

Gary Owens ponders **LONGEVITY**

Turned



Kim Komando's Wonderful Webcasting Adventure

vol. 4 no. 9
Sept. 1997

RADIO WORLD'S MANAGEMENT MAGAZINE

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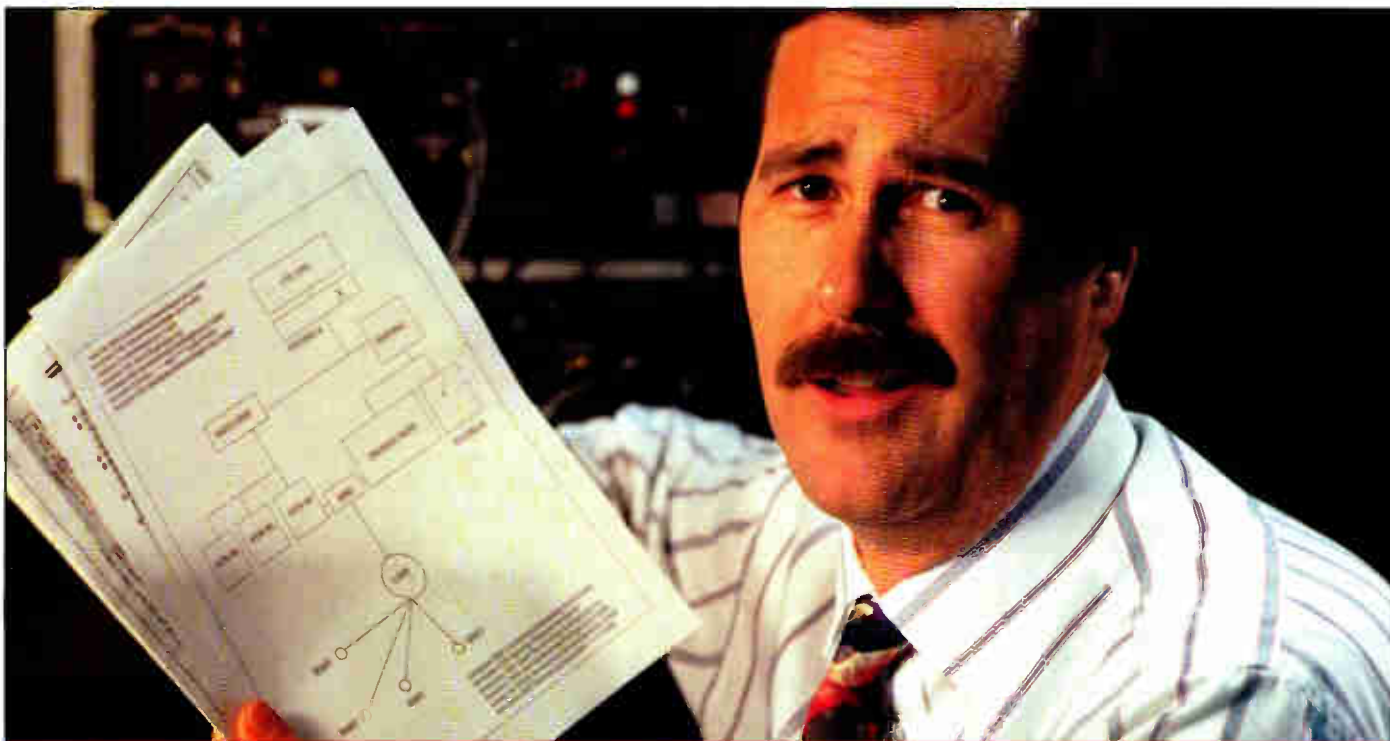
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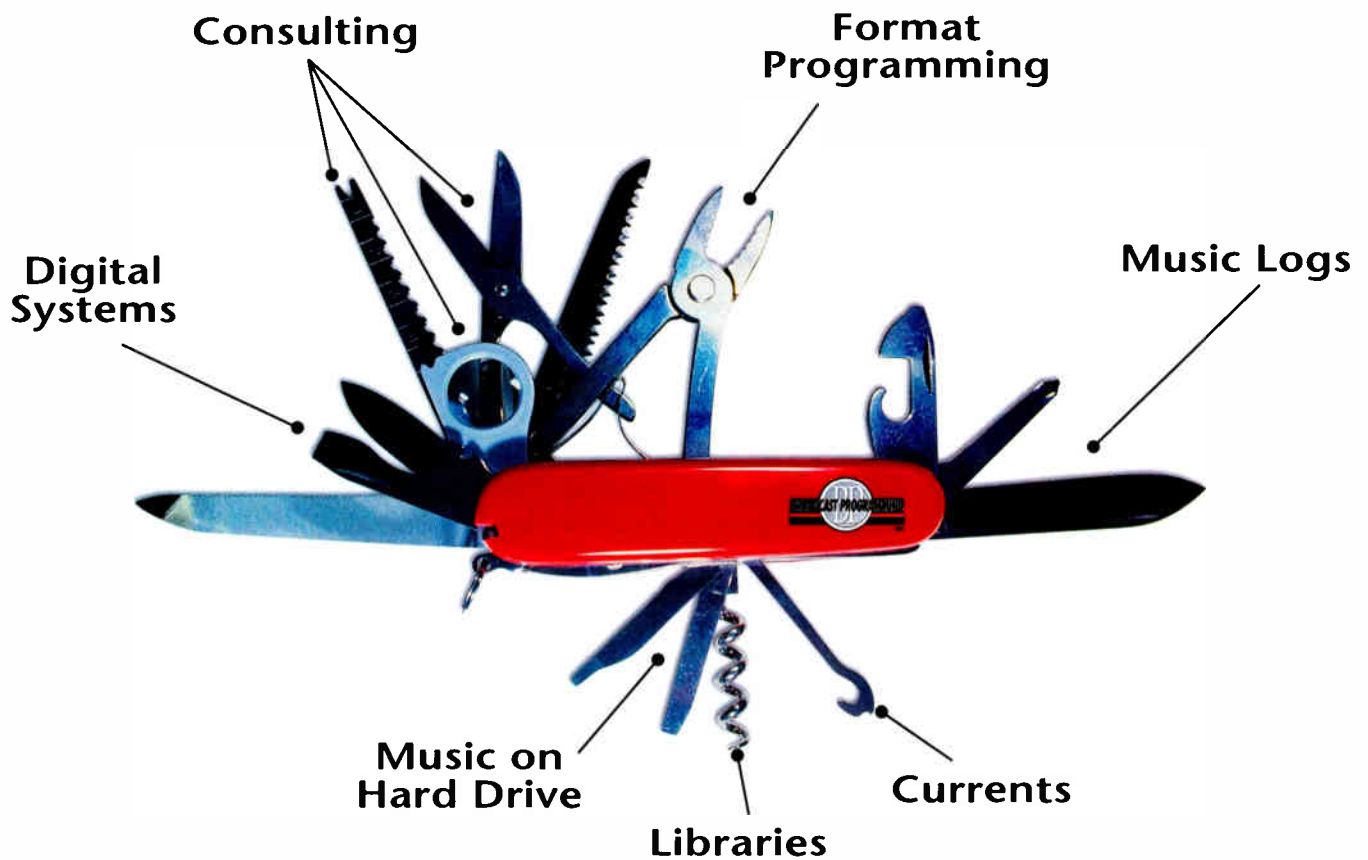


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For Longevity's Sake



Portrait of the editor as a young man

Deeply rooted in an old photograph, the twists and turns taken during any given point in time can surely take you back.

That's me, age 23, in the picture up above. The year was 1978, and I was bursting with bravado and inexperience during my first professional radio days in Delaware.

After learning the ropes at WVHC(FM) at my alma mater Hofstra University, I hit the bricks at my first professional job at WKEN(AM) in Dover, Del. There, I was told that people would know who I was, even though I was only allowed to say my name once or twice a shift. It turned out to be absolutely true.

After WKEN, I moved about 25 or 30 miles south to nearby Milford to work at WAFL(FM) and sister station WTHD(AM). There, I learned the most important lesson of all — the secret of longevity (do good work and set a clear path).

That lesson has stood me in good stead over the years. It helped guide me through my instrumental role in the introduction of the Radio Data System while I worked for the Electronic Industries Association's Consumer Electronics Group (now the Consumer Electronics Manufacturers Association).

In 1994, I became a free-lance writer. Almost immediately, I began scribing for *Tuned In* and *Tuned In's* sister publication, *Radio World*. The rest, as you might say, is history.

Now, everything has come full circle. I'm still in the radio game, deejaying at a local cable radio station in Fairfax, Va., and editing the magazine you're holding in your hands.

I'm excited to be here, bringing you our insider's look at the 1997 NAB Radio Show and media writer Janet Plume's fascinating take on the state of radio in *The Big Easy* (while we're on the subject of New Orleans).

A couple of new, regular features debut this month — *The Quote Board*, on which radio's top managers post their dish about this and that, and *Famous Last Words*, about 600 or so by a well-known radio personality on just about any topic imaginable. First up: the one and only Gary Owens with his musings on longevity in the radio biz (I'm not the only one thinking about this, I guess).

Also on tap this month is Lucia Cobo's incisive one-on-one with NAB Board Joint Radio/TV Chairman Dick Ferguson, Bob Rusk's encounter with the one and only late-night talker Art Bell, and Sandy Wells' sumptuous look at specialty programming.

And guess what? We're just warming up. Here are five words to get you looking forward to next month's issue: Joan, Rivers, Cousin, Bruce, and Morrow.

Thanks for listening. I hope we'll be able to create a bond, you and I. Send your thoughts on the magazine (criticisms or kudos — your choice) to the e-mail or snail mail address at the bottom of this page. I'll read them all.

And let's toast to our mutual longevity in this crazy business of ours. Do it from time to time, will you, for longevity's sake?

— Alan Haber

JUST A NOTE:

In "Schweet! The Greaseman Returns to Washington" (August), it was stated that Grease worked at WJFK-FM in the nation's capital for 10 years. He actually worked at WWDC-FM during that time. We regret the error.

Contact me directly at P.O. Box 4649, Alexandria, Va. 22303-4649.
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CATCH AWAY

It's Four Days of
Cajun, Gumbo and
Jambalaya ... *and*
it's 100%
radio!

It's the 1997 NAB Radio Show,
September 17-20, 1997.
Don't be shy ... jump in!

After all, you are going to be in The Big Easy ...
what else will you have to do?

Exactly. You've got four days of radio ahead of
you. Now, let's make sure you have all your ducks
in a row. Got your list of appointments? Good.
Picked out the can't-miss workshops? Very good.
Made note of the exhibitors you simply have to
see? Great!

Now make a list of all those must-take items
you always seem to forget to take with you. Let's
see ... toothpaste ... mouthwash. Oh, well ...
there's always the hotel gift shop.

It's time to make the rounds on Bourbon Street
and show New Orleans what radio is all about.

Let's get started. On the following pages, you
will be getting the lowdown on the 1997 NAB
Radio Show, straight from NAB President and CEO
Edward O. Fritts, Senior Vice President of Radio
John David, Vice President of Science and
Technology John Marino, and Co-COO of
American Radio Systems and NAB Radio Show
Steering Committee Chair John Gehron.

