

Building "Name Equity"

Continuing Education For The *Dedicated* Radio Programmer

The Only **REAL** Listener-Loyalty In Radio

Too often, some PD's seem to think their radio stations are invincible. (And that their farts don't smell!) Especially so, after a so-called "knock-out" book (where it appears the competition has been pinned to the wall).

Often it has been my responsibility, as a program consultant, to remind client stations of the reality that *there are no "knock-out" punches in Radio*. As radio programming becomes more and more refined, it's wise to remember that practically every radio station with a competitive signal has what I like to call "*instant recovery potential*". Particularly if they bring aboard a consultant or a PD who knows how to *strike fast*.

Funny how the timing usually works out: just about the time you start getting cocky, and pontificating about how "perfect" your philosophies are (in an R&R interview) is about the time you usually get your head handed back to you on a platter in the next sweep.

(Continued . . . see Name Equity on Page 3)

PM Participative Management
Building Synergy That WINS!

The old Harvard B-School adage that many of us were raised on goes something like,

"There are two ways to run a business, autocratically and democratically . . . and democratically doesn't work!"

(Continued . . . see "PM" on Page 2)

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Leadership Cliff's Notes



Participative Management Building Synergy That WINS!

(continued from page 1)

Many PD's, in particular, tend to be "control-freaks" by nature, so they seem right at home in this "command and control" culture (where it's "my way or the highway"). All issues are black and white, and there is no gray. Rules are rules. The law is the law. Simple as that.

Only problem – there is no "rule" to what is right.

At some point in our careers, we've all experienced situations where, we've had to endure working for a misguided, dogmatic, mentally-arthritic PD, who chewed us out and broke our thumbs even though we were doing the right things. (Just so happened his/her interpretation of "right" was at odds with ours – and the audience's!)

This naturally leads to a curly question or two – and you may not necessarily want to hear the answers.

Does your staff look at *you* that way? (Be honest, now!)

Do you *really* know *all* the answers?

(Even if you think you do, does your staff think so?)

Is there "a better way" than just barking out orders, management-by-memo, and weekly woodshed sessions to make sure things are "enforced"? Could be.

Just as the corporate environment of downsizing and disloyalty chewed-up and spat out the so-called "Japanese style" of management, perhaps the effects of consolidation in the Radio business may also mean that there needs to be a "new world order" when it comes to dictatorial programming practices.

The New World Order Of Teamwork

The trend in consolidation is clearly toward downsized staffing and cross-utilization programs, where everyone has "another responsibility (or two)". (Or more!) Even on "live and local", non-VR stations, we're seeing better utilization of personnel at every level . . .

- The PD is also the Morning Jock or may be programming 2 or 3 additional stations
- The Midday Host may also double as Production Director
- The PM Driver is also Music Director & Scheduling Wiz,
- Etc, etc, etc.

This is happening even in major markets.

What this means is that, with added responsibilities for most PD's, it's becoming increasingly difficult to continue the

Participative Management In Sports

"I've always prided myself on getting lots of opinions from all levels of my staff before I make the final decision on important issues".

— Buck Showalter

Arizona Diamondbacks Manager

(reflecting on his success managing the New York Yankees, where he was selected as Major League Baseball's "Manager Of The Year" in 1994)

traditional approach of "there's only one way to deal with this situation".

And especially as PD's take on new responsibilities in formats where they *haven't* had a depth of first-hand experience, the smart programmer will draw on the wisdom of his/her format-experienced *staff* to make himself/herself look good.

Participatory Principles

In its simplest form, Participative Management is another extension of the "brainstorming" sessions we've all conducted over the years. Only with a little more structure and follow-up added to it.

It's best utilized . . .

- To study a problem (or an opportunity)
- To suggest an outcome
- To plan a tactic or strategy that "solves" (or "exploits")
- And ultimately, to implement *action*

Teach and Trust

What it calls for is moving from a "command-and-control" culture to one of "teach and trust". Often this will entail entrusting your staff with sensitive information that might have heretofore been considered "confidential". If you don't share the "classified" secrets, your team will quickly deduce that you don't *really* trust them (and this may have just the *opposite effect* of the camaraderie-goal you're seeking). But let's concentrate on the up-side: when you involve everyone, the spirit of teamwork generates a positive "vibe" around the station that you're *leading* them into battle, instead of merely *ordering* them over the yonder hill.

Get Regular Feedback

The next step is going to tap into this "well" of flowing ideas *often*. Regularly! You may be pleasantly surprised at how many great answers your staff has. And, by the way, this doesn't mean that you have to call "formal" staff meetings to get input (just a short one-on-one conversation can bring a trusted employee into the "inner loop" and make them feel like they're an integral part of your "A" team).

