

Find A Parade ...

Continuing Education For The Dedicated Radio Programmer

... And Get In FRONT Of It **Part 2**

As we discussed last week, being intensely event-driven and event-reactive is a programming strategy that can add *affiliation* and *emotion* to a station that is already *relevant*, *vital*, and *necessary*.

While News/Talk stations may be best *equipped* to capitalize on the concept of "Event Radio" (simply by virtue of the fact that N/T stations usually have the most people resources to "throw at" breaking opportunities), "format" should not be viewed as a barrier. Some of the greatest event-oriented radio stations of all time have come from other formats - Q105 in Tampa, Kiss 108 in Boston, KIIS-FM in LA, KVIL in Dallas,

KFRC/San Francisco, KILT in Houston, KIMN in Denver, Capital Radio in London (UK), 2DAY-FM in Sydney (Australia), 2ZB in Wellington (New Zealand) which once had a 60% share of the Breakfast daypart, and KTSA during its 20-share days in San Antonio (among many others).

(Continued — See "Find A Parade" on Page 2)

The **A-E-I-O-U**™ Checklist

Forgotten Morning Basics

One of the better methods of Morning Show prep that I've recommended for many years is a pre-flight/in-flight checklist that helps ensure *balanced* content, serving to *broaden* the show's composite personality.

(Continued... See A-E-I-O-U on Page 3)

Inside "PD" Issue # 21

- Page 2 Find A Parade: "Made For Radio" Events, Finding Events
- Page 3 TW's A-E-I-O-U Checklist (Suitable for Photocopying)
- Page 4 Hot-Clock Games: CHR (Sample Base Clock)
- Page 5 Programming In The Consolidated New Millennium (Part 5)
- Page 5 Leadership: Putting Meetings In Their Proper Perspective
- Page 6 Most Effective Promotions: The Song Of The Day
- Page 7 Lifestyle File: The Laughter Remedy
- Page 7 Find A Parade: Cause Campaigns, Hidden Opportunities
- Page 8 Find A Parade: Manufactured Events, Pre-Planned Events
- Page 9 Ocean Toons: Why Consultants Consult Psychics
- Page 10 Food For Thought: Easing Deadline-Pressure Improves Quality



Programmer's Digest Publisher/Editor **Todd Wallace** is a 30-year programming veteran — as a #1 jock, PD, GM, and station owner. Over the past 24 years, he has provided programming consultation services to over 100 radio stations. Internationally recognized as the "founding father" of the "callout" research concept, over 200 stations have used his systems of "in-house" music, tracking, and perceptual research.

Find A Parade ...

(continued from page 1)

The quality that all these great event-driven stations possessed was the ability to **make listeners feel afraid to not listen daily (for fear they might miss something)**. This not only fuels strong cumes levels (as even casual cumers try to find out what all the buzz is about) – the increased *occurrences* of listening and extended *spans* of listening also drive TSL, which punches quarter-hour share through the roof! It's "Local Radio" at its best, keying on things that are happening "right now" that capture your listeners' attention and/or imagination.

As we noted last week, there are generally three "ways" for a station to be poised for event-exploitation –

- ✓ **Natural events** (usually best covered by a News/Talk station, which can go wall-to-wall without the built-in limitation of "having to get back to music")
- ✓ **Finding events** (recognizing aspects of an unfolding event that can be uniquely utilized to "hook" your target lifegroup listeners),
- ✓ **Manufacturing events** (planning an event from scratch that becomes uniquely yours)

This week, we'll offer a few examples of each – along with a few "how-to's".

"Made For Radio" Events

Natural Events

One of the defining moments in the growth of KIIS-FM during the 80's occurred immediately after a major morning earthquake. Rick Dees abandoned his usual well-prepped yet spontaneous routine of bits, benchmarks, and big hits – and opened up the phones to let listeners just "talk" about the quake. No music, just talk . . . on LA's #1 hit music station. According to Steve Rivers (who was PD at the time), that single one-day programming event was still talked about a year later in focus groups (and even inspired praise from diarykeepers in the "comments" section of Arbitron diaries). It became a "shared experience" (*remember* this term!).

Such shared experiences needn't be of "disaster" proportions to make for effective Event Radio. During the Summer, many stations in the Midwest (even music stations) proudly wear the mantle of "your weather station" during tornado season. Down South, many stations lock-in updated hurricane coordinants "on the 10's". And in the depth of Winter, similar essential information airs on snow-belt stations. These stations all stand ready to abandon regular programming when conditions warrant, or when an "opportunity" presents itself. And again, I make the point that getting average listeners on-the-air works provides a common-thread that accentuates the "shared" part of the experience.

