as irrelevant compared to terrestrial radio? We'll probe the facts, the listening levels, the revenues, the upsides and downsides, and predict where this will end up and how you can benefit.

Moderator: Daniel Anstandig, President, McVay New Media
Doug Sterne, VP, Audio Sales, Pandora
Andrew Mariathasan, President, RTTNews
Bob Mills, President, Internet Streaming Corporation

InfoPod: 9:45-9:55 a.m.
Sponsored by Abacast

9:55-10:15 a.m.
Break

Session Eight: 10:15-10:50 a.m.
Transmitters? Who Needs Transmitters?

Cellphones, tablets, auto in-dash Internet receivers, and more gadgets every day are expanding the ways listeners can access your brand. Which are the trends and technologies you need to pay attention to? Which are the ones you need to address right now?

Moderator: Kurt Hanson, CEO/AccuRadio, Publisher/RAIN

Session Nine: 10:50-11:25 am
Going Hyper-Viral
Social media experts will show you the tools and strategies to take your station's listener and advertising marketing to a higher level.

Moderator: Ruth Presslaff, President, Presslaff Interactive
David Perry, CEO/Founder, David Perry & Associates
Jim Thomas, VP/Marketing Programming and Interactive Media, Journal Broadcast Group

11:25-12:10 p.m.
Keynote

12:10-1:10 p.m.
Lunch

Session Ten: 1:10 p.m.-1:45 p.m.
The End of the Spot as We Know It and the Future of Spot Advertising
In a digital world where each ad unit is aimed at an interested consumer and where returns are based not on reach and frequency but on click-throughs and transactions, where does radio fit? Can advertising in radio streams provide the level of targeting display can? Is it worth it for radio to move listeners to engage with online ads the way they do with physical clients?
Moderator: Tom Bender, SVP/GM, Greater Media Interactive

Brenda Goodman, Media Consultant, Goodman Interactive Consulting
Mike Agovino, COO, Triton Media Group
Eric Ronning, EVP/Emerging Media, TargetSpot

Session Eleven: 1:45-2:20 p.m.
Uber Platforms: How to Maximize Your Brands, Talent, and Sales Efforts
Every talent and seller in your radio station can become a standalone media asset to generate buzz, revenue, and advertising. This session will show you the elements of a great platform and how to create and control them.

Moderator: Brian Glicklich, President, SoundMind

InfoPod: 2:20-2:30 p.m.
Drill down on specific information and services: to assist your digital media strategy.
Prize Giveaway. Must be present to win.

2:30-3:15 p.m.
Keynote

Session Twelve: 3:15-3:50 p.m.
The Planet of the Apps
Apps are not just for iPods and iPads anymore. They've hit the desktop, and that's where your station needs to be. Explore cool tools to place your station in more distribution points.

Session Thirteen: 3:50-4:25 p.m.
The Changing Face and Role of Websites
Our first conference in 1999 told you that you needed a website back when most stations didn't even have one. Now we take you to the next level to understand how the website has evolved beyond just a simple site to include social media and other platforms. A panel of digital experts look at station sites/Facebook pages/Twitter feeds (as volunteered by attendees), and offer a quick, professional analysis — the good, the bad, the ugly — of each platform, along with suggestions for how to make them better.

Moderator: Sandy Smallens, Managing Director, Audiation
Craig Pizaris-Henderson, Chairman/CEO, Lexos Media

4:25 p.m.
Closing Remarks

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World Radio History





THE OUTSIDER

Townsquare chief Steven Price isn't a radio guy — and that's a good thing

{ By Editor-In-Chief Ed Ryan }

While most industry news has been focused on what Clear Channel, CBS Radio, and other well known names are up to — and most recently, of course, with all eyes on Cumulus' purchase of Citadel — one company has quietly been building itself into quite a powerhouse. Townsquare Media now owns and operates 166 radio stations in 36 small and medium-sized markets around the country. That puts Townsquare at number four on the list for total number of stations, behind Clear Channel, Cumulus, and Citadel. Quite an accomplishment for a company that started in 2009.



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"WE LOOKED AROUND AT A WHOLE BUNCH OF DIFFERENT AREAS IN MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS, AND FOR A BUNCH OF REASONS WE THOUGHT THAT RADIO WAS UNIQUELY POSITIONED TO BUILD A NEW PLATFORM."

Townsquare is not run by a bunch of radio guys, and, as you'll see, that's just fine with the rank and file (see sidebar, next page). The CEO is Steven Price. Before joining the private equity sector, Price served as deputy assistant secretary of defense for spectrum, space, and communications at the Pentagon. He moved on to hold senior-level positions at private equity firms, most recently as senior managing director at New York-based Centerbridge Partners.

In 2009, Price co-founded FiveWire Ventures with Stuart Rosenstein. "[The group's] vision was to leverage their expertise in buying and building businesses and employ a hands-on operational focus to capitalize on the next cycle in the media sector," Price says. "And it was clear they saw the next cycle as buying up troubled radio groups and getting them geared up for the rebound in the recession.

