

Sunscreen For Radio

Everybody's Free (To Legal ID)

One of Top 40 and Hot AC's hottest "reaction" records this Spring has been "The Sunscreen Song", *Everybody's Free (To Wear Sunscreen)*. Kind of "The Desiderata" of the 90's. The text was originally written as a commencement speech by Chicago Tribune columnist **Mary Schmich**, but was made famous by Hollywood Director **Baz Lurhmann**, who directed *Romeo & Juliet* (in fact, the background music comes from the soundtrack). The full performance can be found on an album called *Something For Everybody* on Capitol Records.

Several stations have wisely

featured the text as an interactive treat on their websites. (Check out WPLJ/New York or KYSR/LA.) (www.plj.com/BIGSHOW/everybody.html) (www.star987.com/SUNSCREEN.html).

As with all good reaction songs, several parodies have surfaced.

(Continued — See Sunscreen on Page 4)

Concepts

A weekly series of forgotten basics in bite-size doses

Overt Formatting

A lot of radio stations today are seeing their well-intentioned repetitive branding/positioning efforts backfiring. If your ratings are going South, even though you think everyone's hearing your message, maybe ***overt formatting*** is culprit.

(Continued — See Capsule Concepts on page 11)

Continuing Education For The Dedicated Radio Programmer

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Programmer's Digest Publisher/Editor **Todd Wallace** continues to maintain his Phoenix-based programming consultation firm, **Todd Wallace/Associates**. He has provided programming consultation services to over 100 radio stations in the U.S., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines. Believing that "good logic, solid strategy, and cunning tactics know no boundaries", his clients have included formats of all types in markets of all sizes. Reach TW at (480) 443-3500 or e-mail: TW3tw3@aol.com

The Sun Never Sets ...

Travelogue May 1999

The Todd Tour of the UK was fast and furious — and Kathy and I had a ball, spending time in and around London, Manchester, and Liverpool. And, of course, listening to a lot of great radio along the way.

As a result, you'll notice a decided English flavor sprinkled throughout our promotional and stationality rundowns, this issue and next.

As you listen to BritRadio, it's interesting to see how the various commercial stations in England jockey for position against the BBC's collection of brands (Radio One, the pop music outlet; Radio 2, the MOR approach; Radio 3, the classical network; Radio 4, the "national institution" of spoken-word programming; Radio 5, known as "Five Alive", with news, sports, information, and BBC GLR, (Greater London Radio) specifically targeting the #1 market). You'll hear programmes on the BBC you won't hear anywhere else in the world (like "Desert Island Discs", celebrities telling which songs they'd take with them to a desert island, and "The Live Obituary Show", where the big names in sport tell how they'd like to be remembered).

In commercial radio, nowhere do you hear the term "less commercials" or "fewer interruptions" being used (after all, the BBC stations play zero commercials, so it'd be a little hard living up to an empty promise). Also complicating the situation is the fact that most radio spotloads across the pond are driven by 30-second announcements not 60's (so a 12-minute limit could easily result in 24 units per hour — sometimes more, if 10's or 15's are factored in).

I was also impressed with how music-intensive British breakfast shows were, even the top-rating ones (especially compared to the self-indulgent gabfests we hear on so many American morning shows).

The radio audience rating system in the UK, RAJAR (Radio Joint Audience Research), is a diary service utilizing a Monday-Sunday diary, measuring listeners 15+. The diary is personally placed with an initial interview, where the respondent lists all of the stations he/she normally listens to, and then a grid-system diary is custom-printed, listing the stations mentioned, which, in turn, the respondent then "ticks-off", quarter-hour by quarter-hour. Sample sizes are quite substantial (over 54,000 diarykeepers nationwide in each Quarterly report).

