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Digilink is multilingual. The screen shown above is in Japanese.

Radio World[®]

M A G A Z I N E



Market Watch: San Diego. What's not to love? Perfect weather, a captive listening crowd and radio revenues that have given the #15 market a real charge.

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Format Focus: It's not just a 12+ world anymore. Find out how proponents of Kids Radio intend to capture 17 percent of your market.

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DOUBLE TAKE

“In a high-tech world, we're kind of touchy feely.”

—KSCA-FM Executive VP/GM Bill Ward on the station's AAA format

See page 39.



Black Ties, Dirty Underwear And the Internet

by Charles Taylor

Even though I like to think you're accustomed to a certain amount of decorum on this page, I have to be honest. I'm down to yellow polka dot boxers in the underwear drawer and I've given up trying to get my hair to look like it does in that upper corner there.

Spell that B-U-S-Y. We're barely through June and already things are heating up for a dynamic, frenetic summer for radio. In the early part of the month, Promax—the international association of promotion and marketing—descended upon the nation's capital, our backyard, with 5,500 hungry, vibrant attendees. It was an inspiring event for the show's 210 radio registrants (up from



140 last year) and made clear the organization's renewed dedication to our industry.

The Radio World Magazine was pleased to sponsor the opening night Radio Reception at the in-vogue new Canadian Embassy, as well as radio-oriented sessions and speakers throughout the show.

A week later, radio's most glamorous annual event, The Mercury Awards, honored the industry's best local and national spots at a black-tie ceremony at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York. Ad agency Cliff Freeman & Partners took away the \$100,000 grand prize for its comical "Teacher" spot for Staples Office Products, while \$20,000 Gold Awards were presented to the creators of spots for "The Simpsons," Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Nickelodeon and WGKX in

Memphis. Four \$5,000 awards were also presented, as well as a public service announcement award. These winners were chosen from an astounding 983 entries.

We all know that radio garners big business for advertisers, but it's important that we honor the creative forces that turn products into household words and slogans.

Finally, it was a month of great personal achievement. It's taken me a while to get here, but I'm proud to introduce a new nomenclature in The Radio World Magazine: **CHUCK RWM@aol.com**. That's right. While I could have been washing underwear, I was busy joining the realm of the Internet, cyberspace, et al. My home has become a launching pad for keystroke communication with you, which I invite you to take advantage of.

Meanwhile, amid these pages, computer aficionado Alan Haber takes you on a journey to the Internet this month, explaining how those radio station Web sites you've been hearing a lot about can help you get the word out over another medium. This is what I like to think of as a signature story for RWM, giving radio executives the quick and dirty on what the technology's all about, how you can benefit, what it'll cost you and how you might reap revenues.

You'll also want to check out Vincent M. Ditingo's Management Journal, which explores other feasible sources of alternative revenue in the radio environment of the mid-1990s.

Summer's here and it's prime time to remind your beaching, vacationing, driving, radio-listening audience just how brightly you shine. Enjoy!

Chuck

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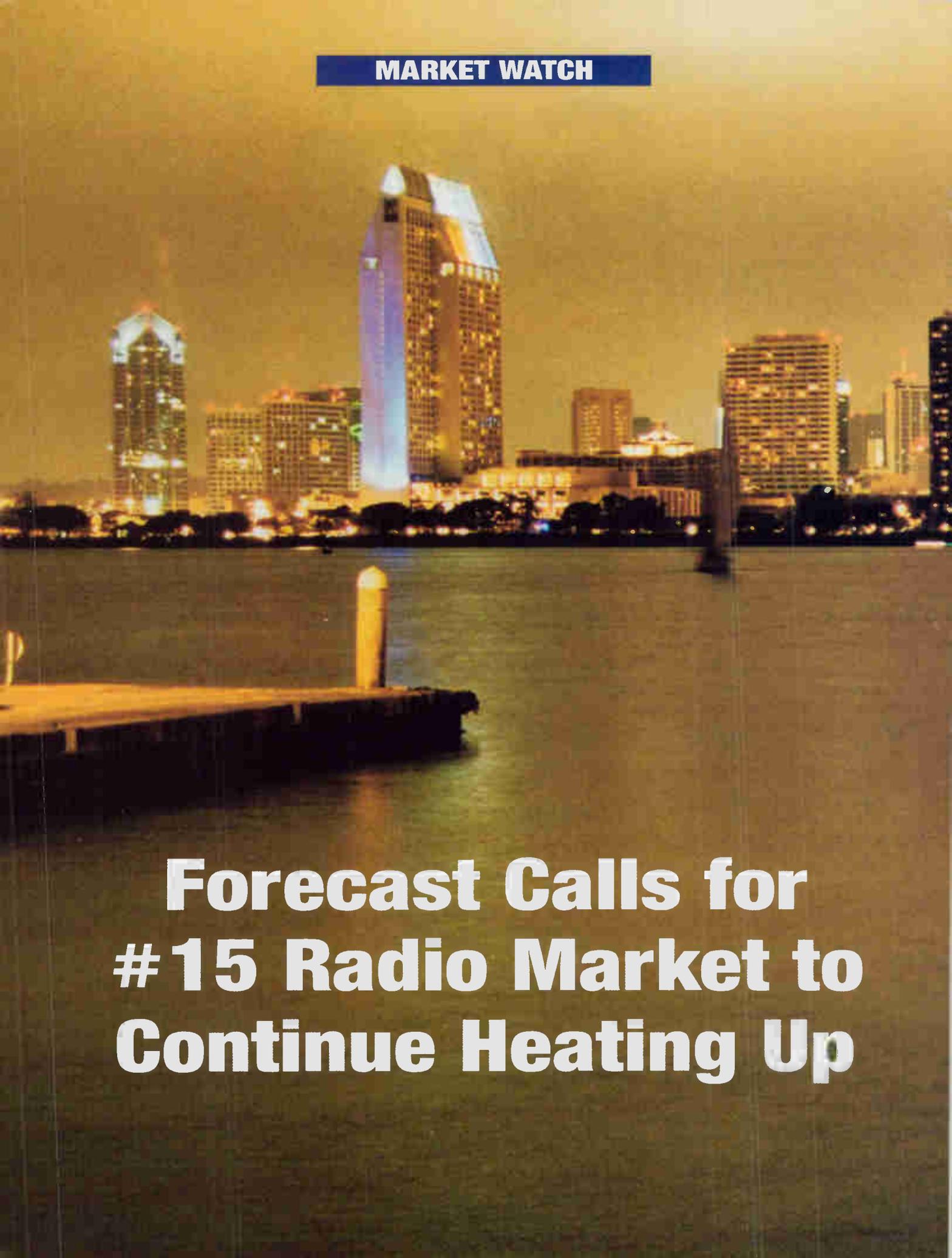
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A nighttime photograph of a city skyline across a body of water. The skyline is dominated by a tall, illuminated skyscraper with a distinctive top. Other buildings of varying heights are also lit up. In the foreground, a dark pier or dock extends into the water, with a single, glowing yellow light post. The water reflects the city lights.

**Forecast Calls for
#15 Radio Market to
Continue Heating Up**

san diego

A nighttime photograph of the San Diego skyline, featuring several prominent skyscrapers illuminated against a dark sky. The lights from the buildings and streets are reflected in the calm water in the foreground. The overall color palette is warm, dominated by yellows, oranges, and dark blues.

.....

by Thomas K. Arnold

It used to be said that the San Diego radio market consisted of two types of people: those trying to get to Los Angeles 120 miles to the north, and those trying to get back to Los Angeles.

No longer. In the last decade, the San Diego radio market has grown and matured, much like the city itself. San Diego this year fielded a Super Bowl team and landed the 1996 Republican National Convention. The local radio market, in turn, is ranked 15th in terms of listeners—up from number 19 a decade ago—and 14th in terms of revenue. Total billings this year are expected to top \$100 million for the very first time, up 5 percent from last year and triple the figure reported in 1983.

And with a near-perfect climate, an exceptional quality of life and more than two dozen signals broadcasting in splendid isolation from the rest of Southern

►

California (thanks to Camp Pendleton Marine Base to the north and mountains to the east), San Diego is now a destination market rather than a stopping-off point.

Stay in the market

"San Diego has become a market no one wants to leave," says Carolyn Howe, director of marketing for the San Diego Radio Broadcasters Association. "If people have a change of position here, they will do just about anything to stay in the market. As a result, it's very hard for an outsider to find a position, because there are so many qualified people already here."

"What you see today is that people are looking to get to San Diego and then they want to stay here once they get here," adds Tom Baker, general manager of nostalgia/classic rock combo KPOP-AM/KGB-FM. "San Diego is one of the best places to live, number one, and it's also a sensational radio market that's going to get even better."

Quality of life aside, what exactly has helped the San Diego radio market grow beyond the proverbial shadow of its much-larger neighbor to the north, long the nation's runner-up radio market? Steady population growth, for one, along with the area's natural proclivity for radio listenership: The sun is almost always shining, so people tend to spend a lot of time outdoors with their radios. And because public transportation in San Diego is woefully inadequate, people also tend to spend a lot of time in their cars, again with their radios.

"Look at the weather. People are outside; people prefer to participate in rather than watch events, and they tend to take their radios with them," Baker says. "The HUT (households using television) levels in this market are much lower than you would expect, given the market size; the last time I looked, San Diego was ranked way down at number 45."

Radio is king

Radio really is king in Southern California," adds Mike Glickenhau, executive vice president and general manager of sports talk/alternative rock combo XTRA-AM/FM. "The lifestyle is very conducive to radio. You tend to be outside, and you are more apt to have your radios with you. It could be November and it's 75 degrees, whereas in the rest of the country the weather might keep you indoors, where you have more opportunity to utilize other mediums like television."

Understandably, competition is intense. The Winter 1995 Arbitron report for the

San Diego market lists 25 radio stations—14 FMs and 11 AMs—with another seven stations beaming north from Mexico, many of them under programming and sales lease agreements with American operators (see sidebar).

Broken down, the market offers listeners four news/talk stations, three country, three Spanish, two adult contemporary, two Hot AC, two nostalgia, two rock, one each of CHR, alternative rock, sports, religious, classical and public radio, as well as no fewer than six "retros," ranging from oldies and classic rock to the trendy hits of the '70s format and hits of the '80s.

"I think anytime a market escalates as quickly as San Diego did in terms of both size and revenue, you're going to see competition heat up," says Steve Jacobs, president and general manager of Hot AC Q106 KKLQ-AM/FM, rocker KIOZ-FM and news/talk KOGO-AM, all owned by the locally based Par Broadcasting Co.

"I would say San Diego has become one of

the most competitive markets in the country, by virtue of the number of signals, the many major companies attempting to buy stations in San Diego and the many new managers," he says.

Money, but at what cost?

In spite of the radio crowding, there's enough money that most stations can survive, Howe maintains. But with the free flow of revenue comes a higher price tag to effectively play in the big leagues. Jacobs says stations should be prepared to spend at least half a million dollars in TV advertising a year if they want to make any kind of impact. Five years ago, he says, it was less than half that.

And the days when an FM station could be picked up for less than \$10 million are long gone. The most recent sale in the San Diego market closed last April, when SFX Broadcasting picked up soft AC KXYF-FM for a cool \$16 million, a price that included real estate.

"It's difficult to zero in on an average, but I

San Diego Radio Market Overview

Station	AM/FM	Format	Rev. Est. in Millions	Owner	Arbitron 12+ Winter '95
KSON-AM/FM	97.3/1240	Country	\$10.9	Jefferson-Pilot	6.8
KYXY-FM	96.5	AC	5.4	SFX Broadcasting	5.4
KSDO-AM	1130	News/Talk	6.8	Gannett	5.3
XITZ-FM	90.3	CHR/Rhythm	3.0	Victor & Martha Diaz	5.2
KKLQ-FM	106.5	CHR	10.0	Par Broadcasting	4.5
KPOP-AM	1360	Nostalgia	1.7	Brown Broadcasting	4.1
KGB-FM	101.5	Classic Rock	5.8	Brown Broadcasting	3.9
KFSD-FM	94.1	Classical	3.5	Lotus Communications	3.8
KIFM-FM	98.1	AAA	4.5	KIFM Broadcasting	3.8
KBZT-FM	94.9	Oldies	4.0	Anaheim Broadcasting	3.6
XTRA-FM	91.1	New Rock	8.0	Noble Broadcast Group	3.6
KFMB-AM	760	Full Service	8.0	Midwest TV Inc.	3.1
XTRA-AM	690	Sports	7.0	Noble Broadcast Group	3.1
KIOZ-FM	102.1	AOR	4.0	Par Broadcasting	3.0
KMKX-FM	103.7	Rock AC	6.2	SFX Broadcasting	3.0
KCBQ-FM	105.3	70s Oldies	2.6	Compass Radio Group	2.5
KFMB-FM	100.7	Adult CHR	3.5	Midwest TV Inc.	2.5
KKBH-FM	102.9	70s Oldies	2.5	Gannett	2.4
KOGO-AM	600	Talk	0.6	Par Broadcasting	2.4
XHRM-FM	92.5	Alternative	1.8	Luis Kaloyan	2.3
KPBS-FM*	89.5	NPR, N/T	n/a	San Diego State University	2.1
XHKY-FM	99.3	Spanish	1.0	Victor & Martha Diaz	2.0



Stations are ranked in order of Arbitron Winter 1995 12+ ratings. Information provided by BIA Publications, Inc. through its MasterAccess Radio Analyzer Database Software.

* Non-commercial station information furnished by the station.

can tell you this: For anyone to try to come into the market and pick up a signal that covers the entire market, it's going to be extremely difficult to get in for under \$12 million to \$14 million," says George Nadel Rivin, partner in charge of broadcast services for Miller Kaplan Arase & Co., a Los Angeles accountancy that tracks radio revenue.

Country on top

The top-rated station in the Arbitron Winter 1995 book is Jefferson Pilot's KSON-AM/FM, a potent country combo that has ruled the San Diego market for the last several years. Noting that KSON's only competition comes from tiny 3,000 W KOWF-FM in the northeastern fringes of the county, local radio observers have long predicted the emergence of a second country station with a marketwide signal.

The only reason it hasn't happened yet, they say, is that owners still recall the bruising four-way battle between KSON-AM/FM and KCBQ-AM/FM that ended with the KCBQ combo switching to oldies in 1986.

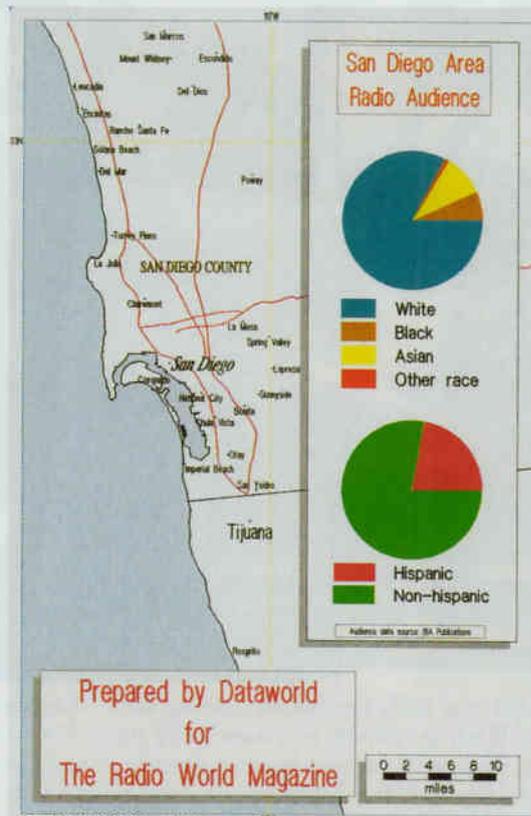
"People are still gun-shy," says XTRA's Glickenhous. But with the prospect of new owners moving into the market, he adds, "it's just a question of when somebody's going to step up to the plate and do it."

Prior to KSON's ascent to the top of the ratings ladder, the perennial market leader was beautiful music station KJOY-FM (K-JOY). But when that format started to erode in the late 1980s, K-JOY became Sunny 103.7, a soft adult contemporary. When Sunny's owner, the Command Group merged with Capstar in the fall of 1993, Sunny 103.7 became part of the nucleus of the fledgling SFX Broadcasting.