"I have always enjoyed running businesses and creating great consumer experiences. During the economic meltdown, we decided it would be a good time to be contrarians and invest in a business. We looked around at a whole bunch of different areas in media and communications and for a bunch of reasons thought that radio was uniquely positioned to build a new platform. We were able to partner with Oaktree Capital and put together Townsquare in a couple of separate transactions."

The First Deals

The first transaction would be Regent Communications. Regent, founded by Bill Stakelin and Terry Jacobs in 1996, took a beating during the recession and started posting losses in 2007. The company wound up in Chapter 11 through a pre-arranged agreement with creditors, wiping out about \$87 million in debt and leaving Regent with \$11 million in cash. Oaktree Capital Management bought a major stake in the company, and on May 3, 2010, Regent changed its name and Townsquare Media was born. Price's first prize had 62 stations in 13 markets.

Next on the radar screen, GAP Broadcasting. In the late 2000s GAP began picking up Clear Channel spinoffs, and it had accumulated more than 100 of them by the time Townsquare became interested. In August of last year, the deal was done, and Townsquare added another 111 radio stations in 36 cities. Oaktree Capital was involved in the GAP transaction, as it was with Regent.

While Townsquare was building its portfolio, New Northwest Broadcasters was feeling the heat of the recession and starting to have serious debt issues. NNB didn't file for bankruptcy, instead agreeing to a voluntary assignment for benefit of creditors, with a receiver appointed to maximize the benefit for creditors from the company's assets. Townsquare in December agreed to buy 12 NNB stations; that

deal has not yet closed.

Having sold six stations in Idaho to Rich Broadcasting, Townsquare Media has 166 stations on the scoreboard and employs 1,500 people. Despite the Rich transaction, Price says Townsquare is not in sell mode.

"We have a practice that we've gone through that I think most companies go through periodically, to take a strategic look at their assets," he says. "I would say hopefully, we will be net buyers. But the folks from Rich came along and had a particular interest in a particular market that we, after looking, deemed was non-core. They felt it was a good place for them to start. So we were able to sell at what we think of as an attractive multiple from our standpoint. It was relatively small for us. I wouldn't read much in to that as to how we are looking to run our company."

The big question, of course, is how big will Townsquare grow? Price says you never know — or, at least, he's not willing to tell us yet. "Would we like to be bigger?" he says. "Maybe. If it's the right market. We will be prudent. With the right situation, we would grow. We certainly have the capital partners to help us grow. We don't feel like we need to. We are doing a lot organically, and we're pretty busy. We feel like we have enough scale to do the kinds of things we want to do to build a great company."

But, he continues, "We wouldn't rule out anything if there were some interesting acquisitions or partnership opportunities along



the way. Our heads are down, operating, running our business in our markets, trying to understand all of the different trends out there and stay ahead of them, or catch up where we need to.”

Not A Radio Guy

Price admits he’s not a radio guy, but that lets him bring a fresh perspective to the industry. So we asked him how he sees the state of radio. “I would say as good or better than I thought,” he replies. “I think it is materially better than the outside world thinks. I

think, to some extent, radio has an image issue. Our industry has had a tough time explaining how compelling this medium is.

“The reach and frequency of radio is as strong as it’s been for the past 30 years. There is still a tremendous number of people who wake up in the morning and think about their local radio station and want to affiliate with it. That message has not gotten out as much as we hoped it would.”

He continues, “The fact that radio is still alive is a well kept secret. I know the RAB has focused on that and seems to be doing a

TEAM TOWNSQUARE

For a company the size of Townsquare Media to be successful, you need managers all rowing in the same direction. CEO Steven Price describes a great Townsquare manager: “Someone who is willing to play offense, not defense, who is aggressive and entrepreneurial, who feels empowered to dominate their local media marketplace, and who puts together a staff of people who think that way and act that way.”



Johnny Lathrop has been in radio for 24 years and a GM for a little less than 10, and was with Townsquare when it absorbed GAP Broadcasting. Before that, he was a Clear Channel GM. “What I like most about Steven and TSM is the autonomy, support, and the fact that we have become empowered like never before to run our markets,” Lathrop says. “Steven asks very direct questions and wants direct answers; I like that he listens to us. If something is working in Buffalo, that does not necessarily mean it’s right for Tyler, TX, and Steven gets that. He is also very supportive and not afraid of taking a risk. Most of us GMs have been working together through several owners and mergers, and we all feel re-energized about radio again. I don’t think a lot of other groups can use a word like ‘re-energized.’ The honeymoon is officially over, and we are still happily married!”



Jeff Silver is the vice president and general manager of the Townsquare cluster in Buffalo — he’s actually been the GM of those stations for 15 years. He says it’s the forward thinking of the home office that keeps him going: “They provide us with the best tools, ideas, products, and overall support to help achieve our goals. I love the opportunity that we have been given.”



Pete Hanson has been the market manager in Fort Collins, CO, for the past two years. He says he “likes belonging to an organization that is embracing the fact that the media landscape is changing quickly, and not just asking how we should be fitting in, but taking that conversation a step further and asking how we can use that changing landscape to affect the communities we serve in new and meaningful ways.” He goes on, “Townsquare is investing in people and resources necessary to create valuable relationships with the consumer. I read a blog the other day that said, ‘Money follows people, and people follow content.’ There’s no shortcut to getting someone to love something. Townsquare Media gets that.”



