NAB Readies Plan To Present New Face To Industry, Public

NAB has set about the task of refurbishing the image it presents to the broadcast industry, Capitol Hill, and the public at large. The campaign is a follow-up to a recent "community service audit" which concluded that NAB’s image is getting better, but there’s still plenty of room for improvement.

The audit, conducted by Washington consultant John Gutenberg, has not been released in its entirety for fear that sensitive passages would be taken out of context or blown out of proportion. However, here are some of the changes that may be seen as the report is implemented:

• The industry and member stations will be told more about the NAB’s many functions and services.
• Stations will get more practical “how-to” information, such as how to promote radio as a medium.
• Capitol Hill will see a more public-minded industry volunteering for worthy causes, rather than one that only appeals for relief through inflexible lobbyists given little latitude to horse-trade.
• Networks and group operators will see themselves having more influence. Gutenberg found a perception by many that NAB, as reflected by its board makeup, is dominated by small market radio interests.
• Publications from NAB’s many departments will adopt a unified graphic look, and emphasize practical informational over “ puff-piece.”
• President Eddie Fritts will carve out a higher profile with the general public as spokesman for the entire industry.

Beer Blast, Porn Rock Dangers

Newly-elected NAB Chairman Ted Snider says his goal is “to enhance communications with all of our constituencies,” including broadcasters. “They sometimes fall into the trap of doing things that are not in the public interest,” he argues. “For instance, sponsoring beer busts and two-for-one happy hour promotion. That doesn’t help our industry.

“We’re not trying to tell them how to run their business or to censor them. But we need to bring things like porn rock lyrics to the attention of broadcasters so they realize that the consequences of doing some of these things just to get ratings in the short run hurts us in the long run.”

Ted Snider

Helping Vs. Lobbying Congress

“We want to stay in closer touch with other allied industry organizations, particularly the receiver manufacturers. Our other constituencies include regulators and Congress. We want more two-way communications, to be interested in what the Congress is interested in—We operate in the public interest and necessity and we’re in a position to help a lot of people.”

“A lot of Congressmen have some very noble goals and things on their agenda that we can help them with. For instance, right now there’s a big movement afoot to help locate lost children. Nobody can do a better job of helping than radio and television. We can help them achieve some of their goals, and we want them to know we’re not just interested in broadcasting; we’re interested in our communities.”

News Briefs

Tax Evasion Impeils WHBI License Winners

The initial decision awarding the license of WHBI/Newark to Frances Antonin and Mary Garcia & KELY/San Luis Obispo, CA, has been remanded to a new judge to weigh new evidence that Garcia failed to pay federal income tax for 1981 and 1982.

In remanding the case to the judge, the FCC Review Board said violations of federal law “raise serious questions as to whether an applicant possesses a responsible attitude toward his or her obligations as a broadcast licensee.”

Garcia has since paid the taxes, but the board said she failed to do so until after a tax lien was brought to light by a competing applicant. The board added, “It appears that Ms. Garcia may have deliberately chosen not to pay her taxes so that she could demonstrate the requisite financial qualifications to be awarded a broadcast license.”

The judge was ordered to hold hearings on several issues, including the pair’s finances and the truthfulness of their 1982 certification that they had the money to build and operate the new FM for three months without revenue.

KUNA, KSLV Renewed With EEO Conditions

The FCC last week granted license renewal to KUNA & KSLV/Salt Lake City, UT, and ordered the stations to make detailed Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) reports for the next two years. The reports must include a minority recruitment sources, as well as the race or origin of all employees and recent job applicants.

The Commission’s EEO Branch found that none of the stations’ 16 fulltime employees was a minority, even though 11.4% of the local workforce is made up of minorities, however, the stations were warned about their lack of Hispanic employees in 1981, and the Commission said the lack of progress since then shows a failure “to ensure that all qualified persons, including Hispanics are considered for all station positions.”

The curves have approved a new compensation plan for reducing educational FM/Channel 6 interference, and lifted a freeze on applications in both services.

To the general public, says Sni- der, “We need to communicate better what we’re doing as an industry. We do all these good things, but we don’t ever summarize it for them. You’d think people would recognize what good citizens we are, but apparently they don’t.”

INVOICES HID TRADEOUT

WBSS Fined $10,000 For Fraudulent Billing

The FCC has fined WBSS/Pompano Beach, FL $10,000 for preparing invoices showing that a lawn equipment supplier paid $33,000 for advertising that actually was bought in a tradeout for $16,000 in “merchandise and services.”

The dealer turned around and used the invoices to get $16,000 in credits — double what it was entitled to — under the Snapper division’s 50% co-op advertising plan.

WBSS argued that its invoice procedure was not intentionally designed to mislead, and merely had been carried over from a previous owner 14 years earlier. It also pinned blame on Snapper for failing to confirm the accuracy of the local dealer’s documents.

Rejecting those arguments, the FCC noted that the station official who put together the tradeout deal, William Beaton, has 20 years of broadcast experience and is “thoroughly familiar with Snapper’s and other cooperative advertising programs.” It concluded that Beaton must have known that “in failing to indicate the existence of the two-for-one trade on the invoices, Snapper could have been misled as to the amounts charged.”

California Broadcasters Praise “The Party’s Over,” a recent drunk driving campaign by the California Association of Broadcasters (CAB), won a resolution of commendation from the California legislature. Above, Assemblyman Steve Cole presents the resolution to CAB Secretary-Treasurer Robert Fox, President of KVSN & KNAY/Ventura.

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