And, if you want more New Orleans-style low-
down, we have that, too. Simply turn to page 15
for an incisive Market Watch feature that delivers
the dish on the game of musical chairs being
played in New Orleans radio.

Meanwhile, back to the Radio Show. Consult
your program on-site for an up-to-the-minute
guide to more than 180 exhibits and over 70
workshops. Or, better yet, why not take gander
at our esteemed sister publication *Radio World's*
September 3 issue for the latest information
published prior to the show?

Get set to find out exactly what makes the
NAB Radio Show tick. And maybe, just maybe,
you should make a note to buy a toothbrush ... as
long as you're going to the gift shop, anyway.



Views from the
1996 NAB Radio Show
World Radio History



“You’ve got an action-packed weekend that’s going to be the most exciting thing radio has seen, in my estimation, in recent years.”



Edward O. Fritts

NAB President and CEO Edward O. Fritts is looking forward to a great Radio Show in The Big Easy. And, if you are wondering why the Radio Show has returned to New Orleans ...

“We do our surveys of cities that people would like to attend for various conventions, and New Orleans consistently rates at the top of the list, particularly for the Radio Show,” says Fritts.

Next year, the Radio Show is off to Seattle. Fritts says there is already “a huge amount of enthusiasm” for the city. Seattle is “sort of like a miniature San Francisco,” he suggests, “except it’s all compacted in a downtown area.” The Big Easy is “much the same,” he notes, “because everything is within walking distance.”

The restaurants. The entertainment. And, oh yes, the show of all shows ... the 1997 NAB Radio Show, reflecting the big changes in radio over the past year. But make no mistake — change is nothing new for this industry.

“I think radio has been in a constant flux of change since the 1920s,” says Fritts. “Its demise has been reported many times over. However, because of consolidation, because of what’s taken place recently with the Telecom Act, with the robustness of the economy, I think that I have seen more optimism in radio in the past 12 months than I’ve seen in 12 years.”

If you are in New Orleans during the Radio Show, you are in the right place for a clear snapshot of where your medium is today. “I think that the NAB Radio Show is a place where all of the ideas and all of the technologies and all of the business parameters begin to converge at one location,” says Fritts.

You want trends? You’ve got ‘em. “There are numerous trends that are taking place,” says Fritts. “Consolidation is one. The robustness of the business, new technology opportunities, competitive challenges, how to grow radio’s share of the pie — all that is under the big top in New Orleans this year.”

You know what is on *your* mind. But what about your peers? What will everybody be thinking about at this Radio Show? “I think you have to start with a foundation,” says Fritts.

“Radio traditionally has had a feeling of being subordinate to other media in the minds of many people, but I must tell you that since the Telecom Bill passed, Wall Street has found that radio is important in the local banking community. It has found that radio is important, and the value of radio stations all across the board, whether they are in small markets or large markets as a result of that, has increased substantially.”

There is plenty to be taken from the foundation of this year’s Radio Show. All eyes and ears will be transfixed on CBS Station Group Chairman and CEO Mel Karmazin when he accepts the National Radio Award on Friday, September 19 at the annual radio luncheon.

"I'm looking at a show where people can come and make money with the ideas they learn."



John David

What's on tap at the 1997 NAB Radio Show? NAB Senior Vice President of Radio John David tells all.

What is happening during The Big Easy incarnation of the NAB Radio Show? Look for plenty of information on station operation, future trends in programming and sales, how to increase revenue, and much, much more.

"How are people finding out how to manage more effectively with consolidation when they're managing sometimes four and five stations in a market?" asks David.

All this and more, including the status of in-band, on-channel digital audio radio, will be in the Radio Show spotlight.

New Orleans has been good for the Radio Show, says David. "The convention center and the hotels are very close together, and you can move around without too much trouble. It's just a fun city."

The Big Easy "is very hospitable to people who come in," he observes. "They recognize that convention business is very important to their economy, from the taxi drivers to the hotel people to everybody involved. They're very receptive to having you as a guest in their city."

If you are one of those guests, and a format session hound to boot, the NAB Radio Show is for you.

"We're doing, as always, a lot of sessions on specific formats," says David. "People don't have to go to a format session just on their specific format. They can find out about other formats." In other words, there's an opportunity afoot for "a country programmer to hear what successful ACs are doing and maybe pick up some tips on techniques."

David says he's looking forward to keynote speaker Robert W. Pittman's "perspective

"Clearly," says Fritts, Karmazin "has led radio's charge on Wall Street. The people on Wall Street love him."

The Radio Show spotlight will also be on America Online Networks President and CEO Robert W. Pittman when he delivers his keynote address on Thursday, September 17. The former radio programmer "has turned out to be actually one of the brightest young talents in executive management today," says Fritts. "I think that will be a great opening to our convention. It'll be exciting. You know, nothing succeeds like success."

Who will you meet, swimming elbow-to-elbow in radio in The Big Easy? "This convention lineup," says Fritts, "is just loaded with successful people, with entrepreneurs who have fought their way through thick and thin ... some of these fellows who have not always had it easy, and I don't think they have it easy today, but I think their ingenuity and creativity has driven them to a very successful position."

What is NAB's challenge in planning for the Radio Show? "We're in a continual planning mode," says Fritts. "I think one of the things we want to do is make sure that we capture the essence of all the various trends, whether they are long-term trends or whether they're short-term, faddish-type trends."

The NAB's role, says Fritts, "is to be able to put the right people — many of them who are visionaries and futurists, many of them who are street fighters, many of them who are technical experts — to put all of them in one place during a short period of time so that an attendee to the Radio Show gets exposed not only to the new technologies on the exhibit floor, but also to the trends."

The idea is "to try to project with some degree of accuracy what's taking place in the industry now and to forecast what will be taking place in the industry in the future," says Fritts.



Fritts meets Larry King on the air at the 1993 NAB Radio Show

If all of this can be conveyed to attendees, says Fritts, "regardless of their discipline, then I think we've been successful." Welcome to what Edward O. Fritts calls "radio's very special event." Welcome to the 1997 NAB Radio Show. ▼

The NAB chief would like attendees to leave New Orleans with "the realization that their time and money has been well spent and has been repaid many times over." The goal, says Fritts, is for people "to come away with a worthwhile experience."

The entire NAB Radio Show experience, he notes, "is designed to make sure that when a broadcaster leaves New Orleans, (he says) 'This was terrific. I went to the exhibit hall and I saw some things I didn't know were available. I learned a great deal from the sessions and I have something tangible that I can take back to my operation and apply to it that will make me money, that will improve my programming, that will help me technically, or that will help me in terms of my management skills.'"

John David, young adult broadcaster



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World Radio History

"I've got to get my picture in the Metro Helicopter every year."



John Gehron

It's one thing to talk shop with your peers on the telephone, but quite another, much more valuable experience when you do so in person. American Radio Systems Co-COO and NAB Radio Show Steering Committee Chair John Gehron works hard along with his three subcommittee chairs to put together a slate of workshops that will help attendees grow their business.

Gehron talks here about the Steering Committee's mission and what is in store for 1997 Radio Show attendees in New Orleans.

The 21-member NAB Radio Show Steering Committee, a coming-together of radio professionals that changes every year, brings real-world expertise to their work.

"It's important that the convention be topical and timely," says Gehron. "That's why the subcommittees (see sidebar) are so important, because they really are bringing to the table ideas and concerns that are going on in the business today."

The committee first gathers together to answer a few questions. "Where is the business going? What are the concerns that we have and that we hear from the people that we talk to every day? What are the concerns that the people (who) work for us are talking about? We try and come up with topics and panels that address those issues," says Gehron.

on how all of convergence is coming about and where radio fits into this. He has a unique perspective, coming from radio, to relate to that audience. He's been an air personality and a PD, and he's going to relate to the management structure and to the programming structure." (Pittman will be delivering his keynote speech on Thursday morning, September 18).

The Radio chief is also looking forward to the unveiling at the show of a report on "at-work listening" habits that will be presented by Larry Rosin, President of Edison Media Research, and Pierre Bouvard, Vice President and General Manager of Radio Stations at Arbitron.

Another high point for David at the show — concerning a topic that holds a special place in his heart — is the Small Market Radio Managers Roundtable, facilitated by Jay Mitchell of Jay Mitchell Associates. Look for the action on September 20.

There will actually be roundtables in the room, around which "people can talk just about anything," observes David. "Small markets have a unique set of opportunities that they will tell you quickly about. To relate to other small market operators around the country is a great opportunity."

Small market sessions, David points out, have been in the spotlight at the Radio Show "for the last three years. They've been very well attended, and they're designed to both make and save money."



John David: Teenage DJ sensation

Small market roundtable attendees will likely walk away with an abundance of tips they can use in their own business. David: "I'm talking about things as basic as using the heat from the transmitter to heat the building... Things like that come up there, and people have been very efficient in small markets with things like that."

An opportunity to be among the best and brightest in the radio business will occur on Saturday night, September 20, when the 1997 Marconi Radio Award winners are announced at the annual black tie (encouraged) event.

A lot of work goes into making the Marconis a great night that recognizes the bright lights in radio broadcasting. It's a true group effort among the NAB radio department's staff.

"We look at the categories every year to make sure we're in tune with the business and the formats and the market sizes," says David. "It's like a group head told me. He said, 'You know, I never thought too much about the Marconis until one of my stations won one. He said it did tremendous things for the morale of the station.'"

What is the challenge for the NAB every year when preparing for the Radio Show? "One of the most important things we do is not be isolated here in Washington, but reach out to people who are recognized as leaders in the business to serve on our steering committee (see sidebar)," says David.

"We start from a zero-based show every year," he notes. "We begin planning in early December or January for the next show, and we have no preconceived ideas about what's going to happen."

So, saddle up for Seattle. Between this year's Radio Show and the next one, it's going to be a wild ride! ▼



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► Among the topics on the table at the committee's first meeting for the 1997 Radio Show was consolidation. "I think consolidation continues to be the biggest topic," suggests Gehron. "What does it mean? Where is it going to go? What does it mean for jobs? That's a big concern for people."

But then, he adds, "There are things that never change. What's going on in marketing, in promotion, in production, in the sales area? How do you approach your client? What's the best way for radio to move forward? Some things don't change, but obviously there are things that change dramatically from year to year."

Gehron notes that the committee tries "real hard to make the format rooms good." He gives classic rock as an example of one of the formats in discussion at the Radio Show. "Where is that format going? That's going to be a good subject this year. Some people have said it's a format that's going away. Others feel very strongly that it's doing fine." (*Classic Rock: The Next Generation* is being held on Wednesday, September 17).

Input is important to the subcommittees. "The NAB does an outstanding job of getting a lot of that information throughout the year," Gehron points out. "As important as these committees are, the real core to the success of the convention is what the NAB does with John David and his staff, because they make being on these committees very easy."

Every year, says Gehron, the NAB goes out "and they look for people who are connected in the business, who are involved heavily in what's going on and influencing where our business is going. The NAB gets good input on what the convention should be discussing and handling."

It took the steering committee "almost six months" to put together the workshop program for this year's Radio Show, says Gehron. "There are at least two planning meetings where we sit down and spend a whole day talking about what we're trying to do — develop the ideas for the panels. Then you have to figure out (who) are the people that would be best on those panels. Then we get into things like who are the keynote speakers going to be and things like that, so it takes a lot of time. The actual meetings are probably the easiest part, and then it's contacting all of these people."