On a smaller scale (in terms of severity), I'll give you an example of how "working the phones" can be applied to something that happens rather often. Residents in my home market of Phoenix, Arizona go nuts during the Summer monsoon

Excellence Isn't Something New

**"If you do common things
in an uncommon way,
you will command
the attention of the world."**

— George Washington Carver

TW Tip #7130

season, especially when the first big rain storm of the season occurs. (I know, I know, we're pansies – but when your annual rainfall is only 7 inches and a third of it gets dumped in one night, it commands the attention of most listeners, especially when the electricity has just gone off in the middle of their prime time TV shows). When I was OMPD of N/T KTAR, one of our more effective coverage techniques was to *take lots of calls from average listeners* about what the conditions were at their particular vantage point. These calls were interspersed between reports from our staff meteorologist, our professional reporters in the field, and newsroom calls to officials. The total package made for very comprehensive storm coverage. Even in the middle of a Sports-Talk show, we'd go "modal weather" – and it sounded great! (It showed the Sports-Talk Host knew more than just Sports, he was a human being). Suddenly KTAR had dozens (even hundreds) of "microphones" on the scene in the midst of something that was affecting everyone in the Arbitron metro. (See "PT" Issue #9, page 8 for details).

Wallace Wisdom:

Be totally prepared way ahead of time. I'd rather be 6 months too early than 6 minutes too late.

Anticipate every event contingency. Having a list of phone numbers for "go to" experts already compiled and handy in both the Control Room and Newsroom puts you ahead of your less-prepared competition and makes you sound "in control". (In the middle of an unfolding event, when every second counts, is not the time to be "looking" for phone numbers).

"Finding" Events

Leave no stone unturned in your quest for event-branding twists.

Sometimes it requires seizing the moment – knowing how to capitalize on an event other stations are overlooking (even though it's right under their noses).

After the Oklahoma City bombing, 62 Phoenix firefighters volunteered to take their dog-sniffing units to OKC to sift through the rubble, looking for survivors. (KTAR sent a reporter along with them, to localize this national event, but that's not the real story). When they returned, they were heralded as heroes on various talkshows. One caller suggested that we ought to figure out a way to tangibly recognize them – like give them tickets to an upcoming Phoenix Suns NBA Playoff game (not an easy thing to do, since the game was a sellout and scalpers were commanding stellar premiums). But that's all it took for Team KTAR sprung into action (on various department levels).

(Continued — See Find A Parade On Page 7)

The

A-E-I-O-UTM Checklist

(Continued from page 1)

Make your morning personality/team aware of the items on this list. Encourage them to try to touch on each of these elements at least twice per show. When they do, they'll soon notice how much more well-rounded their show becomes.

A Artists & Activities

- The songs and artists we play _____
- The things local people are doing _____

E Emotion & Essentials

- Tugging at heart strings _____
- Enhancing listeners moods _____
- Surveillance Ingredients _____

I Imagery

- Reinforcement of the brand _____
- Helping the station _____
- Helping fellow personalities _____

O Our Town

- Local flavor _____
- Local voices (warts & all) _____
- Big local scoop _____

U Useful Info

- News you can't hear elsewhere _____
- "I didn't know that!" _____

Important Note: In my experience, personality content is not something that can be "legislated", top-down. So I do *not* recommend *forcing* a personality to use this checklist. Some will do it willingly (and will be the better for it). But some personalities view checklists as "pre-fab", "formula" radio. If you're dealing with an "anti-checklist" personality, try to at least *mention* all of these elements during one of your regular planning or critique sessions (or maybe drip-fed over the course of *several* sessions). Then follow-up: from time to time, make a point of raising areas that you've monitored which are being ignored. That's all part of the critiquing process.

