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FCC Acts to Give AM Operators Relief

Plan includes new FM translator application auction windows in 2017

BY SUSAN ASHWORTH

More AM radio owners in the United States will be able to acquire FM translators under the long-awaited AM Radio Revitalization Report and Order, approved unanimously in late October by the FCC.

The translator option had been pushed by many AM advocates and ultimately survived in modified form, despite concerns voiced by Chairman Tom Wheeler. Among those that stand to benefit most from the multi-stage translator plan are AMs that don't currently have meaningful nighttime service.

But translators are only one part of the lengthy action, which settled some questions but raised others, because the FCC included a Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making, inviting comment on possible additional measures, as well as a Notice of Inquiry that poses questions about further use of the AM expanded band and even brought up the main studio rule for examination.

The FCC thus ensured that questions of what to do about the AM band's health and future will remain in the news for some time.

The NAB called the October vote "a

great day for AM radio and for millions of listeners across America." Chairman Tom Wheeler said the steps in the order will "ease regulatory burdens on AM broadcasters and address practical problems and interference-related issues that have long plagued AM stations."

Commissioner Ajit Pai, who'd called for a revitalization initiative three years ago at the fall Radio Show, said, "The broad support we've seen speaks to the enduring importance of AM radio in communities across the country." Commissioner Mignon Clyburn, who launched the NPRM as acting chair of the FCC, said the order "will allow the smallest AM stations that face the largest challenges to be the first in line for relief, both for the modification application window that will take place early next year, and for the auction window that will happen in 2017. It also provides for outreach and assistance to those that are most resource-challenged."

Industry execs immediately dove into the lengthy document as well.

"On first blush, it looks like the FCC was truly focused on helping AM licensees survive; either by technical improvement or migration," Ben Downs, an AM activist and the VP/GM of Bryan

Broadcasting, told Radio World. "There are enough revitalization elements in this Report and Order to improve the service for most broadcasters."

The Multicultural Media, Telecom

and Internet Council, which had put forth a "Radio Rescue Petition" in 2009, called the vote "welcome news for diverse radio owners across the nation who are struggling to survive in a world where consumers are turning more to the Internet to get their entertainment, news and information," in the words of President/CEO Kim Keenan. MMTTC says two-

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Phil Bytheway Is Stuck on Radio

Listener's station memorabilia hobby has grown over five decades

BY KEN DEUTSCH

People who are passionate about radio collect all manner of station ephemera, including but not limited to coffee mugs, QSL cards proving reception, T-shirts, airchecks, belt buckles, key chains, buttons and music surveys.

The unusually-appellated Phil Bytheway collects stickers.

"There are bumper stickers, window stickers, the relatively new static-cling stickers, mailing labels, phone stickers and even press-on tattoos," Bytheway said.

He collects just about anything with call letters or a slogan on it.

"I started my collection with KJR(AM) here in Seattle, but in my early days I also picked up stickers from WLS(AM), Chicago; KHJ and KFRC [both

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AM RELIEF

(continued from page 1)

thirds of minority-owned broadcast stations are AM stations.

Commissioner Michael O'Rielly issued a cautionary note: "At the end of the day, however, commission rule changes can only be so helpful. The American people will ultimately decide the fate of AM radio and its place in the American entertainment and information marketplace."

AM WINDOW FOR FM TRANSLATORS

One of the more hotly contested issues was that of FM translators. In the order, the commission adopted a two-pronged approach to enable more AM stations to acquire them.

First, the commission voted to begin a process in 2016 whereby an AM licensee seeking to rebroadcast on an FM translator may acquire and relocate one translator station up to 250 miles.

Then, in 2017, the commission will open new FM translator application auction windows (specifically for AM stations that do not file a modification application in 2016). Class C and D stations will be able to take advantage of the modification window and the auction window first; second windows will be available to all classes.

This section of the order eventually will help many more daytime AM stations use 24/7 FM translators that do not sign off at night.

Ben Downs said the action means "the closing of the daytime-only slum. Every station that has lived through being off the air during half of morning and afternoon drive time is now able to serve their listeners 24 hours a day. That's a change that would be impossible to minimize." Translators are the step that makes the most difference for small- to medium-market broadcasters, he said.

The MMTC said the decision to authorize an AM-only translator window in 2017 "is a truly life-saving measure for dozens of small minority-owned broadcast companies."

The FCC also denied grant of the so-called Tell City waiver and confirms the continued use of so-called Mattoon waivers with an added four-year operating requirement (the relocating FM translator must rebroadcast the proposed AM primary station for a period of four years).

Broadcast leaders recommended that owners interested in translator mechanics should act early. For instance, the Alabama Broadcasters Association told members in an email, "AM stations that are interested in this procedure should begin now to research

all the facts and plan to operate quickly as the assignments will be on a first-come first-served basis. For more detailed information contact your station's communications attorney soon."

MODIFICATION OF DAYTIME COVERAGE STANDARDS

The FCC hopes to make it easier for existing stations to relocate in the face of reduced availability of land and expanding city boundaries. Its order modifies daytime standards — for existing licensed AMs only — to require that a station's 5 mV/m contour encompass either 50 percent of the area or 50 percent of the population of the community. At present, commission policy in effect requires 80 percent. The change does not apply to new applicants or permittees with unbuilt stations; and the FCC gave its Media Bureau authorization to inquire into certain requested modifications "in order to preserve the limited intent" of this move. It said the change is not intended as a means for AMs to provide inferior coverage to their communities.

MODIFICATION OF NIGHTTIME COVERAGE STANDARDS

Most AMs currently must continue to operate at night even when the rules require them to cut back power to avoid sky-wave interference. That causes numerous complications. Now the commission has eliminated that nighttime community coverage requirement for existing licensed stations. Further, applicants for new AM stations (and those seeking a change to their communities of license) will have to cover 50 percent of the population or 50 percent of the area of the communities of license with a nighttime 5 mV/m signal or a nighttime interference-free contour, whichever value is higher. That's down from the current 80 percent.

"We are mindful of striking the appropriate balance between the need to provide relief to AM broadcasters with few siting options ... and the need to provide the community of license with some kind of service," the report said.

As with the daytime change above, the FCC said it would keep a close eye on any station that asks to reduce nighttime community coverage during its first four years of operation.

ELIMINATION OF THE AM "RATCHET RULE"

The FCC eliminated the ratchet rule, which required Class A or B stations looking to make facility changes that would modify their signals to "ratchet back" radiation in the direction of certain other AMs. In the real world, the FCC decided, this tended to discourage station improvements because compliance often required the modifying station to reduce its power.

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More Radio, More Voices

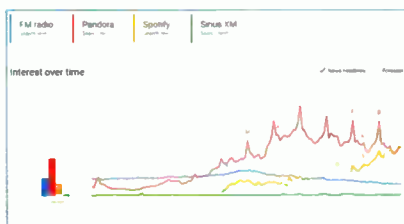
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The CEO of Slacker Radio notes three strategies for traditional broadcasters who want to maintain a competitive advantage in music discovery. See radioworld.com/slacker.

What's Your Perception of Radio Perceptuals?
Consultant Fred Jacobs says the incursion of new media goes to the heart of radio's new competitive challenge. It's at radioworld.com/perceptuals.



New NATE Committee Hoping to Help Craft Drone Regulation

Questions arise when aerial systems fly around broadcast towers. Radio World's Michael Balderston spoke with National Association of Tower Erectors Executive Director Todd Schlekeway about the goals of its new UAS Committee. Read it at radioworld.com/nate-drone.

AM Changes May Just Be Starting

Beyond the actions taken in October, the commission is asking about bigger moves

October's AM revitalization order was just the start, apparently.

The Federal Communications Commission is looking beyond its new order and raising the possibility of making more and bigger changes to the AM band in the United States, including some that, if adopted, could challenge longstanding assumptions and ways of doing business — including the role of distant nighttime AM signals in American life.

These possibilities arise because, in issuing its AM action order (see page 1), the FCC also put out a further notice of proposed rulemaking as well as a notice of inquiry. Both of those are filled with more and bigger ideas and questions that are likely to keep debate about AM's future going for a good while, if possible raising the stakes.

I posted the following shortly after the order came out; this topic is important, so I want to discuss it here as well.

CLASS A QUESTIONS

Just one topic — the idea of altering protections for Class A stations — occupies three pages in the FCC's further NPRM.

There are 57 of these big stations in the continental United States (plus 16 in Alaska, with different nighttime protections). The commission now is digging into the question of whether those signals need the nighttime skywave protection they've had in the past.

It noted that while the big footprints of Class As have historically been ben-

eficial, the commission has reduced skywave protection before. "In this proceeding, spectrum scarcity is not the problem as much as is the need for existing AM stations to overcome an increasing noise floor that inhibits local service, both day and night." Cutting into distant coverage by reducing protections "may well allow power increases for other stations, enabling them better to serve their communities and, in the case of some stations, allowing for the first-ever full-time AM service to those communities."

"Our goal of localism suggests that service from a local news and information source should be preferred over better reception of a more distant signal," the FCC said in something of a money quote on the issue of distant AMs. "We tentatively conclude, therefore, that (1) all Class A stations should be protected, both day and night, to their 0.1 mV/m groundwave contour, from co-channel stations; (2) all Class A stations should continue to be protected to the 0.5 mV/m groundwave contour, both day and night, from first adjacent channel stations; and (3) the critical hours protection of Class A stations should be eliminated completely. We

seek comment on these proposals."

By contrast, Class A stations in the continental United States are currently protected in the daytime to their 0.1 mV/m groundwave contour by co-channel stations, and to their 0.5 mV/m groundwave contour by adjacent-channel stations. But at night, these stations are protected to their 0.5 mV/m - 50 percent skywave contour by co-channel stations, and to their 0.5 mV/m groundwave contour by adjacent-channel stations. And Class As are protected to their 0.1 mV/m groundwave contour during critical hours (the two-hour peri-



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FROM THE EDITOR

Paul McLane



ods after local sunrise and preceding local sunset). So while the FCC did not put the question this way explicitly, it appears to be asking: Do we even need skywave protection anymore, and if so, what should it be?

The commission said that, based on comments it heard in preparing its AM actions, current Class A protections are "the source of concern to many AM broadcasters." It wrote that some people are in favor of reducing day and nighttime protection for the big signals, and some want to reduce or eliminate "critical hours" protection for the stations. During daytime hours, some 200 Class B and D AMs must reduce power and/or change to a directional antenna to meet critical hours protection of the boomers, it wrote. During night hours, other stations often must invest in complex directional arrays to protect one of the Class As and/or substantially reduce power.

"Even for those Class B stations that are protected from interference by other AM stations at night, this often results in sub-standard nighttime coverage, in order to protect the secondary service area of a larger station a considerable distance, and often many states away," the FCC wrote. Some commenters told the commission they could "provide better service, with more power to overcome the local noise floor, if the protections to Class A stations were relaxed."

The FCC noted the broad service areas of Class As and their benefits to rural areas and travelers, and also highlighted their role in emergencies,

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mentioning the work of WWL after Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath. As Radio World has reported, iHeartMedia, citing those and other arguments, has been vocally opposed to easing of Class A protections; it owns 18 of those 57 Class As in the lower 48, and the commission made explicit note of iHeart's opposition. But the FCC said it also heard a number of suggestions for eliminating or reducing protections.

Thus the commission wants to hear from anyone who would lose service from Class A stations, and it wants information about areas and populations that may receive service only from Class As by day or night. "Conversely, we request specific comment as to the numbers of stations that would be able to increase power, daytime and nighttime, under our proposal and what populations would gain service from those power increases." It also invited technical comment about the net effect on listeners that could result from a combination of reduced protection to Class A stations and power increases by co- and adjacent-channel stations that this proposal would allow.

Reading the NPRM, one engineering observer told RW, "It does appear the commission has decided to lob its own salvo against retaining Class A skywave protection while preferring to keep the groundwave protection contours as they are." He is not certain that this foreshadows the entire end of skywave protections, "but it's clear to me they do want to roll back the protected limits if not eliminate them altogether. They are inviting comments and input regarding that proposal and are directly soliciting evidence that there still are listeners who rely on skywave in remote areas."