Speaking of people, look around you as you negotiate the environs of the New Orleans Convention Center. Notice anybody familiar?

The NAB Radio Show is "like a family reunion," says Gehron. "This is still a small business, and it's the best opportunity that I've found to get reacquainted with people that I talk on the phone to all year, so you know beyond just the fact that you can learn a lot at this convention, it's a great place to make contact and it's a great place to get reacquainted." ▼

"These people ... do a terrific job."

Meet the subcommittee chairs



"You know, a lot of committees operate in name only," says Edward O. Fritts. "These people actually work and do a terrific job."

Fritts is talking about the NAB Radio Show Steering Committee. "(John) Gehron, of course, is the overall chairman," he notes. "Maureen Lesourd — I don't think you'll find anybody who's more respected in this business than Maureen. Rick Cummings is one of the top programmers in America, and Weezie Kramer can crank out sales like nobody's business."

You say time is money?

Then you will want to be on time for the Radio Show's premier events. Check on-site to confirm all times and locations because things can and do change at the last minute:

Exhibit Hall Hours (there are no conflicting workshops scheduled during times marked *):

Wednesday, September 17: 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.*

Thursday, September 18: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

(11:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 4:45 p.m. to 6 p.m.*)

Friday, September 19: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

(3 p.m. to 6 p.m.*)

Special Events:

Wednesday, September 17

Opening Reception (takes place in the exhibit hall): 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Thursday, September 18

- Keynote Address: Robert W. Pittman, President

and CEO of America Online Networks, 10:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

- Mardi Gras Walk-Around Lunch (being held in the exhibit hall). Get a "Taste of Mardi Gras" and check out the exhibits! Noon to 1:30 p.m.

- International Reception: 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Friday, September 19

- NAB Radio Luncheon (Featuring the presentation of the National Radio Award to Mel Karmazin, CBS Station Group Chairman and CEO): Noon to 1:45 p.m.

- Exhibit Hall Extravaganza Friday, September 19, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Saturday, September 20

NAB Marconi Radio Awards Reception (Black tie encouraged by NAB), Dinner & Show (Hosted by former Marconi Awards winner Ron Chapman, KVIL-FM, Dallas): 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Marino on "Countdown 2000"

"Countdown 2000: A Technology Update" is a new session that is "a general overview of some of the technologies that exist (and) some that may be coming up in the very near future that are important to radio professionals," says NAB Vice President of Science and Technology John Marino.

Countdown 2000" will include "the latest updates on DAB," says Marino. "We'll have papers from the IBOC team — the USADR folks who are working together with Lucent now — and they'll give us an update on what they're doing as far as the AM DAB situation goes, and also the FM DAB (situation)." This "Countdown," notes Marino, is a general session "that's specifically geared to everybody" — general managers, group owners and beyond.



Seven Heads Are Better Than One

This year's session gathering of group heads promises to be a must-attend event. Mark September 18 for "Group Heads: Succeeding in a New Era." Herb McCord, President of Granum Communications, moderates. Panelists are Norm Feuer, President and CEO, Triathlon Broadcasting; Scott Ginsburg, Chairman and CEO, Evergreen Media; Steve Hicks, President, Capstar Broadcasting Partners; Randy Michaels, CEO, Jacor Communications; Bob Neil, President and CEO, Cox Radio; and Jeff Smulyan, CEO, Emmis Broadcasting.



Making Sense of It All, Post-Show

You do it every year — bring back mounds of brochures and press releases and *tchotchkes*. How do you sift through it all and make it work for you when you get back home?

"I know I've brought enough stuff back myself," admits Gehron. "I guess it's a good time to sort through a lot of it on the plane, because once you get back to the station, and you're back to your job, it's hard to sort through everything."

The key, says Gehron, "is what you learn in the sessions. It's not so much the material you bring back, it's the stimulation at the sessions, because that doesn't go away."

So how do you make sense of the information that's in your head, that you soak up in New Orleans?

"I think that you draw upon it throughout the year as you are faced with situations that were discussed at these panels," says Gehron. "I take a lot of notes. I find taking my own personal notes is a good way to sort through what I think is important. By taking my own notes, I don't get overburdened with information. I don't get information overload."

Gehron encourages attendees to check out as many sessions as possible. "You shouldn't have any downtime," he notes. "Experiment. Go to something new. This is a great way to expose yourself to other areas of the business. If you're in programming, there are some wonderful management and sales sessions that can expose you to what's going on in the total scope of our business."

The Radio Show, says Gehron, gives attendees the opportunity to "do some cross-learning in other areas of the business."

But don't forget to walk the exhibit hall. "I think walking around the floor is critical, too," says Gehron. Doing so gives you a chance "to see exactly what you've been reading about in the trade magazines all year long, and to see what people are talking about in person and see the equipment in action." ▼

"A long time ago, at the very first Marconi Radio Awards ceremony ..."

The more things change, the more they stay Marconi. Check out some of the winners at the very first Marconi Awards ceremony back in 1989 (note the major market personality kucos extended to this year's host).

Legendary Station of the Year:

WLS(AM), Chicago

Network/Syndicated Personality of the Year:

Paul Harvey, ABC Radio Networks

Major Market Personality of the Year:

Ron Chapman, KVIL-FM, Dallas

Large Market Personality of the Year:

Bob Steele, WTIC(AM), Hartford

Medium Market Personality of the Year:

Mark Summers, WBBQ-AM-FM, Augusta, Ga.

Small Market Personality of the Year:

Billie Oakley, KMA(AM), Shenandoah, La.

Major Market Station of the Year:

KNIX-AM-FM, Phoenix

Large Market Station of the Year:

WIVK-AM-FM, Knoxville

"May I have the envelope please?"

Don't get too nervous just prior to the



announcement of the various awards

being given out at this year's Marconi Awards ceremony. Hey, it just might be *you* walking up to the microphone, accepting the award for...no, that would be giving it away!

To whet your appetite for the black tie (encouraged) affair, hosted by adult contemporary Dallas station KVIL-FM personality Ron Chapman, here are some of this year's award nominees:

Legendary Station of the Year

- KABC(AM), Los Angeles
- KVIL-FM, Dallas
- WDIA(AM), Memphis
- WINS(AM), New York
- WOR(AM), New York

Network/Syndicated Personality of the Year

- Art Bell, "Coast to Coast with Art Bell," WTVN(AM), Columbus, Ohio
- The Fabulous Sports Babe, "The Fabulous Sports Babe," ABC Radio Networks, New York
- Tom Joyner, "Tom Joyner Morning Show," ABC Radio Networks, Dallas
- Dr. Laura Schlessinger, "The Dr. Laura Show," Radio Today, New York
- Howard Stern, "The Howard Stern Show," WXRK(FM), New York

Major Market Personality of the Year

- David Brudnoy, WBZ(AM), Boston
- Don Imus, WFAN(AM), New York
- Kevin and Bean, KROQ(FM), Los Angeles
- Robert W. Morgan, KRTH(FM), Los Angeles
- Scott Paulsen & Jim Krönn, WDVE(FM), Pittsburgh

Large Market Personality of the Year

- Buzz Adams, KLAQ(FM), El Paso
- Gerry House, WSIX-FM, Nashville
- Bob Kevoian & Tom Griswold, WFBQ(FM), Indianapolis
- Bob Lacey & Sheri Lynch, WLNK(FM), Charlotte, N.C.
- Steve Rouse, WQSR(FM), Baltimore



The late Wolfman Jack at the 1989 Marconis

Medium Market Personality of the Year

- Al Caldwell, KLVI(AM), Beaumont, Texas
- Joe Condon, WROW(AM) & WYJB(FM), Albany, New York
- Tom Kinard, WJMX(AM), Florence, S.C.
- Bob Robbins, KSSN(FM), Little Rock
- Van & Bonnie, WHO(AM), Des Moines

Small Market Personality of the Year

- Jeremy Borash, KUEL(FM), Ft. Dodge, Iowa
- Dave Daniels & Darrin Cantrell, KJUG-FM, Tulare, Calif.
- Griz England, WYDS(FM), Decatur, Ill.
- Bill O'Brian, KRKT-FM, Albany, Ore.
- Athnel "Addle" C. Ottley, WSTA(AM), St. Thomas, Virgin Islands



The Marconi Awards grand finale in 1996

Get out and enjoy The Big Easy!

Let the good times roll !

If you are one of those cautious souls who live life by the rules, caring about cholesterol and trotting off to bed right after the nightly news, you need not bother to flip through your social invitations during the 1997 NAB Radio Show.

In a city identified by its degrees of excess to the senses, visitors are obliged to spend each night of their stay gorging on some of the best food and music in the world, only to face crawling out of bed the next morning to start all over again.

Perhaps Tennessee Williams best explained the fascination that so many people have with The Big Easy when he was asked why he repeatedly came back to work in New Orleans. "I need to relearn the art of savoring life," Williams replied. For 1997 NAB Radio Show attendees, the opportunity to hone that fine art of savoring life will be available during the day as well as at night in the "City That Care Forgot."

The most difficult proposition for travelers visiting New Orleans is always what to do first. There is so much food, fun and music here that tourists revisit again and again.

Attractions du jour

The number of architectural treasures preserved in New Orleans is unsurpassed by any other city in America. More than 40,000 buildings in New Orleans are listed on the National Register of Historic Districts.

The city's most historic district is the French Quarter, where every building has a lineage and every cloistered courtyard a mystery.

America's first apartment buildings are the Pontalbas, the twin redbrick row houses flanking Jackson Square, which features a triumphant statue of Andrew Jackson on a rearing horse. The square's St. Louis Cathedral is one of the oldest in North America, with the Cabildo and Presbytere on either side, housing museums. Horse and buggy rides originate on the square, as do numerous walking tours of the Vieux Carre.

World-famous murky cafe au lait and powdery beignets are found at the open-air Cafe du Monde, next to the walkway to

Moon Landing, where visitors can relax and watch the busy river traffic at the Port of New Orleans. The Jax Brewery Shopping Mall is home to Planet Hollywood, the Hard Rock Cafe, Tower Records, Bookstar and the New Orleans School of Cooking.

Decatur and Chartres Streets in the French Quarter are filled with restaurants, while Royal Street is chock full of antique stores. Bourbon Street has the nightlife, and side streets such as St. Peter are host to time-honored favorites such as Pat O'Brien's. Family attractions range from the voodoo museum to the wax museum and the Old U.S. Mint.

Stretching from Canal Street to Poydras, the New Orleans riverfront is filled with attractions of all kinds. For example, the Rouse Riverwalk Mall houses national retail stores that range from Sharper Image to Banana Republic and Brookstone.

Appetites away!

From the elegant restaurants that consistently place New Orleans among the top three gourmet dining cities in the nation to the remodeled neighborhood homes serving everyday Cajun and Creole fare, The Big Easy's more than 2,000 eateries guarantee your taste buds will be tantalized.

Arnaud's is one of the oldest restaurants in the French Quarter. This labyrinthine restaurant is a series of multiple levels of private dining rooms filling 10 buildings. The establishment is internationally acclaimed for a wide array of exquisite dishes, from shrimp remoulade to cafe brulot. Don't miss the Mardi Gras museum or the new Arnaud's Bar, with its unique selection of very fine cigars, cognacs, ports, old bourbons and single-malt scotches.