TW Tip # 7027, #6017, and #8008

Next Week The KEY To Making PM Work

Building "Name Equity" & Listener Loyalty

(Continued from page 1)

As Ron Jacobs used to say to his KHJ Boss-Jocks: **Overconfidence kills!**

(Be sure to check out the next installment of "The Authorized Boss Memos", the KHJ Playbook, in issue #10 of "PI").

"But, you don't understand – our listeners here at "Magic 88.8" are *loyal* to us".

Sorry, **In my experience there's no such Sparky. thing as "loyalty" to radio stations!**

Even if you're music-driven, another station with a narrower focus could "out-drive" you by appealing to a smaller target of your constituency.

There is, however, loyalty to radio personalities!

Case in point:

Let's say you program the #1 station in town, "X-109".

- ✓ Great personalities who've been in place for several years.
- ✓ The right music.
- ✓ Good marketing, with regular TV and contesting.
- ✓ You've always "invested" in your product, even built up a "war chest".
- ✓ Been #1 for 10 years!
- ✓ Built a *lot* of "listener-loyalty". Or so you think.

What happens if . . . another station (with signal parity) switches format and takes direct-aim at you?

- ☑ "Magic 88.8" covers your music.

- ☑ They hire your jock staff (including your morning team, who, truth be known, is the *real* catalyst behind your great numbers).
- ☑ They launch with 500 GRIPs of target TV, a tactical campaign that encourages *immediate* sampling.
- ☑ And a \$50,000 contest that quickly attracts lots of nomad cumers to come out of the woodwork.

Suddenly, you're left with a *skeleton* of what your former station used to look (and sound) like. And you'll find out very fast that all that "loyalty", that you imagined was "*station-directed*", has shifted across the street (because it was really directed toward your *personalities*). I take the point, of course, that that's what contracts are for.

But – we all know that contracts have a way of running out (usually at the *least* convenient time). (One of the little corollaries to Murphy's Law, as applied to building franchises.)

So . . . how do you *build* loyalty? Or *can* you?

How To Build Loyalty: Name Equity

Loyalty can't be generated overnight. And it can't be bought. (Except in the sense that you can acquire a personality who already *has* a loyal following).

The best way of building loyalty in Radio is by helping your key personalities build their *local market name-equity*.

TW Tip #1031, #5032, and #6018

Next Week Secrets Of Equity-Building

Capsule Combat

The Rhythmic CHR battle in Phoenix took an interesting turn recently as Jerry Clifton's KPTY turned more toward an "extreme" music presentation (similar to their sister station in Honolulu (KXME).

Roughly a mixture of 75% Pop/Alternative and 25% Hip-Hop. Setting off an interesting promo exchange with KKFR.

Sweepers monitored on KPTY ("Party Radio @ 103.9"):

"Party Radio @ 103.9 – the station that doesn't suck" and "No clothes, no rules – and no f***ed-up songs"

Promo monitored on KKFR ("Power 92"):

"At Power 92, we've never set trip, we've always set trends. Through ALL the player-hatin' and and talkin'-smack, Power 92 has kept bumpin' the beat and bringin' the flavor to the 6-0-2. And now . . . the Party (door close) is OVER! #1 Power 92 is still here, slammin' the fattest hip-hop, throwin' the biggest concerts, and breakin' off the fattest prizes. We want to welcome ALL the Party listeners. And THANKS for comin' HOME to Power 92 — where Hip-Hop LIVES – keepin' it REAL!

TW Tip #9045 and 3064

... and The Beat goes on ...

Bedrock Part 3 Breakfast Benchmark Bits

"The Birthday Club". (aka "Birthday Calls", etc.). Start with celebrity birthdays and move on to local listeners. Some heritage AC and small market Full Service stations have tied station mascot characters (like "Henry Penny", "Buzz-O-Bumble", "Mother Duck", etc.) into their birthday presentation. The smaller the market, the better this feature seems to work. Reason: do the math. If you salute 60 birthdays each weekday, that's nearly 16,000 names a year. In a small/medium market, that can represent a significant percentage of your target audience. TW Tip #5021

The "Yes/No" Game. Talk with a contestant on-air for 30 seconds. If they can run the gauntlet of your questions without saying "yes" or "no" (or "uh-huh"), they win the prize of the hour (being modeled by our lovely assistant). TW Tip #5022 and #4026

"Hollywood Dirt Alert". (aka "Showbiz Sleaze". "Hollyweird News", "Follywood", "The Tabloid & 'Zine Scene", "Hollywood Dirt Alert", etc.). This should be factual showbiz gossip (key word: factual). Rick Dees does it best, by actually bonding his name to it ("Dees Sleaze"). TW Tip #5023

"Wild-Track" Drops. The best morning shows seem to use them. Key: using them sparingly. There's no rule to what makes a good drop. It could be a track from a movie or TV show, a soundbite from a newsmaker, or a cartoon character. Maybe even a running gag or theme ("Tina Delgado is alive, *alive!*"). Sometimes repetition of the same track, tying two seemingly opposite points together helps a drop build up steam (making it work more effectively). TW Tip #5024

"Must-Solve TV". (aka "B-TV", "Backwards TV"), "Classic TV Trax" or "D-TV" (after the breakfast/morning jock's first or last initial). Play a sound-bite (perhaps a scrambled or backwards bite or a theme song) from a current (or classic) TV Show. First in with the correct answer wins the prize of the hour. TW Tip #5025 and #4027

More!