Zoe Burdine has been in the radio industry for more than 23 years and a GM for nine years, the last eight in Flint, MI. And she says the best time to be in the radio business is right now. “Townsquare Media is committed to delivering the best combination of radio, digital, and event products,” Burdine says. “It’s exciting to be part of a company that is looking to build beyond the scope of terrestrial radio. Additionally, our corporate management team allows each market to operate independently, with the right balance of support and guidance needed to succeed.”



LaDonne Craig is a former Regent employee promoted to GM in Evansville, IN, shortly after Townsquare took over. She says she always feels like she’s working *with*, not *for*, Townsquare. “That is what I like most,” Craig says. “A lot of companies will say that, but I can tell you Townsquare means it. Corporate is a resource that provides us the tools we need. As a new GM, that has been invaluable to me. How many companies are there where the CEO will call you to check in, see how you’re doing, and see if there’s anything you need?”

pretty good job. Even more work can be done there. I would say I am presently surprised, in our company, by how many great young people there are who care about music and news and their consumers. Obviously, there are some people who wish it was still 1985, with no competition and no new technology, and who want to keep their heads in the sand. I think they are increasingly a minority in the industry, and certainly in our company."

Philosophy Major

From upper management to those in the trenches, Price says the philosophy must be consistent all down the line. "First, we need to focus on what our consumers and listeners want and find relevant," he says. "Everything we do should keep that in mind. If we do that well, then advertisers will follow. Our vision is to create great consumer experiences. You can do that with radio because a radio brand, as people in the industry know, is something people have a real affinity for. I am not sure if consumers have such a strong feeling about their local newspaper or Channel 72. But they do for a particular radio station.

"To take advantage of that and leverage that is something we focus on. We are also a relatively decentralized company. We believe not only in great brands, but also in great management and great local staff, and we let them do their own thing. In a sense, we let corporate get out of the way and let the people in the market deliver what their audience wants."

To further build its affinity with listeners and communities, Townsquare just launched Townsquare Cares, a national not-for-profit that will assist the families of deployed military personnel. Price says, "I think this effort is good for our country, good for our communities, and good for our nation's military families."

Attack The Attackers

Price says, "Across the board, I don't think there's a company in media that isn't being attacked for their customers and advertisers from every side. That's clearly the case now. And we are attacking. Those same people that are attacking us, we are going after them."

So, are new technologies friend or foe to traditional media? Price isn't fretting about that. "I would say it actually doesn't matter," he says. "I can't wish them away. They are here, so we have to figure out how to make them a friend or to work with them or



compete against them. People have more choices. Any of our customers can go check out Pandora or 17 other things, whether they are at home, in the office, out and about, or in their car. People are going to increasingly have choices.

"What we have to do is to be where the audience is and leverage our brands, which we know, in our local markets, people care about more than a generic jukebox channel. We need to take advantage of that affinity with our brands wherever they are and meet listeners and interact with them and be where they are, everywhere. If we can do that, candidly, I am not worried about any of our competition." **INK**



Lights, Camera, Online Action!

Most pundits point to 2004 as the birth of online video. It was the year that put JibJab's cheeky Flash-animated satire in front of the masses during the presidential election. Coupled with the increased prevalence of broadband, a "perfect storm" was soon created from which online video technology fully emerged. The first YouTube video hit the Internet in April 2005, followed a month later by Blip.tv. And with Apple's release of the first video-capable iPod in October of that year, the era of portable video content was launched.



In a short time, the technical and creative evolution of online video has opened up a whole new rich world of social connections and interaction for websites and online applications. Today, a growing number of radio stations serve up video content on their sites for everything from news and station event coverage to contesting and general listener engagement.

Shira Lazar is an Emmy-nominated TV and Web personality who will be participating in this year's Convergence conference (www.radioink.com/convergence), at the Microsoft Silicon Valley campus on May 18-19. A contributor to the Huffington Post, Fox News Channel, CNN, and IFC's *The Grid*, Lazar is host of *The Partners Project* and regularly interviews YouTube stars. Here is a peek at some of the advice Shira will be dishing out at Convergence about how to make your station's online video more effective and attention-getting.

How can radio stations take better advantage of video on their websites?

I always use Howard Stern as a model, not in terms of content, but in terms of bringing video into everything he has done. If I had a radio show, I would also live-stream the content and post any relevant interviews as their own videos. For live streaming, sites like ustream.tv and Livestream.com are a great option. You can embed the players on your site, too. I would also start a YouTube page to upload all the individual interviews and embed those on my site.

What is the next trend in video content you see on the horizon?

More live and more YouTube. People will be figuring out how to interact and engage more with their audiences in real time, and live streaming is a huge part of that. YouTube is still one of the top video sites for discovery and

engagement, and it's just going to grow even more. *The Young Turks* (www.theyoung-turks.com) is a great example of a talk radio show that has used a community online and on YouTube over the past five years to become an even bigger brand.

What are the first criteria to consider in developing a video strategy?