TW Tip #1064, #5097, #6071, #7125, and #9124

Recent Morning Show articles appearing in **Programmer's Digest** —

- See "PD" Issue #10: "Win Mornings, Win The War (Great Stations Have Defining Morning Shows)"
- See "PD" Issue #11: "Forgotten Basics: What Goes Into A Successful Morning Show)"
- See "PD" Issue #4: "Successful Morning Show Features"
- See "PD" Issue #7: "Bedrock Breakfast Benchmark Bits"
- See "PD" Issue #10: "How To Justify Big Bucks For Your Morning Show"
- See "PD" Issue #14: "More Morning/Breakfast Basics"
- See "PD" Issue #7: "Building Name Equity"
- See "PD" Issue #8: "Longevity Builds Name Equity (Secrets Of Loyalty)"
- See "PD" Issue #20: "More Breakfast/Morning Basics"
- See "PD" Issue #19: "Secrets Of A Great Morning Show TV Spot"
- See "PD" Issue #12: "Stupid Human Tricks: Building Names & Audiences"
- See "PD" Issue #13: "Smart Human Tricks: Using Gimmicks & TV"

Next Week In "PD"
Cutting-edge ways
to measure the
effectiveness of your
Morning/Breakfast Show

On How To Make It In Showbiz

TW Tip #7126 and #6072

"Be so good they can't ignore you!"

— Comedian Steve Martin

Hot-Clock Games **CHR**

Part 5 of the "PD" Music Science 101 Series

Let's quickly pick up where we left off last week with an efficient review of the categories and rotations for a typical CHR (Adult CHR or Hot-Hot AC):

A1	Top 4 proven hits	4 songs	2 per hour	2:00 rotation
A2	Next 3 proven hits	3 songs	1 per hour	3:00 rotation
B	Upwardly mobile	9-11 songs	2 per hour	4:30-5:30 rotation
C	Downwardly mobile former-A's	7-9 songs	1 per hour	7:00-9:00 rotation
X	Exposure songs	6-7 songs	1 per hour	6:00-7:00 rotation
RC1	Hottest former C's	11-14 songs	1 per hour	11:00-14:00 rotation
RC2	Next hottest former C's	25-29 songs	1 per hour	25:00-29:00 rotation
Gold 1	Hottest Gold (1990-97)	35 songs	1 per hour	35:00 rotation
Gold 2	Next Hottest	70 songs	1 per hour	70:00 rotation
Gold 3	Next Hottest	140 songs	1 per hour	140:00 rotation

TW Tip # 2117

Note: due to a word-processing glitch last week, the "B" category did not reflect 9-11 songs on 4:30-5:30 rotation and the "X" category did not reflect 6-7 songs, as we show in this example.

Flexibility

As you can see, most categories contain a *flexible* number of songs (enabling you to better reflect each week's music-product strength, or lack thereof).

Also note that this kind of category-structure can support easy loosening or tightening of rotational-tiers (like the following examples).

In a hot CHR battle, you could reflect:

A1	4	2 per hr	2:00
A2	3	1 per hr	3:00
B	9	2 per hr	4:30
C	7	1 per hr	7:00
X	6	1 per hr	6:00

Yet in a less intense battle (or as a Hot AC), you could add another Gold hourly and lessen the hotness of the harmonics:

A1	3	1 per hr	3:00
A2	4	1 per hr	4:00
B	11	2 per hr	5:30
C	9	1 per hr	9:00
X	7	1 per hr	7:00

Scattergories

Now, let's deploy these categories around a typical non-breakfast hour —

- :00 RC1 / RC2
- :04 A2/A1
- :09 B
- :13 Gold 2/ Gold 1
- :18 A1/A2
- :22 X
- :26 C
- :31 Gold 1/Gold 2
- :35 STOP-SET
- :40 A1
- :44 RC2 / RC1
- :48 B
- :52 STOP-SET
- :56 Gold 3

- ✓ This hour reflects a song-count of 12, based on an 9-minute commercial load.
- ✓ It allows for a 40-minute hitstreak followed by a triple-play, with teasing of both sweeps
- ✓ Current/Gold Ratio: 75/25
Current 58%, Recurrent 17%, Gold 25%

Concentrically-Balanced

Try to capture the essence of your station in first 15-20 minutes. Ideally, you'll want to continue to reflect this essence-balance in each quarter-hour (which, of course, isn't always possible, but something to strive for). Note the concentric-balance on how categories are arranged —

- Gold is balanced in the :13, :33, and :56 slots
- Proven Hits are featured at :04, :18 and :40
- Upwardly mobile songs at :09, :22, and :44
- Counting a C as a Super-Recurrent, recent hits slot at :00, :26, and :44.
- Note that the exposure category (X) is sandwiched between two strong proven hits (A2 and C) in the middle of a sweep (thereby minimizing tuneout risk due to unfamiliarity). Another way to minimize familiarity-risk tune-out slot your X at :48 (in the fourth quarter-hour, usually the least listened-to QH of each non-breakfast hour).
- Note: we've rotated RC1/RC2 and A1/A2 (alternate hours) to moderate any predictable "pattern" of the same RC into the same A (which is particularly noticeable in top-of-hour sweeps). In this way, there are as many as 40 RCs interconnecting with the 7 A's (instead of as few as 11 RC1's mixing with 4 A1's had we locked-in an RC1 followed by an A1).