MORE ON THE DOCKET

And all of the above is merely one section in a list of possible further FCC actions.

The FCC also tentatively plans to roll back 1991 rule changes regarding calculation of nighttime RSS values of interfering field strengths and nighttime interference-free service. It proposes changes to rules providing daytime protection to AM stations, including a return to pre-1991 0 dB daytime 1:1 protection ratio for first adjacent channels ("It does not appear that the post-1991 protection ratio allows for sufficient signal strength to overcome current levels of environmental noise," the FCC staff wrote). It also is thinking about changing second-adjacent channel groundwave protection, and eliminating third-adjacent channel groundwave protection.

It also proposes to revise its rule on siting of FM cross-service fill-in translators; to modify partial proof of performance rules; and make several changes to the rules for Method of Moments

NEWS

proofs. And it proposes to require the surrender of licenses by the 25 remaining dual expanded band/standard band licensees (it says it has never abandoned its requirement that those stations relinquish one of their authorizations).

It went even further, opening a Notice of Inquiry raising questions about the uti-

co-owned stations in a given market?" And if it relaxes the requirement that each station maintain a separate main studio, is there a maximum number of co-located stations that it should allow under one roof? Should any relaxation of staffing requirements be limited to "standalone" AM stations? Should

Our goal of localism suggests that service from a local news and information source should be preferred over better reception of a more distant signal.

– From the FCC order

lization of the AM expanded band. And it even explores the possibility of changes to the main studio requirements:

"Despite ... advances in accessibility to broadcast stations and their personnel, we are reluctant to eliminate main studio requirements entirely, because of the ... importance of the main studio to the goal of ensuring station compliance with local service obligations," the FCC wrote. But it asks whether it should be more liberal with waivers, "more open to requests by commercial stations that can co-locate in studio facilities used by

it require that cell numbers for station management and staff be posted? Should any relaxation of main studio or staffing rules be linked to a station's posting of its public file to the FCC online database?

The part of the FCC document that outlines these possible changes and questions is on pages 23 to 37 of the order, which I've posted at <http://tinyurl.com/rw-AM-order>. I recommend you dive into it.

There is going to be a lot to talk about in coming months.

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AM RELIEF

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ADOPTION OF MDCL TECHNOLOGIES

Since 2011, AM stations have sought waivers in order to use Modulation Dependent Carrier Level control technologies, which vary either the carrier or the carrier and sideband power levels as a function of the modulation level, allowing the licensee to reduce transmitter power consumption while maintaining audio quality and signal coverage.

In an effort to reduce the burden on stations wishing to employ MDCL control technologies, the FCC said. AM stations no longer must file a waiver but must electronically notify the Media Bureau of the station's MDCL control operation within 10 days of first use.

AM ANTENNA EFFICIENCY MODIFICATIONS

The order reduces the existing AM antenna efficiency standards by 25 percent as a means to provide relief to AM broadcasters. Some commenters called for the outright elimination of the commission's minimum efficiency standards for AM transmission, instead using a minimum radiation standard. But the commission said that proposal lacked specifics.

ADDITIONAL PROPOSALS

In its 74-page document, the FCC also proposed the following changes in a further NPRM, and is asking for comment on them:

- All Class A stations should be protected, both day and night, to their 0.1 mV/m groundwave contour, from co-channel stations; all Class A stations should continue to be protected to the 0.5 mV/m groundwave contour, both

day and night, from first-adjacent stations; and the critical hours protection of Class A stations should be eliminated completely (see page 4).

- Rolling back the 1991 rule changes that pertain to calculation of nighttime RSS values of interfering field strengths and nighttime interference-free service. The commission proposes to amend the rules to return to predicting the nighttime interference-free coverage area using only the interference contributions from co-channel stations and the 50-percent exclusion method.
- Revisions of daytime protection contours for Class B, C and D AM stations, which the FCC believes will result in greater flexibility to improve their signals.
- Revision of the rule on siting of FM "cross-service" translators to provide additional flexibility.
- Modification of partial proof of performance requirements to reduce the number of measured radials.
- Modification of rules for Method of Moments computer modeling, used to verify the performance of AM directional systems.
- Return of an authorization from any licensee with dual standard/expanded band authorizations. There are 25 such "station pairs" left. Licensees would be required to surrender one of the two authorizations within one year of release of a future Report and Order.

The commission also issued an NOI in which it asks how best to continue use

TIME TO BONE UP

On the heels of the revitalization order, the FCC announced several outreach efforts, including a planned tool to help AM stations locate eligible FM translators.

It put out a Public Notice that included a simplified summary highlighting key changes, particularly in regard to translator filing windows. The commission set up a dedicated email address, AMmodification@fcc.gov, for inquiries about the window process, and it plans an AM revitalization Web page with information for prospective applicants. The commission also published a list of staffers who can answer questions.

Over the long haul, the Media Bureau plans a three-month outreach effort to ensure that Class C and D licensees are well informed about the modification window filing process. Class C and D licensees in particular should ensure they have a valid email address on file in the FCC Consolidated Database System, as that will be the means of contact from the commission.

Licensees with CDBS account IDs and passwords should log in and make sure their account is up to date via the Account Maintenance button, or can consult the CDBS user guide (<http://licensing.fcc.gov/prod/cdbs/forms/prod/cdbs Ug.htm>) for questions about filing the necessary forms.

The FCC issued information about the timing of the FM translator windows and who is eligible to apply. The notice also touches on construction requirements and operational requirements and lays out a set of standards for those interested in submitting an application. Details can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/rw-fcc-AM>.

Make note, the FCC said: Applications will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis, meaning that earlier filed window applications will have cut-off protection in regard to any subsequently filed window application.

of the AM expanded band, including the types of stations that should operate and the technical parameters under which they should be run. The commission also is looking for comments on whether it should relax its rules and policies on maintenance and siting of AM main studios. Radio World will have further coverage of many of these proposals in subsequent issues.

LOOKING BACK

AM advocates felt the order was a long time coming.

Three years ago, Commissioner Ajit

Pai, a Republican and at the time a new member of the FCC, told a fall Radio Show convention audience in Dallas, "To me, it's time to take another look at our AM radio regulations. The FCC last conducted a thorough review of those rules 21 years ago." He worried about AM's overall market share and its particularly dismal performance among younger people. "These younger listeners should represent the future of AM radio, but many of them never tune in," Pai said then.

Mignon Clyburn, a Democrat and acting FCC chair at the time, subsequently put forth the NPRM. Many of the items made it into the 2015 order: elimination of the "ratchet" rule, modification suggestions to the daytime and nighttime community coverage rules for existing AMs, wider implementation of MDCL technologies, changes to nighttime interference protections and modification of antenna efficiency standards.

And the biggest topic of contention — which resulted in some very public jousting among commissioners — was the decision about translators. The chatter over the prior few weeks was so pronounced that Clyburn chided the process in a statement. "Though much of the back-and-forth on the best way to provide this relief played out in the press, instead of within the walls of the commission, I am nevertheless pleased that we have achieved what I believe is an outstanding result," she said.

You can read the complete order at <http://tinyurl.com/rw-AM-order>.

Comment on this or any story. Email radioworld@nbmedia.com with "Letter to the Editor" in the subject field.

NEWSROUNDUP

EAS: Beginning Jan. 1, 2016, FEMA will begin to include the new all-U.S. "000000" geocode along with the currently used Washington geocode for any nationwide Emergency Alert Notification. This will ensure that any EAN is compatible with both current EAS device settings and with devices configured to be compliant with Part 11 rules that go into effect July 30 next year. EAS participants can begin to update devices to comply with the new rules regarding the all-U.S. geocode and handling of a national period test, or NPT, any time after Jan. 1 without the possibility of creating a reduction in service for a national EAN message. To keep apace, device manufacturers have begun to release software and firmware updates to enable devices to comply with rules established by the FCC in its recent Sixth Report and Order. Those guidelines establish a new national location code, new national periodic test event code, new EAS Test Reporting System and rules for visual EAS messages.

EAS II: The next round of FEMA IPAWS regional tests is scheduled to take place on Nov. 17. This round will be con-

ducted with the support of state broadcast associations in Arizona, Minnesota, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah and Wisconsin, and will originate at 1:20 p.m. PST/2:20 MST/3:20 CST from the IPAWS booth at the International Association of Emergency Managers annual meeting in Las Vegas.

EAS III: FEMA said its Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Division is looking into the feasibility of an advanced emergency alert system. "FEMA is committed to working with the private sector to examine and improve future alerts and warnings," said Acting Assistant Administrator for National Continuity Programs Roger Stone. "New systems could someday include pictures and video as part of the advanced alert and warning information provided to the general public."

SIRIUS-XM: The satellite company hailed its third-quarter financial performance as one of the strongest in its history and said it is "on track to meet or beat our best year for net subscriber growth since the merger of Sirius and XM in 2008." It expects to finish 2015 with revenue of \$4.53 billion. The company reported record Q3 revenue of \$1.17 billion, up 11 percent from a year ago, and said subscribers were "at an all-time high of nearly 29 million."

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Cumulus Moves Grabbed Fall Show Buzz

Meanwhile, Voltair and AM improvement were among topics du jour in Atlanta

BY SCOTT FYBUSH

When the 2,170 radio people who attended Radio Show 2015 in Atlanta look back on their experience, they'll probably remember two things about the gathering.

This was the Radio Show when remnants of Hurricane Joaquin made it hard for many to get home. And it was the Radio Show when hometown broadcast

was actual news being made right there at the Marriott Marquis, too, some of it literally on the show floor.

The NAB's decision to hold some engineering sessions on the floor itself, in a presentation area sandwiched between exhibitors and food carts, amped up the excitement when both sides of the big Nielsen/Voltair controversy held separate presentations on Thursday.



Steven Tyler, sprawling at left as befits a rock star, talked business with Premiere Networks radio hosts Lorianne Crook and Charlie Chase. "They're still playing Aerosmith all over the radio, I can't believe it," he said, according to an NAB tweet. Tyler also told the radio crowd, "I would not be here if it weren't for you."

moguls Lew Dickey Jr. and his brother John were dethroned in humiliating fashion just before the show opened.

The precipitous decline of Cumulus stock, which fell below the \$1-a-share mark on the Friday before the show began, proved the final straw for Lew Jr. as Cumulus CEO. Just a day before the convention's Sept. 30 opening, the company's board demoted him to vice-chairman and ousted John Dickey from the company completely. Mary G. Berner was named as CEO to turn the company around.

While the Dickey's' woes made for interesting talk from a distance, there

More than an hour before Voltair's Geoff Steadman kicked off the duel, low benches in the presentation area were packed full, leaving latecomers to stand and watch from the sidelines.

DECODING THE PPM FIGHT

Steadman steered clear of direct attacks on (or even direct mentions of) Nielsen itself, instead focusing on Voltair's ability to provide monitoring of a station's watermarking performance. Just before the show, 25-Seven released version 2.0 of its Voltair firmware and said a version 2.2 is in alpha test mode.

Steadman said 2.2 will include an analysis-only mode that will not affect Voltair's audio output but will allow stations to conduct ongoing analysis on how well Nielsen's proprietary PPM encoders are succeeding at putting usable watermarks on a station's audio. The new software also will include an enhanced ability to export encoding analysis data, a move Steadman says could enable larger groups to establish

central monitoring facilities to ensure their encoding is working properly.

Nielsen's subsequent presentation may have muddied the waters considerably for broadcasters who've purchased the \$15,000 Voltair box or who might be considering doing so. Expanding on a promise it made during its national client webinar in July, Nielsen told attendees it plans to deliver its own "next-generation" in-station monitor to PPM client stations next year.

"It kind of sounds like a Voltair," said Steadman after watching the Nielsen presentation from the back row. Steadman said, though, that his company is shipping Voltair now, while Nielsen monitoring boxes won't arrive until the middle of 2016 at the earliest.