Essentially, it's always important to understand who you're trying to talk to and the story you're trying to tell. Content is king! As much as technology can help tell the story, if there's nothing there, your video won't communicate anything relevant.

Then figure out your distribution strategy and where you want your video to live in order to reach the right people.

What is the impact of online video on advertising and product marketing?

It allows for more options than ever before. Advertisers do not want to simply buy banner ads and preroll, they want to figure out more ways to be integrated into the content. The more you can find your niche and specific target demo, the easier it is for them to work a brand into it. Brands are also finding more creative ways to advertise over social media and with independent content creators. A lot of full-time YouTubers are figuring out creative ways to connect brands with their millions of viewers weekly. They're doing product giveaways, making a brand into a character on their show, or even doing a custom callout at the beginning, thanking a brand for their support.

As more phones become live-video-enabled, how does that alter news and other communications?

Real-time news is not just something you expect from your Twitter feed, but from news organizations. News outlets shouldn't just be using their own staff as experts, but those in the trenches, launching the stories and videos. While it might be hard to program that because you never know what's going to happen live, it's essential to figure out an online and social media strategy that's on point. That way, if something does happen in real time, you're able to tell those stories as quickly as possible on your site and via social networks. Then you can integrate that into your broadcast as well. **INK**

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

Can AC Still Thrive In The Information Age?

News and talk stations are all the rage these days — in terms of revenue generation, anyway. According to BIA/Kelsey, six of the 10 top-billing radio stations in 2010 played no music. But stuck right in the middle, at number five, was WLTW (Lite FM) in New York City. The Clear Channel-owned station did quite well last year, bringing in more than \$44 million, without the much higher expenses of running a full-time news organization like top biller WTOP/Washington.

BIA/Kelsey reports that there are 1,434 stations running some variation of the AC format, and consultant Alan Burns says the format is healthy. "In most markets there's an AC station in the top two — or three at most — with adults 25-54," he says, "and another one that's also in the top one to three with women 25-54."

McVay Media President Mike McVay agrees that the AC format is as healthy now as it was when it exploded in 1984. "The name 'adult contemporary' has always meant contemporary music for adults," says McVay. "There is a ton of contemporary music that is palatable to today's 25-54-year-old woman. Look at the growth in the CHR format. The more 'adult' and mainstream the CHR, the better the ratings will be. Mornings remain an important part of what attracts listeners to stations. However, the number one most important arena for ACs to win is 'Listening while you work.' Not at work, but rather while you work."



McVay Media President
Mike McVay

But Coleman Insights President Warren Kurtzman sees the AC format somewhat differently, saying it's in a bit of a quandary. "I think these are relatively challenging times for AC," he says, "but I struggle to think back to a time in the past when I couldn't say the same thing. Adult contemporary formats are always challenging because there is virtually never any music that listeners naturally refer to as 'AC,' like they would with 'country' or 'rock'; it has always been a format that combines multiple genres and eras, with that combination varying as audience tastes and competition change."

The current struggle, says Kurtzman, is based on the fact that there has been little exclusive music for the format in recent years. "At hot AC stations, the titles that are most popular with audiences are often the same ones that are most popular with CHR listeners," he says. "Mainstream ACs are dealing in many cases with new competition from adult hits and classic hits stations that cater to the gold tastes of their audiences. In addition, many mainstream ACs are confronted with 'bifurcation' in audience tastes, with some of their listeners only interested in '70s, '80s, and maybe '90s music and some only interested in material from the last decade."

PDs Weigh In

In order to get an even better feel for the AC format, *Radio Ink* reached out to several respected programmers from around the country. The AC format isn't as glitzy or high-profile as the news and talk formats, but it takes a great programmer with years of experience and honed skills to compete and win against so much fierce competition. Here are just a few of the people making it happen across the country.

'THE MOM STATION'

Don Kelley is the vice president and director of programming at Greater Media's WMJX (Magic 106.7) in Boston (www.magic1067.com). He's been working in the AC format since the 1970s, back when it was referred to as pop/MOR. Kelley has programmed 10 ACs, including full service, soft, hot, and mainstream formats, and he's been with Magic since December 1989.



WMJX/Boston VP/Dir. of
Programming Don Kelley

Kelley credits Magic's success in Boston in part to its longevity. "WMJX-FM has been an adult contemporary station since January of 1982," he says. "It is the longest-running AC station in the top 10 markets. We've been very successful, ranking number one 25-54 a total of 44 times since 1991. This is due, in large part, to the fact that we pay very close attention to the tastes and

desires of our local audience. The result is a different sound and music mix than you'll hear on most ACs across the country. We do ongoing outreach to better understand how people utilize Magic 106.7 FM. As the 'Mom station,' our goal is to reflect the tastes and sensitivities of the listener."

Kelley says that if you want to succeed as a program director in an AC format, you'll have to know how your listener interacts with your station. "You need to understand how people use the station and how PPM panelists use the station," he says. "In addition, you need to be 'tuned in' to what people are talking about, be a good talent coach, and serve as 'chief of content.'"