Brennan's invented eggs Benedict, and its breakfasts are unsurpassed and not to be hurried. Dinner in the candlelit courtyard is just as memorable with classic Creole seafood topping the menu.

Commander's Palace, in the Garden District, is the flagship restaurant of the Brennan family, headed by matriarch Ella Brennan, who lives next door. From brunch to dinner, Commander's boasts some of the most extensive selections of

Creole and contemporary cuisine on the planet.

K. Paul's, in the French Quarter, is where Chef Paul Prudhomme originated blackened redfish. The fare is just as good as it was in the early days before Prudhomme became a national sensation, and locals still like to drop by for the jalapeno martini.

Mother's Restaurant is a hole-in-the-wall restaurant specializing in lunch, located a stone's throw from the Convention Center. The Fergi sandwich is a roast beef-and-ham sandwich that is drowned in an *au jus* to die for.

The beat goes on

Music seeps from every crack in the brick and slate sidewalks in New Orleans, and there's no shortage of clubs in or outside of the French Quarter. Whether you like Dixieland, funk or traditional jazz, there's a club with live music on almost every block.

Cafe Brasil, on the far side of the French Quarter, in the Faubourg Marigny District, shows off the Bohemian side of the "City that Care Forgot." Sip some espresso and groove to a Latin band or some reggae. Across the street is Snug Harbor, where local favorite Charmaine Neville is frequently found.

The House of Blues, in the French Quarter, is locally popular for its repertoire of cutting-edge music combined with regular visits from the most-sought-after local talent.

Mid-City Lanes Rock 'n' Bowl is the local bowling alley that has more hopping off the lanes than on. The place is always packed with dancers grooving to a hot band.

Tipitina's, in Uptown, is a New Orleans landmark because its walls have soaked up more music and soul than anywhere else in the city. No matter what night it is, someone great is playing.

After a couple of days of food, fun, music and, of course, the business of radio in New Orleans, you may wonder how the locals keep up with all this excess. We just say, "Laissez les bons temps roulez!" or "Let the good times roll!" ▼

—Janet Plume



David, Meet Goliath.

Goliath, Meet David.



Travelers who visit New Orleans these days aren't likely to feel the absence of some of The Big Easy's most cherished, home-grown businesses. From radio stations to department stores, ownership of scores of local businesses has switched to out-of-town corporations during the past decade.

As national chains owned by publicly traded corporations take bigger and bigger bites of local markets, native businesses too frequently find it impossible to compete with the larger economies of scale and fade into oblivion.

All too often in the 1990s, David doesn't beat Goliath.

In The Big Easy

The 1996 Telecom Act hit radio with the same consolidation fervor speeding through other industries; it is in the process of dramatically altering the New Orleans radio market.

The announced sale of three local stations to Sinclair Broadcast Group of Baltimore — part of the estimated \$630 million, national spinoff of six television and 24 radio stations from Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. — is expected to change the broadcast landscape here considerably.

If the News Corp. deal, estimated locally to be worth \$20 million, goes through next year as announced by Sinclair, New Orleans will transform from a radio market with a single large player — Clear Channel Communications of San Antonio, Texas — and two midsize competitors — Sinclair and Heritage Media of Dallas — to a radio market with two major players — Clear Channel and Sinclair — and no midsize competitors between the Goliaths and the Davids.

Analysts say the rearrangement of ownership is sure to tight-

**Janet Plume gets to the bottom of it all:
Who's on top in New Orleans radio?**

Illustration: JML Design

en competition for the handful of locally owned stations that maintain whole-digit market shares, as well as for the even smaller stations with less than one percent share. In the short term, it will likely increase advertising rates, they say. In the long term, it could threaten the future of the locally owned radio station.

"The Sinclair acquisition will increase the efficiency of the operators in terms of how many stations they can run under a single management umbrella," says Howard Vogel, media analyst with Cowen and Co. "It enables them to be more efficient with their selling. But it also tightens up inventory, so prices will probably go up."

By folding News Corp.'s three New Orleans stations — WEZB(FM), WRNO(FM) and WBYU(AM) — into Sinclair's holdings (WLMG(FM), KMEZ(FM), WWL(AM) and WSMB(AM)), Sinclair will catapult to the largest revenue-producing group in the city. The sale will edge Sinclair up from owning stations whose revenues comprise \$14.65 million or some 30 percent of New Orleans' \$48.2 million radio market to \$20.65 million or nearly 43 percent with four FMs and three AMs.

Broadcast Industry Analysts' research forecasts New Orleans radio market revenues to climb six percent this year to top \$51 million, and continue at that rate to break \$60 million by the millennium.

Clear Channel Communications of San Antonio, Texas currently occupies the lead in group revenues, accounting for \$18.45 million or more than 38 percent of the radio market divided among its five FM stations and two AM stations.

While Clear Channel owns market share leader urban WQUE(FM), which notched a solid 13.2 (12-plus) in the Spring '97 Arbitrons, Sinclair lays claim to radio market revenue leader WWL. The news-talk station, founded in 1922 by Loyola University with a 10-watt license, posted revenues of \$10 million last year, nearly double WQUE's \$5.6 million.

Better served

"The New Orleans radio market will just get stronger and be better served with this sale," says Harold DeMott, broadcast analyst with Credit Suisse First Boston.

"They are good business people," DeMott says. "And Clear Channel is viewed as people who can do no wrong. They have the best reputation in the industry in terms of business savvy and as good operators."

Ernest James, vice president/market manager of Clear Channel New Orleans, applauds the Sinclair purchase as a posi-

tive step for the overall radio market. "It should make buying easier," says James. "The product is proven and both companies are run by professionals looking for the opportunity to maximize their impact on customers."

But the mom-and-pop stations will have to make some choices, James notes.

"I think there will be some opportunities for some people to make a whole bunch of money selling (stations) if they choose to or they can find a niche they can serve and do well," he says. "One station with a low overhead wouldn't need to charge as much (as the big groups) and you may make enough money to make a good living."

While Clear Channel is actively pursuing acquisitions in other parts of the country, FCC regulations limit the group to adding one additional AM station in New Orleans. Sinclair, on the other hand, may be more interested in pulling out of radio altogether, if the buzz around town proves correct.

Media reports have speculated that Sinclair may only be acquiring the News Corp. stations in order to add only more TV stations to its stable, and may eventually sell off all or parts of its radio holdings. Both Sinclair and Heritage officials

declined to be interviewed for this story.

The emergence of two Goliaths to dominate New Orleans' radio market doesn't daunt Sid Levet IV, whose family owns and operates mainstream rock WCKW(FM) (Sidney Joseph Levet III died in Louisiana earlier this summer). Family-owned since 1965, the 100-kilowatt station created a loyal classic rock following in the 1980s with its large music library.

After erecting a 2,000-foot tower in 1989 to keep its Class C license, WCKW expanded from a small metropolitan station to one that covers most of south-eastern Louisiana. In 1995, Levet III, who was inducted into the Louisiana Broadcasters Hall of Fame in August, turned to mainstream rock while other competitors were switching to music from the 1970s.

"Station groups like Sinclair can sell one-stop shopping by offering multiple stations," says Levet. "WWL calls it New Orleans gumbo. But we sell multiple radio markets from Baton Rouge to Lafayette and Houma.

"We're bought and paid for and without debt," he points out. "All these other stations that are buying up each other are facing a pretty stiff debt service that

New Orleans Radio Market Overview

Station	Freq.	Format	1996 Est.		Arbitron 12+ Spring '97
			Rev. in \$ Mil.	Owner	
WQUE-FM	93.3	Urban	5.6	Clear Channel Comm.	13.2
WWL(AM)	870	News/Talk Sports	10.0	Sinclair Comm. Inc.	8.5
WNOE-FM	101.1	Country	5.3	Clear Channel Comm.	7.7
WYLD-FM	98.5	Urban AC	3.9	Clear Channel Comm.	7.7
WLTS-FM	105.3	Lite Rock	2.7	Phase II Broadcasting Inc.	5.2
WLMG(FM)	101.9	Soft AC	2.0	Sinclair Comm. Inc.	5.1
KMEZ(FM)	102.9	Oldies	2.0	Sinclair Comm. Inc.	4.8
KHOM(FM)	104.1	Hot AC	1.8	Clear Channel Comm.	4.2
WTKL(FM)	95.7	Oldies	2.6	Phase II Broadcasting Inc.	4.1
WEZB(FM)	97.1	AC	1.3	News Corp.	4.0
KKND(FM)	106.7	Modern Rock	1.0	Clear Channel Comm.	3.8
WRNO-FM	99.5	1970s Oldies	3.95	News Corp.	3.6
WYLD(AM)	940	Gospel	0.6	Clear Channel Comm.	3.4
WCKW-FM	92.3	Rock	2.0	222 Corp.	2.7
WBYU(AM)	1450	Nostalgia	0.750	News Corp.	2.6
WBOK(AM)	1230	Gospel	0.800	Willis Broadcasting Corp.	2.5
WZRH(FM)	106.1	Country	n/a	Guaranty Broadcasting Corp.	1.0
WODT(AM)	1280	News/Talk/ Sports	0.250	Clear Channel Comm.	0.9
WSMB(AM)	1350	Talk	0.650	Sinclair Comm. Inc.	0.6
WTIX(AM)	690	Business News	0.500	GHB Broadcasting	0.6



Stations are ranked in order of Arbitron Spring '97 12+ ratings. Copyright 1997 The Arbitron Company. May not be quoted or reproduced without the prior written permission of Arbitron. Other information provided by BIA Research through its MasterAccess Radio Analyzer Database software.

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we don't have to worry about."

Ed Muniz, who owns oldies WTKL(FM) and lite rock WLTS(FM) for a combined 11.4 percent share of the revenue market, is less optimistic than Levet about his prospects for prospering beneath the two Goliaths.

"I came into this business when I was 18 and now I'm in the twilight of my career," says Muniz, 57. "Nobody knows the New Orleans radio market better than I do. But no one in my family has expressed a desire to take over the ownership and management of these stations.

"I'm not sure I'm in control of my own destiny right now," he says. "What happens next may control it. I don't think we will have a situation where there will be stations that go dark.

"I'm not fearful of being able to survive, because I have no debt service," Muniz suggests. "But I worry about my ability to prosper. By the year 2000, I think it's conceivable that there could be two major broadcast groups and a third medium-size group that would be a minor player with more than one station."

First Boston's DeMott agrees that the mom-and-pop stations have a tough road ahead.

"If an advertiser has the money to spend the marginal dollars that might have gone to the mom-and-pop stations before there were two major players in this radio market, that money will now go to smaller stations owned by the large groups," DeMott says. "Traditionally, to the extent that an advertiser helps out an up-and-coming station in a big group, it increases their access to the bigger stations.

"The only way a small station can survive in this market would be to have a very defined niche in the market — where you owned a format like oldies, for instance," he says.

Format jambalaya ahead?

While the quick turnover of several stations in recent years hasn't resulted in the drastic musical chairs of format changes that might be expected, no one looks for the New Orleans radio market to remain as it is today.

"When you have a lot of consolidation, you'll have displacement of formats and people who are shed who have not been successful," First Boston's DeMott points out.