How To Avoid "Black Holes"

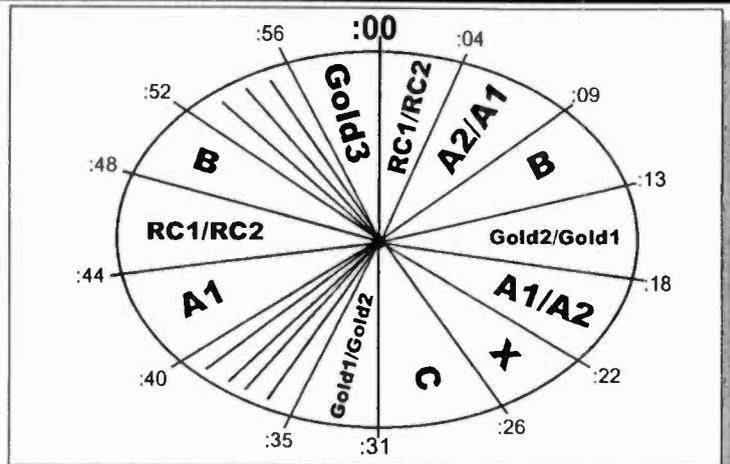
Problem: Have you ever noticed that, due to excessive restrictions in your music-scheduling system (whether computerized or manual), there are times when some songs seem to get "stuck" somewhere between Siberia and Cyberspace? For weeks, sometimes months, these "unlucky" songs are relegated to airplay only between Midnight and 5am, and thus are never exposed to most listeners in a ratable time period. In short, your scheduling system is not achieving optimum performance (and your well-researched library-list isn't being heard by your target lifegroup listeners).

Solution: Program **two** radio stations —

- one for the 19 hours between 5am and Midnight, and
- one for the 5 hours no one ever hears (between Midnight-5am).

Reminder: You need to factor this into your rotation-planning (one "day" now becomes 19 hours, not 24).

TW Tip #2118



RADIO

2000
and beyond

Programming In The Consolidated New Millennium

Part 5 of TW's address to Australian Radio executives:

The New Millennium PD: Wearing *Many* Hats

Multi-tasking has always been part of a Program Director's job description. But these days, the "new millennium" PD is wearing more hats than ever. And when that happens, the resource of time becomes a diminishing commodity. What it's coming down to is . . . incredible time-pressures – and unprecedented demands on your time. Which is leading to executive burn-out in many cases.

In this day of downsizing and consolidation, many PD's are enticed into "saying yes" to this added responsibility, fearing that if they don't, they may be "right-sized" right out the door. When management comes to you and says, "Hey, if we paid you another \$10,000 a year, do you think you could be PD of two stations?", what's your response going to be? Most PD's fear turning down a raise and added responsibility might be misinterpreted as a sign of "weakness".

So it's easy to see why this trend is spreading. In the States, it's not unusual to have one PD overseeing 3 or 4 stations. Which I think is dangerous. *Overseeing* four stations as a Cluster Programmer is one thing, but having direct "hands-on" *responsibility* for all four is practically a physical impossibility (at least in *this* lifetime)!

Like I said earlier, if it used to take you 50 or 60 hours to program just *one* station, how do you effectively program 7 . . . or 5 . . . or even just 3 or 4 in the same amount of time?

What's happening is that things are beginning to slip between the cracks than never used to. Mistakes that a proud PD would never have allowed when he or she was responsible for just one station are now creeping onto the air . . . just because there aren't enough hours in the day to get everything done – even if you're working an 80-hour week.

But most of all, I'm a big believer that every single radio station needs its own Program Director. Especially so, in cluster situations. Because each station *needs* someone to *champion their cause*, and fight for what's right for that station. If you have one PD in charge of two stations, he or she is going to have a "teacher's pet" favorite of the two – and that's unfortunate for the other station. It comes down to basic human nature.

So . . . how do you stay on top of things?