MINDSET FOR INNOVATION

Mary Ellen Kachinske is the program director for Bonneville's WTMX in Chicago (www.wtmx.com); she's been at the helm of AC stations for 20 years, and at the Mix for 11. "I think we continue to win because our team works very hard not to sit still," Kachinske says. "We look for ways to constantly innovate content so we can remain the market leader. From our Bonneville SVP of programming, Greg Solk, to our morning team of Eric & Kathy to our director of



WTMX/Chicago PD Mary Ellen Kachinske

marketing, Dave Karwowski, and music director Nikki Chuminatto, it's a formidable team that involves everyone in the creative process, from new media to on-air talent to sales to IT to production."

She goes on, "We just put on a brand-new show that lets the listeners control what gets played, called U Mix It. Using the Listener Driven Radio technology, the audience actually chooses each song weeknights from 8 to midnight by voting at wtmx.com. Usually a successful, her-

itage station won't take chances like that, but it is this mindset to try new things that makes the difference for us."

Kachinske says the pace of the station is set by *The Eric & Kathy Morning Show*. "I have always called their show 'Seinfeldian,' as it is about 'nothing' — and everything at the same time," she says. "It's real life, and their fans are the biggest evangelists I have ever seen for a morning show! Eric and Kathy celebrate their 15th year together this fall, and their team has dominated the ratings for years in Chicago.

"All of our on-air talent sound authentic and on top of what is happening, not only on the air, but online and via social media too. Also, the Mix has always been very community-service-focused. That side of our personality resonates with our listeners because everyone on the team really believes in giving back."

RESEARCH IS KEY

Chuck Knight is the PD of Jerry Lee's WBEB in Philadelphia (www.b101radio.com). Knight, who's been in the AC format for two decades, including a stint at former Philly AC WYXR, says, "The B101 crew in those days blew us away and sent me packing. I'm honored to have come back 12 years later and to have programmed B101 for the past three years."

Knight believes B101's success absolutely starts with owner Lee and VP/GM Blaise Howard and their commitment to research and marketing. "Then we hire great people to execute the plan," he says. "That's a pretty simple formula, and Jerry's always shared it. Why doesn't everybody operate their stations with the same philosophy? I think the difference is that it takes focus, commitment, and money. We're warriors when it comes to that. This is also where I salute former co-owner Dave Kurtz and all of the great team from the past and present who worked long and hard to make B101 what it is today. We wouldn't be here without them."

Knight goes on, "We always knew listeners came to us for music, but over the years, we've learned there's more to the package. Tiffany & Michael are a much more content-driven morning show than we've had in the past. In the other dayparts, Jenn Ryan, Dan Blackman, and Charlie Maxx are quick and short, but also more lifestyle-content-



WBEB/Philadelphia PD Chuck Knight

ven and less liner-controlled. We always try to sound interesting, fun, and real. We've coined a phrase: 'Being a jock is being a loser.'"

Knight sees this as an interesting time for the AC format. "We are going through a slow transition of very different music styles," he points out. "We're no longer led by the soft rock sounds of Fleetwood Mac, but instead are probably led more by Katy Perry, sound-wise. I think it's that emotional connection to a lot of different eras that's a true product value for us, the yesterday/today thing. Song to song, we can go to a lot of different places. It's different today than even two years ago, but we're lucky enough to still be fully funded for research to keep our finger on the pulse."

On being a successful PD in the AC format, Knight says modesty goes a long way. "I think a lot of us AC PDs have been in the business a long time, and we're less about ego, less about putting our own stamp on a radio station," he says. "Sure, we have to lead, but I think we've seen that when we're confident enough to be open to others' suggestions, it usually leads to better things.

"It's a lot like being a parent. At great radio stations, you can hear the hallway vibe come out of the speakers. I've learned a lot from Jerry, Blaise, our strategic team, and our on-air talent, and I'm a better PD because of all of them. I pinch myself every day I come into B101. I know I'm very lucky. I'm happy and having fun."

'THE COST OF ADMISSION'

Down in Miami, **Rob Sidney** programs WLYF (www.litemiami.com) for Lincoln Financial Media. Sidney joined the station as the music director back in 1990 and was promoted to PD three years later. WLYF — which has had only five PDs since 1970 — emerged as the market's true mainstream AC in 1996, when it was rebranded as "101.5 Lite FM."

Sidney says WLYF is successful in Miami because it stays in touch with the listeners. He explains, "Over the past two decades, we've made a substantial, ongoing investment in research and product development. Knowing our listener's musical appetite is simply the 'cost of admission.' Just as important — perhaps even more so — is understanding her deepest wants, needs, hopes, and fears.

"Behavioral and lifestyle analyses (both formal and anecdotal) have long been part of the recipe for Lite FM's continued growth. We take the data from that research, take the stories from those conversations, and strive to reflect that intimacy in our on-air imaging, our off-air marketing, and in our personalities' dialogue with our listeners. In gaining our listener's trust, in arousing her passion, in appealing to her 'tribal' sense of community, we've worked to create a credible, durable brand; one which can ultimately be leveraged to deliver superior results for our clients."

Sidney says it takes a bag full of skills to succeed in a highly competitive market like Miami. "The successful radio programmer has always possessed an amalgam of attributes: attention to detail, a good ear for music and other program product, technical and production skills, awareness of emerging technologies, and a mastery of the



WLYF/Miami Dir./Programming & Operations Rob Sidney

marketplace — both statistically and emotionally,” he says. “The successful program director tempers this show business sense with a bottom-line sensibility.