Last April, SFX picked up a second soft AC, KYXY-FM, to assemble this town's second duopoly. KYXY had always been a strong performer, but in recent years it has broadened its audience to the point where it is now ranked second in the market.

Sunny 103.7, meanwhile, was never quite as successful as its beautiful music predecessor and in February, with its acquisition of KYXY all but assured, SFX changed Sunny's format to classic rock, its call letters to KMKX and its on-air handle to Rock Mix 103.

"Both KYXY and Sunny were doing well, but they were primary competitors," says Charlie Seraphin, vice president and gener-



al manager of both stations. "So with the purchase of KYXY, the idea was to transform one into a more rock AC, which would give it a bit of a different demographic appeal, yet still be in that lucrative 25-54 arena. KYXY was operating off a larger cume base, so the rationale was it would be easier to move Sunny's smaller cume into KYXY."

The Jury is out

Rock Mix went on the air less than six months after another classic rocker, KCLX-FM, became The Beach and began playing pop hits from the 1970s. The jury is still out on how the switch will impact ratings; KCLX, however, had been trending down, finishing at number 18 in the latest Arbitron book. Rival classic rocker KGB-FM, a former AOR powerhouse owned by Brown Broadcasting, came in seventh.

Consultant Bill Moyes, chairman of The Research Group, is convinced the market can only support one classic rocker, particularly since KCBQ-FM, which plays "modern oldies" from the 1970s and 1980s, effectively competes for the same audience as KGB and KMKX. "They're all playing the same records," he says. "Why does the city need three of those? Somebody's going to fail."

Baker believes KGB's history will work in its favor. For much of the '70s and '80s, KGB gave K-JOY a serious run for the

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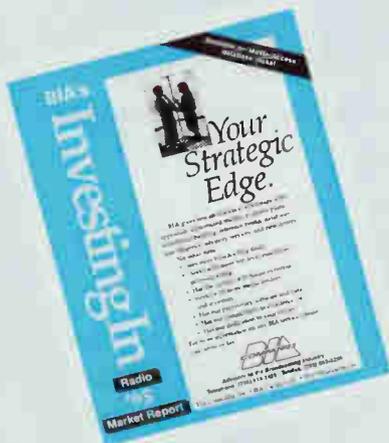
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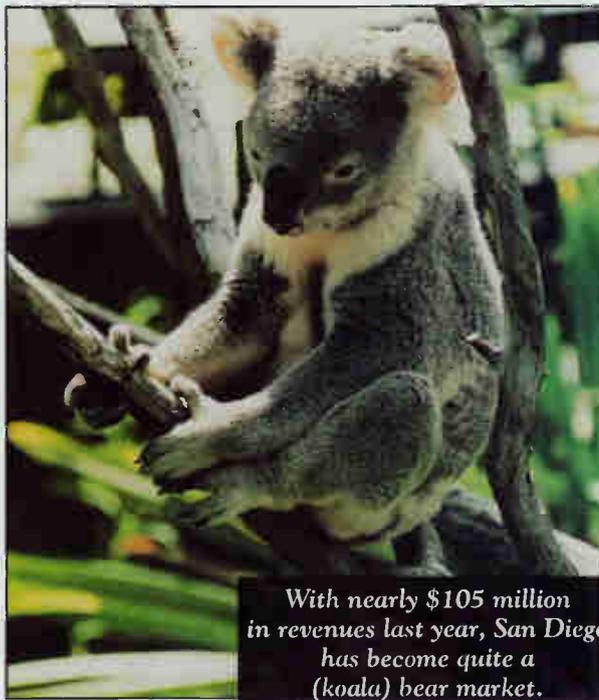


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With nearly \$105 million in revenues last year, San Diego has become quite a (koala) bear market.

number one spot, periodically taking the lead. With its switch to classic rock in 1991, the station was no longer a contender for the top spot, but Baker says he doesn't mind—it's still tremendously popular with adult males, and as far as he's concerned, that's all that matters.

"The 12+ numbers mean nothing," Baker says. "Advertisers are buying 25-54, 18-34, 25-49."

Baker isn't the only one who feels that way. Bob Bolinger, general manager of KFMB-AM/FM, says 12+ numbers "are nice for bragging rights, but little else. When you look at how compressed the ratings are, you see there are a lot of stations with between 200,000 and 300,000 listeners, so you have to really target your sales efforts toward a specific audience."

That's precisely what KFMB-FM Star 100 did when it first cultivated a mainstream following with its zany "Rich Brothers" morning show and sponsorship of major events like the annual Beach Boys/San Diego Padres double-header. The station kept its Hot AC format but dropped the bells and whistles; today, it still ranks in the midteens as far as overall ratings are concerned, but Bolinger notes with pride that the station delivers its target audience of adults, 25-44, "and is about 60 percent female."

While the emergence of duopolies is reshaping the radio landscape in markets nationwide, the trend has

barely caused a ripple in San Diego—at least, for now. At this point, there are just two: Par's Q106 and rocker KIOZ-FM; and SFX's KYXY and Rock Mix 103. But observers don't expect this inaction to last.

"There will be more duopolies," says SFX's Seraphin. "A lot of standalone owners in the market have been unwilling to sell, and some of them are not in a position to acquire other stations. But I think it's only a matter of time."

"San Diego has always been a strong combo market, so many owners already had two viable properties," adds XTRA's Glickenhau. "As a result, San Diego had the luxury of not rushing into duopolies as much as in other markets. But that doesn't mean

the owners' eyes aren't open.

"My company (Noble Broadcasting) is out there looking; we've made some offers, and while we haven't been able to put any deals together, we are very aggressively looking for stations to buy," he says.

Syndication affinity

One national trend that has caught on big in San Diego is radio's growing affinity for



San Diego photos: Charles Taylor

syndicated programming. Late last year, XTRA-FM 91X dropped its high-priced morning team in favor of Howard Stern and saw ratings soar, particularly among

San Diego Financial Snapshot

Market Rank: 15
Revenue Rank: 14
Number of AMs: 14
Number of FMs: 22

Revenue Growth
88-93: 3.0%
94-98: 6.4% est.

Revenue 1991: \$89 million
Revenue 1992: \$88 million
Revenue 1993: \$91.8 million
Revenue 1994: \$104.9 million
Revenue 1995: \$112.2 million (est.)

Source: 

male listeners. According to Arbitron, 91X now commands a weekday morning share of 6.5 among males 18-49.

Rush Limbaugh's syndicated talk show has had a similar effect at news/talk KSDO-AM. The station is ranked third in overall listenership, thanks in large part to the strength of its 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. numbers. Limbaugh is on for the first three hours, followed by Roger Hedgecock, the popular ex-San Diego mayor who now espouses the same conservative philosophies as his syndicated lead-in. The station's overall ratings share is 5.3, but during middays, it sears to 6.8, the highest in the market.

"Syndicated programming is nowhere near what it used to be; it's so much better, both technically and in what's available," says Glickenhau. "I never thought I would have a syndicated morning show for 91X, but Howard Stern does great radio and is compelling enough that he can be a very significant entertainment offering for San Diego, even though he comes out of New York."

What does the future hold in store for San Diego radio? Continued revenue and listenership growth, industry observers say, fueled by a still-growing population base and a consolidated group of well-heeled owners who know what it takes to compete and have the money to do so.

"I foresee that in the next five years, you're going to be allowed to own six stations in a market like San Diego," KPOP/KGB's Baker says. "Triopolies are next, and as the FCC continues to loosen up ownership restraints,

you're going to have maybe four or five players in the market."

"There has already been a considerable amount of adjustment in the market in the last 12 months, and I think we're going to see more of it," adds SFX's Seraphin. "I'm not sure all the players have found their mates or that all the stations have found their niches, so I expect we're going to see

some more changes over the next 12 months." 

Thomas K. Arnold is a veteran San Diego-based free-lance writer specializing in business, entertainment and media. A former radio columnist for San Diego Magazine, he has also written about radio for The Los Angeles Times, Billboard and the San Diego Reader.

Americanized Mexican Stations Coexist As Part of San Diego Radio Market

Of the 32 signals tracked in the latest San Diego Arbitron survey, seven broadcast from the Mexican border city of Tijuana, making this a truly binational market.

Four of the signals are leased to American operators and have English-language programming. XITZ-FM, a CHR station, is ranked fourth overall in the Winter 1995 Arbitron book. Alternative rocker XTRA-FM 91X, is ranked 11th; followed by its AM sister, sports talker XTRA-AM, at number 13; and XHRM-FM, another alternative rock, at number 20.

Filed suit

Today, there's a peaceful coexistence between these Americanized Mexican radio stations and their U.S. brethren. But in 1979, a year after XTRA-FM first began broadcasting American rock music, a coalition of San Diego radio stations filed suit with the FCC, seeking to block what was then Noble Multimedia Communications from operating its two Mexican stations (XTRA-AM had just switched from beautiful music to top 40). The American stations claimed Noble was in violation of the FCC Act of 1934 by exceeding wattage restrictions.

When the FCC subsequently ruled that because the stations were still owned by Mexicans, its guidelines did not apply to them, the local radio community was in an uproar, accusing Noble of unfair competition.

"It's almost like being in a boxing match with your scheduled opponent, and all of a sudden another guy who you've never seen before jumps into the ring and hits you on the side of the head," Jim Price, then general manager of KGB-AM/FM, told the Los Angeles Times in 1981. "We're governed by the FCC, and they're not."

Noble's John Lynch, in turn, countered that the Mexican government's restric-

tions were every bit as strict as the FCC's, if not more, and noted that his company contributes both dollars and jobs to the San Diego economy, just like any other local radio station.

"I think we're a symbol of what ought to be here on the border," he said at the time. "We're trying to bring both cultures together, and the ones who fight us are financially selfish and don't have the entire picture in their minds."

Fears that the 1979 FCC ruling would lead to a rush of American operators seeking to set up shop in Mexico have since proved unfounded. Only one other station has joined the XTRA combo and XHRM in broadcasting English-language programming.

Meanwhile, the San Diego radio market's Latino population has increased from less than 15 percent of the total population in 1980 to 22 percent today. The three stations that broadcast Spanish-language programming—XEMO-AM, XHKY-FM and XLTN-FM—have a collective market share of 3.9 percent, and most observers believe that figure will grow as San Diego's Latino population continues to increase and the stations that cater to it become more sophisticated.

Increasingly important

But even for radio stations that neither broadcast from Mexico nor offer Spanish-language programming, the Latino market is becoming increasingly important. "Anytime you have 22 percent of the market belonging to a specific group, that's significant," says Carolyn Howe, marketing director for the San Diego Radio Broadcasters Association. "One of the other things is that Tijuana is a market of 2.2 million people who cannot only hear our signal, but also shop in San Diego, although these people aren't counted in either our population figures or our ratings." 

—Thomas K. Arnold

Technical Lemon Or Electronic Creampuff?

An Engineering Road Map for the Non-Technical Buyer

by Jim Somich

Engineering is often relegated to the back burner when your time is occupied with ratings, cash flow and financing, but you don't have to be an engineer to steer clear of technical pitfalls when evaluating a property you plan to acquire.

Leaving everything up to your engineering consultant can be a cop-out. Learn a little, save a lot! Know what to look for, what questions to ask. You could save yourself untold headaches down the road. If you're considering a station acquisition, team up with your engineer and supercharge your evaluation. It's easier than you think.

Let's not concern ourselves with the easy ones. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to spot a property that is suffering from extreme neglect. It's one thing to realize that a major rebuild will be the only route to take. It is another to expect only a few, minor problems and find out six months down the road that your tower is ready to come down in the first windstorm.

The signs of a well-maintained property are also obvious to the potential owner. It's those in-between situations that will keep you up all night. Unfortunately, many of the stations on the air today are in-between. Stations are a reflection of the times, and in the 1980s and 1990s, a lot of good engineering was thrown out with deregulation.

Chances are the owner has put the best face possible on his property. This is not unlike buying a used car. It is your job, and that of your engineer, to cut to the chase and make a practical evaluation in a short period of time and often under difficult conditions.

The strategy I am outlining here is based on three components:

1. Plan to devote about 20 percent of your time to technical considerations, and try not to become overwhelmed by trivia. Initiate a checklist so you will know what questions need to be addressed. Retain a technical consultant that you trust to help you answer those questions.

2. Trust your gut feelings about the technical operation. Slipshod operations are not always a bad buy, but they indicate a certain attitude or philosophy on the part of the owners. You may not be an engineer, but your instincts can save you from making a big mistake. Back up your feelings with solid technical input from your consultant. Know what you are buying.

3. Engage in a serious dialogue with your consultant after you have toured the station with him or her and spoken with employees. Your checklist will help you ask the right questions. It will still be up to you to make any final decisions based on the answers you get.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Tour the entire technical plant with your consultant, but rely on your own initial impressions during this phase. Does the facility seem neat and orderly or sloppy and haphazard? Does the plant show any concern at all for technical matters or do things just seem to be thrown together? A desirable property, from a technical standpoint, will show some signs of good engineering.

Look behind doors to get a better perspective. Open racks and look at the wiring. Check inside cabinets or behind equipment. This is not a technical evaluation, but

rather an attempt to determine if engineering is of any concern to the present owners.

Don't just gloss over this phase because you feel unqualified to judge technical matters. Look for the warts. Ask a lot of questions. And don't forget the transmitter site. Although often ignored in serious evaluations, there is more opportunity for technical disaster at the transmitter than anywhere else.

Plan with your consultant to note certain technical parameters during your tour. FM stations should be putting out licensed power and the reflected power should be low, indicating the soundness of the antenna and transmission line.

At AM stations, check the common point current as well as antenna currents and ratios to determine how they compare with licensed values. Take a close look at the towers. Are they well-painted and free of rust and corrosion? Do the guy wires appear to be tensioned properly and in good condition? Checks like these take only a few minutes and can reveal problems ready to turn into disasters. Your consultant will work harder for you if he realizes you are making a strong attempt at a good technical evaluation.

Whether at the studio or transmitter site, keep looking for signs of good engineering. Cleanliness is part of it, but look beyond housekeeping. Does the station own any tools or test equipment or is it relying on the engineer to supply everything? Are licenses and required notices posted along with operators' licenses? All of this is good engineering.

COVERT OPERATIONS

Visit the station after hours, if possible. Try to see it in operation under more normal

conditions. You may be surprised at how your impressions change after the "show" put on for you by the owners.

Talk to employees on duty and don't be afraid to ask pointed questions. I strongly recommend that you meet with the station engineer, whether staff or contract. You should have a list of questions and concerns based on your initial station tour. Your consultant should be present at this meeting.

Try to talk to the station engineer privately, if at all possible. Depending on your concerns after your initial investigation, this meeting can either confirm your worst fears or explain your concerns away.

After you have made your initial tour, and have met with the owners and engineer, break out your notes and have a serious discussion with your engineering consultant. Determine his or her impressions and try to reconcile them with yours. If you have questions or doubts at this point, try to resolve them. Determine how much of the operation appears usable to you and what will have to be scrapped and rebuilt.

Shedding the Light On Dark Stations

Stations that have been off the air for any period of time present some unique technical challenges. If a station is on the air, it is fairly easy to determine its technical condition. Dark stations—especially those down for an extended period of time—are extremely difficult to evaluate technically.

The first rule is that you cannot assume anything. If you have any intention of utilizing any part of the technical operation, you must inspect, test and make some educated guesses. In some cases, the station may be partly dismantled, making evaluation even more of a challenge.

The best you can do in these difficult situations is to rely on your engineer to give you the best and worst scenarios considering the situation.

Often, transmitters can be tested into a dummy load to give you some indication of condition and performance. Dark stations can be a real bargain, but consider the technical pitfalls. And be sure to inspect all equipment thoroughly before applying power. Small, furry animals love to nest in the cracks and crevices of transmitters and phasors.

—Jim Somich

THE CHECKLIST

Even before your initial tour, it's a good idea to develop a checklist of questions that can be applied to any evaluation. Some of them are as follows:

1. The last audio and RF "proof." Though no longer required by FCC regulations, audio proofs are invaluable documentation of the technical condition of the station. If no current proofs are available, seriously consider having them done before closing the deal. RF proofs can uncover coverage problems as well as the need for serious—and expensive—engineering work.