"The Secret Sound". Many stations use this as a station promotion throughout the day, but many morning shows have used it as a running Morning-only bit for years. Listen for clues, identify the sound, win the jackpotting money. TW Tip #5026 and #4028

Phony "Spoof" Spots. Most of the Morning Show prep-services offer them, but you can do them yourself. An effective method John Lander used at 93Q/Houston years ago was to occasionally structure a small contest around the phony commercial that would be played in a cluster-pod. (Spot the spoof-spot and win). Nice little extra: these are bits that can be "re-used". If you re-use them, avoid replaying in the same hour or half-hour. Don't over-do it. Remember Col. Tom Parker's philosophy about over-exposure. TW Tip #5027 and #4029

Song Parodies. Again, most prep-services offer them, but finding a local talent who can do original songs about *local* relevant issues enables you to build something uniquely yours. It's the audio

equivalent of the Editorial Cartoonist in the local newspaper. When you do it, lay claim to it (the way "The Mighty Carson Art Players" did for Johnny). TW Tip #5028

"What's My Line". (aka celebrity "Mr. X"). Guess the occupation of this morning's "mystery guest", and win the prize. Listeners call-in and ask yes/no questions before taking a guess. If they get a yes, they can ask another question or take a guess. TW Tip #5029 and #4030

"The Word Of The Day". A twist on the "secret word" that used to appear on the "Groucho" TV show. In this case, announce the word early in the show. First listener to call-in when it's used again in conversation wins the prize. TW Tip #5030 and #4031

CLEAN Snap! Last week, John Sebastian announced his resignation as PD of America's most-listened-to Country station, KZLA in Los Angeles. So I thought this week was a good time to celebrate his many accomplishments.

In addition to breaking new ground in Country Radio and engineering a strong audience increase for KZLA, John has been involved in some of the fastest, most powerful turnarounds in major market history. In many formats (AOR, Classic Rock, and NAC).

- ✓ In the late 70's, he took AOR WCOZ/Boston from a 4-share to a 12.6% (12+) in just 8 months, parlaying that success into one of the most successful programming consultancies in the world, (built around the tight focus of "Kick-Ass Rock & Roll").
- ✓ Classic Rocker KSLX/Phoenix under his command exploded from 14th to 1st in 25-54 Adults.
- ✓ And KTWV/LA rose from 13th place, 25-to-54, to a tie for #1 in just one year (fitting, since NAC is a format John pioneered in the early 80's).

You can always tell a Sebastian-programmed station . . . he prides himself in deleting the negatives and superfluous "fluff", *streamlining* everything down to the bare basics that listeners want most. In addition to scrutinizing his own station, John has an innate ability to "pick apart" the competition (taking full advantage of their vulnerabilities).

But perhaps the *key* ingredient in the Sebastian success-stories over the years is the way he has disciplined himself to pay *obsessive attention to details*. Unique idiosyncrasies few programmers have the fortitude to uphold.

TW Tip #7028 and #9046

Snap7!
Streamline
&
Sweat The Details!

Nothin' But 'Net



"Wheel World"

Lex & Terry, the syndicated morning hosts of Q102/Dallas (KTXQ), have cleverly cloned MTV's "The Real World" with their Radio adaptation, "Wheel World".

Da Boyz have thrown six average folks from various walks of life into the friendly confines of a trailer home in the greater Dallas area, where they'll be living together for the next 6 weeks.

The "wheelers", as they're affectionately known, have been given \$102 to share for weekly expenses (plus a pantry filled with budget-stretchers like Spam, macaroni and cheese, baked beans, etc.).

But Lex & Terry have gone one step further and taken advantage of the high-tech tools available to them on the internet – providing *live* "trailer-cam" pictures (stills) for the world to see online.



The pictures update every 60 seconds. In addition, the wheelers check-in daily on the Lex & Terry morning show, for interviews and on-air confessions and other interaction. You can check 'em out live in streaming audio between 5:30 and 10am weekdays (CDT). (www.lexandterry.com)

The TW Quick-Take: "Wheel World" gets two-thumbs way up on the TW ticker.