“One important quality is the ability to maintain an understanding of, and positive relationship with, the sales engine. Further, I truly believe that the most valuable PDs are those who are vertically integrated into their stations — brand managers for a single product, steadfast champions for a single cause. The most effective organizations are built of diverse people who offer a broad catalog of skills yet share common values.”

Sidney goes on, “As a manager and team leader, those values I encourage and prize above all others are initiative, versatility, and attention to detail. It’s amazing what can be accomplished by a small but cohesive, passionate, and focused team. I’ve repeatedly discovered that a collaborative environment is crucial to creativity; truly, ‘all of us is smarter than each of us.’”

EMBRACE CHANGE

David Wood programs WYXB in Indianapolis for Emmis (www.b1057.com). WYXB is now 10 years into the AC format, and Wood says that stability helps, as does getting out to know the audience instead of staying behind a desk. “Talk to people in the demo who love your station and find out about their lives,” he says. “Be observant of human behavior. Read everything you can about the female gender. Then forget anything written by a man.



WYXB/Indianapolis PD
David Wood

“Regardless of the format, I think there are a couple of things to remember. First and foremost, it’s about what is important to the listener. The more you really drill down to what is important in the people’s lives, the more you’ll see that a lot of stuff that is said or done on radio doesn’t make the list. We can’t waste their time with things

that don’t matter to them. The demands of being a PD evolve constantly. To say ‘embrace change’ is clichéd, but necessary. So I think a second key is to passionately deal with what you can control, manage what you can’t.”

NEVER A BAD DAY

Kurt Johnson is the VP/programming for CBS Radio/Dallas and PD for KVIL (www.1037litefm.radio.com). He’s been in the AC format since 1989, when he was at WFYR in Chicago, and he did time at WLTW in New York and WYXR and WLCE in Philly before landing in Big D. Johnson says KVIL is successful because he has the right people in the right places, doing the right things.

“We have brilliant air talent, our magnificent APD, Jay Cresswell, and a highly creative promotion director, Eric Landrum,” he says. “This team blows me away with their greatness every day, and they do three things superbly: play the hits, create fun with live breaks and promotions, and sync up with our listeners every day. It’s not rocket science, but to win in AC, today more than ever you need to have strong people at every position.”

Johnson goes on, “Everybody here understands how to create ratings. We could not win without solid corporate leadership, and CBS supports our live, local daily programming. We’ve had the same local leader, Brian Purdy, for seven years; that helps keep KVIL’s vision consistent. And you don’t often hear PDs say this, but the truth is, to win in AC you need a great sales department. Ours rocks. DOS/GSM John Hurlburt is so supportive of programming, and we return the love by moving a trainload of promotions for sales, all while keeping it clean on the air.



CBS Radio/Dallas VP/Programming Kurt Johnson

“At the end of the day, I really believe we win because everyone involved appreciates that KVIL is something special we’ve been given to care for. We never take that for granted. We work hard at it every day.”

On relating the music and entertainment to the community, Johnson says his people “just get it.” He says, “I am extremely blessed to work with one of the best airstaffs anywhere. Gene & Julie, Tony Zazza, Leigh Ann Adam, and Julie DeHarty relate to our listeners so well. They’re such pros that I can encourage them to improvise from the Lite FM Playbook at any given moment if it adds to the user experience. Every day we challenge each other: ‘What’s our listener thinking now?’ and if we’re not already there, we get there, quickly.

“We execute timely contests and events that add to our listeners’ lives, like recent giveaways of family trips to the Wizarding World of Harry Potter, and ‘The Workday Topoff,’ offering free gas for a year. We gave out ‘Pray for Japan’ wristbands all over DFW after the disaster hit. To relate to listeners, we spend time with them. We make hundreds of community appearances a year, and our staff leverage our digital tools to converse with their fans online every day.”

Johnson continues, “Somebody once said, ‘There’s never a bad day at AC radio,’ and I believe that says it all. We deliver an emotional lift with our music. The listener has come to know that when she touches the Lite FM preset, she gets hits: cool newer songs, loved tunes from back in the day. Every time. The station’s really easy to use. Our music connects in the car, at work, anywhere. We’re seeing some of the best new pop music in some time, and that’s really resonating right now — Katy Perry, Lady Gaga, Bruno Mars. Lite FM is a hit music option that spans a lot of demos. In the times we live in, it’s not hard to see AC’s relevance: It’s the place listeners can go that feels good because it doesn’t dwell on natural disasters, wars, political anger, or scary economic news. When you look at it that way, our music is more vital than ever.”

On succeeding in the format, Johnson has an interesting story to tell: “Recently, an AC PD who left radio about four years ago told me that when people ask if he misses it, he replies that ‘it’ isn’t there anymore. In a lot of ways, he’s right. The program director job in 2011 is so different than even five years ago. Add to that the PD’s growing role of directly helping to drive revenue and working the online space, and, I don’t know, maybe it is becoming rocket science.