The way Howard Stern has bounced around the New Orleans radio market in recent years is a good example. WRNO first debuted the shock jock in New

Orleans in 1994, but in January 1995, then-owner EZ Communications narrowed the station's focus to a 1970s rock handle and moved Stern to its sister station, contemporary hits-formatted WEZB(FM).

Last year, EZ sold both stations and a third, nostalgia WBYU, to Heritage, which this Spring resold it to Murdoch's News Corp. After losing some advertisers over Stern's show, WEZB dropped Stern in the middle of his contract. When the contract ran out last year, Clear Channel's alternative rock KKND(FM) picked him up in January.

"The Howard Stern listener is probably the most loyal listener there is," says Richard Turkheimer, Clear Channel station manager for KKND, top 40 KHOM(FM) and country WNOE. "There was an incredible demand to bring him

back to the market. It was the right thing to do and the right format."

KKND, which had suffered from four format and call-letter changes in just over two years (from oldies KQLD(FM)

to young country KGPR(FM) to smooth jazz KLJZ(FM) to alternative rock KKND), leaped from a 4.4 in morning drive (men 18 to 34) in the Fall '96 Arbitrons to an 11.7 in Winter '97 and a 15.0 in Spring '97.

"Stern draws people to the station who also enjoy the type of music we play, so it has helped other segments of the station," Turkheimer says.

While Stern has improved KKND's standing, the country station Turkheimer manages — WNOE — is firmly seated in its niche, successfully surviving several attempts over the



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New Orleans

years to mount a country competitor.

WNOE became the station to tune to when Hurricane Danny swiped south Louisiana in July; the station had been using The Weather Channel for local forecasts for about a year. When Danny appeared in the Gulf of Mexico only 230 miles south of New Orleans, updates on the cable channel's televised local segments included a crawl advising viewers to turn to WNOE for updates in case of a power outage.

"We worked hand in hand with the Weather Channel and got lots of extra coverage because of the storm," Turkheimer says. "We didn't get a power outage, but it was there just in case."

Clear Channel's James switched WODT(AM) from talk to blues in September 1996 at the same time KKND moved from smooth jazz to alternative rock.

"Our problem was we couldn't compete with (Sinclair's) news-talk WWL," James says. "They were a 50,000-watt station and WODT was only 5,000 watts. We were in a situation where we couldn't gain the kind of foothold that was needed to make it profitable. Blues is a niche we think will grow here."

"Both decisions proved to be the right ones, and listener response to both has been great," says James.

While WODT has done well by narrowing its niche to blues, Levet doesn't think his WCKW needs to narrow its focus.

"Mainstream rock is alive and well," he says. "And we'll continue to do well in this format because of our long history in classic rock. We are New Orleans' heritage rock station. People get tired of a lot of this alternative stuff with the same whiny songs over and over again. We started out by establishing a beachhead and expanding our coverage from there."

WCKW brought back morning talk show hosts Walton and Johnson — local talk show veterans for more than 15 years — to compete with Howard Stern when WRNO first premiered him in New Orleans.

"Howard doesn't have to be as nasty as he used to (be) because he has the reputation now," Levet said. "The nice thing about Walton and Johnson is when one of them hashes somebody, the other one takes up for them."

To get an idea of the following that WCKW attracts, consider the station's annual charity bash "Dogs on Hogs." Every November for the past five years, motorcyclists from all over the country have traveled to Lafayette, La. to begin a

daylong ride to New Orleans. Riders pay a fee to participate; the money, considered to be donations, goes to Children's Hospital in New Orleans.

Last year, the "Hogs" entourage numbered 10,000 bikers and stretched for 30 miles of highway, with Louisiana's most public biker, Governor Mike Foster, leading the pack.

Muniz has experienced the same kind of success at WLTS(FM), which has stayed with its lite rock format for 13 of the 23 years he has owned it. The station consistently occupies the top or number two spot among 25- to 44-year-olds.

Muniz's other station, WTKL, led the 35-54 demo last winter and ranked number two in this spring's book. While WTKL slumped from a 6.0 (12-plus) last winter to a 4.1 this spring, WLTS rose from number 10 with a 3.7 to number five with a 5.2.

"We did a lot of promoting in the spring book which was new for us," says Muniz. "We gave away money and did things off the air that we have never done. We'll be doing more promotions."

Muniz contends certain niche formats will be able to survive a radio market dominated by two major players. "Some will be able to buck the tide, like Spanish and religious formats," he says. "But overall this radio market is going to be different. How is it going to be different? I don't know. The circumstances could force us small stations into some kind of merger or alliance. Or the time might be ripe for somebody to come in and buy up two or three or four of us."

Local candidates

Muniz believes the top local candidates for such an acquisition might be his two stations, WCKW and business news WTIX(AM) and nostalgia WTIX-FM.

WTIX(AM) went on the air in the 1950s. Owners Michael Costello and George Buck, two local radio veterans, launched WTIX-FM in 1995; the station caters to baby boomers. A new 100,000-watt facility, with a tower twice as tall and four times as powerful as the present one, was scheduled to go on-line this month.

Small station owners such as Buck, Costello, Muniz and Levet credit a part of their success to their home-grown experience. Such experience figures in their stations keeping pace with the big guns in town.

WTIX-FM sponsors often capitalize on the station's heritage by using the slogan "As much a part of New Orleans as growing up in the Crescent City and listening to 'TIX" as part of their advertising.

New Orleans Financial Snapshot

Market Rank: 39
Revenue Rank: 38
Number of FMs: 18
Number of AMs: 16

Revenue 1993: \$37.2 mil.
Revenue 1994: \$40.4 mil.
Revenue 1995: \$42.5 mil.
Revenue 1996: \$48.2 mil.
Revenue 1997: \$51.1 mil. est.

Revenue Growth
'90-'95: 4.6%
'96-'00: 6.0%

Local Revenue: 80%
National Revenue: 20%

1995 Population: 1,270,400
Per Capita Income: \$13,564
Median Income: \$27,920
Avg. Household Income: \$36,828

Sources:



and
The Arbitron Company.
The above reflects information
available as of August 1997.

"That kind of local flavor is hard to duplicate," says J.T. Anderton, vice president of Duncan's American Radio, a research and analysis firm in Cincinnati, Ohio. "You don't have to be number one to make money. A two- or three-share player can be a viable alternative for advertisers and give listeners another choice."

However the current New Orleans radio landscape settles, it is important to keep sight of what makes the market special.

Cowen and Co.'s Vogel believes maintaining local flavor is tantamount to a station's success. "It's all good and well for these new owners to come in with their marketing machines and run all the stations in a region with one overhead as part of a move toward efficiency," he says. "But it's also in their interest to maintain the local flavor because otherwise they will lose revenues and audience."

"If they aren't sensitive to local desires and interests," he suggests, "they will go down instead of up."

Janet Plume is a New Orleans-based media writer. ▼



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<input type="checkbox"/> B. Commercial AM station	<input type="checkbox"/> F. Consultant/ind engineer
<input type="checkbox"/> C. Commercial FM station	<input type="checkbox"/> G. Radio station svcs. provider
<input type="checkbox"/> D. Educational AM/FM station	<input type="checkbox"/> H. Equip. Mfg./distributor/dealer
	<input type="checkbox"/> I. Other _____

4 **Job Function (check one)**

<input type="checkbox"/> A. Owner/President	<input type="checkbox"/> D. Sales
<input type="checkbox"/> B. General Management	<input type="checkbox"/> E. Programming/News
<input type="checkbox"/> C. Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> G. Promotion
	<input type="checkbox"/> F. Other _____

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006	026	046	066	086	106	126	146	166	186
007	027	047	067	087	107	127	147	167	187
008	028	048	068	088	108	128	148	168	188
009	029	049	069	089	109	129	149	169	189
010	030	050	070	090	110	130	150	170	190
011	031	051	071	091	111	131	151	171	191
012	032	052	072	092	112	132	152	172	192
013	033	053	073	093	113	133	153	173	193
014	034	054	074	094	114	134	154	174	194
015	035	055	075	095	115	135	155	175	195
016	036	056	076	096	116	136	156	176	196
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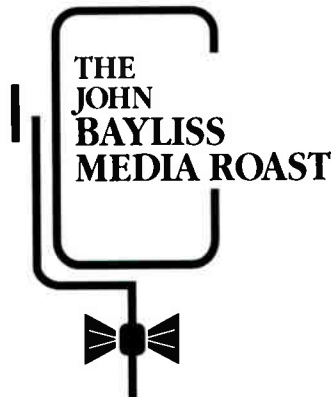
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Tuned In: Let's talk about consolidation. As an entrepreneur, what are your thoughts on radio? Does the new structure of the business allow for people like yourself to come in now and grow in the business?

Ferguson: There are different levels of entrepreneurship. I think it would be fair to say that Mel Karmazin is an entrepreneur. He happens to be working for Westinghouse, of which he owns a not insignificant portion, so he feels the entrepreneurial fires. And I haven't talked to him recently, but from reading the trades, it sounds to me that he is treating that place the same way he treated Infinity when it was basically his shop.

Scott Ginsburg is an entrepreneur. Steve Hicks is an entrepreneur. So, maybe it is entrepreneurship on a grander scale. Randy Michaels is an entrepreneur. You have a generation of radio entrepreneurs who are going to the next level.

Tuned In: Is there an opportunity for a star-struck kid to get into radio and rise through the ranks and build his or her own group?

Ferguson: I think so. There is a tremendous need right now in the business for talented people. Some people say that with clusters there are fewer jobs for general managers. That's true. But there is a whole new job of heading up a cluster of stations in the marketplace. And you need different people running operations. There are new director of sales jobs that there weren't before. There are bigger opportunities for people that really want to expand their horizons.

I think that the opportunities are there, they are just different. Is the opportunity there for someone to build a radio company in the same mold that I and some other people did in our time? Probably not as great, no. But is it extinct? By no means.

I see and hear stories of people building small market radio groups and what's more, if they are building them because as entrepreneurs they want to build these businesses and then sell them to somebody, there are a lot of small market radio stations that have gone up dramatically in value.

Often the issue is raised "Why did the little guy get out — he couldn't compete." There is some truth to that. It is tougher to compete against a bigger group, but it is not tougher if you know what you are doing. And it is not tougher if you are well-financed.

Look at Jerry Lee in Philadelphia. He is up against Evergreen/Chancellor, CBS and other fine companies and he is doing just fine. But Jerry has a good capital structure. ... Everybody in Philadelphia looks at Jerry's radio station as a highly competitive operation and advertisers are not going to not buy it because it isn't part of a big group.

Change has its good sides and its bad sides, and some people don't want change. I'm not going to tell you that every change in my life was a good one or that from time to time I didn't resist it, but it is just a fact of life.

People have to keep their eye on the big picture. Those of us who love radio tend to stay very focused on it. One of the reasons people went for this consolidation is that they felt it would equip radio to compete better in the wild and woolly, highly deregulated, new industry telecommunications sector.

As a broadcaster, I am delighted that CBS/Westinghouse has a huge investment in terrestrial radio. They are the major player in underwriting in-band, on-channel digital audio radio. And that is going to benefit all of us.

Large, well-financed companies will be able to implement that once the technology is there. If it is implemented in the large and medium markets by the leading radio stations, its chances of catching on are greater than if the industry were less well-financed. This is one of the good things that can come out of it.