It's one of the best promotions I've ever heard, anywhere! (And you know I don't throw raves like that around lightly!)

Lex & Terry have managed to translate an already interesting concept into an even better one. D/FW listeners will be naturally curious and will spread word of mouth quickly. "Wheel World" is to the late 90's what the flag-pole sitters or wake-a-thons were to the 60's. Only better (because more drama can unfold).

TW Tip #5031, #4032, #3066, #15023, and #16022

Pearls Of Wisdom

Two Things You Should *Always* Remember

"Everything within a radio station involves salesmanship. Even a PD is constantly selling. Selling ideas to management, his staff, and the audience."

— *Bernie Waterman, CEO of Waterman Broadcasting*

"No act of salesmanship ever goes unrewarded. Or unpunished, for that matter."

— *Gary Edens, CEO of Edens Broadcasting*

(Adjust your attitude accordingly)

TW Tip #7029 and #17009

Lifestyle File™

Making Time For Your Family

More and more busy executives are bringing work home with them (via e-mails, laptops, cellphones, and home-faxes). As a result, the struggle to balance career responsibilities with quality family time becomes increasingly difficult. According to best-selling author and lecturer **Stephen Covey***, here's how very busy people carve out "prime" time for their family. And how you can, too.

- ✓ First, take the time to create a *family mission statement*. What does your family unit stand for? What are your collective values? What kind of contributions do you want to make to society and mankind? Quantify the enduring legacy you want to leave. Set it out in short-, medium-, and long-term specifics. Then set out to achieve it.
- ✓ Put work and family in perspective. Work is important, but family is more important. Very few people on their death-

bed lament, "I wish I'd worked harder on the job". Imagine your life in the year 2040. Will you wish you'd spent more time with your spouse and kids? Then set about to change your mindset and save your relationships, *while you still can*.

- ✓ Get family input on how to make your quality time more rewarding. Actually "schedule" blocks of time for your family.
- ✓ Most important: put at least some part of your family plan into action *immediately*. (It's too easy to put it off . . . and the next thing you know, it'll be 2040).

* Stephen Covey's books represent the cream of the crop when it comes to centered living. "The 7 Habits Of Highly Effective People", "First Things First", and "Principle-Centered Leadership" are blueprints for how to live your life more abundantly. A derivative work, "The 7 Habits Of Highly Effective Families", focuses on how to enrich your family life.

TW Tip #21007, #22008, and #7030

Speaking In "Superlatives"

One of the more notable Wallace signature formats I'm semi-famous for is featuring "the world's greatest city™" as a reference to a station's market. I thought you might be interested in the background of the genesis of this idea (in the expectation it might foster a germ for you to develop something newer – and perhaps even better).

Ever since my first visit to San Diego (in 1971), I was impressed with what I consider the greatest positioning statement for a city that I've ever heard:

"San Diego: America's FINEST City"

(a play on the word "fine", a meteorological term meaning "no rain", though I doubt that one person in 100 would fully understand that connection to the statement.)

Another major influence on my thinking about city-chauvinism came from Denver legend Hal Moore (now at Jefferson-Pilot's KCKK), who coined the phrase "I Love You, Denver" when he was at KHOW (and breathed larger-than-life meaning into it, promotionally). (In the Radio theater of my mind, I can still clearly hear Hal every Friday at 3 inviting his listeners to "stop whatever they're doing, turn to the west toward the purple-mountained majesty, put their hand over their heart, and repeat the pledge, *I Love You, Denver!*". (Wow! I still get chills!)

City chauvinism became more personalized when I returned to Phoenix (after a one year stint in a market I didn't particularly like). I first implemented the reference to Phoenix as "the world's greatest city" at KRIZ (because I fervently believed it). The format element was done very matter-of-factly, every time (so the listener truly believed the jock meant it – and they all *did* mean it).

The more I analyzed it, I realized that *most* people, *no matter where they live*, believe *their* city is "the greatest in the world" (or they wouldn't live there). Of course, not everyone does, but the percentages are way in your favor (like 10 to 1!)

The phrase took on a life of its own at stations like Kiss 108 in

Boston and 3KZ and KZFM in Melbourne,

where the top-flight air personalities really *sold it*. In fact, in Boston the phrase has become so universal that Kiss 108's sister station, WJMN, now uses it, too (17 years after its introduction in Boston).



The World's Greatest City

In Melbourne, KZ added more promotional sizzle with "I Love Melbourne" stickers (which worked particularly well, since listeners were more likely to plaster-on a sticker that said "I love my city" than one that says "I am greedy").

When I owned KZKZ in Flagstaff, I toned the slogan down a notch to a more understated level, "America's greatest lifestyle" which I thought seemed a little less pretentious and more believable in a city of 50,000 (though arguably "world's greatest city" would have probably worked just as well).