For openers, be prepared to work longer hours. Some PD's used to work 40-hour weeks. I don't know of a good PD anywhere today who's working less than 50 or 60, just to keep treading water. And it's only going to get worse. So you need to be prepared for it.

Make sure you're using your day-planner efficiently. And, as you do that, don't forget to schedule-in *brain-storming time*. That's so important! It used to be – the PD and GM would get together several times a week and kick around theories about how they can make the station better and more effective (for both the listener and the advertiser). These days, those meetings aren't happening as often as they used to. And it's important to make sure you *keep them happening*.

(Continued — See **Radio 2000** on Page 6)

Leadership Cliff's Notes Putting Meetings In Their Proper Perspective

NOTICE

Are you lonely? Hold a meeting!

You can see friends, draw organizational charts, feel important, impress your colleagues, eat doughnuts and drink coffee.

All on company time! Meetings: the practical alternative to work.

TW Tip # 7128 (Sign at National Institute For Occupational Safety & Health in Washington DC)

RADIO
2000
and beyond

Programming In The Consolidated New Millennium

(Continued — from page 5)

Make sure you've surrounded yourself with great department heads. If they're not great, you may find you'll have to upgrade — because "mediocre" is just not good enough anymore. If your Promotion Director is just a banner-hanger, you're headed for trouble. Cause you can't cover for them anymore. You don't have the time.

Like I said earlier — the resource of time is running very thin these days. As a result, multi-tasking is just simply a way of life for Radio in the new millennium. Here in Australia, you don't have tea-ladies around the station anymore . . . back home in the States, we won't have show-and-go jocks anymore.

And in the near future, especially in smaller markets, *everybody* is going to have a second, or a third, or maybe even a fourth job around the radio station. And that's only fair, because, after all, the PD has to wear 6 or 7 hats. Maybe more.

You need to do more things with fewer people, in less time. The good news is that you can *use* these cross-utilization programs to make the *most* of teamwork, so *everyone* feels like they're *contributing* to your winning effort. And that's a really great feeling!

Which brings me to Participative Management. There was a time when it was pretty much up to the PD to have all the ideas (almost to the point where

it became a little self-indulgent, as you listened to some stations). Well, nowadays, especially in a large corporate culture, it's important for the programmer to learn to function as the leader of a *team* . . . and to help make that team a well-oiled *machine*.

The upside is — that means YOU don't have to have all the ideas yourself anymore. But — you have to know how to bring all the good ideas out of your people — and how to *empower* them (so they're not just following you around and sniffing your farts — that doesn't accomplish anything).

Okay — we've talked about the realities of consolidation and the new workplace that it's creating. Let me give you some of the *warning signs* that the zeal for profits may have gone a little too far.

TW Tip #6073 and #7127

Next Week

**"The Warning Signs"
& "The Good News"**

The Most Effective Promotions Of All Time

"The Song Of The Day"

One of the "cleanest", least-intrusive promotions ever-devised is the "Song Of The Day" promotion.

How It Works: Listen tomorrow morning at 7:15 for Bubba and Booby to announce the X-109 \$5,000 Song Of The Day. Be first to call when it plays and win \$5,000. (Or: caller #109).

Why It Works: "Song Of The Day" efficiently builds audience on two levels:

- ✓ It forces listeners to tune-in your morning/breakfast show. Most stations lock the "announcement" into their #1 PUR (Persons Using Radio) quarter-hour, but it can be selectively utilized to boost any other quarter-hour that needs a jolt with a contest-marketing defibrillator.
- ✓ Then it forces listens throughout the day until the song actually plays.

New Twists & Fun Variations

- **The Guaranteed-Win \$96,000 Song Of The Day.** One of the better new variations on this theme has been devised by PD Steve Jones of CKRAMix 96 in Edmonton, Alberta (Canada). The song was played three times during the day. The morning announcement tells *which hour* it will be played in (thus resulting in listening-appointments). Each daily winner wins \$96 and is qualified to win the \$96,000 cash prize, given away the last day of the BBM survey sweep. Promos centered around how winning \$96,000 could change your life forever. People do crazy things to win \$96,000 (listening for a song and calling-in is a very easy hoop to jump through).