The most recent book shows Top 40 Capital FM in the

London lead (with about a 16% share of listening, followed by BBC Radio 2 at about a 12, BBC Radio One on about a 10 share,

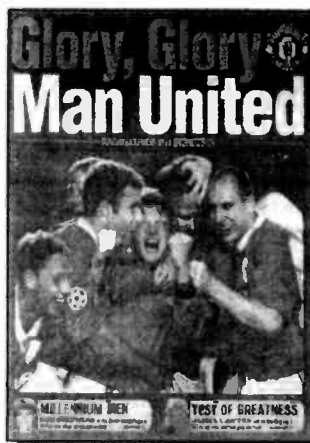
as is Radio 4. Soft AC Magic 105.4 (formerly Melody FM) recently overtook Mainstream AC Heart 106.2 for the Adult Contemporary crown (by a 6 to 5 share margin), with Pop/Rock Virgin Radio showing in the high 4's, barely ahead of Oldies outlet Capital Gold. BBC Radio 5 registers in the 3-share range, slightly ahead of dance-based Kiss 100. The remainder of the stations pull less than 2% of the audience (usually because they don't cover the entire expansive London metro).

Our main mission on this trip was to meet with the EMAP Radio Group, comprised of 18 stations around the country (including two in London). We conducted a two-day seminar/workshop for all of their Programme Directors about *The Advanced Programming Basics behind Music, Mornings, Marketing, and Momentum™*. They were a great group of dedicated, thinking programmers. Special thanks to Group PD Paul Kavanagh for arranging the workshop — and for his hospitality. Talk about great corporate slogans — how's this —

EMAP: *Listening Hard.*



As fate would have it,



we happened to be in Manchester the evening of the football (soccer) European Cup Final in Barcelona, which Manchester United (representing all of Britain) won, beating Germany in come-from-behind fashion in the last 53 seconds of play, which made the win just that much more dramatic. ("That cannot be true", said the stunned German TV commentator.)

The city of Manchester, of course, *erupted!* (Note to U.S. readers: this is as big as winning the Super Bowl, arguably bigger). (Continued — on page 3)

"On average, a 10% increase in partisan conversion will result in a 15.5% increase in AQH. In comparison, a 10% increase in cume will usually only net a 2.5% increase."

**— Reg Johns
Fairst Direct**

TW Tip #1101, #7223, #19068, and #20031

The Sun Never Sets ...

rival brekky personality Chris Tarrant lifting up the



(Continued — from page 2)

Sirens, fireworks, horns-honking, pubs open with drunken celebrants on every corner, all night long! Our hotel, the Victoria & Albert, was right downtown, right across the street from Granada Television, so we heard it all — until 6am! The next morning, Key 103's breakfast show perfectly captured the essence of all the excitement everyone was feeling. There was some kind of Cup mention, every set, all morning long. That night, the team was paraded through the streets before a crowd of nearly 250,000 cheering people (mind you, Manchester's population is barely a million!). Key 103 brekky personality **Mike Toulan** emceed the celebration at the end of the parade route. One of those great life-memories!



From the cheap thrills department: Liverpool is but a 45-minute train-ride away from Manchester, so we had the chance to do the obligatory Beatles/Mersey tour. We walked Matthew Street,

saw the site of the original Cavern Club, toured **Paul McCartney's** boyhood home (preserved as it was in the 60's), and visited The Beatles Story, a walking tour which told their story chronologically in multi-media fashion, with interesting exact replications of The Cavern Club, Brian Epstein's NEMS record store, the Abbey Road studios, etc. (so you could imagine exactly what it must have been like).

Back to London, where a breaking scandal was hitting the front pages and leading the news. (There's just *nothing* like the Fleet Street tabloid press when it comes to uncovering titillating stories — and fanning flames!) And wouldn't you know it, this time it involved radio, full page, front page! In this case, Heart FM's breakfast co-host **Kara Noble** allegedly sold a photograph she snapped 10 years ago of