Another variation occurred when I consulted 2UW in Sydney (which used the line "Australia's #1 city", which also tied-in with the station's other "#1"-oriented promotions ("the #1 couple", "the #1 sticker", etc.)

If you're interested in using a similar city-superlative (I'd appreciate it if you didn't steal "world's greatest city" outright), the best place I've found for natural deployment in an hourly-presentation-sequence is as part of the weather forecast, where it can be conveyed in a casual, natural, understated tone ("Magic 88.8 Weather, for the world's greatest city...").

Wallace Wisdom:

Say it like you really *believe it* – and your listeners will, too.

TW Tip #9047, #11005, and #3070

A great car-sticker campaign can be one of *the most effective* forms of station visibility money can buy. Main reason: besides making an "impression", it shows potential listeners that a lot of other listeners already "endorse" you.

Think stickers don't get noticed? Think again! Good ones *do!*

Recent example: In the nip-and-tuck Phoenix Country battle (which pits young buck KMLE vs. heritage KNIX), both stations commit big bucks to various forms of marketing. So what did listeners notice most? According to a *Radio Index* survey of the 25-to-64 audience*, 28%

Speaking Of Stickers

remembered seeing KNIX's car sticker in the past month, while 24% remembered seeing KMLE's car sticker. By comparison, only 8% remembered seeing KNIX's high-profile TV campaign in "past month" recall. Outdoor recall barely registered on the Richter scale.

*Note: This is 1996 data, to preserve confidentiality of the current situation. TW Tip #3067

MORE Sticker-Tips

Stand-out shapes can improve your visibility. A die-cut sticker in an unusual shape helps listeners to recognize your

stickers from much farther distances. For example, you could see "I Love Melbourne" stickers (like the ones above) all over town. (First thing you notice is the heart-shape, which tends to draw a consumer's eye to it). TW Tip #3068

A slightly "larger" sticker. If you design your sticker to be slightly larger than your competitor's sticker, it's easy to cover your enemy's sticker completely (which, of course, you can encourage via the right incentives).

"Show us that you've stickered-over Krudd 99's sticker, and you'll win *double!*"

TW Tip #3069

If there's any silver-lining in the proliferation of Virtual Radio (computerized digital-audio-automation) throughout our business it's this:

It's good for PD's.

For several reasons...

- ✓ **Job security.** There will always be a need for a someone to "organize" the whole venture, especially someone with a "flair" for adding "pizzazz" to the mechanical workparts. (Only downside: there'll be a lot more people after your job, many of them out-of-work jocks who'll be willing to work for less. Let that motivate you to constantly improve!)
- ✓ **You'll have better "control" over what goes on-the-air.** You can "pre-listen" to *everything* before it actually gets on the Radio.
- ✓ **Your staff will be higher caliber.** You'll be able to speak "programming shorthand" when you communicate with a major market jock who already understands the "I'm here to serve you" vendor philosophy. (Compare that to the whiny "victim" who's always complaining that "Radio isn't fun anymore" and "maybe we oughta sabotage this damned computer") Major market talent knows creative and inventive ways to make ordinary things "sparkle" (usually because they *take the extra time to make it shine*, instead of compromising or accepting lesser quality because "it's good enough for Topeka").
- ✓ **An "On-Air" PD will especially be in demand.** Having the talent to be the Chief Cook and Bottle Washer is nothing to be ashamed of. If you're an off-air PD who's been on-air before, now would be a good time to start brushing-up on your jocking (hosting) proficiency. (We all get a little "rusty" when we've been running a desk instead of a board).
- ✓ **It elevates the PD's role within the**

organization. There was a time when PD's were thought of as glorified jocks. (Many of them were!) Now you get to prove your *executive* prowess by demonstrating to upper management how the economies of scale and the economies of time-efficiency can be used to make a *better* air product.

All that having been said, this doesn't mean your job-of-the-future is going to be a cake-walk. It's actually going to be a lot more complex.

But the good news is... it's an opportunity for you to...

- acquire even more programming and management skills, and
- to demonstrate the broad range of your expanding skillset.

The Key: Re-dedicate Yourself To Being "Switched-On" All The Time

Don't accept mediocrity from yourself. In any area.

Push yourself to "the next level". And understand that there are going to be several "learning curves" that you're simply going to have to *quickly master*. Don't let that throw you. It's simply the price of entry (or the price of "remaining") in this new world order.

Think of this bold new broadcasting world we're entering as the difference between pre-season and regular season (or regular season and "playoff level ball").

I remember hearing an interview with an NFL rookie (wish I could remember his name) who *breezed* through training camp and the pre-season games, and thought to himself, "wow, playing in the NFL is a lot easier than I thought it would be!". Then came the regular season, when all the veterans turned the level of play "up a few notches". And playoff-season, when the energy became *fiercely*-intense. Suddenly, this player began to realize that he still had a thing or two to learn about what it took to "shine" in his chosen field. **You can't just go through the motions.**

Same is true in running a digitally-automated radio station in the new millennium.