Tuned In: Does this lend wings to the efforts to market the medium?

Ferguson: Absolutely. An effort that RAB started with Gary Fries a number of years ago was to have group heads out there calling on clients directly. That has resulted in a lot of business for radio and a much better profile for radio — it puts the heads of companies in contact with their customers in a way that they weren't before and allows heads of companies at the decision making level to see real people with a stake in the business and I think that is very positive.

I think there will be plenty of rate competition — that has never been a concern of mine. ... In a negotiation most people feel that the upper hand, clearly, continues to sit with the advertiser.

But we don't see our relationship with customers as adversarial. I think if anyone makes it adversarial, it can be people in time buying services who make it a you-against-me type of deal and I guess that is sort of a natural dynamic. ... To me it has been off the wall that

continued on page 48 ➤

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The Quote Board

What managers are thinking

Q What do you feel the radio industry is doing particularly well right now?

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KFI(AM), Los Angeles

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— Bob Bruno
General Manager, WOR(AM), New York

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— Brenda Adriance
President/General Manager,
KHKS(FM), Dallas

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"Consolidation has been very good for the radio industry because it has added stability. Having the FCC allow consolidation eliminated the fly-by-night radio operators and made radio a more solid vehicle."

— Bill Struck
General Manager, KHEY-AM-FM and KPRR(FM),
El Paso

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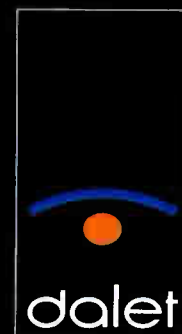
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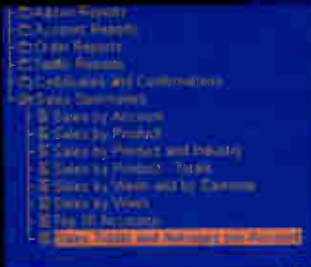


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Circle 181 On Reader Service Card

World Radio History

The World Standard



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4. Dalet Is Flexible To Your Future

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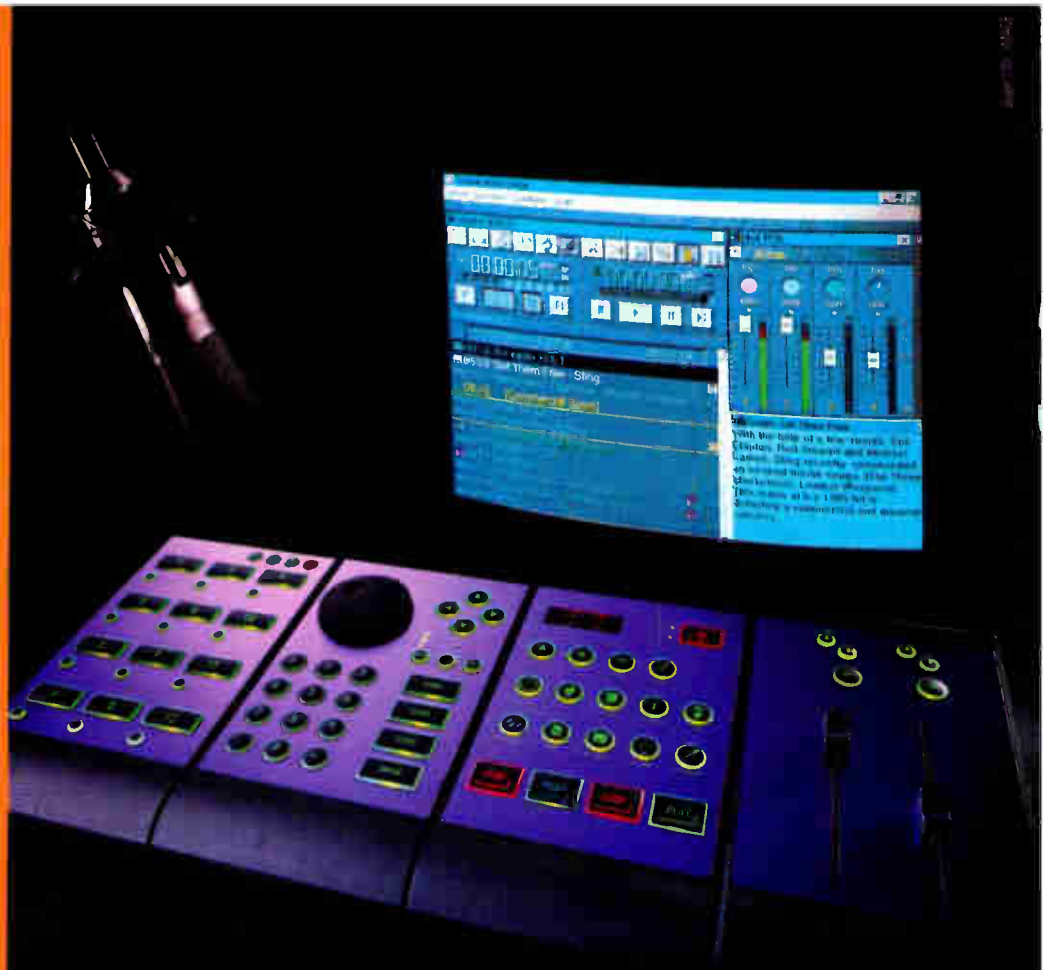
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World Radio History

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World Radio History

Bell-ieve It or Not: The Art of Bell

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Bob Rusk is your tour guide.*



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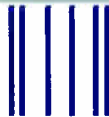
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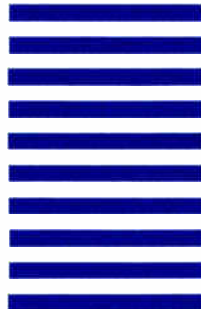
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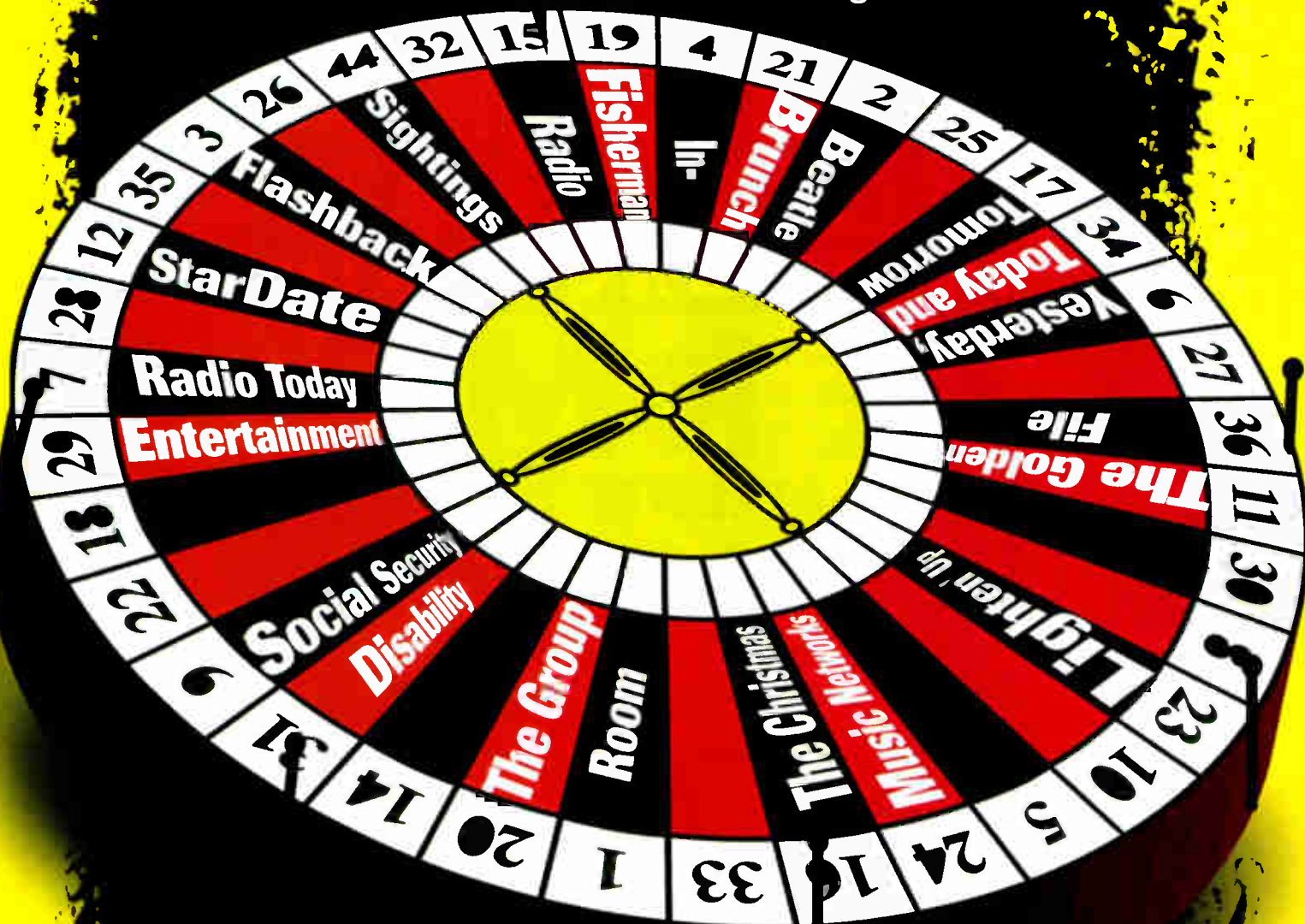
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What's your pleasure? Looking to fill that long-vacant Sunday night slot? Liven up your morning show? Counter-program against your cross-town rival's killer talk show slate? Regardless of your station's need, you can fill it with a cool specialty show.

Today's world of specialty programming offers stations an embarrassment of riches — everything from legal chitchat to DJ side projects. All sorts of hosts are looking to carve out a niche they can call their own. Not surprising-

ly, today's world of radio allows a person's passion and on-the-beat and off-beat ideas to be adopted by a potentially wide audience.

Your station can run a specialty program of its own creation, of course, thereby dispensing with the need to sign on for a long-term relationship with a syndicator. However, you may opt for the syndicated route. If you do, you'll find yourself in good company.

Most stations in the country carry some kind of syndicated product, whether long form.

stations every week. Each show is created around a Beatles theme or anniversary. Affiliates include oldies station WBIG(FM) in Washington, oldies station KXKL-FM in Denver and talk-sports station WIRL(AM) in Peoria, Ill. Last year, "Beatle Brunch" was cited as the "Best Non-Drive Time Radio Show" at the first "Achievement In Radio Awards," presented for excellence in South Florida radio.

Another program, "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," sounds like it should be the title of a Beatles album, but it is in fact a Los Angeles-based show that puts the spotlight on the popular music of the pre-Beatles era. Recently, YTT debuted a five-minute version of the show on Doug Stephan's "Prime Time Open Line," carried on more than a hundred affiliates over the Washington-based Radio America network. Host Bob Stone introduces a popular song and tells the story behind its creation, spotlighting the artist who made it famous.

"Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" will fill a void that's been created by the well-worn and tired top 100 pop hits format — one that has overlooked the tastes and habits of a huge chunk of the radio audience," observes Charles Barrett, president of The Barrett

Company, which produces the program. YTT is also available as a long-form adult standards program.