Ask if the station has a consulting engineer or firm. This is a good starting point for digging up previous proofs and related materials. Audio proofs are relatively simple, low-cost and can be performed overnight. Field signal measurements take longer and cost more. The decision to commission these measurements should be made with your engineering consultant and based on apparent need. Perhaps your engineer can perform the needed measurements without incurring the cost of an outside consultant.

2. Are all licenses and authorizations in order? These include the station license, auxiliary services (STL, RPU, etc.) and other special authorizations that are a part of the main station license.

3. Does the station have any technical contracts that you should know about? Do they lease space on their tower? Do they lease an SCA channel? Get copies of the contracts and go over them with your lawyer.

4. Determine if any tower studies are available. This is especially important if the station leases tower space. You cannot determine if a tower is overloaded by looking at it. If you or your consultant have any doubts about the tower(s), consider having a study done before closing the deal. It could save you untold grief later.

5. In AM stations, try to determine the integrity of the ground system. Your engineer can go over the tower site with a field meter and determine the extent of the ground system. In many cases, what is hidden from sight doesn't exist at all! A solid ground system is required to maximize AM coverage.

MONITORING

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in the car and on a better radio, if possible. Listen with your consultant. You are listening for signs of trouble. Does the station sound good? Is it clean and undistorted? If it isn't, why not? Try to find answers to these questions before signing on the dotted line.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

If you have followed the advice given here, I promise you are head and shoulders above most potential buyers. Instead of closing your eyes and hoping for the best, you have taken a pro-active engineering approach. Now is the time to get together one last time with your consultant and resolve any lingering doubts you may have.

What is your consultant's final opinion of the technical operation? Assume that other problems exist that are buried too deeply for you to find until later. Determine what must be repaired immediately and at what cost. What repairs can be postponed and what is hopeless and must be scrapped?

Remember that none of this is beyond the engineering layperson. Even the best engineering consultants will gloss over problems if they feel you do not want to be directly involved in the engineering. The key to a successful evaluation is to ask the right questions—and ask them over again of different people—until you get the right answers. If you do your homework, most of your engineering surprises should be good ones. 

Jim Somich is a radio broadcast engineering consultant and president of MicroCon Systems Ltd., a manufacturer of broadcast equipment.

BUYING AND SELLING

Putting a Potential Buy to the Test

A Good Game of 20 Questions Will Uncover Factors That Count in Considering a Purchase

.....
by *Dain Schult*

In the 1980s, there appeared to be a nationwide contest to see who could expend the highest cash flow multiple for a radio station and still somehow show on paper that its debt could be serviced.

Today, many of those deals don't look as smart as they did then. But as radio rises out of the ashes and challenges television and cable as a desirable investment vehicle again, the stage is set to see whether, as an industry, we learned our lessons from the frenzied decade past.

Let's be smart buyers. As a potential station buyer, what are the most important things to look for, ask about or check when considering a station for purchase? Above and beyond current

financials and preliminary information, including call letters, dial position, coverage map and sales presentation, what are the 20 most important questions to ask about the deal?

Consider the following:

Station characteristics

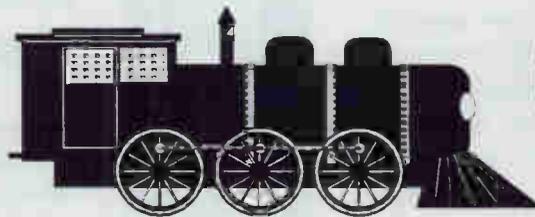
- 1) What is the station's billing and collection history for the last three years? Is it going up, down or sideways? Why?
- 2) What is the station's ratings and format history for the last three years? Is it stable, growing or dying? Why? Is the format unique or nondescript?

Market characteristics

- 3) What is the radio market's revenue history for the last three years? Is 

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it growing or slumping? Why?

4) Are there pending ownership changes, LMAs or move-ins on the horizon that change the level on the playing field? Or change the radio revenue mix?

5) Are there unique market or economic factors that will impact this station? Are there economic factors such as a military base about to close that could wreck the markets and cause an in-town recession?

Facilities

6) Are the current facilities adequate and acceptable for what you want to do in operations or will you need a larger or smaller facility? Everything may fit perfectly now, but what will the station look like a year from now? Five years from now?

Programming, promotions, image

7) Is this station "on target" with where the market is headed in terms of demographics. If not, why not? What's right, wrong or needs improvement?

8) What kind of promotions and jingles/liner market is this? Is it the kind of market where every advertiser expects some kind of bonus-added promotion or contest before committing to a schedule? Is it the kind of market where you have to give away big bucks to "buy" the audience? Are all other stations using out-of-market voice talent for their liners and IDs?

9) What's the biggest or the best promotion that has been done in this market and was it sales-related? What does it take to make a splash in the market?

Bookkeeping/traffic

10) What kind of computerized bookkeeping/traffic system do the stations have and how long has it been there? Is it adequate for now but needs replacing soon?

11) Can the current personnel make the transition to a new system quickly? If you decided to change vendors, can the staff adjust to the change?

12) What is the station's public image regarding both accounts receivable and accounts payable? Do clients take the station seriously on both counts? Is the station perceived as a deadbeat on accounts payable?

Sales strategies

13) What percentage of local billing is direct retail and how much is agency?

Who's in control of these accounts?

14) What percentage of overall billing is local and how much is national/regional? This says a lot about the ability of the current sales staff.

15) How much, if any, effort has been made to develop non-traditional revenue

Above and beyond current financials and preliminary information, what are the 20 most important questions to ask?

sources for the station? Anybody spending time on coop or telemarketing?

Current management

16) What are current and long-range financial, programming and operational goals of the station? If it doesn't have any, what does that tell you about the station?

17) How are the salespeople compensated and why? Is there accountability built into their plan?

18) Are there any "dead bodies" hidden in the closet regarding the station's prior public image or prior hiring/firing procedures? Where are the dead bodies buried and can any of them come back to haunt you once you've taken over?

19) Does the station have department heads with the authority to act in a situation or does everything have to go through the GM first? Who is controlling what and when?

20) Can the station's market value be doubled within five years or less? If it can't, maybe you need to pass up this station.

Of course, there are any number of other questions that need answers, but if you get favorable feedback on these considerations, you are well on your way to finding a radio property worth the time and effort to acquire and operate. ☺

Dain Schult is a radio consultant based in Atlanta. Now principal of Radioactivity Inc., he has more than 20 years experience in all facets of radio.

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As Women Climb Sales Ladder, Stations Rethink Age-Old Policies

by Bob Harris

When pioneer radio company Group W recently held a dinner to recognize the most outstanding account executives among its 13 radio stations, 12 of the President's Club Award winners were women.

Indeed, in an industry known for being top-heavy with male executives, the event acknowledged that women have come a long way in broadcasting: Today, more women are selling radio than ever before, they are very good at what they do and they are extremely successful.

"It was a wonderful feeling that all these women had won," acknowledges John Waugaman, executive vice president of Group W Radio. "But you know, it didn't matter. No one made a big deal of it." In fact, Waugaman says he always passes a box of fine cigars around the banquet table after the awards dinner. This year, a few of the winning women lit up.

With women now attaining their place in top-level positions in broadcasting, many of the nation's group owners are rethinking policies that have been in place for decades, accommodating a title that accompanies many of these executives as they climb the ladder: working mom.

The Nursery

At Group W's WMMR-FM in Philadelphia, for example, the station has established what it calls "The Nursery." In an enlightened effort to keep two outstanding female AEs who wanted to spend time at home with young children but also wanted to work, a unique job-share program was created.

Each of the two AEs, Jeanne Braun and Suzy Swartz, work three days a week. One works Monday and Tuesday, both work Wednesday to communicate, and then the other works Thursday and Friday.

Has it worked? Well, according to Waugaman, the pair were so successful last year that they won Group W's Super Bowl

sales promotion. Traditionally, the person making the most sales wins an exotic trip for two to the Super Bowl.

However, unlike most years when winners take spouses or significant others, the two winning women decided to take the Super Bowl trip together and leave their husbands at home with the kids!

This "nursery" concept seems to be spreading. KYNG-FM in Dallas has had a similar job-share program for about a year,



Group W's President's Club:
12 of 13 have no mustache.

while KLIF-AM, also in Dallas, recently hired two women who actually sought the position as a job-share pair.

While women's increasing prominence at the top level in broadcasting might be viewed by some as an anticipated trend, others say it was only a matter of time before women earned their place at this level.

"Women make better managers than men," says Donna Fadal, general manager of Sandusky Radio's KEGL-FM in Dallas/Fort Worth. "Men take care of problems. Men are good problem solvers; they efficiently solve one problem, then move to the next problem.

"Women take care of people. Women are better at the things that are needed to be a good radio manager," she says. "Women seem to have a radar and good instincts about people;

they are very good at nurturing."

If this is true, then why are the vast majority of radio general managers still men, when the vast majority of radio salespeople are women? Is there a reason?

One reason there aren't more female managers is that far more women than men move out of a career path to stay home with children. It also seems more women than men leave good jobs to follow spouses. This, in effect, forces them to 'start over' in a brand new market.

Fadal gives an example of a female sales manager in Dallas that accompanied her husband to a new job in Washington, D.C., and then couldn't find a sales manager's job, so she started at the bottom again as an AE.

Find mentors

Brenda Adriance, general manager of Gannett's KHKS-FM, Dallas, recommends that it's important for women working their way up to "find mentors, both male and female, to talk to." The lack of mentors and "mentoring," she says, is a hindering factor for women with management goals.

Both Adriance and Fadal were adamant, however, about warning salespeople, male and female, that the road to becoming a manager does not include frequent jumps between stations in the same market, constantly seeking the "best list."

"I have been at KEGL for 13 years," Fadal says. "I started as an AE and continued to get promoted because I didn't move. You can't keep moving around between stations and expect to build the trust and respect necessary for a move into management."

However, cross-town Dallas GM Adriance did suggest to women, "Seek out companies that will allow you to reach your goals. A manager's job doesn't fall into your lap; you must seek the companies that provide the opportunities."

From the male perspective, there's no reason why a predominance of women in top-level positions won't continue to burgeon as company policies adapt to circumstance and women continue to demand their place in the line.

Says Group W's Waugaman, "It's only a matter of time before there are as many women GMs as men." 

Bob Harris is a Dallas-based sales and marketing consultant. His broadcast services include in-market sales training, seminars and hands-on new business development.

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Today, Dahl is president and chairman of Minneapolis-based Children's Broadcast Network, owner of Radio AAHS (as in "The Wizard of..."). He says that one of the biggest challenges of kids' radio is overcoming widespread resistance with the industry to a virtually untested format.

All the answers

"Radio is a very mature industry, full of all these guys who know all the answers," Dahl says. "One answer they have is that kids don't listen to the radio. But there's nothing on radio for kids to listen to. That's why they don't listen. When you provide a product, kids consume it."

Dahl is the lead contender in a widely ignored race for the 12-and-under airwaves. And while he may not acknowledge them as such, a small herd of programming competitors populate the thin field. One of these is KidStar out of Seattle, in action for just over two years and limited so far to its home market. Another is Fox Kids Countdown in Los Angeles. Although Fox brings its Man-o'-War name to the fray, it offers but a two-hour Sunday show carried by just over a hundred stations (including KidStar).

Dahl's Radio AAHS is not only the front runner, but also the distance runner in the race, with five years and 27 mostly AM affiliates to his credit. AAHS is also the only children's network that broadcasts 24 hours a day.

Whether or not Dahl acknowledges the roadblocks mentioned above, they were at least partly responsible for the demise of several earlier kiddie-nets and programmers, including CBS' RadioRadio, Imagination Station and Children's Radio Network. In fact, the CRN was an earlier incarnation of Children's Broadcasting Corp., which owns Radio AAHS.

Fox's Bert Gould says the demo is still "tough for the industry and especially for radio stations to lock onto." As executive vice president of Fox Children's Network, he's in charge of the Kids Countdown, launched last July. Gould says that the lack of Arbitron ratings for this listening group sets up a "domino effect."

If it's not rated...

"If it's not rated," he explains, "advertisers can't measure their effectiveness; then



Photo: Pege Chichester

they're not going to be willing to advertise to the demo; therefore, radio stations aren't going to want to program to the demo and programmers aren't going to create programming to meet it."

Despite these challenges, the potential audience—and the possible payoff—is enormous. Children make up about 17 percent of America's population. That's more than 40 million listeners, who spend some \$14 billion of their own money and influence at least \$130 billion more. To reach this "underserved market" audience, advertisers nationwide spend just \$1 billion, a mere one percent of their budget.

At least one researcher believes these numbers are way off base. Marketing professor James McNeal at Texas A&M University says young people directly influence nearly \$160 billion in buying and that they indirectly ("passively") influence purchases of up to \$450 billion a year.

"Children have a great deal of influence on household spending," he says. McNeal, who has written three books on marketing to children, predicts that the \$160 billion figure will nearly double by the year 2001.

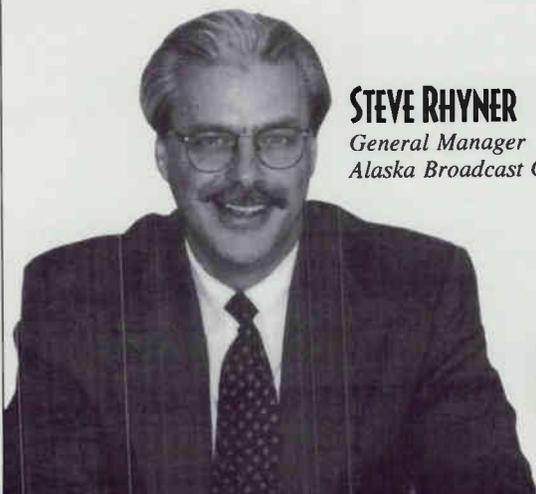
"Marketers are looking at radio for good reason," McNeal says, "because it's one more way to communicate with this rapidly growing market."

Generating research

McNeal agrees that the ratings gap has hindered the cause of children's broadcasting. He quotes an industry maxim: "If you can measure it, I'll buy it." But he

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Today, Dahl is president and chairman of Minneapolis-based Children's Broadcast Network, owner of Radio AAHS (as in "The Wizard of..."). He says that one of the biggest challenges of kids' radio is overcoming widespread resistance with the industry to a virtually untested format.

All the answers

"Radio is a very mature industry, full of all these guys who know all the answers," Dahl says. "One answer they have is that kids don't listen to the radio. But there's nothing on radio for kids to listen to. That's why they don't listen. When you provide a product, kids consume it."

Dahl is the lead contender in a widely ignored race for the 12-and-under airwaves. And while he may not acknowledge them as such, a small herd of programming competitors populate the thin field. One of these is KidStar out of Seattle, in action for just over two years and limited so far to its home market. Another is Fox Kids Countdown in Los Angeles. Although Fox brings its Man-o'-War name to the fray, it offers but a two-hour Sunday show carried by just over a hundred stations (including KidStar).

Dahl's Radio AAHS is not only the front runner, but also the distance runner in the race, with five years and 27 mostly AM affiliates to his credit. AAHS is also the only children's network that broadcasts 24 hours a day.

Whether or not Dahl acknowledges the roadblocks mentioned above, they were at least partly responsible for the demise of several earlier kiddie-nets and programmers, including CBS' RadioRadio, Imagination Station and Children's Radio Network. In fact, the CRN was an earlier incarnation of Children's Broadcasting Corp., which owns Radio AAHS.

Fox's Bert Gould says the demo is still "tough for the industry and especially for radio stations to lock onto." As executive vice president of Fox Children's Network, he's in charge of the Kids Countdown, launched last July. Gould says that the lack of Arbitron ratings for this listening group sets up a "domino effect."

If it's not rated...

"If it's not rated," he explains, "advertisers can't measure their effectiveness; then



Photo: Page Chichester

they're not going to be willing to advertise to the demo; therefore, radio stations aren't going to want to program to the demo and programmers aren't going to create programming to meet it."

Despite these challenges, the potential audience—and the possible payoff—is enormous. Children make up about 17 percent of America's population. That's more than 40 million listeners, who spend some \$14 billion of their own money and influence at least \$130 billion more. To reach this "underserved market" audience, advertisers nationwide spend just \$1 billion, a mere one percent of their budget.