bikini-top of **Sophie Rhys-Jones** (who'll be marrying **Prince Edward** in just a royal fortnight) to the Sun newspaper for the sum of 100,000 pounds. The Sun promptly published the topless snapshot on "page 3" (the place Londoners traditionally expect to see such naughty photos). Buckingham Palace and Prime Minister **Tony Blair** immediately launched an unprecedented scathing attack on the paper, demanding a formal apology, which Editor **David Yellend** quickly groveled to provide. As part of the fallout, Kara became "the most hated woman in the UK" (the British equivalent of **Linda Tripp**), and was promptly fired by Heart (with no explanation). Seems she had *assured* soon-to-be Princess Sophie that she'd never show those photos to anyone, so she was branded a "traitor", selling out her former friend for a few quid. Tarrant, meanwhile, was center-stage, angrily attacking Kara's actions and vehemently denying any romantic involvement with Sophie (who was working as a PR girl for Capital FM when the photos were taken). His two minute breakfast rant was rebroadcast as part of the lead story on of the nightly TV newscasts (including the BBC). (What war in Kosovo?)

The weather couldn't have been better for our Road Show. "British Sun Time" (their version of the daylight spring forward) meant it stayed light until 10pm and we experienced mostly sunny days with a few "wispy clouds" and "thunderly showers" (as the local met office termed it).

The Underground (tube) took us everywhere we needed to go with incredible efficiency (although we learned to never again hop a packed train during rush hour!).

Can't wait to go back. We *LOVE* London! (Harrod's Food Halls, especially!)

Quick shameless plug: If your station/group is interested in sponsoring one of TW's live in-person presentations about the nuances of *advanced programming basics* (with PowerPoint slides and tons of hand-outs so that everybody gets a toy), just call (480) 443-3500. These workshop/seminars are available in one-, two-, or three-day sessions, customized to your particular needs or desires. (We've been told it's the greatest thing since One Day Cricket!)

TW Tip #5114, #6210, #12027, #20032, and #21033



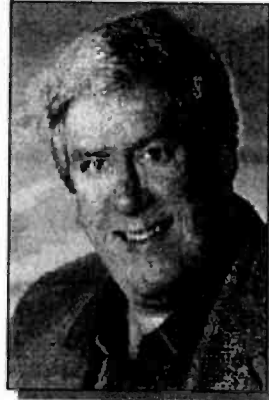
Sunscreen For Radio Everybody's Free (To Legal ID)

(Continued — from page 1)

Perhaps the cleverest was an "inside" adaptation for radio programmers, entitled *Everybody's Free (To Legal ID)*, a collaboration by WPXY/Rochester PD **Clarke Ingram** and **Scott Fybush** (a reporter for Time/Warner cable news channel "R News", who also has a radio past, including WBZ/Boston). What started out as a joke began looking downright profound as the points began unfurling.

You've probably seen one of several post-edited versions which have been e-mailed globally over the past few weeks. But I thought you'd appreciate seeing the full original, unaltered version. (It's featured as a special "PB" lift-out, suitable for framing on page 5). I think you'll find it brilliantly hits home as a timely (and timeless) reminder about how to stay centered as you go about mothering a million details on your winning radio station.

Clarke Ingram is a 20-year programming veteran. He's been OM/PD of CBS/Infinity's WPXY in Rochester for the past 5 years, having also served as PD for KZZP/Phoenix, WBZZ/Pittsburgh, and KRQ/Tucson (which was America's highest-rated Top 40 station during his tenure). In his past life as a top-rated air personality, he also worked for WHTZ/New York, and WEGX/Philadelphia.



Clarke can be reached via e-mail at —
cingram@aol.com.

TW Tip #7224, ##8157, and #21034

Dr. Don's Timeless Rx For New Millennium Morning Talent

Part 2 (Continued from "PB" issue #39)

Two weeks ago, retired morning personality **Dr. Don Rose** shared some of his secrets for getting #1 ratings in the morning (as he did for years on stations like KFRC in San Francisco, WFIL in Philadelphia, WQXI in Atlanta, etc. during their respective heydays). Among his tastier tidbits:

- ✓ **People are interested in three things from their morning person: they like to hear about people, animals, and some illusion to sexual impropriety.**
- ✓ **Consistency is actually more important than being great.**
- ✓ **Uniqueness, doing something nobody else is doing, makes you stand out from the pack.**

- ✓ **What you say doesn't necessarily have to be funny, as long as it is *sincere*.**
- ✓ **Keep looking for the right spot to slot a line you know is funny (Dr. Don once waited 30 days for the perfect opening, but when it opened, it was a killer!)**

This week: Insights about timing and drops, "paying your civic rent", and Dr. Don's "dirty little secret" about how to break format.