“The speed and volume of change in the job keeps increasing, but one thing hasn’t changed. The key for an AC PD is spending

the bulk of time every day directing every ounce of energy in the station toward raising the mood of your listener. Music, promotions, talent, even commercial content. In AC, above any other format, winning is paying very close attention to the nuance, the ambience, the flow, anything that serves. And, equally important, eliminating anything that doesn't."

OBSESSING OVER THE DETAILS

Bill Conway runs KOIT in San Francisco for Entercom (www.koit.com), and he has for 14 years now. With 38 years as a programmer, Conway has been at the steering wheel of an AC format for 21 of those years, making stops in San Diego, San Antonio, and Charlotte. In 1985 KOIT started on its AC journey, and Conway believes it's been successful, in part, because of marketing and research.

"Whether on my watch or that of Mike Phillips, Suzy Mayzel, and Allan Hotlen who preceded me, we have obsessed about the details," Conway says. "We have had a number of longtime air personalities who always project humanity and never phone it in, even though we are 'Lite rock with less talk.'"

He goes on, "Community service has always been a big part of



KOIT/San Francisco PD/Station Manager Bill Conway

KOIT; it is one way to be very local and endear your station to the market. We are also, as a listener recently said, 'workplace appropriate.' By that I mean we help make people more productive without being intrusive. Our *Love Songs After Dark* fits a mood and feel for nighttime listeners, and weekends are popular because we reflect what's going on back to our listeners, again without being intrusive. KOIT's music is like comfort food. It is familiar, it is tasty, it is what they really like, and it makes them feel good."

Conway says programming an AC may be simple, but it's not easy. "You have to have a feel for the overall sound of the station, the subtleties and the nuances of flow," he explains. "You have to be aware of the changes in your audience. You have to be patient and persistent. A good understanding of research and ratings is very important because the devil is in the details. You need passion for the format and good math skills."

THE CONSULTANTS SPEAK

Having heard from the PDs, we asked the consultants about some current issues that affect all flavors of AC. Social marketing is a big part of relating to listeners these days, and Alan Burns says he has a lot of data about the AC listener to work with. "In our national study of 2,000 women (www.burnsradio.com/hereshcomes.aspx), we found that while AC is a little light in early adopters, AC P1s are very active both online and with other digital media," he says. "Half of them spend at least some time each week listening to online, non-radio music streams, and that number is growing. Half spend time with a digital music player weekly. Seventy-two percent have a Facebook profile, which indexes about 50 percent higher than the population in general. That data also shows that listeners who interact with a radio station online — whether that's visiting the station's website, joining its listener club or points program, or 'liking' it on Facebook — are more loyal, heavier users. They're definitely MIPs — most important listeners."

Coleman Insights' Warren Kurtzman says the two most important things stations can do online are providing access and engaging the audience. "Access means giving listeners the ability to consume your content wherever they are, whenever they like," he says. "It means making sure your content — not just what is broadcast on your AM or FM signal, but any content your station creates or curates — is available through every platform your listeners use."

He goes on, "Engagement means using all of the tools at your disposal, including your website, social media, mobile apps, etc., to strengthen the bond between your station and your listeners, ensuring that they continue to value you and your brand as new choices emerge. You can do this by sharing content that is both compelling and consistent with what your listeners expect of your brand. In addition, you can use this engagement to learn more about how your listeners feel and



Coleman Insights President Warren Kurtzman

what they really care about so you are in a better position to deliver things that are meaningful to them going forward.

"If you do this right, such engagement works like a continuous feedback loop, where you keep learning about your audience, delivering to them what they want from you and having them remain loyal to your brand."

A final question for Kurtzman: Does an AC station need to be more than just a jukebox to win, or is that OK?

He replies, "At Coleman we have talked for years about a concept we call the 'Image Pyramid.' It speaks about how important it is that a station establish a strong image in the marketplace for the music it plays. It also, however,

speaks about how the most successful stations complement strong music positions with imagery for other attributes, such as for personality, contesting, marketing, specialty programming, information, and community involvement. Generally the only time a jukebox is going to win over a station whose brand is comprised of musical and nonmusical attributes is when the multi-dimensionally branded station stands for things listeners do not find appealing or has a product that is poorly executed.

"This has become even more important as new competition for music listeners emerges. If your station is only a jukebox but also plays commercials, how are you going to win over a streaming audio service like Pandora that not only has far fewer commercials, but also offers music customized to an individual's tastes? Radio stations can't 'out-Pandora Pandora'; in addition to curating a music selection that many listeners find appealing, they have to offer other content that those listeners also want to hear. This is only going to become more crucial as the ubiquity of music streams and other sources of audio content increases." **INK**

BLAST From The PAST >>



AGING LIKE A FINE WINE: A RADIO LIFER Here is the handsome Vince Smith, age 19, spinning discs at WRLD-AM/Lanett, AL. In 1952, Kay Starr's "Wheel of Fortune" spent nine weeks at number one. In 2011, the chart-topper is Lady Gaga. Fifty-five years after his first airshift, and still a handsome man, Smith pulls a midday shift at WRLA-AM/West Point, GA. Way to go, Vince.