(Continued — See "Song Of The Day" on Page 9)

Find A Parade

Continued — From Page 2

The station donated the 24 tickets from its luxury suite at America West Arena and talkhosts went on-the-air inviting listeners to donate tickets for the other firefighters and very quickly the ticket-donations hit 62. Then an anal Fire Chief tried to spoil things for everyone, saying the firefighters couldn't accept the tickets. We took the case to the air, imploring the Mayor to step in and grant papal dispensation (which he immediately did). End result: 62 firefighters were saluted at half-time with a two-minute standing ovation by 19,023 people, seen on national TV, with not a dry eye in the arena! The local newspapers even covered it ("a local radio station . . .")

Cause campaigns are naturals. Kids who need kidneys. Help for heart-transplants. The recent example of a North Carolina morning team raising \$100,000 for the family of a slain cop. You know it when you see it. The important message is: don't ignore it. *Run with it!*

Look for the "hidden" opportunity. When Drew Hayes (now at KABC/LA) was PD of WLS, he spotted a big local opportunity everyone else in Chicago missed. As an elderly Black woman on Chicago's south side was being beaten and robbed, she managed to find a nearby gun and killed the attacker. The next day's topic on WLS Talkshows: "Should we name a street after her?"

Freeway Race. When a new section of a Phoenix freeway was opened (with the promise it would save drivers lots of commute-time), KTAR staged a live "freeway race" between two of our mobile-units, going the speed limit — one the "old" (long) way, one the "new" (shorter) way to give listeners a practical demonstration of exactly how much time it would indeed save them.

Be ready to show up at an event on a moment's notice. At KTAR, for example, the flagship unit of our street fleet was *Roadrunner One, The KTAR Mobile Newsroom*. This marti-equipped rolling full-studio could be on-the-scene of a breaking event anywhere in Phoenix metro within 30 minutes and was a particularly effective visibility-presence for large-crowd events that could be pre-planned.

Know what constitutes "Local Radio" for your market. One of the more unusual events we covered at KTAR was broadcasting the funeral of local beloved TV kid-show host, along with a tribute-retrospective on one of the talkshows. We had listeners calling for weeks afterward, thanking us for doing it. (And the bottom-line: an Arbitron Maximizer-run later revealed this was one of the station's highest rated events!)

(Continued — See Find A Parade on Page 8)

Lifestyle File™

Laughter Remedy

If you've forgotten how to laugh, you'll want to meet **Paul E. McGhee**, a developmental psychologist specializing in humor. His company, The Laughter Remedy, teaches humor skills to folks who need it (corporations, health-care organizations, and the general public).



McGhee is the author of 11 books, including his latest, *Health, Healing, and the Amuse System: Humor As Survival Training*.

(\$20, Kendall/Hunt Publishing)

Study after study has shown that . . .

- laughter blocks pain (filling the body with endorphins, the body's own opiate-like painkillers)
- laughter fights infection (by activating certain immune system components)
- laughter reduces emotional stress (by giving good-humored people a resilience that helps them make it through particularly stressful days),
- laughter relaxes your muscles

and it is a fact that laughter has even proven effective in fighting diseases (including cancer, the "humor your tumor" cure).

If you find that you've gotten out of a daily humor habit, here are some steps to retickle your funny bone:

- Read comic strips in daily newspapers and weekly magazines (all it takes is an extra few minutes)
- Listen to audiotapes or CDs of your favorite comedians while driving (there's nothing like a good laugh to de-stress a traffic jam)
- Watch sitcoms on prime-time TV (don't overlook some of the all-time classics, which can be found in syndication and on cable networks)
- Try to watch or listen to something humorous right before bedtime (you go to sleep happy, preparing you for a peaceful night's sleep)
- Wake up listening to a funny morning radio show (hopefully yours)
- Don't be afraid to be "playful". Spending time with kids helps, even if they're not your own (Usually behaving like a

Here's something most of us in this business already know — but occasionally it's useful to remind ourselves: about the therapeutic and centering benefits of laughter.

child puts a smile on your face).

- Add light humor to your office communications (when appropriate).
- Develop a sense of irony (when something unpleasant happens, this can help promote a sense of detachment that reduces stress levels and prevents excessive worry)
- Don't take yourself too seriously (good-natured self-deprecating humor keeps everyone loosey-goosey and naturally at-ease)
- During times of stress, try to "automatically" react by "lightening up" (finding the humorous side of things can help you make it through even the most trying situations).

(Wallace Wisdom: Thank God for sick humor!)

Perhaps McGhee's most salient point is: **No matter how big a role humor plays in your life, there's always room for more.**

Contact Paul E. McGhee, PhD, at (973) 783-8383 or by e-mail at his full service website which is full of articles/jokes/bloopers/schticke (giggledoc.com). Fun stuff!