The concept of VR has made it possible to erase the barriers of "time" and "distance".

And you now have the opportunity hire a better air-staff who will custom-voice all of their content to your local market in *exactly the way you want it*.

As long as the robo-jock provides up-to-the-minute, relevant local information (albeit voiced "pre-live" and played back "apparently live"), it doesn't matter if he or she is sitting in the room next door... or 1000 miles away.

That's where YOU come in. It's your job to *anticipate every contingency* and make *sure no mistakes get on-the-air*.

But "re-constituted programming" is *not* something you can just "set and forget". It requires even more attention to detail and behind-the-scenes organization than a fully "live and local" station does. As we pointed out in our Magic 11/Las Vegas example last week (see "PD" issue #6, page 9), if you *take extra care to mother the million and one details*, you'll be amazed at the full capabilities of "apparently live and local" reconstructed-programming.

Here's a short checklist of things you've got to be willing to do:

- ✓ **You must keep all of your Air Talents thoroughly briefed.** For VR to work well requires that every personality has the very most *up-to-date* understanding of the market they're cutting tracks for. This means sending newspaper, magazines, and a *complete run-down* of relevant local happenings any "local" is going to be aware of. (Concerts, big sports events, etc.) Used to be you'd probably slate all this stuff a day or two in advance - *now* you've got to line it up *a week or two in advance*.
- ✓ **You must understand the inner-workings of state-of-the-art formatics.** You must be able to break your format down into modular "component" workparts - and be able to put it back together again, seamlessly.
- ✓ **You must be open to new ways of advancing the art and science.** Finding newer, better ways of sounding "local". Experimenting with fresh, not-yet-tried methods of enhancing the capabilities of computerized-automation. Not all of them will "work", but that doesn't mean they shouldn't be tried at least once, in "loss-leader" time-periods.

(Continued... See VR PD on Page 9)

News & Surveillance Ingredients



Complete Weather: The Components Of A Quick, Efficient Weathercast

We all know the importance of weather as an essential trigger ingredient in your station's composite surveillance image (especially before 9am). But many stations haven't taken the time to *standardize* the way they present it (using terms listeners want to know in every weathercast). In an effort to establish a more defined forecast, I've been recommending the following guidelines to my consultation clients for years...

What Listeners Want To Know From A Weathercast:

"What will the sky-cover be?" Give your listeners a one- or two-word overview, covering the next few hours.

(e.g., Clear, Partly Cloudy, Overnight Overcast, etc.)

"What is the temp-range going to be?" Again, give them a one or two word description. Warm, Unseasonably Hot, etc.

"Is it going to rain?" Tell them, preferably with the percentage-chance of precip. If under 10%, say "with NO mention of rain". That says it very clearly. But if you don't actually say it, many listeners will still "wonder".

"Are there any other conditions I'll have to contend with today?" Tell them, succinctly. Gusty winds, humid, smoke'n'haze.

"What will the next high and low be?" Next two temp-extremes. Try to put it in terms that better explain it to listeners.

"Dress for a high today of only 26".

"We'll have a sunrise low of 45 tomorrow morning at 6:22".

"Is this normal for this time of year?" Adds tons of perspective, with just a few words. "Hi today, 51, that's 5 above normal".

"Any major changes in sight?" Near-term changes in the 5-day forecast that listeners need to know about.

"But looks like rain movin' in by Friday".

"What's it like right now?" Current conditions in a concise capsule.

The importance you attach to "winning the battle of Weather Mountain" should dictate how *in-depth* your current-conditions follow-up package should be. A *complete* package would include:

Cloud cover. Strive for stationality terms that are uniquely "yours" (like "right now, Skyweather is Clear")

Current temp. In larger metropolitan areas, suburb-temperatures enable you to broaden your reach with hourly area-awareness. If your studio-location is in the thick of things, use it regularly. Try to personalize area temps with local landmarks (which tend to paint more of a mental picture in a listeners mind). "At Scottsdale Community College, it's 47°, officially at Sky Harbor Airport it's 44, and right now it's 45 in the heart of Podunk here at X-109".

Ideally, the National Weather Service will supply area temps for you. Or you can post a topographical temp-map overlay in the Control Room, showing averages (when it's 75° in Phoenix, it's 78 in Scottsdale, 72 in Mesa, etc.) Or try this little trick: make a deal to install temp-gauges at 24-hour gas station cashier-booths around town. Then just make a quick call to get the current "Scottsdale" temp from the attendant on duty.

If your station has a strong commitment to weather information, here are some other key readings listeners find useful.