While YTT harkens back to a simpler life, "In-Fisherman Radio" extols the virtues of a relatively simple pleasure still widely available to Americans. Since its inception in 1979, "In-Fisherman Radio" has grown to cover the 48 contiguous states with 800 affiliates, reaching 5.5 million listeners per day.

Hosts Wade Bourne and Jim O'Rourke present tips on fishing, product reviews and interviews in the three-minute, six-day-a-week broadcast. The show comes in four versions, tailored to regional fishing conditions in the north, northeast, south and west. The founder of "In-Fisherman Radio," Al Lindner, shares his expertise in another show offered to stations, the one-minute "Fishing with Al Lindner."

The specialty route

So, what's your pleasure? Fishing for a specialty show to make that spot in your schedule shine? New specialty shows continue to crop up every day, sometimes from the most unlikely sources.

David Plotkin, for instance. The

enterprising 15-year-old DJ from Pasadena, Calif., recently took his passion for dance music of the 1920s and early 1930s to the air for a once-every-other-week spin on KOR(GAM) in Anaheim (the show is not currently syndicated).

Watch out for people like Plotkin, who might be onto something. Also watch out for people like Mac McGlathery, a retired jazz drummer from Kansas City, and his wife Beth, who host a daily three-minute syndicated feature for seniors, "The Golden File," distributed by their company MPS Productions. These and other creative folks continue to fuel the specialty show fire.

If your station is in need of a fresh new show, you might want to go the specialty route. The pickings are plentiful.

Sandy Wells, Editorial Coordinator for the Los Angeles Radio Guide, also reports on traffic for Metro Networks and is a host on Personal Achievement Radio. He can be reached via e-mail at: KPWR14a@prodigy.com



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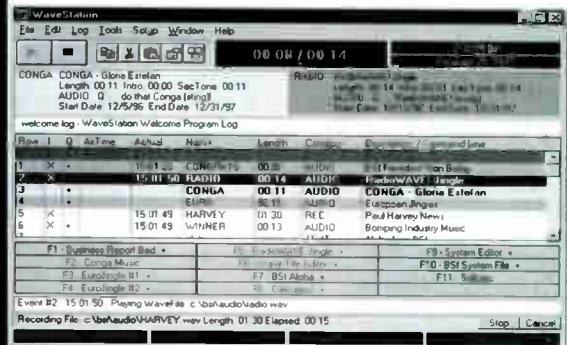
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Kim Komando

My Wonderful Webcasting Adventure

Webcasting has become the latest buzzword at radio stations across America and around the world. However, as with so many things related to computer technology, if you ask a dozen people to describe webcasting, you will get a dozen different descriptions.

So let's start with a short definition. If you are webcasting, you are sending your station's normal broadcast signal onto the Internet. Listeners can "tune in" to your webcast in a number of ways, including directing their Web-browsing software, such as Microsoft Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator, to your station's Web page.

This sounds simple, and on the surface, it is. However, there are plenty of technical considerations to be thought through before your station jumps into webcasting. If your station opts for a do-it-yourself approach, you are looking at a considerable investment in both equipment and staff.

Your listeners should be aware that they need certain components to receive your webcasts, including a fairly late-model computer and at least a 28.8-kbps modem to hear music (a 14.4 kbps modem is satisfactory for voice).

Just like any file that is transmitted across the Internet, your webcast is delivered in a particular format that can only be interpreted by corresponding software on listeners' computers. The most popular among these formats is Progressive Networks' RealAudio, but there are several others in use, including Telos' Audioactive and Xing Technology's StreamWorks. If listeners don't happen to have the proper software that enables them to hear your webcasts, you should provide them with an easy means to download it from your Web site.

Tuning in

What would prompt listeners to go to all the trouble of tuning in to a webcast rather than just listening to their radios? First, webcasting allows your station to reach listeners outside of your normal coverage area. If you have programming that has any sort of universal appeal, listeners from literally around the world

can and will (given the proper promotion) tune in.

However, if your station carries syndicated programming locally, you should check your licensing agreements before webcasting it. Many syndicated programs (including Rush Limbaugh's) specifically prohibit webcasting.

Clearly, syndicators must keep the delicate balance of servicing and pleasing local affiliates while at the same time doing what is best for their syndicated product. Many syndicators feel that webcasting presents them with a controversial decision, up to and including whether allowing local affiliates to broadcast on the Internet violates exclusivity agreements.

In one sense, the potentially broader webcasting audience allows you to attract advertisers that normally might not be interested in reaching only a smaller local market. But it is highly unlikely that Joe at Joe's Home Remodeling Service in your hometown really needs to have his spots aired internationally on the Internet, unless he's getting into national or international mail order.

Demographically desirable

It is important to keep in mind that Internet users represent a demographically very desirable group. As I point out in my book, *CyberBuck\$: Making Money Online*, the typical Internet user has both an above-average education and an above-average income. I mentioned earlier that trying to get into webcasting on your own can be a very expensive proposition. Fortunately, a number of companies have sprung up to provide this service for radio stations.

Perhaps the largest among these companies is AudioNet (<http://www.audionet.com>). Other companies in the field include WebNet Radio (<http://www.webnetradio.com>) and CIRnet (Christian Internet Radio Network) (<http://cirnet.com/index1.htm>), which offers webcasting services exclusively to religious-oriented radio stations.

In the end, probably the most important question of all is: Are any radio stations actually turning webcasting into a profit center? The answer, at least at the present time, is essentially no, although that may change as time goes on. Don't expect to generate any big bucks jumping into webcasting at this point in time. *For now, look at webcasting as an investment in the future.*

Copyright 1997, The Komando Corporation. All rights reserved. Kim Komando is a talk radio host, TV host, Los Angeles Times syndicated columnist and founder of the Computer Clinic on America Online (keyword KOMANDO). Her Web site can be found at <http://www.komando.com>. The best-selling author hosts a computer talk radio show syndicated by WestStar TalkRadio Network that is carried by KIRO(AM) in Seattle, WIBC(AM) in Indianapolis and more than 160 other talk radio stations. For more information, call 602-912-9458 ext. 203 or send e-mail to kimk@komando.com

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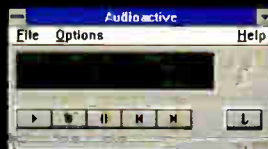


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As options, Spot Box can automatically load logs from traffic by diskette or LAN. You can record spots and edit phone calls at the right of the screen. Starting at \$5,000, Scott's Spot Box is so affordable many stations can even put two in an air studio for redundancy.

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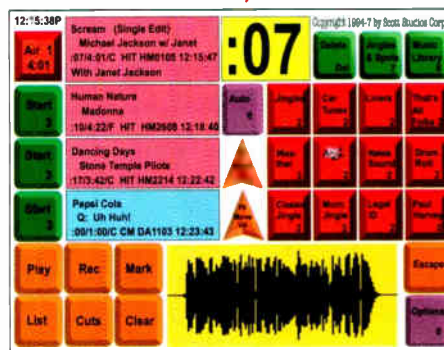


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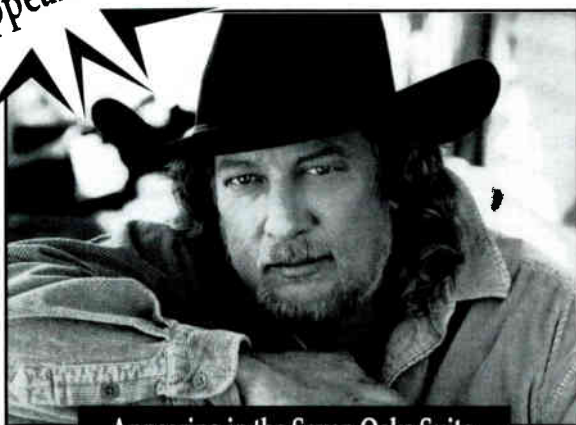
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VINCENT DITINGO SIZES UP STATION VALUATIONS IN THE LATE 1990s

In what has turned into a high stakes game that would make the chess masters of the world proud, today's radio owners are steadily building upon their demographic positions in the marketplace, causing station trading multiples and dollars to reach new heights on an almost regular basis.

In the meantime, radio's lending community has become convinced that operating a series of local station clusters is the blueprint for maintaining successful operating margins on a market-by-market basis.

While the present runaway pace of station buying and selling will soon soften, particularly for major market owners, the underlying factors and criteria that drive purchase decisions in all size markets have dramatically changed forever.

Indeed, the time-honored adage that speaks about patience being a virtue, once adhered to by owners seeking to purchase a single station in a given market, no longer applies in today's "buy it before someone else does" deregulatory radio world. Nearly any deal to buy station properties in the current radio broadcasting environment melds both offensive and defensive competitive strategies in relation to other local radio groups and media.

"The old rules for buying radio stations have been thrown out the door because of deregulation and changes in the fundamental economics of station operations," observes Pete Bowman, vice president of BIA Consulting, the Chantilly, Va.-based media appraisal and research firm.

The paradigm for assessing station acquisitions among radio owners, according to Bowman, has been transformed from negotiating what both parties calculate as the fair-market value of a property to a buyer-oriented approach of ascertaining the property's "investment value." This is especially relevant for owners looking to quickly expand in markets where they have a base.

Among the key criteria owners and lenders study when determining the investment value of radio stations are the true cost of capital (the amount of debt and equity financing) and levels of risk tolerance, which, in addition to financial risks, also include potential operational ones.

In particular, says Bowman, it is important to understand the caliber of the desired facility and the signal coverage area, and project how well they will complement, in terms of adding revenues, existing stations already owned in the same market or region.

When it comes to building local station clusters, there is a totally different mindset at play than there is when coming into a market for the first time, which is why there is no

longer any strict guideline of cash-flow multiples to pricing. This underscores the shift from fair-market valuations to a local radio investment perspective.

Flexible Multiples

Historically, which for radio trading should be defined as the most recent period prior to the FCC's initial duopoly expansion ruling in September 1992, station multiples were hovering around eight times cash flow.

In the early to mid 1980s, many banks lent owners monies based upon "leading" cash flow, revenues projected for a minimum of either the next calendar year or 12-month fiscal period. However, most lenders since then have been using "trailing" cash flow, the station's economic performance during the previous 12 months, for deciding loans in a more definitive way.

Since the 1992 duopoly ruling, and subsequent passage of the Telecommunications Act in February 1996, which further extended local station limits, there has been a marked increase in average (broadcast) cash-flow multiples, all of which has remained in step with the changing dynamics and economies of scale for station ownership.

How have radio station multiples fluctuated since the mid-1980s? As information provided by Prudential Securities in New

York shows, station multiples during the late 1980s, based on trailing cash flow of publicly traded companies, were at an eight to 10 times cash-flow rate on average, slipping to six to seven times during radio's recessionary period of 1990-1991. Average trading multiples then soared to 12 to 14 times cash flow in 1996-1997. Several major market group deals in the past 18 months have been reported at multiples of 15 to 20 times cash flow.

The bottom line here is that in the radio marketplace of the late 1990s, what seems overpriced to one owner will appear reasonable to another, based upon the determined investment value. Also, with radio's new economic synergies, revenues from a newly acquired station can be leveraged against those from other commonly owned stations in a market.