The bigger and more immediate announcement from Nielsen was an

as a single "hit" in one minute for data to be decoded and a station to have its listening credited. Testing of the enhanced system was conducted in several "non-currency" PPM markets, then in parallel with standard CBET at 19 stations in the Washington and Baltimore markets using a second layer of encoding. Nielsen said those markets would move to the enhanced CBET system almost immediately, with all PPM markets following suit as early as the end of November.

Nielsen's Beth Webb said the enhanced CBET produced a 15 percent increase in AQH persons, giving at least a 0.1 point gain in AQH ratings in approximately 40 percent of the cases studied.

WHAT'S "NEXT" FOR RADIO?

The conference rooms off the show floor were just as crowded for several sessions addressing another big concern for broadcasters: where they'll fit into



The ongoing PPM/Voltair controversy drew crowds to separate presentations by Nielsen, shown, and 25-Seven Systems about audio watermarking technologies.

upgraded version of its CBET watermark encoding system to make coding more robust and more easily detectable in challenging acoustic environments, all without creating audible artifacts.

"Every client gets the same benefit without any user controls, so it's a uniform benefit in how we apply this," said Nielsen Chief Engineer Arun Ramaswamy.

He said feedback from the original CBET system showed Nielsen that there was too much variability in how well watermarks could be decoded in different listening environments.

The upgrade is seen by many as a response to the Voltair, though Nielsen said in its webinar this summer that it had already been working on enhancements and was expediting them due to market conditions.

Ramaswamy says the new version is much more robust, needing as little

the new world of plentiful entertainment options in cars and on mobile devices.

The NextRadio initiative, backed heavily by Emnis Communications, boasted about big growth to come. Thanks to the addition of AT&T and T-Mobile as partners, NextRadio President Paul Brenner said 60 million new phone handsets will be activated in 2016 with FM reception included via the NextRadio app.

There are still two big holdouts, Verizon on the carrier side and Apple on the manufacturer side. Brenner said NextRadio is turning up the heat on Verizon with a bigger promotional campaign from radio stations urging listeners to tell the carrier they want FM capability in their phones.

As for Apple, Brenner says it's the one phone maker that can dictate terms to carriers instead of the other way around.

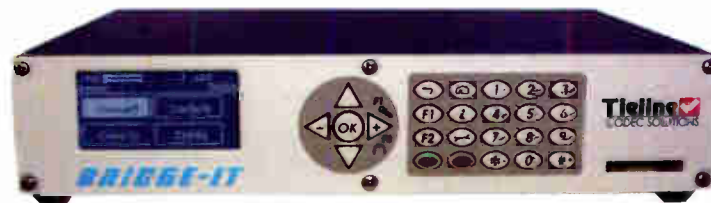
(continued on page 10)



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RADIO SHOW

(continued from page 8)

But he says momentum is building as more consumers catch on to the interactive features that stations can use through NextRadio. He urged radio stations to do their part by activating their links to NextRadio, sending dynamic content such as album covers and contests through the app.

The 2016 show will be held in Nashville, a choice that drew rave reviews from many on the floor.

The connected car is another battlefield; and if broadcasters weren't already worried about their place on the dashboard, a session moderated by Radio World Editor-in-Chief Paul McLane provided plenty of nightmare material.

"There's still a place for AM and FM in vehicles, but if it comes down to a question of cost — sorry," said Scott Burnell of Ford's Business Development



Lara Logan, chief foreign affairs correspondent for CBS News and "60 Minutes" correspondent, headlined the Radio Luncheon. Attendees reacted emotionally to stories of her time in war zones, including the brutal assault she suffered in Egypt in 2011.

and Partner Management division.

Burnell said younger audiences aren't making terrestrial radio a top priority for in-car entertainment, and their desires will drive the decisions car manufacturers make about what features get included in future vehicles.

"There's going to be more entities fighting for that real estate on that 8-inch screen in the car," he said.

Here, too, the message to broadcasters came down to "keep fighting." While Pandora, for instance, has an organized campaign to educate dealers with incentives to demonstrate Pandora features to buyers of new connected cars, Burnell said he hasn't seen similar initiatives by broadcasters to work with dealers to educate buyers about where to find their local FM and AM signals.

NEXT YEAR IN NASHVILLE

As the Radio Show wrapped up, some broadcasters made early exits in hopes of avoiding a huge East Coast rainstorm that wreaked havoc on many return flights and drives.

For those who remained for the last hours of the show, there was plenty of entertainment. A big gathering of engineers assembled Thursday night at the suburban transmitter site of Cox Radio's WSB(AM) for tours of the 50,000-watt facility at 750 kHz, and a barbecue truck supplied by the Telos Alliance. Meanwhile back at the Marriott Marquis, WSB's managers were accepting the News-Talk Station of the Year trophy at the Marconi Radio Awards. Country star Gavin DeGraw and syndicated radio host Rickey Smiley headlined the ceremony. CBS Radio's KYW(AM) in Philadelphia walked away with Legendary Station of the Year, accompanied by Major Market Station of the Year WTOP(FM), Washington; Medium Market winner KRMG, Tulsa and Small Market winner WLEN, Adrian, Mich.

The partnership of NAB and the Radio Advertising Bureau in co-producing the fall show appears to have been a successful one. Plans are already in the works for the 2016 event, to be held in Nashville, a choice that drew rave reviews from many on the floor when it was announced.

Industry Mourns Ernie Jones

BY PAUL McLANE

Veteran structural expert Ernie Jones died in a tower elevator accident on an Oklahoma broadcast tower in October.

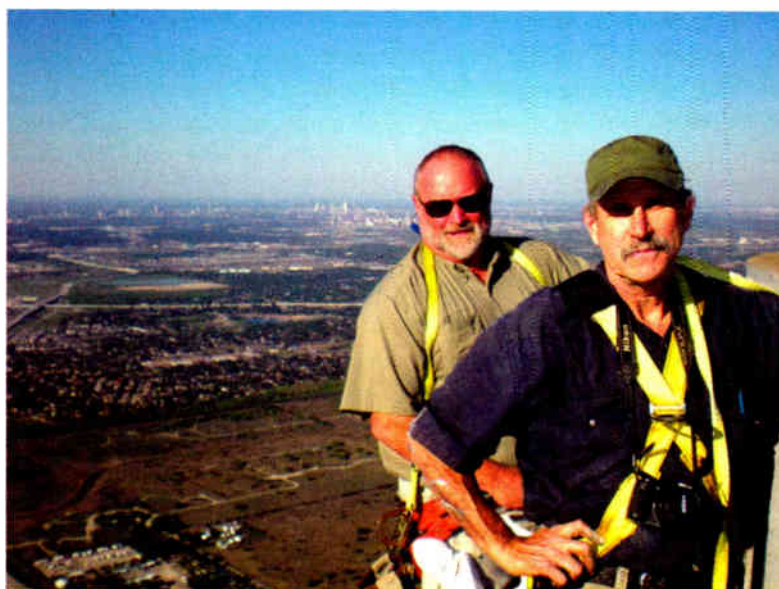
Jones, 65, was a founder of Consolidated Engineering Inc. in Lynnville, Ind., which does engineering analyses and tower renovations in broadcast and telecom.

His business partner and friend David Davies told Radio World that Jones died when the tower service elevator started back down while Jones was connected via lanyard to a member of the tower but was still in the cab. Davies said climbers hurried up the structure in hopes of rescue but to no avail. He said OSHA was investigating the accident.

The tower serves Hearst station KOCO(TV) in Oklahoma City. A KOCO executive did not return a call to RW.

CEI clients have included ERI, CBS, Clear Channel, American Tower and numerous others. Its website said the company has coordinated fabrication of more than 1,000 towers.

Colleagues reacted with dismay. One wrote in an email, "Ernie was a giant figure in the tower structural analysis community, one of the leaders in tower structure standards-setting and a first-class fellow." A committee of the Telecommunications Industry



Ernie Jones, right, is shown with his friend and business partner Dave Davies in an undated photo.

Association said it will honor Jones with a dedication of its pending TIA-322 standard.

Jones, who held Professional Engineer certification, was no stranger to towers or safety considerations. According to the CEI website, he was active in standards work for steel antenna towers and support

structures, and for 29 years he had been a participating member of the TR14.7 Committee of the TIA and the Electronics Industry Association.

According to his bio, he was responsible for developing the ANSI/TIA-1019, 2004 Gin Pole Standard and was a co-chair of a technical section responsible for creating a full construction standard on the installation, alteration and maintenance of antenna supporting structures and antennas.

Jones is survived by his wife Kathy Jones; daughters Karalyn, 26; Megan, 25; and Angel, 7; and his son Andy Jones, 27. He was preceded in death by parents Raymond and June Jones; his sister, Louis Jones; his first wife, Krista Jones; and his daughter Caroline Jones.

Davies said CEI intends to honor all its business commitments, and he asked that clients with open jobs that had been arranged with Jones email him at DDavies@conenginc.com.

Davies knew Jones for 52 years, since they were 14-year-old boys — camp counselors who met in Evansville, Ind., who took manual-labor jobs together. It was Jones who later convinced Davies — then working as a police officer — to go back to school for civil and mining engineering degrees. "He is a major part of my life and my best friend," Davies said.

For a conversation with Davies about Jones and the accident, see radioworld.com/ernie-jones.

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NEWSROUNDUP

CUMULUS: The new CEO of Cumulus came out swinging last month in an online address to employees. Mary G. Berner is now leading the second-largest U.S. radio company, with a portfolio that includes 460 AM and FM stations in 90 markets. She succeeded Lew Dickey in a corporate shakeup. Berner, 56, opened by decrying "rumors emanating from the uninformed, the uninvited and perhaps even the ill-intentioned." She said she is a big supporter of Nash, the country music format and brand, and she unequivocally denied the need for the company to file for bankruptcy. She listed Cumulus bright spots including specific



Mary G. Berner in the Cumulus employees' webcast. stations and strong markets, the Nash brand and broad corporate reach. Her tone and message

largely were upbeat. "Yet the company overall is not performing. ... Given our many assets, we should not as a company be underperforming our competitors; yet we are," Berner said. "Make no mistake," she said later, "this is a turnaround." She said employees told her that they are passionate about being "live and local," but said a typical comment came from an employee who told her, "I love my job but I don't love my company." She said employees want better, more transparent corporate communication, fewer silos, more collaboration, better prioritization and more focus — what she called "operational blocking and tackling." Before realizing its potential, Berner said, "First we need to stabilize the company."

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FOREIGN OWNERSHIP: The FCC in October proposed guidelines that would create a new process for applicants looking to exceed the established 25 percent foreign ownership rule. The NAB expressed support. The changes mirror policies and procedures the FCC now follows for common carrier licensees and their foreign-based investors. The commission said the NPRM is designed to spur investment from new sources of capital as well as provide the broadcast sector with greater transparency and predictability, and reduce regulatory burdens and costs.

AES67: The Media Networking Alliance issued a "maintenance revision" to AES67-2013, a standard for high-performance streaming audio-over-IP interoperability. It said the revision, AES67-2015, clarifies some of the interoperability requirements, based on general implementation and "plugfest" experience. "The possibility to incorporate these revisions was identified during the AES 'Plugfest' testing, carried out in cooperation with the European Broadcast Union, in October last year, and held at the Institut für Rundfunktechnik, in Munich, Germany," it stated. "During these tests 10 companies tested 16 currently available networked-audio products with AES67-specific extensions against each other to confirm interoperability."

ROYALTIES: The NAB says it now enjoys a majority in the House of Representatives in favor of the current version of the "Local Radio Freedom Act," a resolution against performance fees or royalties on U.S. radio stations. The association says it has 218 co-sponsors in the House as well as 23 in the Senate. The organization musicFirst, which advocates for payments to musicians, issued its own press release saying the resolution is non-binding and decrying "NAB's nearly decade-old resolution" as "a stale, tired tactic."

NEXTRADIO: Emmis-backed NextRadio continued a social media campaign targeting Verizon. It says some 152,000 Verizon customers signed an online petition requesting the ability to listen to local FM radio on their mobile devices.