PB: Do you have any advice about comedy "timing"?

DDR: Y'know, I don't know that you can "teach" timing, I think you have to kinda' "feel it". And I think the reason a lot of young

personalities have their timing all wrong is because they're not sure of themselves enough to wait that right amount of time. They feel the clock ticking.

PB: What do you think constitutes a good "drop-in"?

DDR: Like the sound effects that I used? I suppose repetition of something that just sounds funny. We had a terrific one at KFRC, for example, that we called it "the horny Santa", which we tended to use after something to do with the illusion of impropriety. It was a "Ho Ho Ho Ho" with a good snort on the end. And that turned out to be kind of a camp thing. The way

(Continued — See Dr Don's Rx on page 9)

Sign Hanging On Einstein's Wall At Princeton

Thanks to **Bruce Maiman** at KDON in Monterey and **Doug Erickson** for finding this centering reminder

**"Not everything that counts can be counted,
and not everything that can be counted counts."**

TW Tip #7225 and #19069

Drink plenty of Jolt.

Be kind to your ears. You'll miss them when they're gone.

Maybe you'll do mornings, maybe you won't. Maybe you'll have good ratings, maybe you won't. Maybe you'll be washed up at 40, or maybe you'll be at Z-100 on your 75th anniversary.

Whatever you do, don't congratulate yourself too much. Or berate yourself either.

Your ratings are half chance. So are Randy Michaels'.

Enjoy your microphone. Use it every way you can.

Don't be afraid of it, or what management tells you to do with it. It's the greatest instrument you'll ever use.

Hit the post. Even if you have nowhere to do it but in your own car.

Read the format clocks, even if you don't follow them. Do NOT read Inside Radio, it will only make you ornery.

Get to know Corporate. You never know when your GM will be gone for good.

Be nice to your engineers. They're your best link to the transmitter, the people most likely to be there at 3am in the future.

Understand that radio stations come and go. But for the precious few, you should hold on.

Work hard to bridge the gaps with your contacts, because the older you get, the more you need favors from the PDs who hired you when you were young.

Do Modern Rock once, but leave before it makes you hard. Do A/C once, but leave before it makes you soft.

Aircheck.

Accept certain inalienable truths: station prices will rise, owners will be frugal, you AND your material will get older.

And when you do, you'll fantasize that station prices were reasonable, owners were generous, and stations respected their listeners. **Respect YOUR listeners.**

Don't expect anyone else to run the board for you.

Maybe you'll have a hard drive, maybe you'll have a long record, but you never know when either one might run out.

Don't mess too much with your voice, or by the time you're 40, you'll sound like Moe Preskell.

Be careful which indie's advice you buy, but be patient with the assistant who supplies it.

Advice is a form of nostalgia. Dispensing it is like . . .

pulling a Seventies hit off the shelf, sampling it, getting Puff Daddy to produce it, and putting it back in rotation until it burns out. This is also known as CONSULTING.

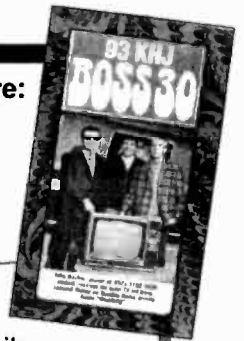
But trust me on the call letters.