In today's radio environment of larger revenues and reduced operating costs, broadcasters can more easily increase cash flow and, in some situations, cut the multiple in half one year out. This makes multiple ownership a better deal than in the days of buying standalone stations, says James Marsh, vice president and senior publishing and broadcasting analyst for Prudential Securities.

In the radio marketplace of the late 1990s, what seems overpriced to one owner will appear reasonable to another.

Identifying opportunities

There is little denying among radio and financial executives that present economic conditions favor both buyers and sellers of radio properties. With low interest rates and low inflation, any remaining independent and/or family-owned operation must, at the very least, have an acquisition strategy in place for identifying market growth opportunities on a regional basis.

A prime factor that should be working to the benefit of local radio expansion is the decline in unemployment in select regions of the country. This is due in large part to the continuing growth of the telecommunications, computer software/support, and health care industries. The boom within these employment sectors has been creating numerous new technical and service-driven jobs, increasing both local market spending and ad revenues.

Agent for change

For the successful modern-day commercial radio broadcaster, it simply comes down to being an agent for change. That means taking advantage of both deregulation and a good economy by building solid demographic franchises through multiple station ownership. Ultimately, there will be a shift in the local media marketplace with radio sales managers more easily positioning their stations as a primary buy against the broadening number of other media and marketing alternatives. ▼

➔ FERGUSON, continued from page 24

people are worried about radio getting stronger. To me it's like "Yeah, the five-foot fellow just grew to seven feet and put on 100 pounds of muscle so that he could go out and do battle with Goliath."



keep doing it on tape" or were you the person who took it upon yourself to learn this new system?

People need to be looking at changes and kind of embracing them and asking "How can I stay on top of this and not be railroads in an airplane world?"

Tuned In: As chairman of the joint board at NAB, what will you be focusing on?

Ferguson: Let me tell you about my biggest concern about consolidation and the focal point of what I hope to do as chairman of the joint board of the NAB: the public interest standard.

Our industry — both radio and TV were born, raised and nurtured on the public interest standard. That is a concept that has not been lost on many, many broadcasters. But it is a concept that can be lost in an industry that has become enamored by and enamored with Wall Street.

The financial industry has taken a big equity stake in our business, pounding down on people all day about earnings. ... In effect, they keep companies focused on an important part of their business, which is earnings.

Who is keeping people focused on the public interest standard? It ought not to be the FCC — it ought to be ourselves. If I can do something over the next two years, it will be to talk about the public interest standard.

There are so many important things tied to this. Economic things. If we are not serving our communities, meeting the needs of those communities, we will be less able to get advertising to run on our stations. So, the arguments that take place in Washington about the freedom of press and our freedom to use the spectrum because of what we give back — if people lose sight of that, the argument is eroded somewhat. ▼

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the station KMED, after the medical unit in which he was a medic.

KMED had anywhere from "flea power to 40 watts," recalls Bell. The station, which played rock, remained operational for about a year, until it made the local ratings and the higher-ups at the base, Bell says, forced him to take it off the air.

In 1967, Bell was off to the island of Okinawa, where he lived the Japanese lifestyle and worked at KSBK(AM) as a disc jockey until 1977. At the time, KSBK was the only English language commercial station in Asia.

Bell joined 50,000-watt KDWN(AM) in Las Vegas in 1985, where he stayed for 11 years ("Coast" initially originated there). The rest is history.

Forging ahead

Art Bell is forging ahead, longevity firmly in mind. "I'm doing what I enjoy doing," he says. "The big audience just seemed to happen, and I'm still not exactly sure why. Maybe (my show is) successful because (it's) not like everybody (else's).

"When Rush Limbaugh acquired his big success, the industry suddenly got in line and decided that was how talk radio should be. That's idiotic.

"Talk radio is presently the number one format. If it wants to remain the number one format, it's gotta grow up. There's more to talk about than politics."

Bell's talk show world covers it all. "I do all kinds of radio — serious, funny, entertaining," he says.

"One night I interviewed Willie Nelson for five hours. I've been all over the map with what I do, and I'm gonna continue to be all over the map."

Veteran radio man Bob Rusk is a regular contributor to Tuned In.



The World According to Art

Bell does not consider himself a prophet, but rather someone who interviews prophets on his show.

Based on the knowledge he has gained as a radio talk host, Bell thinks that sometime before the year 2012, there will be a culmination of events that could destroy much of the human race.



"There could be Earth changes that could produce it," he states. "There are indications that we have had polar reversals on a regular basis in the past. Woolly mammoths have been found frozen with vegetation in their mouths, in areas where vegetation shouldn't be growing — indicating that the Earth has gone through very quick upheavals before. So it's reasonable to assume that it could again."

Bell stresses, "The world is not going to end. However, whether we are still on it or not is an open question."

Nevertheless, the "Coast" host insists he is "really not a doomsayer."

"I very much enjoy life," he says. "But I also observe life. These are my observations. It's not the Holy Grail, but I think it's correct."

— Bob Rusk

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As options, Spot Box can automatically load logs from traffic by diskette or LAN. You can record spots and edit phone calls at the right of the screen. Starting at \$5,000, Scott's Spot Box is so affordable many stations can even put two in an air studio for redundancy.

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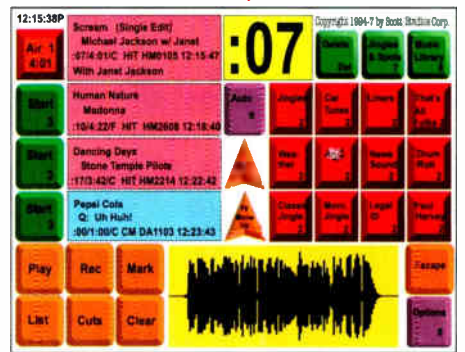


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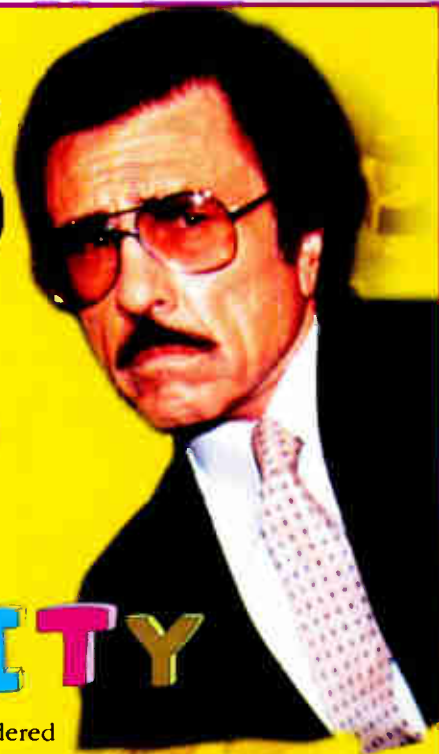
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Famous

Last words

Gary Owens

...ponders **LONGEVITY**



I have thought long and hard about the many puzzles of broadcasting. One puzzle that continues to be quite puzzling is longevity — you know, staying around in the radio business a good long while.

Unfortunately, radio is not known as a secure avocation (one very good program director I know has worked for 62 radio stations in 30 years)!

When I sat down to put quill to scroll and jot down my thoughts about longevity in radio, my assistant, Mary Wollstonecraft Pootwaddle brought me the short longevity file! But I got over it... in the long run.

I started considering some of the longtime luminaries of our business: Cousin Bruce Morrow, Wally Phillips, Bob Steele, and other great voices who have touched their audiences with love and rude noises over the years — longevitists (don't look it up) all.

I'm a bit of a longevitist myself. I started speaking into a radio microphone at age 16 and I've been on radio continuously ever since, either locally or in syndication. So I know of where I speak.

But I digress. How do you become a longevitist? Consider, if you will, that just a few years ago, one-and-a-

half years was considered the average stay for someone toiling in the radio biz.

So who knows? Each new day, regardless of your career path, is a step into the unknown, especially if you're paranoid. And if you're a person who has whoopee cushions sewn into your clothes, life justifies itself only by the amusement it brings.

In addition to promoting your *own* longevitism (don't look this up, either), take the time to help your air staff settle into a long-term stay at your station by encouraging them to be as valuable to your station as possible. The radio business, by its very nature, can leave a person in mid-air like a spider swinging and dangling from a pump handle ... but you and your air staff can land solidly.

Here's how.

Encourage your air staff to help out with the various departments in your station. DJs can help the sales department by chatting with potential clients and performing a public service by helping the public service department cut PSAs.

But that was now and this was then.

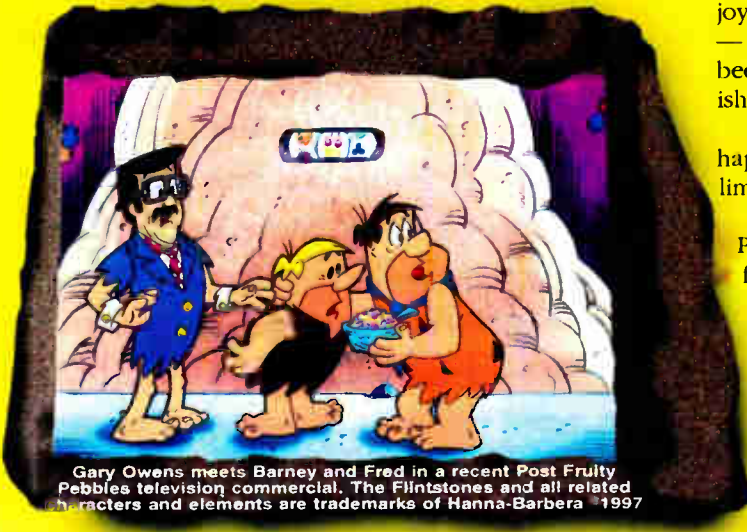
When I came to Hollywood 36 years ago, I was overjoyed. Here was a city that offered me everything I wanted — radio, television, movies, cartoons, the chance to clean beehives and the opportunity to be Senor Wences' fist polisher. But I digress.

You and your air staff should know no boundaries. Be happy to be in radio. In most other careers, there are certain limitations imposed by the outside world.

Performing, on the radio is like living in a dream. Performers become part of the story they tell. So, as performers (we are all performers in one way or another, you know), we can continue dreaming the rest of our lives.

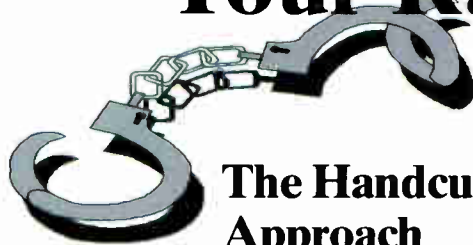
As longevitists toiling in the radio biz, of course, that is our inalienable right. And about that I do not digress.

Gary Owens currently spins the platters on Jones Radio Networks' The Music of Your Life format. His hands are still cupping his ears after all these years. ▼



Gary Owens meets Barney and Fred in a recent Post Fruity Pebbles television commercial. The Flintstones and all related characters and elements are trademarks of Hanna-Barbera ©1997

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You and your spouse haven't had a weekend off, let alone a vacation in the last 5 years. You feel lucky you have a dedicated staff, but it takes so many people to run the station that you simply can't afford to pay them what they are worth. You end up losing them as they move on. Your love of radio is frayed now by the financial realities of the business. You need to find a way to break out of the cycle and make station ownership what you always dreamed it could be.

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