CONSOLIDATION: Mel Karmazin, former president/CEO of CBS and then Sirius Radio, pushed the media to consolidate in much more meaningful ways to keep up with merging advertisers and agencies. Accepting a Giants of Broadcasting award in New York, Karmazin spoke on the need to partner up in order to keep a golden age of content moving forward. "We need a whole lot more media consolidation to take place," he said, citing recent mergers in tech and brewing. "Our advertisers are merging, the agencies are merging, and we're still dealing with a very, very fragmented world." Karmazin also blasted the Washington regulatory environment, saying it took 17 months and several congressional hearings to marry XM and Sirius. A politically motivated FCC should "just be out of the merger business," he said, leaving the regulatory process to the Department of Justice and Federal Trade Commission.

STATION COUNT: How many broadcast stations are there in the United States? According to an FCC report, there were 31,013 licensed broadcast stations as of Sept. 30. That includes AM stations; FM commercial and educational stations; UHF and VHF commercial and educational TV; Class A UHF and VHF; FM translators and boosters; UHF and VHF translators; UHF and VHF low-power TV; and low-power FM. Defining "radio" as AMs and full-power FMs, the number is 15,470. Add low-power FMs and the count becomes 16,834. Roll in FM translators/boosters and the total is 23,256. (For a 10-year comparison, see radioworld.com/station-count.)

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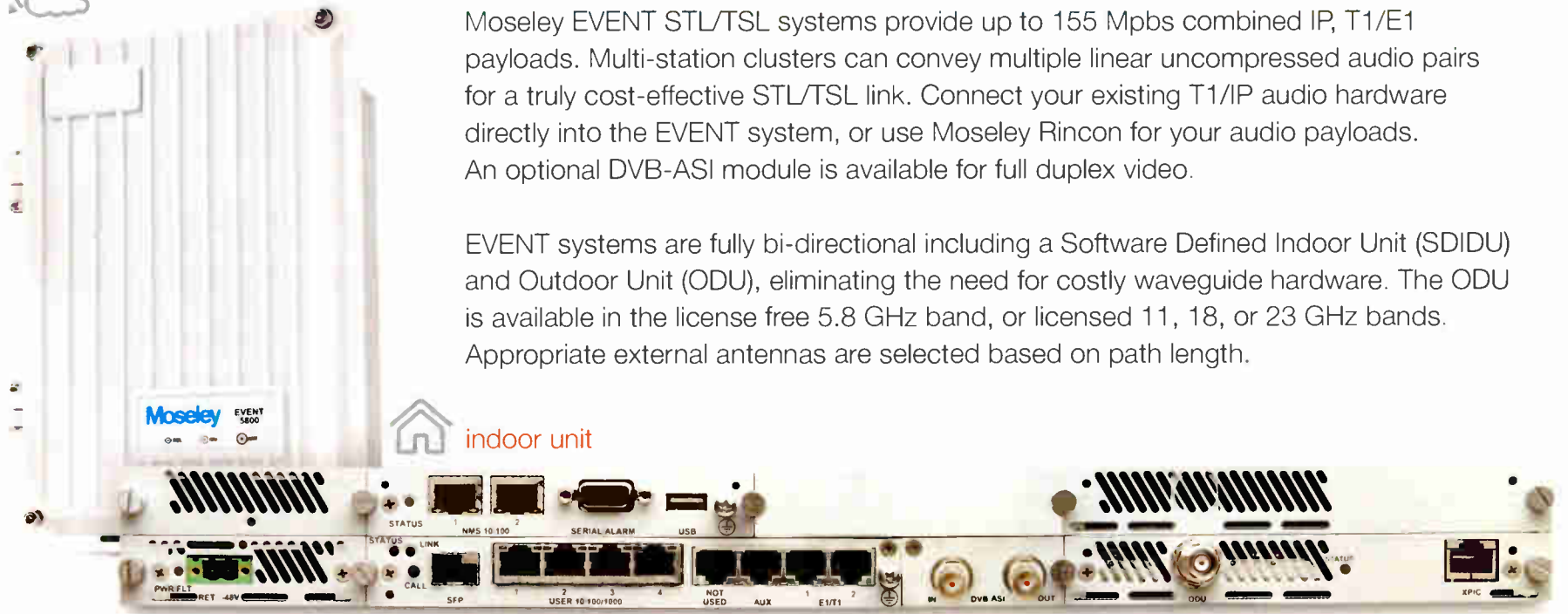
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Also, read about one engineer's experience with a handy sample rate converter

WORKBENCH

by John Bisset

Read more Workbench articles online at radioworld.com

Greg Muir, principal engineer with Wolfram Engineering in Great Falls, Mont., sends a link to a cute unit. It's called RF Explorer, a hand-held spectrum analyzer about the size of a pack of cigarettes.

It was designed for AV professionals to troubleshoot wireless audio equipment, through it's too bad there are not

more frequency bands useful to the broadcast engineer.

There are six models that range from \$129 to just under \$400. You can find out more at <http://lrfexplorer.com>.

Brad Arnold is chief engineer for Goforth Media Broadcasting in Mobile, Ala. He wrote to say he is impressed with the versatility, usefulness and quality of the Behringer Ultramatch SRC2496 A/D Sample Rate Converter.

At Goforth Media, Brad is responsible for an FM and two AM stations. The AMs are WBHY Christian talk and WLPR with a southern gospel format. Both AMs get their program feeds from a digital subcarrier riding on the FM and picked up on FMeXtra digital receivers. Brad's backup feed is a Tieline box, running over telco lines, with one AM on channel one and the other on channel two. The two audio processors are Orban

Optimod 9200s. An audio/music dealer was offering the Ultramatch on sale for \$199; Brad had some experience with this device and felt this was an offer he couldn't let pass so he ordered the unit.

Brad's intention was to insert it between the receivers, the Tieline and the Optimods. The FMeXtra receivers come with two digital outputs, optical and AES, and an analog output, which he was using. The Optimods also have digital inputs, both optical and AES, and of course, the analog in.

Optimod, he gets an instant transfer over to the Tieline feed, should the digital drop out.

Brad writes, "But, now for the good part." He takes the digital out of the receivers and feeds it directly into the digital input of the Ultramatch. The digital out of the Ultramatch feeds into the digital input of the Optimod 9200s. Brad sends the AES signal into both 9200s through an AES splitter. One Optimod selects the LEFT channel, and the other selects the RIGHT.

The day Brad installed this arrangement, he was listening to the southern gospel music on his off-air receiver while

The bass and highs were more pronounced; the mid-frequencies were clearer.

You can feed the Optimod with analog and digital inputs, and there is a reason for doing this. When a digital input is selected on the Optimod, and analog is also present, the unit automatically will divert to analog should the digital signal disappear. One reason Brad's digital signal could drop out is if his microwave STL should fade out, or if the digital output of the main control room were to act up, or a loss of AC power occurred at the FM site.

Since Brad has the Tieline analog connected to the analog inputs on the

he hooked up the SRC quickly. When he powered up the Behringer Sample Rate Converter, he could immediately hear the difference in the quality of the audio. The bass and highs were more pronounced; the mid-frequencies were clearer.

It's Brad's opinion that the Optimod responds better to the digital signal as compared to the analog. Brad highly recommends using the 2496 in any analog audio chain where a digital conversion is needed.

Readers may ask, "Why didn't Brad just use the digital out of the receiver, instead of inserting the Ultramatch?" Brad inserted the Ultramatch to have an easy-to-access level control, a front-panel headphone jack and a visible level meter to assist in troubleshooting when audio is lost. He had no idea it would also improve the audio and do it for under \$200.

Bryan Urban of Austin Community College referenced our tip in the Sept. 1 column, in which we referenced putting white dots on USB connector orientation and cautioned you to watch the orientation in case the connector is mounted upside down or vertically. The white dot is to help ensure that staff members don't force connectors, ruining the socket and the plug.

Bryan suggests placing a white dot on the device you are plugging into, as well. Good suggestion. This way you match white dot to white dot to get proper orientation before inserting the USB plug. Bryan notes that this isn't a new idea; camera lenses have been marked this way for years.

(continued on page 19)



RF Explorer is shown with Touchstone Spectrum Analyzer Software.



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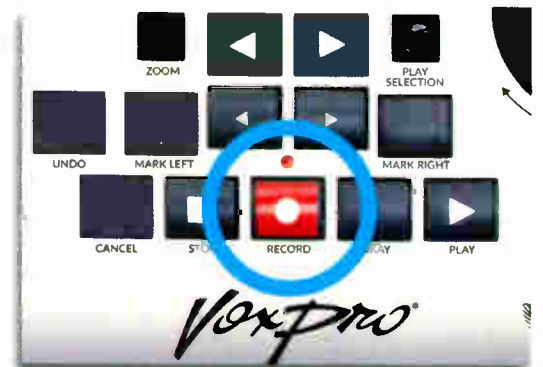
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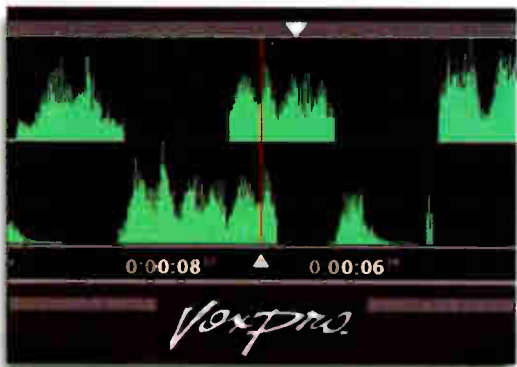
You're doing your morning show when there's a caller on the line.



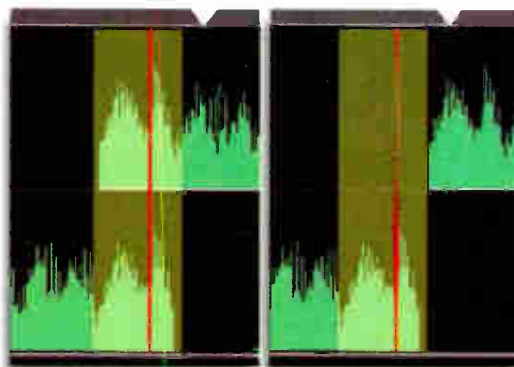
It turns out to be THIS guy and he wants to talk.



You're ready to go.
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VoxPro saves your work and starts a new clip with you on one track and the caller on another. If you talk over each other, fixing it is easy.

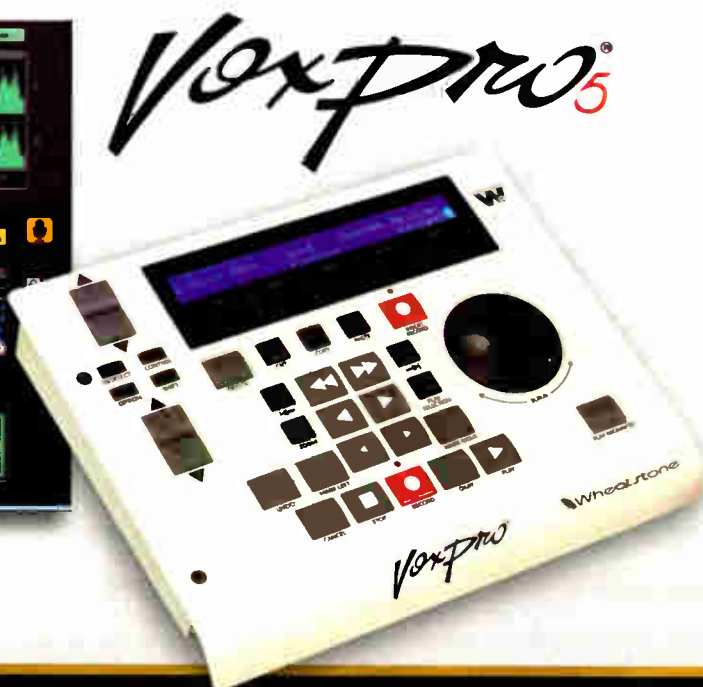


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5 Surprising Places for IP Audio

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Modern audio networks are being used for a slew of new applications because of newer, smarter I/O units. For example, WheatNet-IP BLADE-3s combine integrated control with audio tools such as mixing and audio processing at every connection point in the network for a multitude of possible uses.