At least one researcher believes these numbers are way off base. Marketing professor James McNeal at Texas A&M University says young people directly influence nearly \$160 billion in buying and that they indirectly ("passively") influence purchases of up to \$450 billion a year.

"Children have a great deal of influence on household spending," he says. McNeal, who has written three books on marketing to children, predicts that the \$160 billion figure will nearly double by the year 2001.

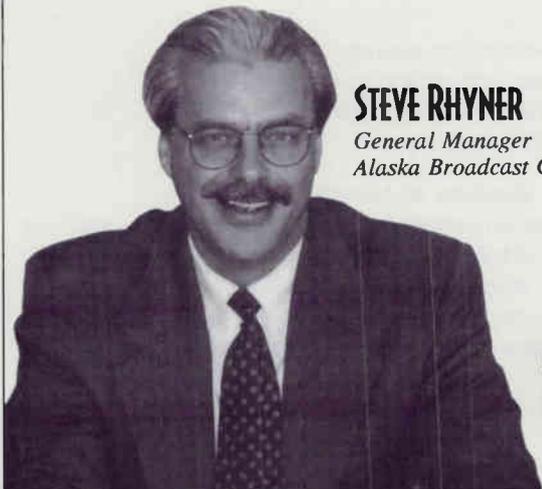
"Marketers are looking at radio for good reason," McNeal says, "because it's one more way to communicate with this rapidly growing market."

Generating research

McNeal agrees that the ratings gap has hindered the cause of children's broadcasting. He quotes an industry maxim: "If you can measure it, I'll buy it." But he

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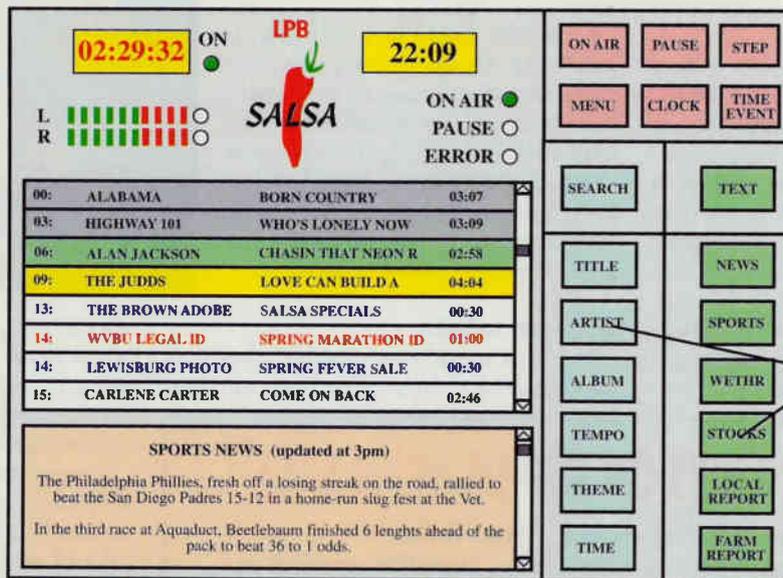
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Kids' Radio Proponents Strive to Quantify Sizable Audience in a 12+ World

.....
by Page Chichester

*Radio AAHS, KidStar and Fox Play on Different Levels
For 17 Percent of the Population*

As he listened to "The Lone Ranger" and other after-school radio shows in the early 1950s, 6-year-old Christopher Dahl may have envisioned himself one day recreating the theater of the mind for millions of youngsters. He may even have envisioned an entire network just for kids. But it's a safe bet he didn't foresee the obstacles that he and other children's programmers would encounter.

For one, Arbitron doesn't rate audiences under 12 years old. For another, kids today are said to be part of the television generation, programmed for pictures, action and visual stimulation. Some observers say that for such an audience, radio seems like "half a loaf." These and other objections have made it difficult for subteen radio programmers to

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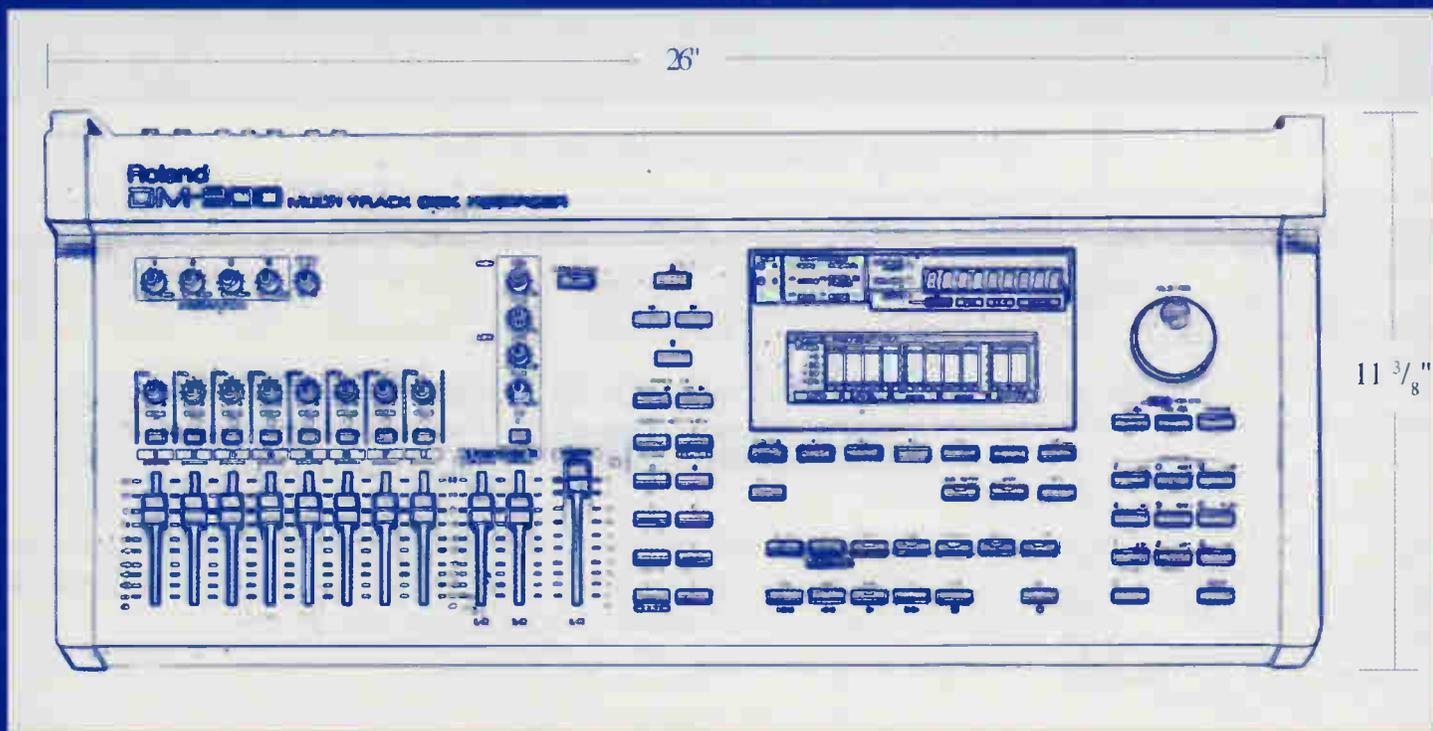
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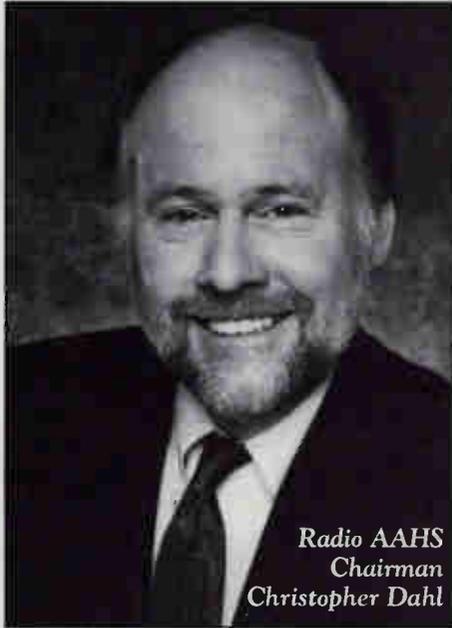
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says Arbitron is starting to take notice, programmers are generating their own research and more than just toy and snack food makers are looking at the 4- to 12-age group.

Auto manufacturers—considered by some to be a lost cause when it comes to children's programming—are coming around to this notion as well. With research suggesting that



Radio AAHS
Chairman
Christopher Dahl

children exert some influence on about \$10 billion in car purchases a year, McNeal says both Ford and Toyota are rumored to be focusing some attention on the young market.

Dahl can vouch for this brand of influence. "Twelve years ago, my 12-year-old son said, 'Dad, we gotta get one of these Jeep Cherokees,'" Dahl recalls. The Jeep parked in Dahl's driveway today is his fourth.

"I'm still being influenced by the decision we made—really, that he made—12 years ago," Dahl says. "I think a lot of savvy car dealers realize that these kids are, in fact, determining things like what sort of car we're going to get."

That may explain why Radio AAHS has been able to welcome car dealers into its mix of advertisers, which includes Sears, McDonald's (also claimed by KidStar and Fox Kids Countdown), Kellogg's, Kraft, Target Stores, General Mills, Disney and Blockbuster. AAHS also is partnering with Warner Music Enterprises to produce a colorful monthly magazine with a CD or cassette in every issue. In addition to advertising, Disney provides programming on Sundays.

Ease concerns

Still, one major advertiser admitted in a 1993 MediaWeek article that, lacking much in the way of hard listenership numbers, airing commercials on children's radio requires

"a little leap of faith." AAHS has found several ways to ameliorate such concerns.

In the world of kid's radio, Dahl considers himself the Lone Ranger, patrolling the uncharted and sparsely populated frontier without as much as a sidekick. He sees himself as the Ted Turner of the children's airwaves. Like Turner, Dahl is undaunted when confronted with skeptics.

He sweeps perceived stumbling blocks aside. To plug the research hole, Radio AAHS commissioned an independent

study in 1992. That told him that his Minneapolis station was number one for age 9 and under, and number four in afternoon drive. AAHS also attracted one parent for every two children.

When AAHS contracted Arbitron in 1993 to study listeners ages 2 to 11 in Minneapolis, it found that they tune in about seven hours a week, half of which is done in cars. It also found that 91 percent of children 12 and under listen to the radio, and that AAHS was reaching about

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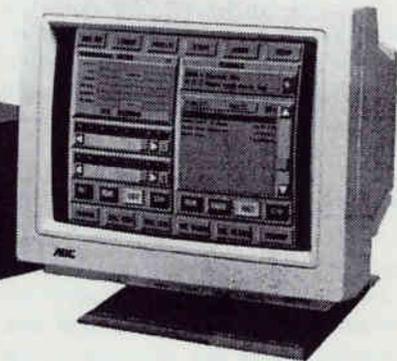
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To bolster these findings, the station developed other audience quantifiers. AAHS began hosting concerts that attracted around 9,000 kids and parents. Its studio phones take an average of 4,000+ calls a day. The studio itself attracts 20,000 or more visitors a year. The newly launched Radio AAHS Magazine has about 40,000 subscribers.

Maintain standards

Another concern raised about children's radio is the danger of exploitation. AAHS, KidStar and Fox all employ stringent self-policing to forestall any complaints. Dahl says objections have been few.

"Parents tell us that if you can maintain the standards and integrity of your broadcasting—and be somewhat vigilant about what sort of commercials you run—they're okay with the fact that it's a commercial venture," Dahl says.

Dahl discounts descriptions of kids as being "programmed for television." In fact, viewership for Saturday tune time is flat or declining for most networks (the one exception being Fox). And kids certainly don't consider radio "half a loaf," any more than adults do, he says.

Given all the above—plus a widely acknowledged need for quality children's entertainment—the time for children's radio would seem ripe. This argument is especially compelling when you consider that 75 percent of the nation's 5,000 AM radio stations are losing money and looking for salvation. Dahl maintains that "any halfway decent operator can make money with this format on the AM side of the dial."

But although the Minneapolis station has been a moneymaker almost from the start, the Children's Broadcast Corp. has not. Radio AAHS Network is still grasping for the holy grail of 40 percent market coverage in the United States. At the moment, it has about 30 percent. That gap could be filled with prized New York and Chicago stations, which together would amount to another 12 percent. CBC plans to buy stations in these two high-priority markets. Some financial analysts predict these could help the company turn a profit by early 1996.

KidStar, on-air from 6 a.m. to midnight, uses some of the same mechanisms as Radio AAHS to count its listeners. It has a membership club, a quarterly magazine and an interactive phone system. The PhoneZone employs personal listener codes to help KidStar develop profiles not only on the call-in audience as a whole, but on

individual listeners. The PhoneZone is also an important way for listeners to participate in the broadcast and hear themselves on the air.

That has been sufficient to lure several high-profile advertisers, including Microsoft, Weyerhaeuser, Nike, Nestle and Nordstrom. Like Dahl, KidStar Executive VP and GM Jodell Seagrave also downplays the supposed roadblocks to success in children's radio.

"We see a very large demand by advertisers at very high levels," Seagrave says. These companies "are looking for new and effective ways to reach kids and families with children."



Fox Broadcasting

For added insurance, KidStar has sponsored proprietary studies, which revealed an estimated weekly come up of up to 175,000 kids, plus 125,000 parents.

"We have not found that we've been handicapped by the lack of traditional Arbitron ratings," Seagrave says. "because we've come up with very effective tools for measuring the effectiveness of an overall program." She adds that Arbitron has developed some prototypes for measuring children under age 12, and that KidStar may avail itself of that service.

KidStar's goal is to be reaching 2 million listeners in all top 10 markets by the end of 1996.

Counting ears

Meanwhile, unlike AAHS and KidStar, Fox Kids Countdown has made no effort to count its audience.

"Honestly, we have no idea how many listeners we have. We really don't," Gould says. He says counting ears would be an expensive undertaking. "It would probably cost us more than the show cost to produce."

Still, Fox has been able to coax, convince or cajole such national advertisers as Quaker Oats, Marvel Entertainment, Kool-Aid, LA Gear and Tiger Electronics to sign on.

Gould agrees that advertisers may be committing a "leap of faith, in that I'm not giving them ratings," but he believes the Fox name and track record helps offset any perceived risk.

"Almost all these people are big kids

advertisers," Gould says. "They know they want to reach kids and they know how. I think they realize kids listen to radio." Of course, it doesn't hurt that Fox also boasts a 5 million-member Kids Club (built mostly upon its TV programming), representing nearly 4 million households.

Fox takes some radio programming cues from its TV department. Whereas AAHS and KidStar feature stories, kid DJs, call-ins and games, all linked together with an eclectic music mix, the Kids Countdown offers regular appearances by Fox TV characters and guest appearances by real-life celebrities, interspersed with a soft AC playlist.

"We're playing contemporary hit music," Gould says. "We're not playing Barney and Raffi; we're playing the hits. We try to create a radio show that is targeted at kids, but that any adult can listen to and enjoy." Like Fox's TV shows, the countdown is intended to appeal to a very broad audience.

Because of the many variables involved, anyone hoping to win the children's radio race will need perhaps one trait over all—endurance. Dahl, for one, maintains that if he keeps at it long enough, everything will fall in place.

"I don't think Turner had any idea that it was going to take 10 years and the Gulf War to make what he had successful," Dahl says.

He believes the cards are stacked in his favor. "Number one," Dahl notes, "we deliver the demo completely to you; there's not much competition. On radio, if you want to reach 18-24, there are three, four, five alternatives in every major market. Here, if you want to reach these kids on radio, it's Radio AAHS. There's no need to buy anybody else. I think there's a big advantage to that."

Of course, KidStar and Fox Kids Countdown counter that there's enough room in the winner's circle for other networks and programmers.

Regarding industry skeptics, Dahl says he's working hard to convert them as well. He wants them to stop betting against children's radio.

"One of the things I like to say to my fellow broadcasters is: If somebody could bring you an entire demographic and say, 'It's all yours,' whether it's 18-24 or 24-36, would you jump at the opportunity? That's what we're offering here." 