TW Tip #8033, #21024, and #22017

News & Surveillance Ingredients

Events

Find A Parade . . .

(Continued — From Page 2)

Remember that a “local event” may be a *national* shared-experience. Great “local” radio involves recognizing events local people are interested in. Often this might be a national or international event. The trick is in knowing how to view it from a local perspective (and also knowing when not to “get in the way” of something so compelling that localism isn’t needed or may miss the larger story).

Sometimes its all in how you cover it. During my tenure at KTAR, we covered the O.J. Simpson Murder Trial in great detail (probably in greater detail than any other heritage N/T station in America). When the content got really juicy, we would often broadcast the actual live feed of courtroom proceedings. But what separated us from stations that were “wall-to-wall OJ” (a “format” that only generated a national-average 3-share) and the stations that declared “OJ-free” zones (which meant they turned their back on listeners’ natural curiosity about this ongoing event) was that we made our decisions on an *hour-by-hour* (often *quarter-hour by quarter-hour*) basis. Our talkhosts were always ready to pick up any slack (like when the DNA evidence was putting listeners and jurors to sleep).

Why it worked: treating the OJ Trial as an “event” gave KTAR the capability to “float like a butterfly yet sting like a bee” during an unfolding story that compelled listeners to turn into “audio voyeurs”.

Manufactured Events

Coordinated events can range from **pre-planned city-wide events** (that all stations have access to, but most choose to ignore) to **station-exclusive, totally orchestrated events** (where you can tailor everything to your specifications).

Pre-Planned Events

KTAR nighttime talkhost **Bill Straus** (now with KXAM/Phoenix) was very skilled at turning simple “shared-experiences” into interesting on-air events.

In one instance, he celebrated the evening fly-by of the Space Station Mir by doing his entire show from the roof of the KTAR Building. He did a short description of the 5-minute fly-by, then talked with other skywatchers about what they were seeing along with him. (Almost like laying on the ground

and describing cloud-shapes with a friend). Weeks later, listeners were commenting about feeling of “community” that show possessed.

Another example: The Straus Firewalk. In a several week build-up, Bill shared with listeners that he was intrigued with the way some motivational gurus led their followers in a walk across burning coals – to the point where he wanted to try it himself. So he invited listeners to join him in a firewalk (which, of course, was broadcast live, with “play-by-play” provided by the voice of the Arizona Cardinals and ASU Sports Tom Dillon (Arizona’s Sportscaster Of The Year for 15 years running).

Perhaps the Grand Master of Eventology is KTAR midday talkhost **Pat McMahon**. He was (is) so talented generating events from scratch we built an entirely on-location afternoon show around him, **McMahon About Town**. One of his more memorable events was . . . Nude Radio, his live broadcast from a nearby nudist camp (which still gets listener comments in perceptual research studies). Throughout his poolside broadcast (during which he was clothed), he kept talking about how he was really tempted to join the nudists for a skinny-dip, which he *did* in the last minute of the broadcast, with everyone screaming and hooting. A listener could “see” what was happening in the theater of their mind.

One of the opportunities event-driven radio presents a News/Talk station, in particular, is the ability to “paint outside the lines”, doing “fun” broadcasts that are outside the normal mold of what many consider “traditional” (stodgy) News/Talk Radio. Like covering the grand opening of the Phoenix Hard Rock Café. In Pat McMahon’s past life, he was a well-known, popular rock-and-roll DJ/PD, so he was right at home interviewing all the stars as they came and went. The Hard Rock remote added a new (and hip) dimension to the KTAR image at the time, showing that the station didn’t always have to take itself so “seriously”.

In cities where fireworks are legal, many stations have promoted “The Shot Heard Round The World”, where at 7pm on July 4th everyone lights a firecracker. Another shared experience (where listeners can hear others sharing it with them).

TWTP#3142, #6073, #7129, #9126, #10041, #11’010

Next Week: Station-Exclusive Events

Programming Note

**“Squeezing More Out Of A Consolidated Research Study”
will appear in “PD” Issue #22**

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

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Check out Bobby Ocean's creative website (www.bobbyocean.com). Full of interesting ideas, links, quotes, production and voiceover demos. E-Mail Osh at oceanvox@pacbell.net
Jeff Young's Radio 411 (www.radio411.com) is the cyber-home of Ocean Toons and the Bobby Ocean Cartoon Gallery.