It's almost like having a complete studio in 1RU wherever you need one.

And with AES67 now promising to interface your network to just about any audio device out there, there's no telling where IP audio will be off to next.

For the entire story... INN28.wheatstone.com

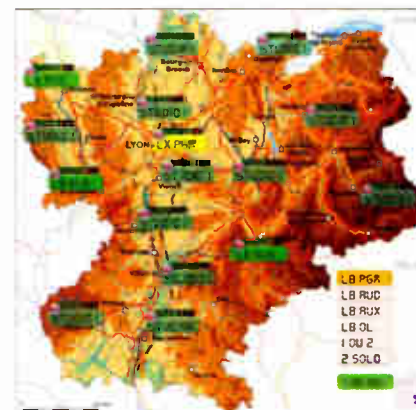
AoIP Tip: Gaming the System

If you are doing some serious sports coverage this season, here's a tip.

You can create a map of all your sports venues through one customized Screen Builder interface for your WheatNet-IP audio network, and click between them to bring in feeds, set processing, and call up mic presets.

All you have to do is arrange faders, knobs, buttons, clocks, timers, meters, events and other widgets in a drag and drop environment. Then link widgets to hardware such as microphones, codecs, and consoles located in the network and determine what each widget does using a simple Script Wizard.

For the entire story... INN28.wheatstone.com



Clearing the Air on Loudness

Did we hear you say, "Let's start an audio cleanliness war?"

"I want to start an audio cleanliness war...Who is with me?"

It was music to our ears when we saw these words posted on the Facebook "I Love Broadcast Audio Processing" discussion page recently. If only!

In many ways, we at Wheatstone have been slowly working our way toward that day when ears no longer bleed and modulation monitors look like they're glued to 100%.

So while we've built into our audio processors the tools you need for both a loud and an open and clear sound on the dial, so much more can be done. Even with so many AirAura's, VP-8's and FM-55's in the field, it's time to talk about what it takes to create clean audio on the radio -- something that can be applied no matter what type of processor you use.

For the entire story... INN28.wheatstone.com



He Who Listens, Likes!

You're going to love how BestRadio Brazil measures listenership, and we think you'll like the studios too!

What's not to like about independent online station BestRadio Brazil in São Caetano do Sul, São Paulo, Brazil?

The music is eclectic, the sound is distinct, and the studio is magnificent. BestRadio Brazil is using WheatNet-IP audio routing and control with an IP-12 digital audio console, which pulls double duty for live webcasts as well as for production purposes.

For the entire story... INN28.wheatstone.com



MAKING THE ABSOLUTE BEST IN RADIO FOR OVER 35 YEARS



WORKBENCH

(continued from page 14)

After no issues over 2-1/2 years, the 11 GHz microwave link from the studio of Crawford Broadcasting's KBRT(AM) in Costa Mesa to its mountaintop transmitter site began experiencing receive frame errors.

Packets were being lost in both directions between audio codecs and there were short audio dropouts on the air. This would occur every night, almost like clockwork, at about 11:30 p.m. It would last between two and 30 seconds, with several short (half- to one-second) audio dropouts occurring during that time.

Because the issue always happened at night and was so predictable, it was likely biological in nature.

Director of Engineering Cris Alexander considered buying and placing a game camera on the studio roof to see if that could capture what was happening, but that idea was nixed as it wouldn't solve the problem.

Figuring the issue was likely at the studio where the rooftop would provide birds with a place to land and do other things that birds do, Cris figured a better approach would be to invest in an \$18 plastic owl from Home Depot and place it in front of the antenna.

As soon as the owl was installed, two hawks got very upset and carried on for hours. But the nightly receive frame errors magically disappeared.

If you are faced with bird issues — or for that matter, any kind of rodent, insect or pest problem — bookmark www.bird-x.com for a variety of humane solutions that work.

Contribute to Workbench. You'll help your fellow engineers and qualify for SBE recertification credit. Send Workbench tips to johnpbisset@gmail.com. Fax to (603) 472-4944.

Author John Bisset has spent 46 years in the broadcasting industry and is still learning. He handles West Coast sales for the Telos Alliance. He is SBE certified and is a past recipient of the SBE's Educator of the Year Award.



This fake owl was an inexpensive solution to a persistent problem for KBRT.

HOW TO

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WORKBENCH
by John Bisset

EVERY ISSUE
RADIOWORLD

Put UGC to Work for Your Station

Listeners are a great resource to complement radio's presence and reach

If you could give a microphone, camera and video recorder to every one of your listeners, what would you have them produce for you?

Of course, if you think about this seriously for a moment, you know that this question is moot. The majority of people who listen to your radio station have this media creation capability built into their smartphones.

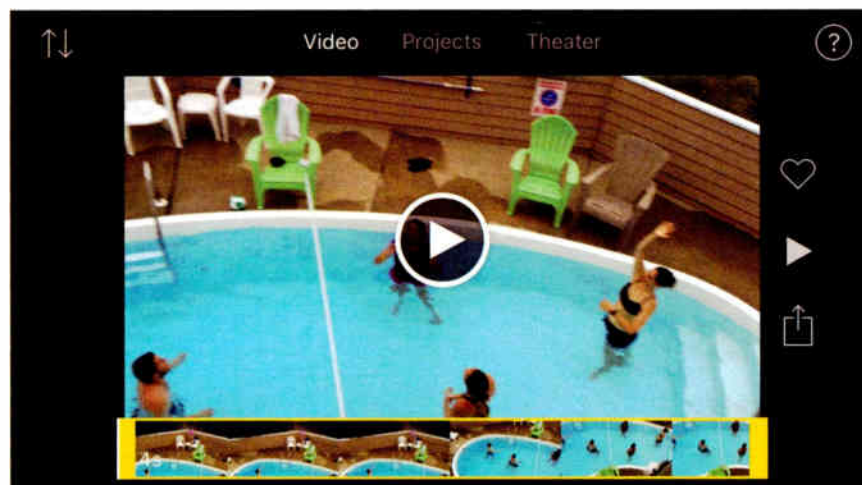
"User-generated content" — created primarily on smartphones — has been exploding on social media for several years, but it has not yet been widely exploited by radio. I'd like to think this is due to a lack of station resources and not a lack of vision.

Why is UGC important? Because it's part of a lifestyle that helps those who create their personal media to connect with others. This connection is emotional. The people who take photos and record videos and sound memos are already actively sharing this content with family and friends, and many try to go viral just for bragging rights. It's also common to hear people get excited to see that a picture they took and posted got 40 "likes." Imagine this same person having their content broadcast on your radio station's airwaves and/or posted and promoted on your website.

Here are a few examples of how you can get in the UGC game.

VOICE MEMOS

The first one is obvious — and real. I heard it recently on NPR's "Morning



iMovie for mobile is a go-to app for UGC. Curate submissions, post the best on your website and promote them on-air.

Edition" when one of the hosts asked listeners to email voice recordings of questions that would be posed on-air to a special guest.

Take this a step further and ask your listeners to email you voice memos concerning their opinions on topics: reviews of new songs, thoughts about movies, TV shows and local events.

SPECIAL EVENTS

When predictable holidays like Valentine's Day roll around, you could easily be broadcasting stories of how people met and fell in love; all you have to do is ask in advance.

Imagine the online galleries you could create by soliciting the pictures and vid-

eos that your listeners are creating at concerts, local festivals and newsworthy events. Brag about the best ones on-air.

When a news/talk station doesn't happen to have a staff member present in a breaking news situation, the answer may be to obtain UGC sound recorded by bystanders.

PODCASTS

Instead of creating your own podcasts, try searching for UGC. There are many podcasts being created in your city that you might be able to use all or part of — perhaps on the air, on an HD channel or online via your website. A Web test of a podcast that you promote on-air could give you the feedback you need to see if

PROMO POWER

Mark Lapidus



it's striking enough of a chord for you to make a commitment to production and real distribution.

Could you create your city's biggest New Year's photo album for 2016? Yes, if you plan it right now and prime the pump with a prize for everyone who submits photos. Thanking people who submit content by name on the air will also create action.

For UGC to start flowing, your station should create an activation plan so listeners hear examples of what you're seeking. Offer them an easy way to send you the content via email or a social platform. As you give more exposure and credit to people by name, you will receive more content.

Now: Who will do the work of aggregating UGC? A content producer, under the guidance of your program director, is a good candidate. Perhaps this is a new position at your station or cluster for the coming year and you can still get it into the budget. If not, perhaps you could assign individual projects to on-air talent who are already familiar with your audience's interests.

Great UGC is real, interesting, relevant to your local market and — believe it or not — plentiful.

And, oh yes, don't forget those release forms. You will need an agreement with the content creator that gives your station the rights to their 15 minutes of fame.

The author is president of Lapidus Media.



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Political Broadcasting Rules: a Refresher Course

Now is the time to review your systems to ensure compliance with FCC requirements

BROADCAST LAW

BY DAN KIRKPATRICK

The author is with communications law firm Fletcher, Heald & Hildreth.

The 2016 elections are a year away, but the race for presidential nominations is already heating up, and primaries themselves will begin in just a few months. With what is certain to be a contentious and hard-fought election season fast approaching, *now* is the time for broadcasters to review their systems to ensure that they will be in compliance with the FCC's political advertising requirements.

A little advanced planning can go a long way in making this election season run smoothly (and ideally profitably) for your station.

The FCC's political broadcast rules generally cover: (1) who is entitled to access to broadcast advertising time; (2) how much they pay for that time; and (3) disclosure and recordkeeping requirements. We'll look at each of those areas below — but we highly encourage stations with questions to contact their communications counsel. The FCC's rules and policies are fairly complicated when it comes to political broadcasting, and the answers to many questions are often highly dependent on the specific facts at hand.

The concept of a candidate's "use" of a broadcast station is central to understanding and complying with the political rules. As we will delve into in greater detail below, the "use" of a broadcast station by a candidate triggers several potential obligations, so it is important to know, as a threshold matter, (a) when someone is a candidate and (b) when

they are considered to have made a "use" of a station.

WHO IS A "CANDIDATE?"

To be considered a candidate a person must:

- have announced his/her intention to run;
- be qualified to hold the office he/she is running for; and
- be qualified to be on the ballot or be eligible to be a write-in candidate

would not be considered a use by that candidate.

Candidate appearances in certain types of programming do not count as uses. For example, appearances by a candidate on bona fide news, news interview or documentary programs are not considered uses. Thus, coverage of a bona fide news event, such as a debate or candidacy announcement, does not constitute a use even if the candidate is featured prominently in that coverage.



WHO'S BUYING WHAT



Albuquerque, N.M.'s KAGM(FM) recently completed a new studio build with the assistance of SCMS' Doug Tharp, who helped to design the studio and spec the equipment. The upgraded studio features GatesAir QuickLine II studio furniture and GatesAir Flexiva Oasis 12-channel digital audio console, Electro-Voice RE20 microphones, dbx 286s microphone processors and O.C. White booms and arms.

The project was initiated because the existing studio was outdated. The

station wanted to ensure the new equipment would last 10 years, while ensuring that the feature set would be adequate for KAGM's needs.

Corporate Engineering Manager Rusty Burchfield made the purchase and oversaw the project for American General Media. The \$15,000 project was completed within 30 days, with the actual installation finished in two days, in part because of the Oasis prewire kit's plug-and-play features.

A candidate for president must either be qualified in the state in which the station is located or qualified in at least ten states in total.

WHAT IS A "USE?"

In general, a "use" is any positive appearance of a candidate whose voice or likeness is either identified or is readily identifiable. The appearance in question does *not* need to be approved by the candidate or the candidate's committee to be considered a use — third party ads may trigger a use, as can appearances in entertainment programming (e.g., an episode of "The Apprentice" in which Donald Trump appears).

The candidate's appearance on the station must be positive, so a third-party attack ad against a candidate

WHICH CANDIDATES ARE ENTITLED TO "REASONABLE ACCESS" AND WHAT ACCESS IS "REASONABLE?"