Page Chichester is a Roanoke, Va.-based journalist, former managing editor of Virginia magazine and father of 9-year-old Lee, whom is pictured in the story's opening photograph.

Format Focus takes a monthly look at trends impacting radio programming.

WIOD/WFLC/WHQT Director of Marketing Kurt Steier: **'Sticking to the Basics Is the Most Important Thing'**

by Scott Slaven

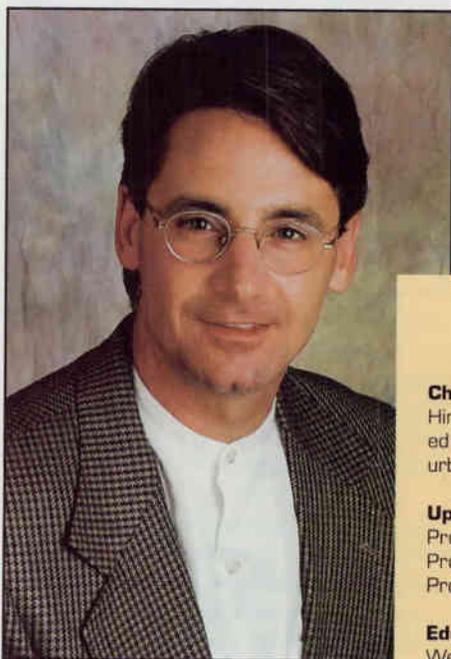
The Promax Promotions Profile offers a look at the experiences and points of view of the nation's top radio promotion professionals.

Promax is an international association for promotion and marketing executives in the electronic media, based in Los Angeles.

This month: Kurt Steier, director of marketing for Cox outlets WIOD-AM, WFLC-FM and WHQT-AM in Miami.

Q: Kurt, tell us how your promotions career began.

In college, I was the paid director of publicity for the Center Board, which secured all the concerts, lectures and special events. Before this, I never thought of



going into promotions. I started out majoring in engineering, but like a lot of people, I didn't know exactly what I wanted to do.

Later, I worked promotions during Spring Break in Fort Lauderdale for Coppertone and Tropical Blend. We coordinated the bikini and belly flop contests, T-shirt giveaways and water volleyball tournaments. It was a blast. That's when I really knew what I wanted to do.

Q: How long have you been at your present gig?

Since August 1989. I was hired here for WIOD Radio, which is news, talk and entertainment. In the Spring of '90, our sister station was changing from AOR to an adult contemporary format and I was promoted to handle marketing for both.

Then in January 1993, after the FCC duopoly ruling, we acquired WHQT, an urban adult contemporary, and I was promoted as marketing director for all three radio stations.

Q: How tough is it to juggle three different formats?

It's always a challenge, because there's always something going on. The thing that became difficult was that I simply didn't have enough time to do everything—especially focus on the product. I finally had to hire two promotion directors to help handle the load. With three formats, there were just so many people calling in, wanting something and I couldn't handle it all.

I think long-term planning is an important part of our jobs. If you lose time in that part of your job, you lose your vision of the station. It's important that we work six months out and know which direction our stations are going in.

Q: What are some of the challenges of promoting talk radio?

It's tough because the talent is the product. Our lineup on WIOD is unique to say the least. Where most talk stations are issues-oriented, ours is entertainment-based—free-form, stream-of-consciousness talk where we let the listeners talk about anything they want. Our morning show, Rick & 

Kurt Steier

Title: Director of Marketing WIOD-AM/WFLC-FM/WHQT-AM, Miami

Choice Morsels

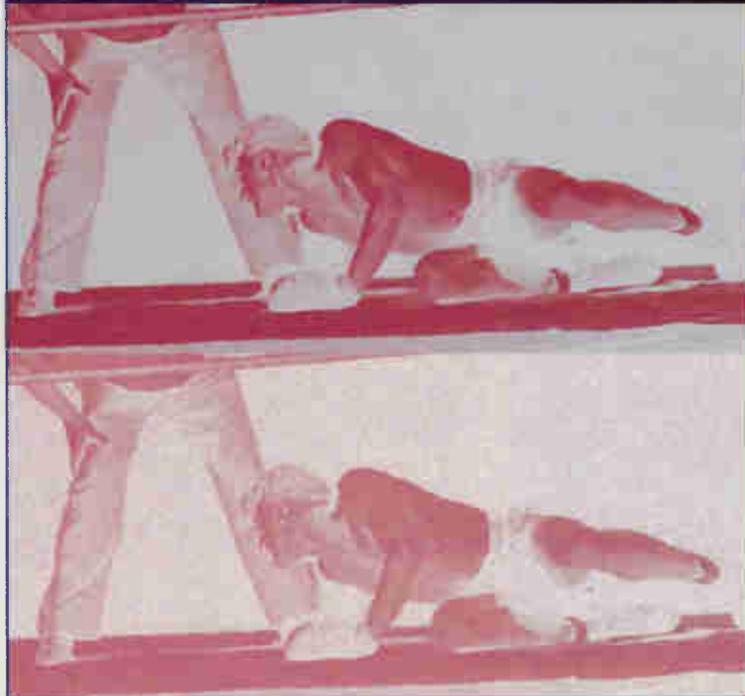
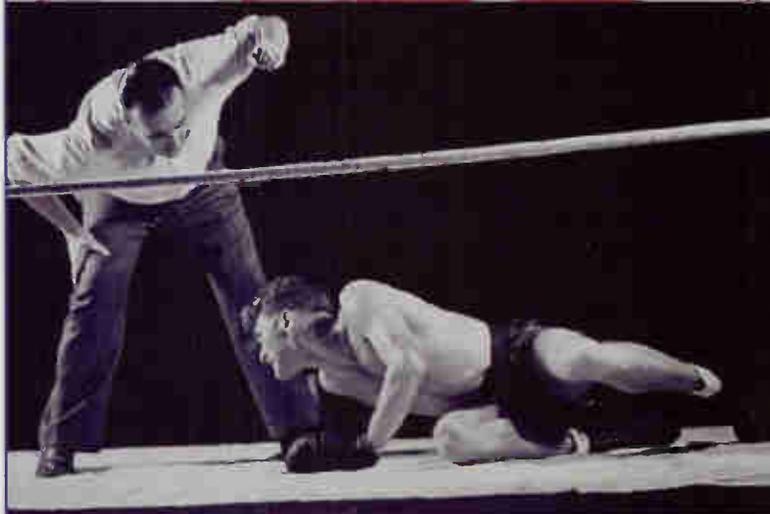
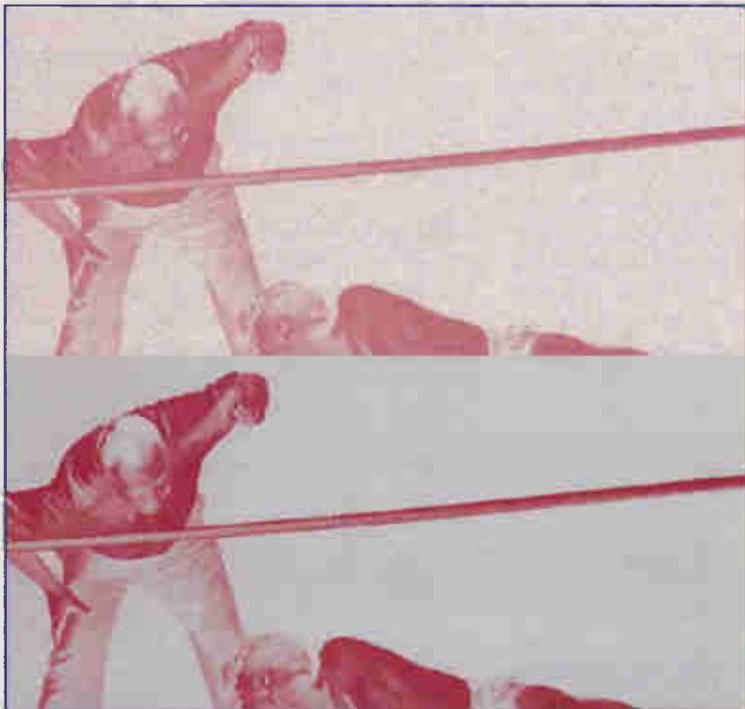
Hired in 1989 as Promotions Director for news/talk/entertainment WIOD-AM. In Spring 1990, promoted to handle Cox's new AC WFLC Coast 97.3. In January 1993, the company acquired WHQT-AM, an urban contemporary outlet, and promoted Steier to Director of Marketing for all three stations.

Up the Ladder

Promotion Director 84WHAS, Louisville, Ky., 1987-1989
Promotion Director WVEZ/WAKY, Louisville, 1987
Promotions Coordinator AAA, Lexington, Ky., 1986-1987

Education

Western Kentucky University, Bachelor of Arts/Advertising, 1986



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Q: Is Miami a liberal or conservative market?

Let me put it this way. Rush Limbaugh is up against Neil Rogers and Neil kicks his butt. This market is very unusual. We can get away with a lot more here than you can in, say, Kansas.

Q: What makes the Miami market unique?

When I came here from Louisville, it was

almost culture shock. Because of the warm weather, there is always something going on, particularly in winter, when things slow down for most people.

You can get involved in everything and kill yourself or pick specific things to get involved in. As far as the market is concerned, it's a challenge because of all the different cultures and the huge Hispanic community. I'd have to say I've learned more here than I would have in any other market because it is so diverse.

Q: How do you define a successful promotion?

The buzz, when people are talking. And when your staff and talent are excited and believe in the promo, because that translates over the air.

Sticking to the basics is the most important thing. That's what I'm most proud of.

Q: Are you on the Internet?

No, we're not yet. We're looking into it but, to be honest, I'm not totally sold on the Internet yet. People come in here and say the Internet is the greatest thing but nobody can tell me the percentage of people in my market that are even on it.

I think it's something we all need to be aware of and need to know how to get involved in, but it's not something I want to spend a whole lot of time on yet. It's a time management thing. Technology is supposed to save us so much time, but has it?

Even since I've gotten a computer, started using the fax machine and everything else, I feel I have to move faster just to keep up. Either way, the Internet is here and it's not going to go away. I do think it will have more sales opportunities than programming. ☺

Scott Slaven is director of communications for Promax.

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When: Annual for six years, starting
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The Deal: WIOD-AM talk show host
 Neil Rogers started the campaign in the
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 of his most memorable on-air moments
 of the past year. It initially raised
 \$26,000 for Center One, a Miami charity
 committed to AIDS awareness.

The promotion has grown in succeeding
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 separate recordings of wacky morning
 duo Rick & Suds, as well as afternoon
 personality Phil Hendrie.

"The on-air talent makes it happen,"
 Steier says. "They pick the charity and it's
 their enthusiasm that sells the product."

Even so, Steier took Rogers' effort to
 its current professional level and negoti-
 ated a tie-in with the record chain
 Peaches for in-store displays. Steier also
 instigated an 800 phone line where lis-
 teners can purchase by credit card. This
 year, the product will be offered for sale
 over the Internet.

Benefits: Last year's CD raised a total
 of \$200,000 for the charity.

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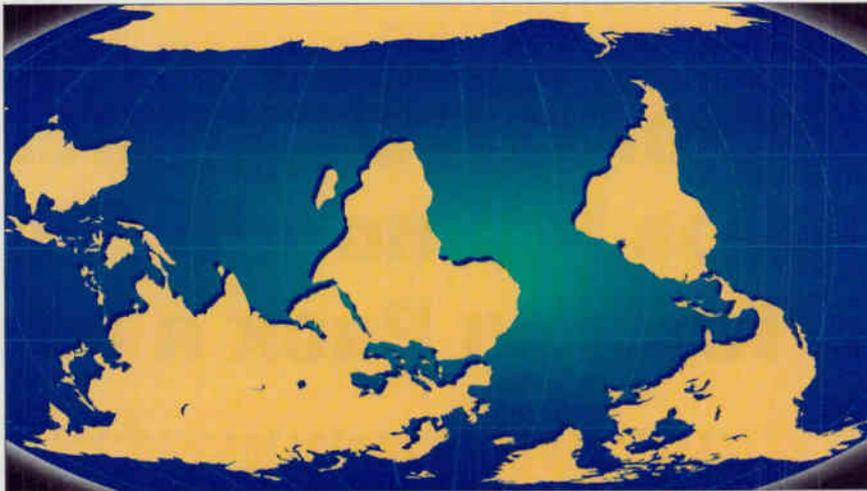
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Promax '95 Conference Equips Promotion Pros With Tools to Pack a Punch

.....
by Charles Taylor

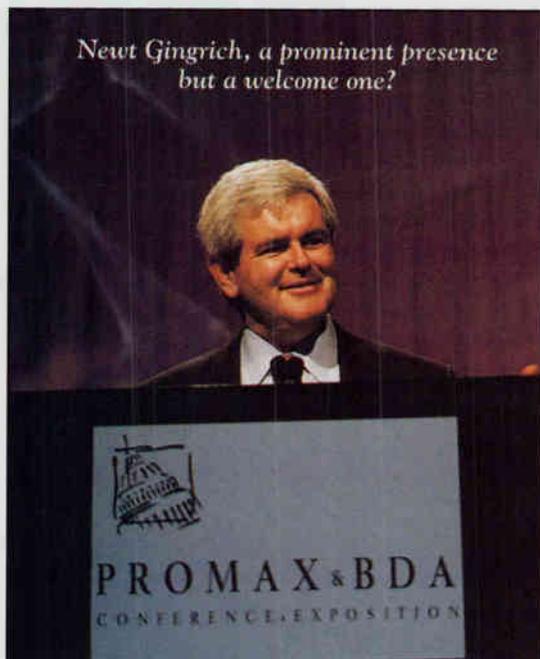
Marketing Leaders Look to New Technologies to Reach Listeners

In an industry where marketing techniques are evolving as rapidly as names on a station's playlist, last month's Promax International & BDA Conference & Exposition in

Washington, D.C., offered registrants an amply stocked tool kit to take home to their respective market battlefields.

From interactive communications to the Internet to database marketing, 1990s' buzzwords wafted across a host of radio-specific sessions, roundtables and speeches. These tailored forums also asserted Promax's revived commitment to radio amid a traditionally dominant mix of cable, network and local television marketers.

By show's end, 5,479 had registered for the four-day promotion extravaganza, including 210 radio attendees, a dramatic jump over last year's 140. Promax courted these delegates with an appearance by actor/radio personality Jay Thomas, format meetings and topical roundtables that covered creative promotions, event marketing, careers, cross-media promotion, spots and cutting edge technologies. The association also offered its first Radio Reception, sponsored by The Radio World Magazine.



Washington, D.C., offered registrants an amply stocked tool kit to take home to their respective market battlefields.



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DESIGNS THAT MAKE THE DIFFERENCE
Circle (159) On Reader Service Card

—always with a focus on how these techniques impact listening. “It’s great to use tools like Internet and interactive phones,” commented KCBS-FM’s Kim Kelly, “but we still have to give people reasons to tune in.”

The best ideas

According to Promax International President Jim Chabin, radio attendees, more than any year in the past, were given information individually suited to what each format is doing around the country.

“You heard the best ideas and strategies that have been done, whether guerilla marketing with the O.J. Simpson trial or maximizing opportunities that Howard Stern creates in New York,” Chabin said. “From coast to coast, radio attendees heard the meat and potatoes—actionable solutions—from the people in the markets that have seen the impact of them.”

Chabin emphasized that the ball is just starting to roll for radio’s rejuvenated alliance with the organization: “We want to continue to grow radio so that it is more of a complete piece. Individually, each piece of the puzzle may not seem like much, but now, if it’s promotion and marketing, it’s here at



this convention.”

Aside from the radio conclave, there were big things going on for TV attendees—sessions and practical workshops, yes, but more prominently, schmaltz and big names—as syndicators pushed their own personalities and the techniques to effectively market them. Everyone from Oprah and Paul Reiser to Jerry Springer and Siskel and Ebert could be seen doing the

publicity thing.

And then there was Newt Gingrich. While the Speaker of the House of Representatives was certainly a big name for Promax to offer attendees, his pre-packaged party platform speech probably went further in providing a great coffee lounge anecdote for the audience than a helping hand. In a constituency that could confidently be tagged predominantly liberal, a number of Gingrich’s ideas on education and self-reliance were met with hisses and cat calls. Then again, when it comes to marketing, nobody could deny Gingrich is a pro.