Winds and Humidity. Research has shown that females, in particular, are interested in knowing about these conditions, so they can determine what kind of a "hair-day" it's going to be. (e.g., If it's going to be windy, an extra puff of hair-spray might be in order).

Wind Chill and Heat Stress. These are useful indexes that everyone can relate to, since it's what it actually "feels like" right now during times of severe cold weather or oppressive humidity.

Peak readings. Most people like to know what today's high was. And on a windy day, they also find it interesting to know what the peak wind-gust was. Getting the info: Check with the NWS (or install a Heathkit Computerized Weather Station at your studio location).

Uniquely local. Some markets may have unique weather-interests you can reflect. Example: in "arid" Arizona, evaporative-coolers can be very effective until the dew-point reaches 55. So including the dew-point in weathercasts at certain times of the year is "useful information" to many listeners. It helps a listener "get it".

To The Point. Another perceptual trick that can enhance your weather attribution, while "individualizing" your weather with a "unique" presentation: Mention current-temperature in tenths of a degree. "And right now at the X-109 computerized weather station, it's 58.5". Sounds very "official" And it's easy to do. (Digital thermometers are readily available).

Make Words Work. The key to communicating a concise weather package is to make words work. All of the above may look like it would be a wordy-forecast, but here's the real bottom-line:

"Partly Cloudy and Warm. Clearing by Noon with NO mention of Rain. Some gusty winds late in the day. Sunrise low will be 45, with a high tomorrow of 72". (That took 7 seconds).

Experts *legitimize* your weather product. A "weather expert" can add tons of credibility to your weather image, especially a high profile local TV meteorologist with a strong Q-score.

So do "widgets". Especially if you have access to an expert, consider publishing your own station "almanac" full of local weather data and calendar/datebook information. You'll gain even more image points in listeners minds.

Stake your claim. Take advantage of concise opportunities that enable you to claim perceptual weather-related positions:

- ✓ "Color-Radar Weather" or "Satellite Weather" helps a listener to "see" your forecast. In their mind's eye, many listeners can "visualize" your radar-scope (probably in much grander scale than reality).
- ✓ "Dependable Weather" or "Guaranteed Forecast" reminds them of a benefit. "Doppler 109 Weather" communicates a strong reinforcement during storm season.
- ✓ "X-109's X-clusive computerized weather station" sends a clear message to listeners that you've made a commitment to keeping them informed about weather. You get the idea.

While the above is considered pretty much SOP for a news-oriented station, it wouldn't hurt a music-driven station to include the same detail in their forecasts (especially within newscasts in the morning daypart).

TWTip# 10020, #5033, and #9048

Coming Up In "PD" Issue #9

The Fine Detail Of An Expanded Storm-Coverage Policy

About "TW Tips"

At the end of each quarter, we'll issue a free "PD Index", to cross-reference every TW Tip into the following programming categories —

- 1000 series - The Audience
- 2000 series - Music
- 3000 series - Promotion/Marketing
- 4000 series - Contests
- 5000 series - Mornings
- 6000 series - Talent
- 7000 series - Leadership
- 8000 series - Morale
- 9000 series - Presentation
- 10000 series - News/Info
- 11000 series - Public Service
- 12000 series - Operations
- 13000 series - Talk
- 14000 series - Technical
- 15000 series - Internet
- 16000 series - Computers
- 17000 series - Sales
- 18000 series - Production
- 19000 series - Research
- 20000 series - Ratings
- 21000 series - Life
- 22000 series - Bookshelf

IBM Management Philosophy

Workers
respect
what
management
inspects.

TW Tip #7031

How To Be A Switched-On! VR PD

(Continued . . . from page 7)

(That means you've got to be willing to wake up at 3 in the morning to hear it 'live'!)

- ✓ **You must give regular feedback to your VJ's.** Just because a jock is 1,000 miles away and already an "acknowledged pro" doesn't mean he/she can't benefit from ongoing constructive critique. It starts with *demanding pronunciation excellence* as applied to street names and local celebrities. (Nothing exposes the Oz-charade faster than an obvious mispronunciation of a local name everyone knows). But it also extends to the same suggestions for improvement you'd offer a live-and-local personality (about pacing, pitch, inflection, on-air attitude, etc.). Most of all, insist that every Air Talent do "local" prep, and make sure to monitor their progress on how they deliver that local content. (When it's done casually and nonchalantly it's much more effective than an obvious stilted "frontal assault" that seems to telegraph "here comes my obligatory local bit").
- ✓ **You should be "pre-monitoring".** Just as you'd "live monitor" your station (by listening to the Radio) or "post-monitor" (via airchecks), you now have the opportunity to catch mistakes *before* they go to air. So you should have a procedure that enables you to listen to every voice-track before it's fed into the system. Just as important you'll also have continue your live-monitoring as well (to note any mistakes that may have sneaked past your pre-monitoring systems).
- ✓ **Details, details.** Listeners will notice when your weather forecast says "Clear" but it's pissing down rain. So you need to make sure it gets changed (hopefully *before* the blunder goes on-the-air). If an Air Talent makes reference to Sinatra being near death or Linda McCartney joining Paul on his next concert tour, you've got to *notice* it (and correct it) before it gets on-the-air. It may simply require

that you design a good check-and-balance system (maybe something you can delegate). But . . . leave *nothing* to chance.