The FCC's rules (and the Communications Act) provide that "legally qualified" candidates for *federal* offices (i.e., president, vice president, House and Senate) are entitled to "reasonable access" to commercial broadcast stations for the broadcast of advertising. This means that, as a general rule, commercial broadcasters *must* make time available to candidates for federal offices.

Demands for reasonable access can come only from a candidate or his/her authorized campaign committee. Third-party advertisers and issue advertisers do *not* have reasonable access rights and, as discussed below, neither do

(continued on page 22)

POLITICAL RULES

(continued from page 21)

candidates for state and local offices.

Although a federal candidate's reasonable access rights ensure access to a broadcast station's airtime, federal candidates do *not* have the right to demand time during specific programs or day-parts. In addition, stations may choose to exclude political advertising from news programming. But beyond those limited exceptions, the station must offer federal candidates reasonable access to the station's full schedule.

Precisely what degree of "access" is "reasonable" is not always easily determined. Since federal candidates enjoy considerable discretion to tailor their campaigns as they see fit, stations should avoid setting flat limits on the total amount or types/classes of time available to federal candidates. Questions about what is reasonable in any given circumstance may need to be referred to counsel. In any event, in view of the clear requirement that federal candidates be afforded reasonable access, stations should do some advanced planning about the amount of time likely to be required to reasonably accommodate political advertising. (For such planning, it is obviously wise to consider the number of candidates competing for the various federal offices, since a use by one candidate can trigger equal time claims by others running for the same office.)

In contrast to federal candidates, candidates for state and local offices (e.g., mayor, county council, school board, etc.) are not entitled to reasonable access. Thus, a station can choose

not to sell any time to any candidate for a particular state or local office.

But if the station does sell time to one candidate for a particular non-federal office, other candidates for that office will be entitled to insist on "equal opportunities" (see below).

If a large number of candidates are vying for one particular non-federal office, selling time to one candidate

restricted to a limited period of time before the election. The rule is triggered by a use of a station by a legally qualified candidate. Once a legally qualified candidate for a given office makes a use of a station, all other legally qualified candidates for the same office are entitled to the opportunity to make equal use of the station. That is, the station must make the same amount and kind of

and the 60 days prior to a general election. (The 45/60 day periods are often referred to as "LUC windows.")

In general, the lowest unit charge is the lowest rate charged to any other advertiser for the same class and amount of time for the same time period, including all discounts and bonus spots. As a practical matter, political candidates are to be treated as the most favored advertiser during the LUC windows. This favorable treatment is available only to candidates or their authorized campaign committees for uses by the candidate; it is *not* available to any third-party advertisers, including political action committees, citizens groups and the like. As explained below, federal candidates also must make an affirmative certification that their advertisements meet certain criteria to qualify for the LUC.

Determining the exact amount of the lowest unit charge for any particular candidate order can be tricky. It depends on what the candidate is buying (e.g., ROS vs. fixed position, preemptible vs. non-preemptible, etc.). Stations must also take into account other factors that affect advertising rates charged to its non-political customers, such as day-part, discounts given for large purchases, the value of bonus spots, etc. Most stations will have more than one lowest unit charge depending on the various classes of time sold on the station during the LUC window.

Because the calculation of the lowest unit charges can be complex, stations should begin considering the issue well in advance of the LUC window.

WHAT ARE DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS AND ARE STATIONS REQUIRED TO HAVE THEM?

A disclosure statement is a written summary of the station's advertising rates and policies. Ordinarily, it should describe the classes of time available to advertisers, the lowest unit charge for each class, any make-good policies, policies on the preemption of ads, and any other sales practices or information that would be relevant to advertisers. Stations should provide the disclosure statement to any candidate, agency or group requesting political time (inside or outside of the LUC window). Of course, disclosure statements should be updated as often as necessary during the election season to ensure accuracy.

The FCC's rules do *not* require that stations prepare written disclosure statements. Nevertheless, as a matter of routine prudence, every station should have one. Disclosure statements provide both station sales staffs and prospective advertisers a clear guide to the factors relevant to any advertising purchase; they also tend to limit after-the-fact disputes. Moreover, the process of preparing a complete disclosure statement forces the station to consider and resolve, in advance of the election season, a num-

In contrast to federal candidates, candidates for state and local offices (e.g., mayor, county council, school board, etc.) are not entitled to reasonable access. Thus, a station can choose not to sell any time to any candidate for a particular state or local office.

for that office could result in a multiple demands for equal time from that candidate's competitors, which could in turn seriously reduce the station's commercial inventory. That being the case, stations should consider, in advance, the non-federal political races for which advertising time will be made available. Once that determination has been made, any restrictions should be included in the stations' disclosure statements (see below).

WHAT ARE "EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES?"

All candidates for the same office must be treated in an equal manner. This rule — known as the "equal opportunities" or "equal time" rule — applies to *both* federal *and* non-federal (i.e., state and local) candidates; it is *not*

time available at the same cost.

In order to take advantage of this rule, a candidate seeking equal time must request it within seven days of the opposing candidate's triggering use of the station.

Stations are not obligated to notify opposing candidates when a use is made but, as described below, stations must document all uses in their political files and make those files available for inspection. If a station does not make documentation publicly available in a timely manner, the seven-day deadline for equal time claims may be extended.

The equal opportunities rule can become a serious issue when on-air talent wish to run for office. All of their appearances on the station after becoming legally qualified count as free uses of the station. Similarly, if an actor or other entertainment personality becomes a legally qualified candidate, the broadcast of movies, TV shows or other material in which the actor/personality is identifiable would also count as free uses. Such uses would obligate the station to give equal amounts of free time to all opposing candidates.

Equal time claims can also become a serious issue in the final days before an election, when some stations may need to monitor their available commercial inventory closely to ensure that they are able to accommodate equal time demands from candidates.

WHAT IS "LOWEST UNIT CHARGE" AND WHEN DOES THAT APPLY?

Perhaps the most troublesome question for many stations is the question of what rates may be charged for political advertising.

All legally qualified candidates for any political office — state, local or federal — are entitled to the "lowest unit charge" or "lowest unit rate" during the 45 days before a primary election

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

ADVERTISEMENT

Audio-Technica BP40 Large-Diaphragm Dynamic Broadcast Microphone

Audio-Technica's new BP40 broadcast vocal microphone offers a rich, natural, condenser-like sound from a large-diaphragm dynamic design. The 40 mm diaphragm features patented floating-edge construction that maximizes diaphragm surface area and optimizes overall diaphragm performance, while the humbucking voice coil prevents electromagnetic interference (EMI).

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ber of practical questions (e.g., whether to decline to sell time to candidates for certain non-federal offices).

WHAT SPONSORSHIP IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS APPLY TO POLITICAL ADS?

All political advertising must include some form of sponsorship identification. Specifically, when a political ad is run there must be a statement that the ad was paid for or sponsored by the group or person purchasing the ad time. If the advertiser provides the station with a pre-produced spot that does not include the required sponsorship ID, the station must add this language on its own accord (if necessary, it can do so over the content of the spot — no free time need be provided).

Ads for federal candidates also must meet a variety of additional requirements imposed by the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act. If the ad refers to an opposing candidate, BCRA requires a statement, spoken by the candidate who is purchasing the time, which identifies the candidate and the office sought and states that (a) he or she approves the broadcast, and (b) he or she (or his/her campaign committee) paid for the ad.

BCRA also requires that federal candidates or their authorized committees provide a broadcast station with a written certification stating whether or not the advertisement refers to another candidate for the same office. If it does refer to another candidate, the certification must state that the ad will comply with the stand by your ad announcement requirements described above. This certification must be provided to the broadcast station when the time is purchased. If the certification is not provided, the station is not obligated to give the candidate the lowest unit rate.

If the ad advocates the election or defeat of a specific candidate and is paid for or sponsored by a third party, then the ad must clearly indicate whether it was or was not authorized by a candidate. That is, the sponsor identification statement must include both the "paid for" or "sponsored by" language and the "authorized by" or "not authorized by" a particular candidate or campaign committee language. If it is not authorized, there must be an additional audio statement that the name of the entity purchasing the ad "is responsible for the content of this advertising."

This is in addition to relevant state law, which may require more.

CAN A STATION REVISE THE CONTENT OF A POLITICAL "USE?"

When a legally qualified candidate for office makes a "use" of a station, the station is *not* permitted to censor the candidate's message in any way.

While some political uses may contain content that the station might ordinarily choose not to broadcast, the station

cannot alter the use at all. However, the station is protected from any liability that may result from the candidate's message. This "no censorship" provision applies *only* to candidate advertising and *not* to third party advertising. Thus, stations need to take potential liability into account when deciding whether to accept such third-party ads.

WHAT RECORDS NEED TO BE KEPT?

The FCC's political file rule requires stations to maintain, and allow public inspection of, records of all requests for political time. These records must include details of:

- the nature and disposition of the requests;
- the schedule of time provided or purchased;
- the classes of time involved;
- the rates charged; and
- contact information of the purchaser

In addition to the FCC's political file requirements, BCRA requires that the broadcaster's public file contain all requests for time by anyone (including non-candidates) who seeks to communicate a message that refers either to: (1) a legally qualified candidate; or (2) any election to federal office; or (3) a national legislative issue of public importance. Because the political file is often reviewed by parties seeking equal opportunities, it is important for stations to keep the political file up to date at all times.

Note: since the political file is available for inspection by the public, care should be taken to remove or redact any confidential information, such as credit card or check numbers that might otherwise be included in the materials placed in the file.

As noted previously, this is a thumbnail overview of the political broadcasting rules. In the coming weeks and months, stations should review the rules in detail and confirm that their disclosure statements and station policies in place and up-to-date. As the election season approaches, station management should ensure that sales personnel are well informed about what the rules require and the recordkeeping tasks that they will need to fulfill.

Once the political advertising season begins in earnest, questions and controversies can arise quickly. Those questions and controversies can be complicated and require careful analysis. Don't hesitate to call your friendly neighborhood communications counsel for help.

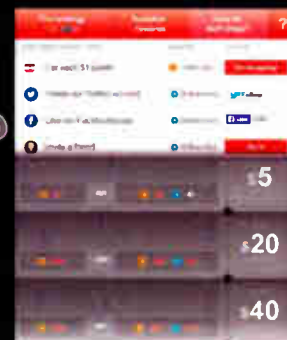
Daniel Kirkpatrick counsels radio and TV stations on compliance with FCC regulations affecting their day-to-day operations, as well as in the context of sale, purchase and financing transactions. The website of Fletcher, Heald & Hildreth is www.fhhlaw.com.

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Tascam DR-10X: Your Mic's New Partner

Keeping it simple makes everything much easier

PRODUCT EVALUATION

BY ALAN R. PETERSON

When it became feasible to record news reports and interviews on the spot with a smartphone and a decent mic, news hounds everywhere welcomed the change.

Gone were the weighty "portable" recording deck and its uncomfortable

replacement was purchased.

Portable Flash card recorders have been a suitable alternative for over a decade, but who needs X-Y stereo miking for a press conference? Or all those editing buttons, file format choices and input selectors getting in the way? When interviewing the FBI agent at the scene, one incorrect menu selection means not bringing the story home.

What radio needs is something small, inexpensive and truly portable that *just* records from a mono microphone with a minimum of menu madness. Just hit a

for one second and recording begins. From a cold off position, a slide forward starts recording immediately with no intermediate steps. *That's* the kind of nimble performance news reporters need in a recording device.

I tested my unit out with everyone's favorite utility mic — the EV 635 — for its popularity as well as its quirks. Being an omnidirectional mic, voices need to be close-in to be heard over the din of whatever background noise is present. In our case, there is very loud construction on a 19-story building going on next door. Perfect test conditions.

First, it was a surprise to see the



shoulder strap. Also gone was the risk of losing the story from a badly-placed impact to the DAT or MD deck, causing mistracking. Beautiful, pristine digital audio could be captured on a portable device they were already carrying and emailed as a file back to the studio.

Then came the reality. Spotty 4G service meant no delivery. Worse: losing, dropping or otherwise damaging said smartphone meant the recording was toast. And the user was out an average of \$500 to replace the phone. Life, contacts, passwords and social interaction were all on hold until repairs or a

button and Go!