More than anything

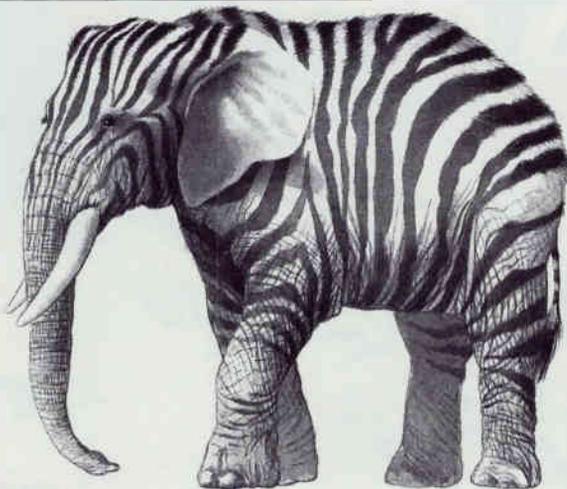
Other speakers included Richard Frank, president of the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, poet and author Maya Angelou and New World Entertainment Chairman Brandon Tartikoff.

More than anything, Promax attendees realized at show’s end that there is still plenty to learn about promotion and marketing, while acknowledging among themselves that the power they wield in delivering a station’s message through a shrewdly fashioned image is among the most important skills in the broadcast media.

“This is a conference where the number one goal is to learn,” Chabin said. “These people want to get better and they want to go back and kick the pants off their competition. They are passionate about what they do.”

The 1996 Promax/BDA conference will be held at the Los Angeles Convention Center June 19-22.

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Circle 209 On Reader Service Card

Expanding Advertising Bases Top Priority for Radio Industry of the Mid-1990s

The need to expand local and national advertising bases in a developing multimedia world is fast becoming the top priority for U.S. commercial radio owners. Only by growing advertising bases will radio broadcasters continue along a revitalized revenue path for the future.

Foremost, radio sales executives and managers must know as much as possible about both current and prospective advertising clients, including advertising expenditure history and potential plans for new product and service launches or new retail chain openings. This can be accomplished by monitoring events through advertiser databases. The key here is to successfully maintain the existing advertising client base while cultivating new business dollars.

Indeed, more than any other time since the early days of television, radio executives need to grow their share of available advertising revenue by being the medium of choice for more marketers. The process has been made easier with the FCC's broader duopoly ownership rules, which are greatly impacting both local and national advertising sales.

There also must be a major push today to position radio as the ultimate "reach medium." Sales presentations to advertisers should stress radio's increasing out-of-home audience or burgeoning mobility factor as a primary advantage over all other media.

Reflecting consumer tastes

Sellers of radio advertising time, particularly young sales professionals, should be aware of the fact that the aural medium has always been the most resilient communications vehicle within a constantly changing society.

Through its programming, radio has done an excellent job reflecting societal lifestyles and consumer tastes for more than 70 years. In so doing, the industry has registered many advertising successes—both local and national—along the way.

In recent years, a large number of memorable radio advertising campaigns have come about, such as the "Motel 6" national campaign. By noting such successes, sales personnel can best demonstrate how radio can be a highly effective targeted medium for delivering desired listeners/consumers.

Faced with increasing media advertising competition—including closed-circuit audio services for retail chains and big screen advertising in motion picture theaters as well as on videocassettes—it has become imperative for all radio stations, rep firms and networks to further advance billings by having alternative or new

business development programs in place.

One way is to create new advertising revenue streams to build upon traditional radio advertising dollars. This may involve adapting and/or complementing advertising forms from other mediums such as the television infomercial or direct response concept. With this approach, radio stations can air 60-second spots derived from existing TV infomercial campaigns.

"Radio infomercials build a bridge with direct response TV advertisers," observes Mark Lipsky, president of Radio Direct Response (RDR), a Bala Cynwyd, Pa.-based company that specializes in tailoring both short-form and long-form infomercials to radio.

Support media

"For the TV infomercial advertiser, radio is now recognized as part of its support media," says Lipsky, a former Greater Media advertising and promotion executive.

Infomercials, a television mainstay for some seven or eight years, is still a relatively new marketing idea in radio. For radio, infomercial or direct response advertising is primarily produced in a short-form (mostly 60-second) format. There are also some long-form (30- or 60-minute) campaigns. Those that are short-form run on an unsold station inventory within a variety of dayparts. Long-form infomercials, which are usually produced as a talk show, typically air during the night or on weekends.

Generally, radio stations airing 60-second infomercial spots are assigned a dedicated toll-free 800 number for audience response to the product or service. For their allotted airtime, stations receive a commission for each product or service bought. At RDR, for example, stations running spots of infomercial TV products receive a flat 25 percent commission of the product's gross price. (RDR produces the spots and uses third-party telemarketers to field the telephone calls and close the deals.)

In some cases, infomercial advertising can also be a straight media buy and it may feature products not advertised on television.

"Infomercials," Lipsky suggests, "allow radio to better compete for all retail dollars in the marketplace."

Radio's multidimensional media mix

Another approach to broadening existing advertising revenue streams, especially for local sales, is to institute a more visible campaign for the radio advertiser.

This calls for radio to establish its own, multidimensional or value-added media mix for advertisers. The elements for a radio media mix include publishing listener-oriented magazines featuring stories germane to the station and its format, along with ads from station advertisers; forming "listener clubs" that can act as a merchandising arm for the station; and designing direct mail contests and other targeted sales promotions.

Then there's cyber-radio in which stations and

Trendformation: Renewing Financial Interest in Radio

networks offer "real-time" interactive on-line services to listeners, including advertising messages from station sponsors via World Wide Web sites on the global computer network Internet. Cyber-radio provides station advertisers with yet another outlet for getting their message across to potential users of their product or service.

And there are still other technology-driven, interactive radio marketing approaches in the works like CouponRadio. As you read here in May, CouponRadio essentially involves the use of a station's RBDS (Radio Broadcast Data System) subcarrier frequency for transmitting advertised sales product information directly to a specially equipped car or home receiver. The data or "electronic coupon" is stored on a small card that can be printed out and redeemed at the participating retail store client. CouponRadio will soon be implemented in the Miami/Ft. Lauderdale market.

Creativity at the forefront

When any radio campaign is executed, its success rate is almost always tied to its on-air creative foundation. In essence, creativity is the backbone of any advertising message—audio, video or print. Therefore, in the continually stimulated society of the mid-1990s, radio executives must raise the consciousness for creativity with both media copywriters at agencies and with those charged at stations—particularly in the medium to smaller markets—with writing ad copy.

A major step in focusing on radio creativity occurred three years ago when the radio industry launched its annual Mercury Awards ceremony, a black-tie dinner honoring the best of radio advertising creativity. Now every June in New York City, advertising's top creative executives, usually from major agencies and corporations, judge a variety of commercial spots for their effectiveness and creativity.

Leading the advertiser participation for the recently concluded 1995 event were Tony Ponturo, president of Anheuser-Busch's Busch Media Group/USA; Keith Reinhard, chairman and CEO of DDB Needham Worldwide; and Steve Frankfurt, chairman of Frankfurt Balkind Partners. The winners receive cash awards totaling \$200,000. One grand prize winner receives \$100,000.

Tom Hripko, president of The Radio Spot, a Dallas-based radio creative agency, advises that the commercial's tone, type of voice and music must make sense for the product and that the ad copy must be relevant to its target audience.

"Most importantly, ad copy must be approached from the user's point of view by stressing benefits to the listener," says Hripko, who created the now-famous "Motel 6" radio campaign, which won the first Mercury Award for Best Radio Commercial in 1992.

Hripko also notes that humor is typically the most effective way to communicate an advertising message on radio. "You are asking the listener to give up 30 or 60 seconds of their life, so you need to repay them in the form of a reward like laughter."

In May, Hripko teamed with The Interep Radio Store to launch a series of one-day creative workshops, coined "The Good, the Bad and the Award Winners," for individual stations and group operators.

When it comes to securing senior financing for new station deals, the radio industry has been gradually "coming out of the box," to borrow a slogan from a past Radio Advertising Bureau conference. The industry is recovering from the severe economic crunch of the early 1990s when many sources of money dried up.

With the FCC's 1992 duopoly ruling now taking hold nationwide and congressional discussions centering on phasing out all ownership limitations for both radio and television, there is renewed interest from the investment community in the economic viability of radio.

And with new selling models based upon multiple (local market) duopoly ownership and more proficient sales techniques, the advertising revenue growth rate for radio has been impressive. In 1994, total radio advertising revenues grew at a rate of 11.3 percent over 1993 to nearly \$10.7 billion, the fastest rate of advertising revenue growth since 1985.

That impressive growth carried over for the first quarter of 1995 with local and national spot revenues combined climbing 13 percent over the same period last year.

Even so, modified duopoly ownership rules have led many senior lenders to view the radio industry primarily from a consolidation perspective.

"There is clearly renewed interest among banks and senior lenders in the larger deals," says prominent radio and media broker Gary Stevens. "Banks are willing to go into deals where there is a buffer—that is, deals that contain a high degree of equity on the part of the buyer," he says, noting that this is a marked difference from the lending frenzy of the mid-1980s.

"The lending community is slowly coming back because the fundamentals of the radio industry are sound," adds David Schutz, vice president of New York City-based Hoffman-Schutz Media Capital. "The industry is the most stable it has been in 15 years."

The continuing consolidation in radio also underscores the fact that the era of entrepreneurship in station ownership that evolved around buying, owning or starting single AM/FM station operations, appears to be over for the foreseeable future, except for, perhaps, small rated markets and/or suburban-rated markets.

But most major commercial lenders, Schutz observes, will be reluctant to lend under \$1.5 million for today's radio deals.

Vincent M. Ditingo is a business writer and media consultant, as well as an adjunct assistant professor of communications at St. John's University in New York. He authored the new Focal Press book, The Remaking Of Radio, which addresses the restructuring of the radio business during the 1980s and early 1990s.

Management Journal appears monthly in The Radio World Magazine.

Low-Key AAA KSCA-FM Hits Los Angeles with a Bang

by Kathy Gronau

Gene Autrey-Owned Station Targets Urbane Adults With Deep Playlist And Composed Attitude

When Gene Autrey's Golden West Broadcasters launched KSCA-FM's AAA format in Los Angeles last July, the company recognized an opportunity to rustle up something distinct on the dial—a rare feat amid the replete radio dial of the nation's second-largest market.

A year later, the station's mix of current releases, classic rock, new music and deep album cuts has been embraced by a tasty adult demographic as well as the city's no-nonsense critics' circuit: The L.A. Weekly honored KSCA—known as FM 101.9—as the best radio station 5-7 a.m., while Los Angeles Magazine called it the best new radio station in its annual roundup of "The Best and Worst of L.A."

The adult album alternative outlet has also become the darling of media personnel and advertising buyers, as well as a favorite stopping point for recording artists and their record companies. In just a year, more than 100 artists have performed live from the station's Burbank facility.

Great guns

The secret to the format's draw is, in large part, its audience—defined as a passionate group of young-thinking, well-educated yuppies with big bucks. The target is 25-44, slightly more male than female, painted as disenfranchised baby boomers who are weary of repetitious playlists and bellowing DJs.

"As tightly playlisted as radio has to be, the radio market plays it too safe for this group. They go elsewhere for music and entertainment," says FM 101.9 Program Director Mike Morrison, who joined the station from non-

comm alternative/variety outlet WXPB-FM in Philadelphia. "What we try to provide is something a little more stimulating than the average AC or classic rock station."

In many ways, KSCA resembles the free-form programming of the 1960s; DJs respond to each cut personally, often giving background information about the recording or artist. In line with this, the station shuns personalities, self-absorbed chatter, image liners and jingles.

For example, the morning team, Nicole Sandler and Chuck Moshontz, both veterans of KLOS-FM's popular "Mark and Brian" morning show in L.A., talk to each other in a normal, conversational tone. Weather and traffic are read slowly without music beds, bells or whistles. Arguably, the only attempt at zaniness is the "Lyrically Speaking" contest, where Sandler reads a lyric and asks people to call in with the name of the song. Winners receive prizes like CDs or front-row tickets to concerts.

The FM 101.9 attitude is an issue that Executive Vice President and General Manager Bill Ward has considered long and hard. "The disk jockeys answer their own phones, there's not a bank of switchboards," he says. "We're not snooty about it. We are very easily touched by the audience."

In another life

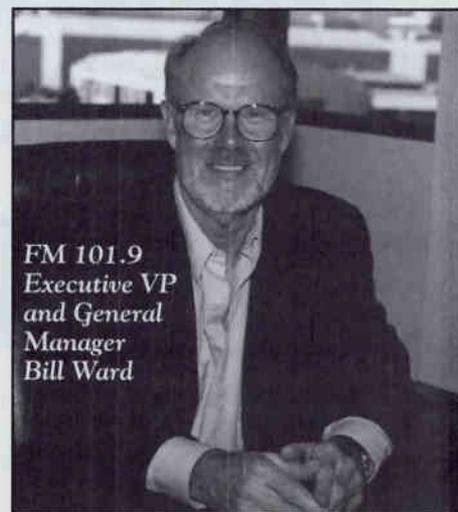
Before it was KSCA (which stands for Southern California Album Alternative), the frequency at 101.9 was known as K-LITE and followed adult contemporary format lines. Among the market's five AC stations, it ranked dead last. Notes Ward, "In that congested format, it seemed like we

should be doing something else."

Since switching to AAA a year ago, the station's 12+ Arbitron share has doubled, from 0.9 to 1.9. From the Fall to Winter 1995 book, its 25-54 share increased from 1.3 to a 1.9. Although it has snatched listeners from modern rock, AC and oldies stations, Ward is realistic in acknowledging that its doubtful FM 101.9 will be a top five station in the market.

"It's an alternative station," he says. "It will appeal to an upscale audience that is a little more discriminating than the masses."

Such a target suits many advertisers just



FM 101.9
Executive VP
and General
Manager
Bill Ward

fine. FM 101.9 has gotten in the door of a number of clients that were "no goes" in the K-LITE era. Bob Koontz, FM 101.9 sales manager, says it has added 300 clients, including automotive dealers, airlines, record retailers, beer, concert venues, financial institutions and films since switching to the AAA format. As K-LITE, the station tended to be older and more female, he says.

In addition, many of the station's buyers and business owners are the same affluent adults that the station targets. So selling to them is easier because of their

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familiarity with FM 101.9. Madison Avenue also smiles down on AAA because its audience is made up of active listeners. It's theorized that they don't use the radio as background music; therefore, they stay tuned while ads run.

Record labels love the station because it plays artists and cuts that have never been played on the radio before, and it sells CDs. This translates to live appearances at FM 101.9's Music Hall from the likes of Lyle Lovett, Donovan, David Byrne, Sheryl Crow and Michelle Shocked. Although it sounds like a large theater, the forum is actually an acoustically enhanced 15x15-foot hallway leading to an office.

"We've had anywhere from one person with an acoustic guitar to a nine-piece reggae band, where half the band wasn't even in the Music Hall; they were spread out into the hallway," Morrison



says.

The station's music-intensive playlist includes broad-based rock with elements of blues, acoustic, reggae and other forms of world music from new artists like Seal, Toad The Wet Sprocket, Crow, Crash Test Dummies; established notables like Tori Amos, John Hiatt, Sting, Jackson Browne, Van Morrison and Peter Gabriel; and album cuts from favorite artists of the past few years like Bonnie Raitt, Dire Straits, Lovett, David Bowie and The Pretenders.

"There's new music, old music, familiar and unfamiliar music," Morrison says. "There's things that sound organic and rootsy and there's things that sound high tech and slick; there's quiet and there's loud; there's fast and slow."

Deep cuts

Music is programmed using a Selector computer, like many other stations, but more than 3,000 songs are rotated from the station's library; cuts go deeper and slower than other stations.

Changes in the playlist are made to work with daily themes: there's Music Hall Monday, New Music Tuesday, Remember Wednesday, Undercover Thursday and Funky Friday. Sandler might, for example, play The Jackson Five's "I Want You Back" or Aretha Franklin's "Respect" on a Funky Friday.