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The Most Effective Promotions Of All Time

"The Song Of The Day"

(Continued — from Page 6)

- **Win Double When It Plays Again.** Win \$1,000 when we play the Song Of The Day. Then if we play it again, it's worth \$2,000. One concern: the word "if". This could leave a sour taste in some "players" mouths if they listen for another 5-6 hours and you don't play it (somewhat like descending jackpots used to do before they were outlawed). Solution: Just play it again, thereby putting daily closure to each contest (the upside: builds anticipation, big-time; the downside: triples your budget).
- **Twice The Winners.** Some stations split their \$1,000 daily prize in half, using two songs (both announced at 7:15am): a before noon winner, and an afternoon winner (\$500 each).
- **Consolidated Contesting.** Tear a page out of the Jacor notebook. If you own 10 like-formatted stations in your group (or can coordinate a consortium), pool the prize-money for a daily grand-prize with big clout. Instead of each station being stuck with a lowly \$500 Song Of The Day, the "collective" prize-pool becomes a whopping \$5,000 a day. (Big difference in a listener's mind). If you're concerned that listeners might think you're pulling a fast one, remember Randy Michaels' comment that McDonalds does this with all of their promotions and it doesn't concern consumers one bit. He's right.
- **In A Row.** Australia's Triple M network did a similar consolidated-prize contest, The Triple M Triple Play Of The Day. "Listen for us to play (song 1), (song 2), and (song 3). When you hear 'em in that order, call in to win 10 — \$10,000 cash!". So simple any idiot can understand it!
- **Topical Song Relevance.** When possible, try to tie a song into a forthcoming concert or other event that has the attention of listeners in your lifegroup (like spotlighting the Theme From Friends on the day of the season premiere).

Wallace Wisdom:

The real beauty of this contest is that it's the ultimate example of a *clean* promotion that's "there for those who want it, not there for those who don't".

Perfect for a music-intensive station (or any station that doesn't want its presentation bogged-down with excessive contest mechanics).

TW Tip # 3141, #4072, #5098, and #9125

Programmer's Digest

Easing Deadline Pressure To Improve Quality

For the past few weeks, I've been fighting an uphill battle against the deadline pressure of publishing a "weekly" newsletter. It seems I'm my own worst enemy when it comes to the practicalities that would make it "easier" to do — for example, instead of strictly adhering to the 8-page format we originally announced, I've regularly been adding "bonus" pages to each issue because it made it better and more complete (in fact, you'll recall we recently even had a *double* issue because "it just felt right").

The Problem. Because right from the beginning we started putting a "born-on date" on each issue of **Programmer's Digest**, I've felt an urgency to try to "hit" that publication date as close as possible. This makes sense for a "breaking news" publication like *R&R* or *Billboard*, but it's a needless step for a theory-letter that's not dependent on delivering time-sensitive "news" while it's hot.

The Solution. You know me — I've always looked at "problems" as "opportunities for solutions" and "opportunities for improvement". So here's a "win-win" solution that I think makes sense for everyone

- it will ease the deadline pressure a bit for me, and
- it will lead to better quality of writing (when I'm not under the gun to get an issue out the door to hit a publication date, I can take the extra time to finesse an article or two — thus making it even more useful to you)

Here's the plan: Starting this week, instead of locking-in to an arbitrary weekly Monday deadline, I will keep writing until I get an

Food For Thought

issue fully completed and fully polished to my high standards (from now on, it will never be "rushed") It may roll out on Monday, or it might be Thursday if a particular issue is full of complex articles. We will still maintain the roughly once-a-week cycle of publishing, but there may come times (like my recent extended Australian consulting visit) when I'll need to put a hiatus week between issues. (We'll always try to notify you ahead of time whenever that occurs).

What This Means To Your Subscription:

Basically, just a switch from "dates" to "issue numbers".

- Instead of Volume One (the charter subscription) being based on a specific anniversary "date", it will be revolve around your receiving 51 issues (the number of issues we promised for each annual volume).
- Each volume thereafter will be 51 issues (Vol 2: #52-102, etc.)

Bottom line: you'll get what you paid for (actually *more*, because of our regular practice of value-adding "bonus" pages).

Being an obsessive perfectionist, I'm really looking forward to being able to spend the extra time *embellishing* the articles you read, triple-checking for typos, and, in general, making what you get out of "PD" just that much better and more meaningful.

I trust you approve of this change-for-the-better.

TW

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