Well, Tascam heard you. Say hello to the DR-10X: a tiny recorder suited to radio ENG and single-mic interviewing. It snaps directly to the XLR connector on your microphone, records to a MicroSD or SDHC card, and gives you back the freedom to pack light and move fast when the job demands it.

WORKIN' IT

Four buttons, a power switch and volume up/down buttons are all there is to navigate. The minuscule display is only one line tall, but includes everything at a glance: level meter, file name, battery life and elapsed time. And without any moving parts, battery demands are minimal — one AAA battery drives the recorder.

A two-position power switch gets you rolling. Slide the power switch backward for one second and the recorder is on and in standby mode. Push forward



low levels at which the device records. Opening a file in Adobe Audition, I noted peaks only around -12 dBFS. This is not a slam by any means. This much headroom means those political

PRODUCT CAPSULE

TASCAM DR-10X
Plug-on Micro Linear
PCM Recorder

Thumbs Up

- + Portable with no moving parts
- + Records to WAV file
- + Creates own safety recording
- + Uses common AAA cells

Thumbs Down

- Pricier than expected
- Really tiny buttons and display

MSRP: \$279; Street: \$180

For information, contact Tascam in California at (323) 726-0303 or visit tascam.com.

candidates can scream into my mic as much as they want, and I'll still bring home a clean recording.

Know why? The DR-10X has a clever feature called "dual rec mode" that automatically rolls a second background recording at a different level chosen by the user. If you have ever lost a primo interview because your record levels were too aggressive and the entire recording was one huge square wave, you will appreciate this feature to no end.

In fact, there are quite a few surprises under the two menu buttons, all of which are useful. A low-cut filter knocks out everything under 120 Hz for rumble-free recordings; a limiter keeps those loud politicians at bay; a mic gain selector helps match the mic to the recorder; and then there are the usual date/time and file name selectors that somehow even the best of us never seem to enter.

The DR10X records 24-bit/48 kHz WAV files. Long recordings can be a bit large, but they will be as crystal clear as you want them to be (as your mic can capture).

Some previous users have commented on noticeable noise when recording with the DR-10X. I have not noticed any worth mentioning. And on those low levels, gain make-up can be done in your audio editor of choice. In Audacity, for example, normalizing and applying "Dyson's Compressor" resolved any level issues I had and made my interview recording pop.

OBSERVATIONS

Dyson's Compressor is an LADSPA plug-in, available only in the Linux version of Audacity. Most any compressor plug-in would be suitable.

Remember the DR-10X is an audio

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recorder. You can't email the file back to the studio as you can with a smartphone. But you can quickly offload the recording to a laptop or other portable digital device via USB to make your edits. When you think about it, other than "because I *can*," why bring the entire studio into a high-risk situation when only a recording device is necessary?

Battery life depends on headphone use. Anywhere from 8 to 15 hours without the phones is typical, depending on battery type. Fortunately, AAA batteries are plentiful and cheap, compared to those weird proprietary batteries that came with portable DAT machines. Spares are easy to come by and carry.

You can't change the sample rate on the DR-10X, so you can't really tweak how much material you can fit on a MicroSD card. So why not carry more than one card? It's not like we all carried only one cassette in our go-kits back in the Stone Age.

Even though the DR-10X is designed to clip to a mic for on-the-go recording, nothing is stopping you from connecting it to the XLR output of a mixer for

Radio newbies, rejoice.
You've got a great little recorder in the Tascam DR-10X.

multiple-mic recording. Just watch the level coming out of the mixer and pad it down if you have to.

Optional equipment provided by the user should

include one sharp fingernail and really good eyesight. The buttons and the display are *really* tiny.

Last, the manual describes the versions of Windows and Mac OS that "agree" with the DR-10X. I can state that it works quite satisfactorily under UbuntuStudio (Linux) as well, if you are so inclined.

At \$279 list (around \$180 street price), the DR-10X was a bit pricier than what I would have expected, especially when compared to the \$100 DR-05, also from Tascam. But having said that, radio newbies, rejoice. You've got a great little recorder in the Tascam DR-10X.

Alan Peterson is production director for the Radio America Network, Arlington, Va., and oversees production of "Intelligent Medicine with Dr. Ronald Hoffman," "The Pet Show with Warren Eckstein" and "Mom Talk Radio," among other syndicated shows. He can be reached at apeterson@radioamerica.com.

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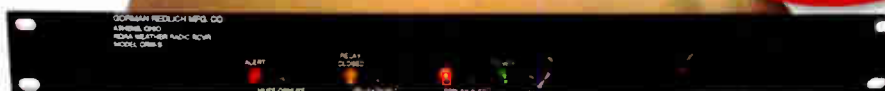
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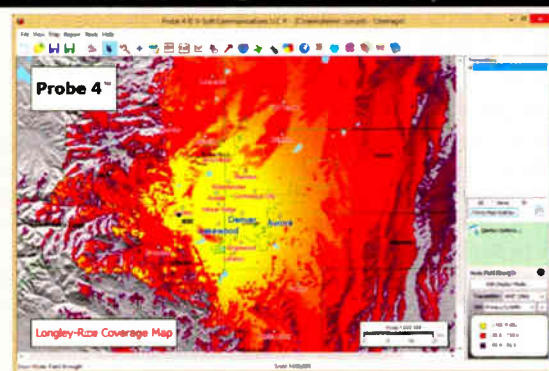
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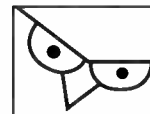
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Don't Make Your Problems My Problems

Instead of just saying "no," public radio should get creative and cooperate with ad agencies

COMMENTARY

BY EVAN BROWN

Recently, I made suggestions about ways public radio stations could increase their revenue streams from advertising and marketing agencies in the article "You're Leaving Money on the Table" in the Sept. 9 issue.

A number of these were commonsense suggestions to me, but I also received some fairly scathing responses (see facing page), so I would like to address them — sometimes with equal fervor.

First, and with all due respect, it is not my job as an ad agency professional to have a detailed and intimate understanding of the FCC as it impacts your industry. That is your job. Your responsibility is to propose ideas that can clear guidelines and at the same time satisfy our goals. The mantra of the marketing industry is "Don't make your problems my problems." Come forward with solutions instead.

REGULATION RESPONSE

And by the way, you aren't the only ones who have to deal with regulators.

Do you honestly think we enjoy writing disclaimers in car dealer radio spots? We probably hate writing them just as much as you hate hearing them. One agency I worked for had 80+ car dealer associations as clients across 40 states. We needed two full-time para-



legals on staff just to review the disclaimer copy and ensure that it fulfilled the appropriate financial regulations, which vary from state to state and can be impacted by three to five legislative bodies in each state.

Where you have essentially one principal regulator in "Uncle Charlie," we can come into contact with literally hundreds of local, state and federal regulators as well as lottery commissions, states' attorneys general, community zoning commissions, as well as the occasional aspiring politician who wants to stir up trouble to get attention. And we haven't even brought up our clients' legal teams, who can be even tougher than the regulators.

In short, we've learned to get around our regulatory challenges. Stop whining and figure out how to get around yours.

WE KNOW YOU

Next issue ... There were suggestions that agencies do not know about public radio and further do not wish to know. That is an absurd and false assumption. If you were to survey most agency executives and creatives, you would learn that consumption of public radio is very high among them, and the opinion of public radio is equally high.

Many execs listen to "Morning Edition" on the way to work, and many creatives have an NPR station's music playing quietly in the background as they contemplate new ideas. You apparently have no idea how captive of an audience you have among advertising agency people.

It is abundantly clear that they know a lot more about you than you know about them.

Additionally, the best media planners do not come into a planning situation with a preconceived notion that we are going to use one set of media and leave out another. It is our responsibility to be able to carry on a 10–15 minute conversation and educate a client on every mass medium out there, including public radio. The last thing we need is for a client to bring up a medium during a plan discussion that our media team knows little about.

BRAND INTEGRITY

I — and most media planners — recognize that public radio is not an advertising medium and have no desire

for you to make radical changes that adversely impact your relationships with your listeners. We do not want you to be commercial radio stations. There are plenty of them already.

We see public radio as a marketing medium that gives us an opportunity to demonstrate to certain target audiences that we support the organizations they support. That's good enough for us if the target audience is lucrative enough. We just want to be able to communicate our support in a manner that is consistent with the rest of our advertising and marketing programs.

We are, after all, specifically and exclusively contracted to develop and shepherd our clients' brand identities. Part of that task means using our *client-approved* creative, our talent, taglines and other elements in all possible situations, including public radio. So learn what our strategy is and figure out ways you can appropriately adapt to it. We are very willing to tell you. All you need to do is ask.

IMAGINE THE POTENTIAL

My harshest criticism is that it appears to me that many in public radio seem to have mastered the craft of proudly saying "no," then walking their merry way, content and satisfied that their pompous resistance has enabled them to leave those delicious-looking, yet most likely sour grapes on the table.

By consistently digging your feet in the sand while the rest of the media and marketing world around you has changed radically, you have, with arrogant blissful ignorance, succeeded in staying the same — and thus become obsolete in the process.

You are the butterfly that refuses to

(continued on page 30)

READER'S FORUM

UNDERWRITING VS. ADS

Evan Brown makes some good points about potentially untapped public radio revenue ("You're Leaving Money on the Table," Sept. 9 issue), but let's be honest: Public stations and commercial stations are apples and oranges. The business models are different, partly because public radio audiences will not tolerate the zany creative and clutter they choose to ignore on commercial stations, and are happy to pony up their own dollars to avoid it.

The assertion that commercial radio's creatives are "better at it" reveals a fundamental misunderstanding of how most public stations are perceived by their listeners. We know those listeners, hear from them every day. Loyal listeners complain when they perceive we are sounding too "commercial."

Many advertising agencies do work with public

stations, understand the copy restrictions imposed by FCC rules, work with us to figure out how to get the message out and the billing in. Our network of public stations does subscribe to RRC (Nielsen Audio), is top five in our market against iHeart, Cumulus and a host of others. We attract a lot of agency business, and while we could do more, we must also manage key avails to recognize grant funders, member donations and other types of revenue activity to reinforce awareness of our non-profit mission. Public radio is not a monolith. There are all manner of formats unsuitable to be standardized for the convenience of agencies.

Some public stations have multi-million dollar endowments, choose to focus on attracting large corporate and private donor funding as more practical than chasing short-term retail sales with all the back-and-forth dealing on rates and copy.

One thing I have learned from years of commercial and, more recently, public radio management experience is there are many ways to operate radio stations,

and each is the right way when well-executed.

It is not public radio's problem that ad agencies bundle ad placement funds with creative that public stations cannot use. And we sometimes turn away buys that come our way on principle as well as to stay within the rules.

Those of us with commercial experience — and there are many in public radio — recall lucrative placements around election cycles, buys intended to influence public policy, spots heavy on call-to-action, unverifiable claims and over-the-top hyperbole. FCC non-commercial radio rules clearly prohibit such material. More to the point, our highly educated, affluent and extremely loyal public radio audiences are not interested.

*Dr. Michael S. Ameigh
Assistant Provost for Budget and Operations,
SUNY College at Oswego
General Manager, WRVO Public Media
Syracuse, N.Y.*

Talkback: Readers Have Their Say

The following reader comments were posted in response to Evan Brown's commentary "You're Leaving Money on the Table: An open letter to public radio from an ad agency media professional" in the Sept. 9 issue. Also see the author's reply commentary on page 28.

istockphoto/creator76

Good lord, this is drivin'. "You have to accept advertising agency's creative. The agency ... has client authority to ensure that their message is consistent across all media in which it appears." The FCC most specifically does not allow this.

This argument is really undermined by the fact that it does not acknowledge FCC limits on underwriting messages. Public radio can't just use your creative.

There are errors in this piece, including the author's apparent unfamiliarity with the FCC's requirements governing what can be said on the air. But the writer also has a point: Public radio and TV stations are often needlessly complex to deal with. They often stress their independence by refusing to synchronize underwriting standards and requirements. It can be a shocking and annoying obstacle for a buyer of conventional media, who often run away rather than deal with it. This proves the author's point: We are leaving money on the table. Instead of debating with him and his like, we in public broadcasting ought to be asking how could stations become less needlessly complicated and, thus, get some of that additional money being left on the table.