To assure flow from one music selection to the next, the PD and music director hand-edit the logs very carefully. Otherwise, the computer might put Chuck Berry next to Enya. Morrison also tries to make each 15-minute segment (the time he says it might take to dri-

ve to the store) to show the variety of textures and styles that can be heard on the station.

Thematically, AAA radio stations traditionally will play music that sounds like hip hop or rap, but louder alternative cuts that are violent or slashing are left for other formats.

"Virtually no one under the age of 25 listens," Morrison maintains. "We think these people have gotten beyond the rebellious attitudes of their youth. Anger and rebellion are something that appeal to youth, which is not to suggest that all of our music is safe and emotionless. We try to stay away from things we perceive as juvenile, immature, angry."

Fiercely competitive

Even with its intricately culled mix of artists and left-of-center positioning, the station still has the reality of competing in a fiercely competitive marketplace—albeit the nation's number one in terms of revenue. It's also up against giants like Viacom, Cox, Bonneville, ABC/Cap Cities, Westinghouse and Infinity.

In addition, it costs a lot of money to create the large productions and provide extravagant prizes to get listeners in L.A., which Ward calls the contest capital of the world.

"We can't out-KIIS KIIS," he says. "We cannot out-production what Gannett does with their production and give out a Porsche every Friday or \$10,000 every Thursday, or the big cash giveaways."

One way FM 101.9 keeps costs down is with a lean payroll. In February, Golden West Broadcasters sold off its KMPC to Cap Cities, leaving FM 101.9 as the company's only radio outlet. Since, it has relocated to a new, smaller facility, trimming from 85 employees when it operated KMPC and K-LITE, to under 20 employees who rotate many hats.

Ward acknowledges that it's difficult to measure the station's impact in Los Angeles in just under a year. Indeed, even The Wall Street Journal pointed out in a September 1994 article that the AAA format is so new, there isn't audience data to show its potential.

FM 101.9 in Los Angeles is the biggest market to try the AAA format, which has succeeded in progressive cities like Seattle, Denver and San Francisco. Still, Ward remains confident that the station's one-on-one approach with listeners will earn it a durable place along the FM dial.

"In a high-tech world," he says, "we're kind of touchy feely." 

Kathy Gronau is a media specialist who markets radio programs and audio products nationally and internationally. She is a member of the Board of the Association of Independents in Radio and a frequent contributor to the Los Angeles Radio Guide.

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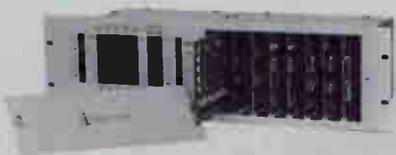
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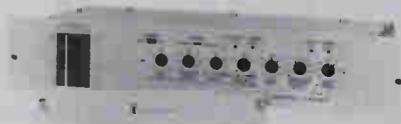
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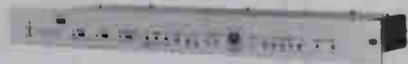


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july

Radio License Renewal Seminar, Chicago. Speakers include NAB attorneys, EEO specialists and outside experts. Contact Christina Griffin in D.C., at 202-775-3511.

aug.

BIRTV '95, China World Trade Center, Beijing. The 1995 Beijing International Radio & TV Broadcasting exhibition is organized by China Central Television (CCTV) and China Radio and TV Co. for International Techno-Economic Cooperation (CRTV). Contact organizers in China at +86-1-609-2783/609-3207; fax: +86-1-609-3790.

sept.

Don't forget to send a card! The Radio World Magazine celebrates its first anniversary.

6-9

NAB Radio Show, New Orleans, La. Once again, the NAB will join forces with SMPTE, SBE and RTNDA to produce the World Media Expo, a fall radio and television exhibition and conference, now deemed the fourth-largest industry gathering in the world. Contact the NAB in Washington, D.C., at 202-429-5409; fax: 202-429-5343.

14-18

IBC, RAI Exhibition and Congress Centre, Amsterdam. The 1995 International Broadcasting Convention is one of Europe's premiere broadcasting shows. Contact the IBC Convention Office in London at +44-71-240-3839; fax: +44-71-497-3633.

23-26

Nordic Sound Symposium XVI, Bolkesjø Mountain Hotel, Bolkesjø, Norway. The 16th Nordic Sound Symposium and Exhibition will focus on new techniques, new equipment and new ideas in the audio/broadcasting fields. Contact the symposium committee in Norway at +47-6679-7730; or fax: +47-6679-6154.

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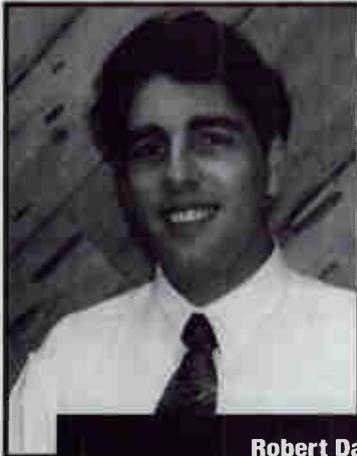
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Robert Davidman
Sports Specialist/Web Master
WKIS-FM/WQAM-AM, Miami
Format: Country/Sports

At a time when stations are looking to create new revenue streams, the Worldwide Web provides a creative way to market the station and anything affiliated with it. A station can incorporate advertisers into its Web site so that listeners can see the radio ads. The Web is a great mix of print, TV and radio. Web sites can showcase advertisers with colorful print ads combined with produced video and audio clips. In some cases stations can even send real-time transmissions of their broadcast.

We have taken the approach of information provider. Our sites try to give our listener the resources necessary to go beyond our programming. WQAM, our all-sports talk station, uses the Web to get feedback from the millions of sports fans here in South Florida. We have an interactive sports forum that allows Web surfers to voice their opinions about a variety of sports topics with each other and our hosts. We respond to all of our e-mail and even respond to some of the questions live on the air.

KISS, our country FM, provides listeners with various country music information related to our on-air product. The Web site enables listeners to go online and get to know us and let us know what they are thinking.

The best way to capture an audience is to give them what they want. A Web site takes a station one step closer to finding out the needs of the local listeners and makes the listener more interactive with the station. We benefit by reaching our market differently than everyone else. Our advertisers benefit since they now have greater reach and frequency through our Web sites. This, in turn, creates new and unique revenue streams for both of our stations.



Steve Craig
Asst. Music Director/On-Air Talent/Web Guru
WNNX-FM 99X, Atlanta
Format: New Rock

Not only is a station Web site hip and kind of a buzz thing right now, it provides us with a good one-on-one vehicle to stay in touch with listeners.

Over our site, we provide 99X's playlist, how those songs are doing sales-wise, who's going to be performing in our acoustic concerts Friday afternoons and schedules for special shows. You can also request songs and find Web sites from almost any band we play.

For our Chinese New Year concert last year and Earth Day concert this year, we provided World Wide Web coverage—not a broadcast over a computer, but backstage and in the audience with digital cameras and audio clips, along with interviews with bands as they came off-stage. We packed it with still images and Quick-Time videos.

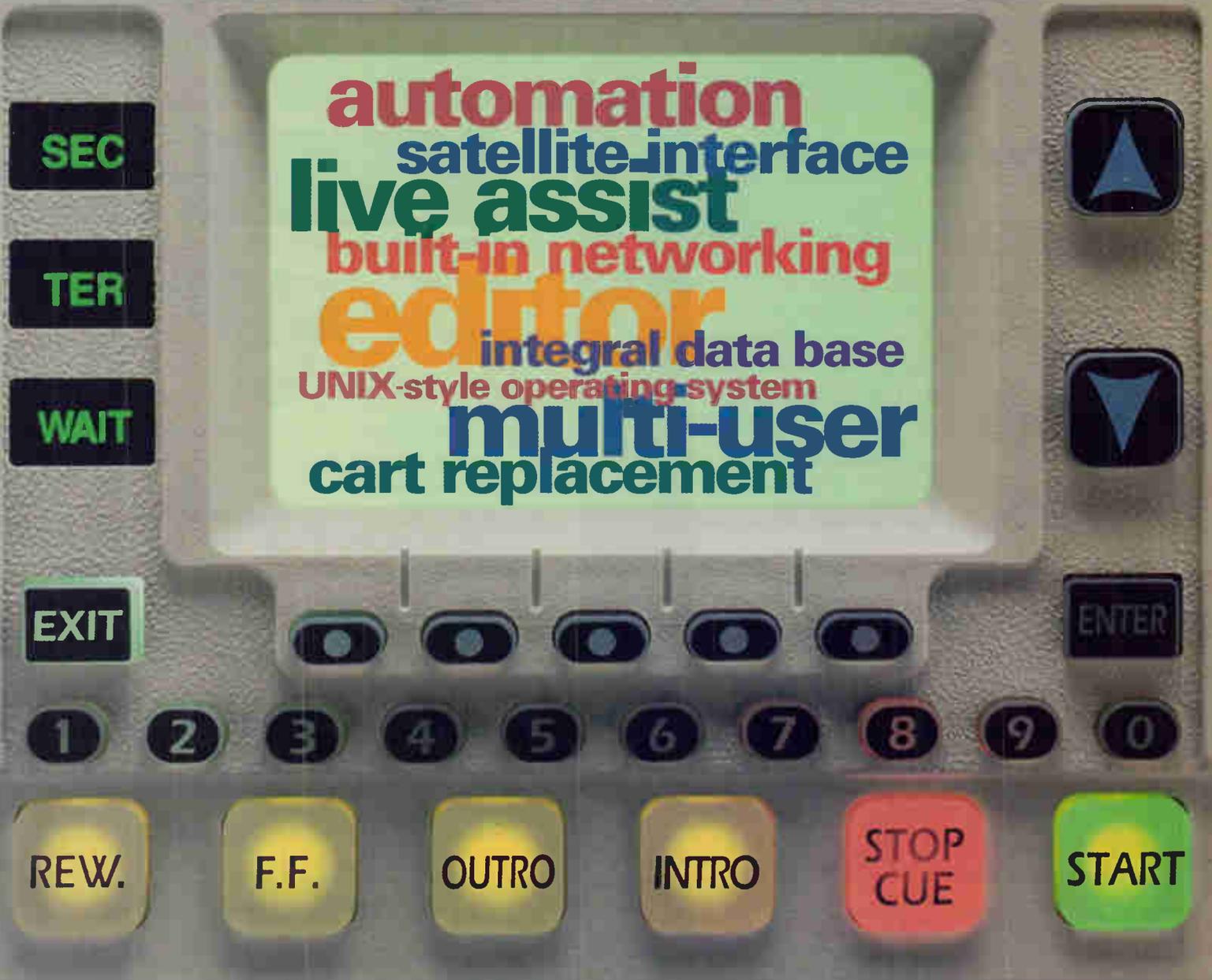
I also take pride in responding personally to e-mail (I get about 30 a day) and joining in on news groups, dealing with gripes, suggestions or praises, whatever. There's a lot of healthy debate there and people are impressed that somebody from on the air actually participates.

What we're looking to get out of it, aside from providing a service to lis-

teners who have access to computers, is an improved marketing database. Traditionally, we've compiled our database from people who win things from us and people who sign up for our Freeloaders Card.

Now, when anyone participates in one of the pages or requests a song through the Web pages, we immediately have them in our database. We know where they are, we know what college they're coming from, what kind of system they're using, what subscriber service. A lot of times we can figure out a psychographic on them, even their demographics.

How will your station benefit from having an Internet Web site



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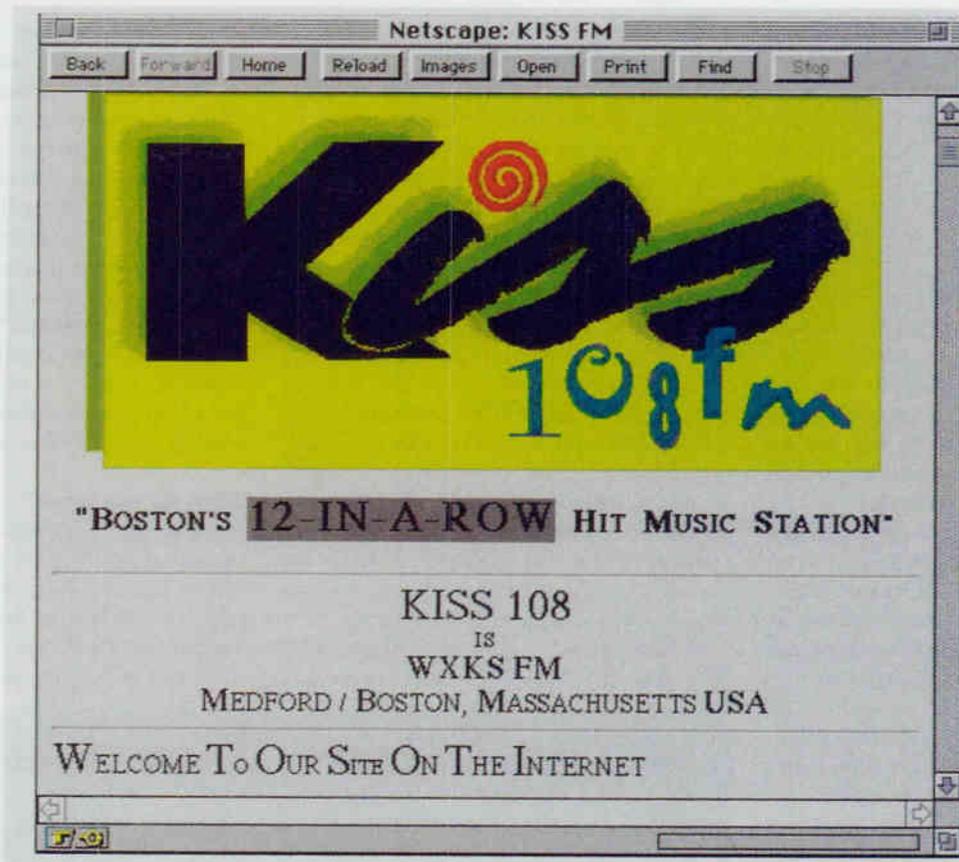
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TECHNOLOGY AT WORK

What Radio Managers Really Need to Know About the Internet

by Alan Haber

*A Station Web Site Is Informative,
Fun and Potentially Profitable.
Here's Where It Can Take Your Stations.*

Think of the Internet as one humongous radio network that produces no programming of its own, yet offers somewhere in the neighborhood of 5 million happy-go-lucky affiliates who distribute their own shows.

Think of the graphically inclined, super-charged World Wide Web—arguably the

most popular component of “the Net”—as a landscape calling out to radio stations eager to increase awareness among their audience, snag new listeners and increase revenue.

Indeed, the fast-growing movement to use one's PC interactively already has 50 million “cyberhounds” worldwide, combing the Internet 24 hours a day for informa-

tion. By some accounts, that number is rising as much as 15 percent a month.

Radio on the Web

When radio stations establish their own Web sites, listeners can access all sorts of information simply by dialing up via their modems—everything from program schedules, pictures of air personalities and their bios to upcoming promotional events. They can even listen to the station in real time, provided the necessary software is installed on their computers.

The number of radio-oriented sites on

the Web may be small—a few hundred commercial and noncommercial stations, networks and related information sources—but it's growing fast. For example, the National Association of Broadcasters and Radio Advertising Bureau have signed on with their own sites.

Sites are exploding

"Web sites are just exploding," says Fred Schumacher, VP and GM of country KMPS-FM/AM and classic rocker KZOK-FM in Seattle, which initiated its Web site in September 1994. "It provides an opportunity for radio stations to go way beyond the boundaries of their signal limitation and become a worldwide medium."

Then there's the potential for additional revenue. Your Web site can function as an income producer if you offer value-added services to your advertisers; for example, clients can "sponsor" a page on your site (each new screenful of information is called a page) and you can provide a link to your client's site if one exists (the physical link could be in the form of the client's full-color logo, for extra-added value).

Consider classical outlet WFLN-FM in Philadelphia. Dave Conant, the station's program director, operations manager and morning man, says his station is intent on eventually generating revenue with its Web site.

"The possibilities for income are really limited only by the types of people that advertise with us," he says, noting that the station's audience is extremely responsive, highly aware of technology, educated and affluent.