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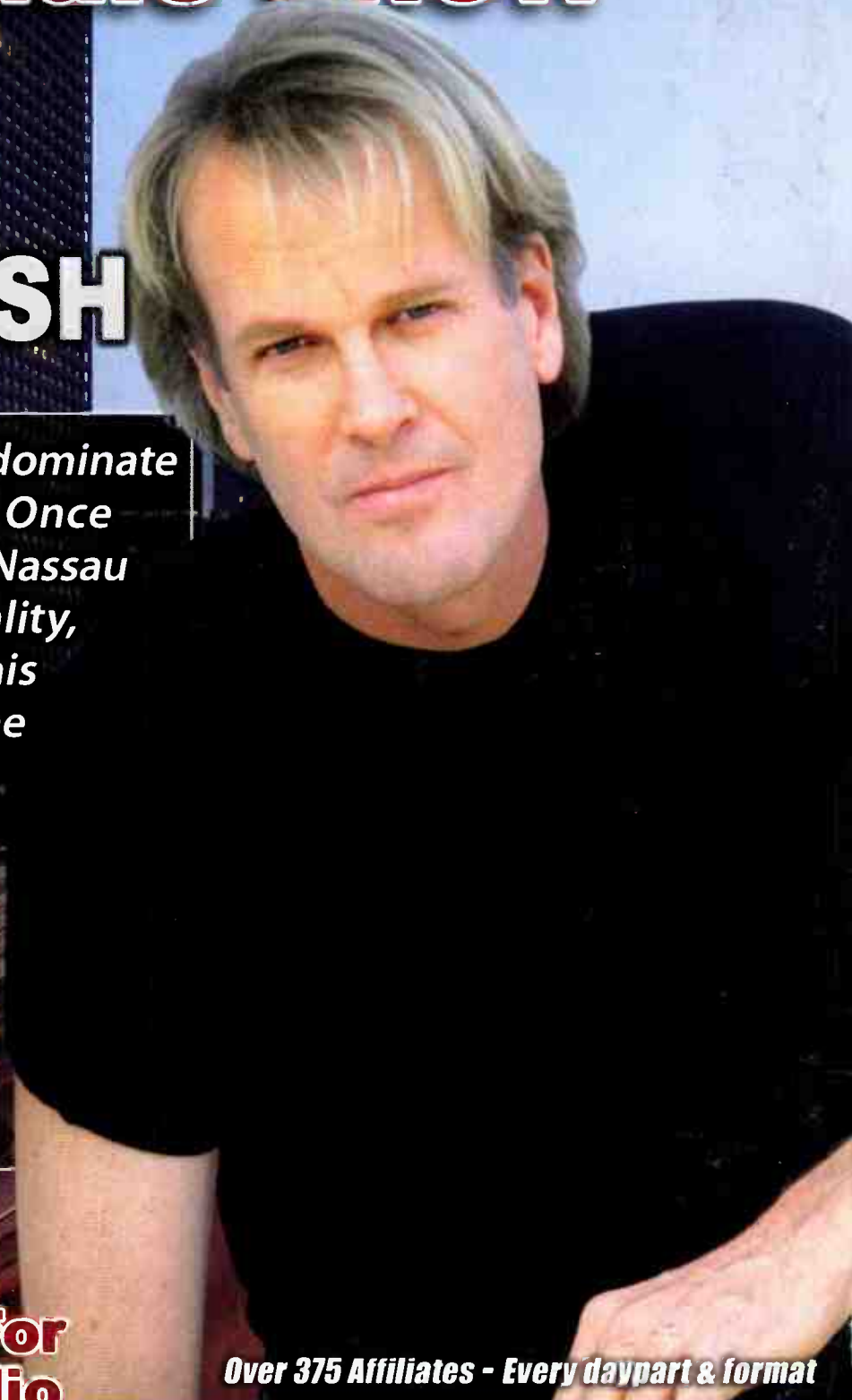
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the John Tesh Radio Show

PPM LOVES TESH



"John Tesh continues to dominate on Long Island in PPM! Once again, #1 with W25-54 (Nassau County)! John's personality, content, and quality of his program really are a home run for K-Joy!"*

Bill Edwards

Program Director

KJOY 98.3 (WKJY/FM)

Long Island, NY



*February 2011



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Bob Dylan - "Together Through Life"

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Jay-Z feat. Alicia Keys - "Empire State Of Mind"

by **ANGELA HUNTE**

Keith Urban - "Sweet Thing" & "Kiss A Girl"

by **MONTY POWELL**

Alejandro Sanz feat. Alicia Keys -

"Looking For Paradise"

by **SWIZZ BEATZ**

Melanie Fiona - "It Kills Me"

by **JAY FENIX**

Keyshia Cole - "Remember"

by **GREG CURTIS**

David Cook - "The Time Of My Life"

by **REGIE HAMM**

Keri Hilson feat. Kanye West

& Ne-Yo - "Knock You Down"

by **NATE "DANJA" HILLS**

Lady Antebellum - "American Honey"

by **CARY BARLOWE**

Lady Antebellum - "Need You Now"

by **HILLARY SCOTT**

Ginuwine - "Last Chance"

by **BRYAN MICHAEL COX**

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