One cannot say that localism is the savior of radio on one hand yet decry a lack of standards/ synchronization across multiple stations on the other. If you have more of one, you must have less of the other. ... I take more than a little offense at the accusation that pubmedia "refuses" to do anything. So we don't pound a square peg of commercial ads into the round hole of public radio? Why is that our problem? Public radio is different. Different audiences, different organizational schema, different content, and different FCC rules. Why should ad agencies expect us to be the same as commercial radio? It's like that [scene in the] movie "Office Space":

MICHAEL: Yeah, well, at least your name isn't Michael Bolton.

SAMIR: You know, there's nothing wrong with that name.

September 9, 2015

GM JOURNAL

You're Leaving Money on the Table

An open letter to public radio from an ad agency media professional

UNDERWRITING

BY EVAN BROWN

Throughout my career of planning and buying advertising, I have constantly been disappointed that I cannot integrate public radio into my media mixes as well as I have wanted.

Meetings with stations lead to good intentions to do more with each other, but we end up doing very little if anything at all because we are so hamstrung by the various walls the stations and the medium inadvertently put up and are reticent to tear down.

This is disappointing because public radio has huge marketing potential.

The sad part is that public radio stations are unnecessarily leaving a lot of revenue on the table due simply to procedural issues, a lack of understanding of the advertising and marketing firm's processes, requirement of large amounts of time relative to the budget, and other issues that make it difficult to work with.

Many of these issues should be easy to resolve. So here are a few suggestions.

* **Standardize!** It is said that each station sets its own guidelines to underwriting messages (spot length, copy guidelines, production limitations, etc.) to preserve its individual identity. However, your station's identity comes from your programming and the makeup of the market you serve — not the underwriting messages you sell. A lack of common standards severely limits public and it has teams that do that. It also has client authority to ensure that their message is consistent across all media in which it appears. Frankly, the agency creative teams are better than yours.

* **Commercial stations are your competition.** Even if you don't see them as that way, they see you that way. If a radio sales rep meets a potential client who says they only "advertise" on "NPR," rest assured that rep has Nielsen Audio, Scarborough, Media Audit or other data that would show the client how much better their station delivers the client's target audience than the NPR station. Non-commercial or not, you're just broadcasting over the air. When you are out in the business community, you need to approach your clients as commercial entities do. If you consider yourself "above" the way commercial stations go after business, you will always be "below" your potential. You are competing with for-profit entities across all teams, extensive marketing tools and a willingness to bend rules to make a sale. You need to be willing to have and do the same.

As Walt Kelly once wrote, "We have met the enemy, and he is us." Take a serious, constructive and critical look at yourselves and ask the question, "Are we successful because of what we do ... or despite what we do?"

Evan Brown has worked for large corporate and independent advertising agencies like McCannErickson, Momentum Worldwide, Bates USA, Doner, Fichtelberg and MARC USA. He has been involved in both public and commercial radio, advertising sales and buying both at the local market and at the network levels.

radioworld.com | **RADIOWORLD** 37

MICHAEL: There *was* nothing wrong with it ... until I was about 12 years old and that no-talent ass clown became famous and started winning Grammys.

SAMIR: Hmm ... well, why don't you just go by Mike instead of Michael?

MICHAEL: No way! Why should I change? He's the one who sucks.

I think ad buyers should be careful what they wish for. I reckon the main reason there is inconsistency in what different stations will allow is because some stations are more willing than others to stray from the spirit and/or the letter of the FCC regs. Were stations to get together and standardize, I bet they'd come up with standards that are more conservative than many clients would like.

Really? Not one word about how a huge percentage of agencies out there have no clue how to structure spots to be FCC-legal for non-commercial entities, and no desire to learn? Ever wonder why a lot of public radio outlets don't want to be bothered dealing with agencies? It's not some mythical idea of "preserving their identity"... few NPR outlets are gonna leave phat stacks of cash on the table over that. They don't want to be bothered because a lot — not all, but a lot — of agencies have no clue that 80 percent of what they want to say cannot be said on noncommercial radio. And when you try to work with them on that, they either try to steamroll you or they walk away.

Many planners don't want the extra work of delivering a qualified uncluttered environment for their clients and explaining why their CPMs are justifiable higher. Too much work. Let's go ahead and run another auto brand in a six-minute pod with four competitors. They still delivered the GRPs at the CPM. What more do you want?

OPINION

READER'S FORUM

LPFM CHALLENGES

I appreciated the front-page story about LPFM in the Sept. 23 issue of Radio World, "Some LPFM Permittees Surrender CPs."

Peter Gutmann was quoted as saying "some parties discovered they lacked the expertise necessary ..."

There are so many things that can go wrong for people building a radio station without proper broadcast experience. The picture, credited to The Prometheus Radio Project, shows an antenna bay mounted and the hardware being tightened. The antenna is oriented sideways with the feedpoint turned horizontal. Even though some power will be radiated towards the horizon, a huge portion of the signal will be radiated into space, towards the ground and at various angles unusable for listeners, while the signal will be significantly lower in many desired directions.

Someone with an eye for detail should naturally wonder which way the antenna should be oriented and check the manual or consult someone with broadcast engineering experience. Even checking some Internet Web pages of broadcast antenna ads could have been helpful for them.

Even when there is publicly available information, the many details for radio can be overwhelming to those inexperienced in the finer details from specific area of broadcasting. They can't just depend on advice from someone with management or announcing skills.

This underscores a purpose for the FCC designing into the LPFM rules a less complicated system of licensing that is easier for compliance. One example is mileage spacing instead of using contours. Even with the simpler rules, there is great confusion, as the article clearly portrays.

When done correctly, LPFM can provide a good service. But that does not come cheaply nor does it often occur accidentally. It requires very experienced people being involved regardless whether they are volunteers, contractors or consultants.

It is a bit ironic that an organization promoting their volunteer and paid services and that is asking the FCC for more LPFM privileges would supply such a clear visual aid of an LPFM problem.

*Alan Kilgore, CPBE
Chief Engineer
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Suring, Wis.*

GRAMMAR FOUL

I totally enjoyed and appreciated Paul McLane's "From the Editor" piece in the Sept. 1 issue. However, as a war child of 1930s New England liberal arts alums (note no specific "us/a" suffixes), grammar jumps off the page to my eyes and ears. Also was browbeaten into taking Latin in high school "because it would help your College Board scores" — which, I admit, it did.

I read the editor's article and then turned to Alan Jurison's article on HD Radio diversity delay. It's exactly at the relevance and level I believe appropriate for your readers who are broadcast engineers. But then, OMG, I turned to page 8 and right in front of me in the center box is one of the glaring errors that are so common today. "Client" is singular; "their" is plural. It's screamingly wrong and illiterate to my eye — distracts from the message big-time. How about old-fashioned but correct "his" or awkward "his/her" 'stead of "their"? Or, make it go away by using plural "clients"? The first two sentences in the second column on page 10 have the same problem.

*AF (Rick) Melzig
Broadcast Engineer
Pahoa, Hawaii*



CREATIVE

(continued from page 28)

come out of the cocoon.

The disappointing part of this entire discussion is that the marketing community still sees far more marketing potential in public radio than public radio sees (or perhaps wants to see) in itself.

It takes hard and diligent work to figure out a way to say "yes." It takes research, occasional conversations with your attorneys, a willingness to take risks, and a desire to modify your offering to fit the needs of the marketing world of today, yet retain a firm grasp of the essence and beauty of your medium.

I will say there are also many who see both the need and benefits of a transformation (or perhaps, evolution). I applaud you and your courage to think differently. My hope is that you are part of a quiet majority, because your voices register much lower on the VU meter than the voices of dogmatism.

To the rest of you, consider how much you could gain if you replaced cantankerous resistance with constructive engagement and dialogue. We could do some great things together if you did. We really could.

Evan Brown has worked for large corporate and independent ad agencies like McCann/Jay, Momentum Worldwide, Bates USA, Doner, Fahlgren and MARC USA. He has been involved in both public and commercial radio, having worked on air and in production and advertising sales, and buying commercial and public radio for clients at local and network levels.

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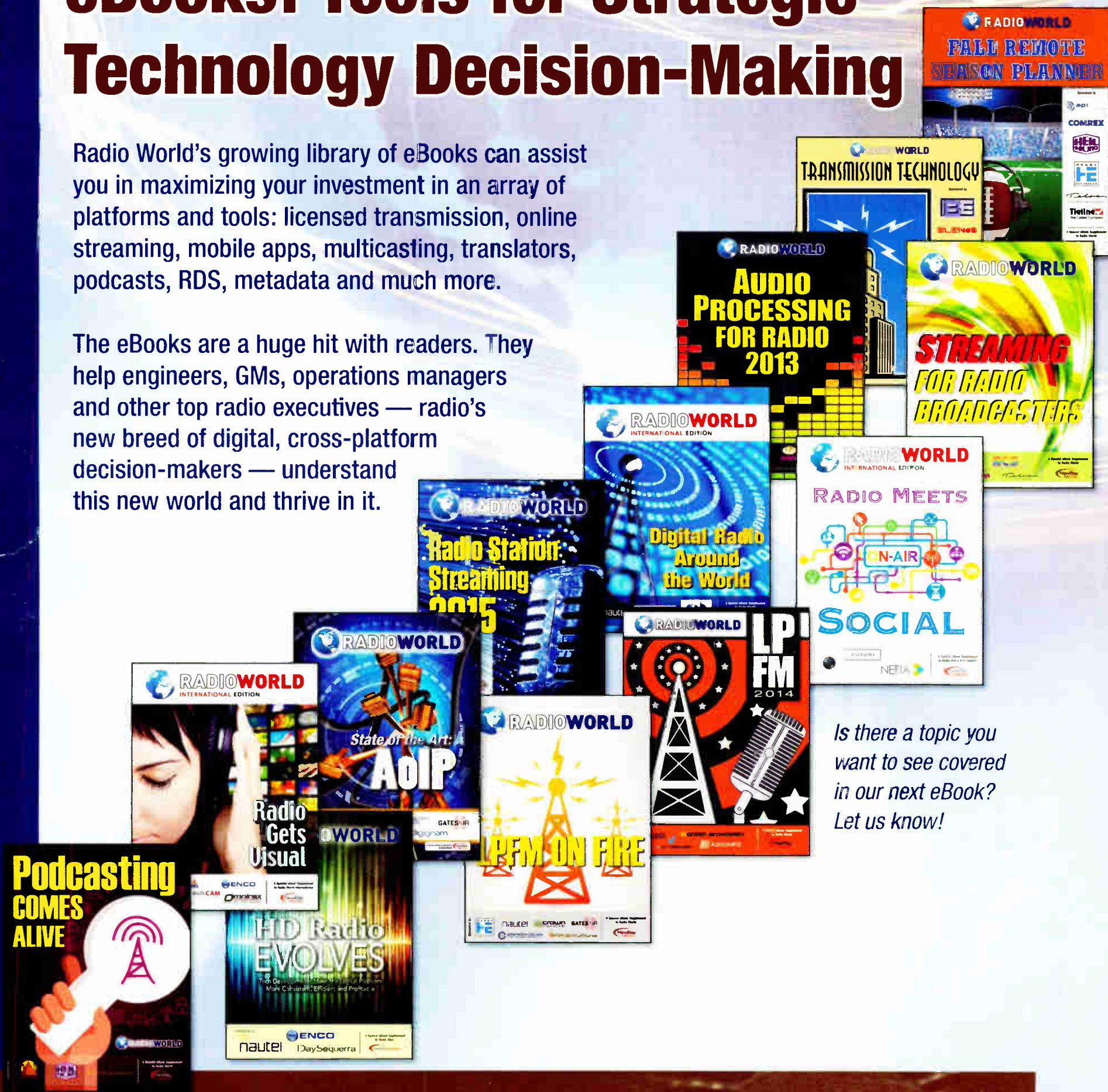
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