In addition to turning a profit, you may be inclined to set up your station as the expert on a particular topic. A country station, for example, might want to be known as an authority on its genre and include country music news, bios of country artists and links to country music Web sites on its own site. This adds credibility and provides a helpful service to listeners.

A station can also utilize the Internet as a way for listeners to interact with air personalities, who can read their e-mail on the air. You could even set up a live "chat" session in which personalities "talk" directly with listeners.

"E-mail is more descriptive. People will say more in e-mail than they will over the phone," says Charles Whitman, chief engineer of country station KRGO-FM, which covers the Salt Lake City area.

Expectations

Although KRGO's Web site is new, Whitman says his expectations are flying high. "The response that I've gotten from people I didn't even think had Internet

access has been overwhelming," he says.

J.J. Wright, midday personality at WXKS-FM KISS 108 in Boston (and not coincidentally, the station's Internet guru) says that everything a station does on the air can be mirrored on its Web site.

The KISS air staff, he explains, can only say so much on the air about the station's annual concert, an all-day outdoor festival featuring more than 30 national acts. On its Web site, however, Wright can provide the entire concert lineup, links to every act's Web site, directions to the concert location and a list of ticket locations.

KISS 108's Web site averages anywhere from 75 to 100 "hits," or accesses a day, nearly all from within the station's listening area.

Aside from these benefits, some stations are committing to a Web site simply to be on the cutting edge of a technology they see becoming a household word in the near future.

At Long Island, N.Y., rocker WBAB-FM, "We wanted to set our groundwork so that

when this thing does explode—which is obviously happening now—we'll already be in there," says Program Coordinator Eric Wellman. "Eventually, this will become a very good commercial opportunity, another sponsorship tie-in. The site tends to be a nice sweetener, a nice thing right on the top when you're trying to close a deal with a client."

Wellman advises that general managers who are on the fence about putting up a Web site for their stations should "do it quick, because if you don't, it's going to be old hat. If anyone thinks it's not going to happen for five, 10 years down the road, they're wrong. It's going to happen in five, 10 months."

What do you want?

If a station does indeed decide that the time is right to join the cyber-world—before you call your engineer or Internet guru in—it's best to know exactly what is wanted out of the experience.

The cost of erecting and maintaining ➤

Cyber-Terms

Following are some Internet terms that will help with cyber-literacy. If not, they at least sound impressive at budget meetings:

E-mail—Short for electronic mail, memos and messages sent to individuals or groups just like postal mail, except that it's faster and there's no need to borrow a stamp.

File Transfer Protocol (FTP)—Usually an anonymous service by which programs, files, graphics, etc., can be retrieved from a remote site for use at a local PC. FTP is a good way to find and demo new software.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)—A basic primer file that helps new users get up to speed on any particular Usenet or topic.

Hypertext—Items, usually words, on a Web page that act as links to other WWW sites. By selecting a section of hypertext, it is possible to move from one site to another on the WWW.

Internet—The infrastructure of the "Information Superhighway," the Internet is the information conduit that interconnects the various on-line services and Internet-access providers, allowing people to communicate via e-mail, IRC, FTP, Usenet and the World Wide Web.

Internet Relay Chat (IRC)—Real-time discussion "rooms," usually dedicated to a single broad topic, that allow people to send private or public messages back and forth.

On-line Services—Commercial Internet-access providers such as America Online (AOL), CompuServe and Delphi.

Server—A computer and the software reserved as the host for Internet traffic.

Page—In WWW parlance, a page refers to each new set of information. A Web site can consist of several interlinked pages on a single server, or of a single page with hypertext links to other Web sites. The first page a person normally links to at any given site is called the "home page."

Uniform Resource Locator (URL)—The addresses for WWW pages.

Usenet—Public discussion forums or newsgroups where people post messages back and forth. Some radio-related Usenet newsgroups include alt.radio.college, alt.radio.digital, rec.audio.pro and rec.radio.broadcasting.

World Wide Web (WWW)—One of the most popular Internet features, the WWW lets people post pages of information, including graphics, audio and text, all of which can be downloaded for later use, as well as hypertext links to other WWW sites. To access the WWW, a software program called a browser, is needed. Common graphical browsers include Netscape and Mosaic; a popular text-only browser is Lynx.

CHUCKRWM@aol.com—How to send a message to your friends here at The Radio World Magazine.

—T. Carter Ross

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a Web site will depend on such factors as the amount and complexity of graphics and information you place on your station's site. (Incidentally, the less complex the graphics, the faster your visitors will be able to load station information.) It could cost a couple hundred dollars to set up the site and around \$100-\$150 a month to cover programming and other services.

Keep costs down

The cost of developing your site could essentially be erased if you locate the server (the computer on which the site resides) in your station and use your resident computer guru to develop and maintain the site. Another way to keep costs down is to trade out for on-air promotion the services of a company that develops and maintains Web sites, as WBAB did.

If you're setting up a site at your station, aim for an affordable Pentium-level computer to act as the server; settle for nothing less than a very fast 486 model. Make sure the computer has at least a gigabyte or more of hard drive storage—remember, you'll be adding a lot of information to your site in the future, and you don't want to get caught running out of space (you could always add a second hard drive, if necessary).

You'll need to get a line connection to the Internet (not a regular telephone line; it won't perform well if your site gets plenty of accesses). Go with a 56 kilobit or T1 or higher line, instead.

Once you erect your site, you can publicize it on the air, of course, but you can also publicize it on the Web, in various promotional resources like the popular "What's New" site run by the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA).

You can also add your site to the searchable lists of radio stations on the Web, such as the one at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's radio station WMBR, or the granddaddy of all databases, Yahoo, which contains more than 32,000 individual listings on a variety of subjects, including radio.

Once your site is up and running, don't be surprised if it attracts visitors from far and wide with little or no publicity. Milwaukee new rocker WLUM-FM's site has been up about four months; after only about 60 days, Marketing Director Dan Baus says it was deemed to be "unbelievably popular without any advertising whatsoever."

An R.E.M. concert ticket giveaway, which was conducted solely on the site, attracted entrants from as far away as California and Kansas, although the win-

ner, picked randomly, was from Milwaukee.

At KRTR-FM Krater 96.3 in Honolulu, morning man Michael Qseng, who offers a Web site focusing on his show, says about 10,000 people a day visit it from around the world.

Qseng's cost to develop and maintain the site is kept to a minimum, because he traded out with his Internet service provider and delivers on-air promotion for—and a link on the site to—the provider.

The time is ripe

No doubt, there are any number of ways to establish a radio station Web site on the Internet. The benefits are there and the cost is low. And without a doubt, the time is ripe for the industry to develop new ways to generate additional revenue, both through product or service sponsorships and promotion of station events.

Predicts Alan Chartock, executive director of NPR member Northeast Public Radio, a regional public radio network in the Northeast, "Sooner or later, all management will be there. They won't have a choice." 

Alan Haber is a free-lance writer who specializes in radio and a variety of popular culture topics. He writes regularly for sister publication Radio World and profiled WDRE-FM in New York for the January RWM.

You can chat with the very Net-zealous Haber at zoogang@ix.netcom.com.



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The following resources offer comprehensive, useful lists of radio stations that have Web sites. Because each station included in these resources is presented as a hypertext link, you won't have to write down or memorize any complicated addresses; the station's address is highlighted on the screen, meaning a simple mouse click on the address will whisk you away to the station's site:

- ▲ Yahoo (<http://www.yahoo.com>)
- ▲ Radio Stations on the Internet, located at MIT's WMBR (<http://www.mit.edu:8001/activities/wmbr/otherstations.html>)
- ▲ Radio Stations on the Web (<http://american.recordings.com/wwwofmusic/radio.html>)
- ▲ Shortwave/Radio Catalog (<http://itre.uncc.edu/radio/>)

Check out the following radio station Web sites: works of art, one and all:

- ▲ KMPS AM/FM (<http://fine.net:80/kmps/>)
- ▲ KRGO-AM (<http://www.xmission.com/~cwhitman>)
- ▲ KRTR-FM (<http://hisurf.aloha.com/QsengStuff/Qseng.html>)
- ▲ WAMC-FM (<http://www.npr.org/members/WAMC>)
- ▲ WBAB-FM (<http://www.ll.net/wbab/>)
- ▲ WFLN-FM (<http://www.netaxs.com/people/isphere/wfln>)
- ▲ WMBR-FM (<http://web.mit.edu/afs/athena.mit.edu/user/w/m/wmbr/www/home.html>)
- ▲ WYXS-FM KISS 108 (<http://www.kissfm.com/kiss/>)

—Alan Haber

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2.5 kW FM 1983 Harris FM2.5K	5 kW AM 1978 Harris MW5A/R	
3 kW FM 1974 Harris FM3H	5 kW AM 1981 Harris MW5B	
5 kW FM 1974 Harris FM5H3	5 kW AM 1977 RCA BTA 5L	
5 kW FM 196? Gates FM5B	10 kW AM 1974 CSI T-10-A	
10 kW FM 1968 RCA BTF 10D	10 kW AM 1975 Continental 316-F	
20 kW FM 1974 Collins 831G-2		
20 kW FM 1976 Harris FM20H/K		
20 kW FM 1968 RCA BTF 20E		
25 kW FM 1975 Sparta 625-A		

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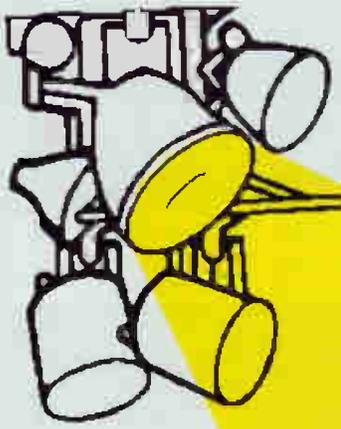
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Facility Spotlight

SW Networks, New York
Owner: Sony

24-Hour Formats: Classic FM, Smooth FM (NAC)
Long-Form Programs: Static (alternative rock),
Pure Concrete (metal), Street Heat (hip hop),
Country's Most Wanted
Talk Shows: Mario Cuomo, Alan Dershowitz

Susan Solomon, President/CEO
Ron Schiller, VP Engineering and Technical Operations



When Sony decided to create SW, the first new radio network with national magnitude in years, there were two crucial requirements: It had to be all digital and it had to be done fast.

The digital part was accomplished by marrying new hard disk gear from Arrakis with the Sony MiniDisc and satellite delivery. The speed came with the expertise of NCC, the consultant hired to take five fully floating mid-Manhattan studios from design to air in less than five months.

"NCC and I had worked together before and we streamlined the construction process because we were on the same wavelength. NCC shaped the rooms to the equipment," says SW VP of Engineering and Technical Operations Ron Schiller. It used a modular design and unique computer modeling to keep costs and time from getting out of hand.

"We were able to go directly from model to fabrication, computer to computer, with less human intervention, which helped us meet the tight schedule," says NCC President Al D'Alessio.

The \$1.3 million project was begun in September and completed in January. NCC designed the rooms and acoustics and provided builder Acoustic Systems modular elements.

"The talent is happy with the sound," Schiller says. "The rooms are quiet, as good state-of-the-art digital studios should be; but there's a warmth, too, without that sterile sound sometimes associated with prefabricated design." 

Facility Spotlight offers a look at innovative radio facilities. Share your cutting edge with us. Call Editor Charles Taylor at 703-998-7600

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- *AAAA (American Association Of Advertising Agencies) Media Conference (Feb. 1996)
- *Ad Club Of NY-Radio 75th Birthday Luncheon (Nov. 2, 1995)

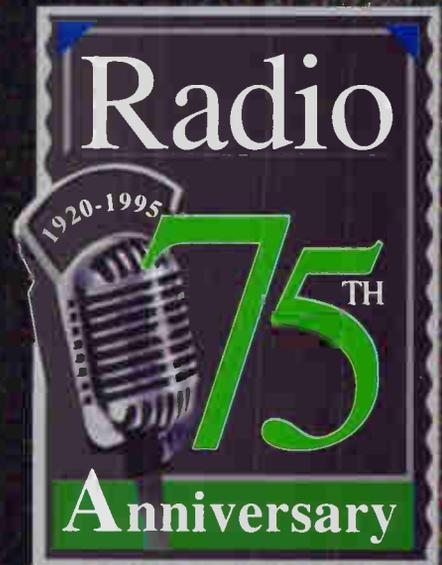
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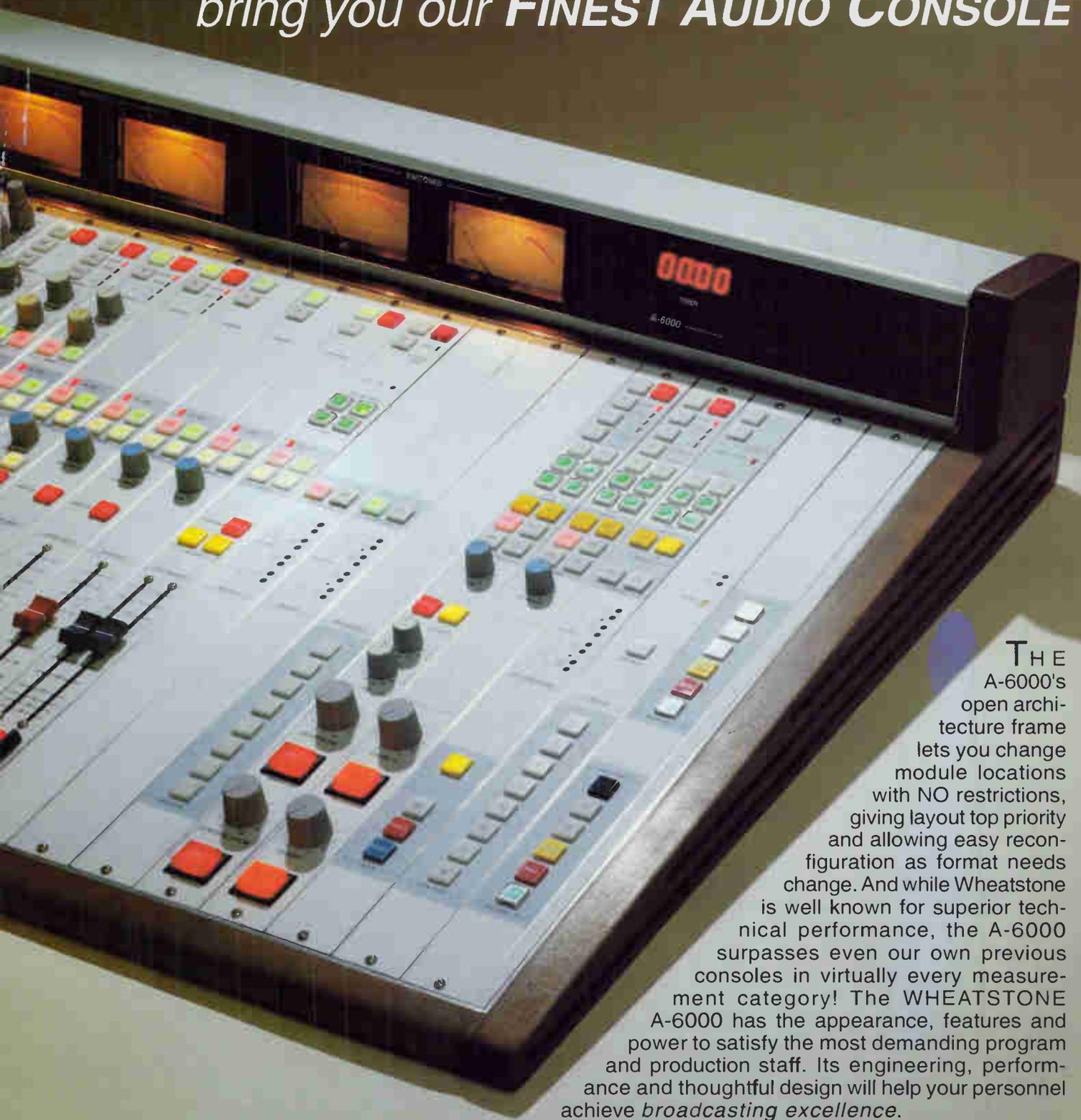


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