- ✓ **Contingency Plans.** What is your plan if the President is shot or a space shuttle blows? The "Switched-On" PD will already have a digitally-loading message ready to roll for the instant that happens. This doesn't have as much to do with "live" vs. "memorex" as it does with *planning* vs. *non-planning*. Many stations were caught with their carts down in 1963 when JFK was assassinated. Now 35 years later, I'll bet not one station in 100 knows what it would do if the unthinkable happened again. In a more likely scenario, you also need to plan for weather emergencies (especially in areas where they happen with regularity). Will you go "live"? Or "apparently live". Will someone be "on call"? Will you be? Step-by-step, plan your every activity with clockwork precision *in advance*. (Do it and you'll probably sound better than the so-called "live" station down the street that doesn't have a plan).

Wallace Wisdom:

To paraphrase Paul McCartney,

"In the end, the Radio you make is equal to the care that you take".

If you're the PD of a VR station, you need to go *out of your way* to make your station doesn't just sound live, but *better than live*. I guarantee you, if I was PD of an "apparently live" station, you'd *never* be able to tell it was "automated"! You should be able to say that about *your* station, too.

A strong, "Switched On" PD in charge of a voice-tracked radio station is going to produce *Outstanding Radio* — and stunning results.

TW Tip # 7032 and #9049

Coming Up In "PD" Issue # 9

Part 3 of the "PD" Mini-Series About
"The Virtues of VR"

The "PD" Bookshelf

By former CBS executive and talent agent, Milo O. Frank (Simon & Schuster)

The premise is simple: In this "short-bite" world we live in, consumers have become conditioned to expect succinct communication — on every level.

The 30-second commercial set the stage. High story-count newscasts on Radio and TV and national newspapers like *USA Today* (which bullet-point only the important facts) accentuate the dynamic.

So the most *effective* managers are the ones who know how to present themselves, and their ideas, *efficiently*.

If you haven't been able to state the crux of your case in the first 30 seconds, you've "lost" most people and you'll be swimming uphill thereafter. Like the two-page memo explaining why memos should only be one page.

Learning how to judiciously condense will help you focus your thinking, writing, and speaking. It'll help you keep conversations "on track" and shorten meetings since you have more time to "listen". TW Tip #22009, #7033, and #9050



Programmer's Digest

Food For Thought

Too Hip For The Room

One of the oldest, but truest, axioms in Radio is:
All that matters is what comes out of the speakers.

Corny as that may sound, it's really true. If you don't "do it 'right' on the Radio", nothing else counts. You can "throw cash" at the battle all you want, but most listeners won't be swayed if the fundamentals are missing.

It's amazing how many programmers seem to forget that. Or think it's changed because of consolidation, or operational advances like VR, or (insert any other lame excuse here).

As we move ever closer toward 2000, with all the new capabilities that computers and technology are making available to programmers and marketers, it's easy to get swept up into the frenzy of high-tech-itis. And lose sight of what really *matters* to listeners.

The *reality* is . . . most listeners *still* turn to Radio for the same things they did 25 or 30 years ago. And in very much the same way.

True, there have been some subtle changes (like more females in the workforce, an earlier start to the average workday, the impact of aging baby-boomers on demos, and the proliferation of tighter-niched and hybrid formats as more stations become "viable" in a marketplace).

But . . . by and large, *most* of the basics remain the same.

Which is why it's important to remain focused on concentrating on the listener benefits that really matter.

It's also a time to make sure you're in-true-sync with what songs listeners really want to hear. Judging by some of the playlists I've examined lately (using Mediabase Music Research airplay monitoring), it seems as if some stations are determined to be way "ahead" of their listeners' music tastes.

Too hip for the room, literally.

Perhaps it's because partaking of music biz schmooze is a lot more fun than the boring job of "reflecting the masses". (Some PD's appear to value their relationships with record company reps more than they value their station's relationship with its target audience).

In coming weeks, we'll look deeper into some of the bigger "mistakes" being made using "hearsay" music policies that don't pass the "logic" test. (By the way, if you have any "pet" issues you'd like us to expose or look deeper into, just give me a call).

All The Best,



Coming Next Week In The World's **Fastest Growing** Programming Newsletter

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And

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