The AUTHORIZED "BOSS" Memos

**Flashback to October 27, 1967 —
as JACOBS KICKS ASS to
wake up the KHJ Boss Jocks!**

The Top 3 songs on the KHJ Boss 30 are:

- 1) It Must Be Him Vicki Carr
- 2) Soul Man Sam & Dave
- 3) Please Love Me Forever Bobby Vinton
Woman, Woman by Gary Puckett
& The Union Gap is Boss Hitbound



To: KHJ Boss Jocks

From: Ron Jacobs

Oct. 27, 1967

Two years ago, the right people were convinced that KHJ could go rock and quite possibly rise from its horrible rating position in the market and, as those of you who were here remember, a complete number was done to get it going. From May of 1965 (when KHJ had a 2.2 in the morning to KRLA's 21.8%), a hell of a lot of sweat and effort has been put into this thing by you . . . and me . . . and Drake . . . and everyone connected with KHJ. Some of those people are still here (like you and me) and others ain't. But it is up to us to sustain the momentum we've got going for us . . . and above all: not to get fat, happy, and complacent. Whether you've heard it so often you know longer get the message, or you don't really think it applies, there is much truth to the statement: OVERCONFIDENCE KILLS!

Now, I don't say everyone is walking around assuming that just by showing up we're going to be #1 . . . but if overconfidence isn't killing us . . . complacency is causing at least the symptoms of a serious disease. There we were, coming off not-so-bad summer ratings, after the Series, with a hell of a lot (we thought) going for us and laughing at the "nothing" being put out by our competition. We thought we just might have enough going to offset the automatic drop which occurs after the kids go back to school. THERE'S A HELL OF A LOT BEING PRODUCING for your 180 minutes??? Or are you reading the racing form, always "going to the bathroom" when news is on, discussing at great lengths the football odds, posing for photographers, calling for records from the playlist with no consideration of tempo, style, popularity, when they were last played, and all the other non-think crap which has added up to some pretty lousy music sequences on this station the past several weeks.

How long, or what will it take, to make you realize that all the BASICS must be done all the time in order to hold, let alone increase, our position??? A printed rating page showing you #4 to some no-talent on another station??? A one-way ticket back to a 250-watt station in Barstow??? No one paying any attention to you at Nickodell's??? If everyone isn't putting out all the time, when we can't ever expect to do better! And unless we do better, we'll always have a KRLA or a KFWB thinking they're right on the verge of closing in on us. OUR LETDOWNS SUSTAIN THE COMPETITION'S ATTEMPTS TO PICK US OFF!

Stop . . . for a moment . . . and consider what it would be like to work at a station which didn't: spend more money than you've ever seen to keep contests going all the time (remember the last place you worked, where they did a contest, if at all, maybe during the ratings, and the listeners could win sweatshirts, or perfume, or even a TOASTER!) . . . send a full-time sports man to the World Series and a newsmen to Washington for the peace rally (did you do that in Omaha . . . or Fresno . . . or Philadelphia . . . or San Diego?) . . . put together an album like the Double Golden (with your pictures in it) which is already in 30,000 homes . . . get Desilu to open up on a Saturday (for the second time in their history) just to accommodate our contest finalists . . . spend \$6,000 for one tape recorder in production . . . fight a fantastic battle to get the news-time down so your show has only got one tune-out per three hours (unless you tune 'em out) . . . have scenes going which make the CIA look like the Boy Scouts so that you can World Premier an exclusive (while the guy on against you goes crazy) . . . give you a contract with more security than anyone ever thought would exist in Top 40 radio . . . spend more money on jingles than most stations spend on promotion (singing your name, to use on your show) . . . set a pace which is copied from Bakersfield to Boston. THINK ABOUT IT. It's all here . . . and so are you.

EGO . . . EGO . . . EGO . . . you've got to realize that this is a team effort which requires 100% from you during your 180-minute gig to stay on top 168 hours per week. "Team" effort means you read (and absorb) what's being said in this memo . . . not flip to the next page to see how "you" did in the ratings. "That's alright, my numbers are up, and I'm cool." You been told over and over and over what must be done all the time by the station in order for us to stay on top. You only have to do it for three hours a day, and if everyone does, then, and only then, is it happening for KHJ all the time.

(Continued — See **Boss Memo** on page 7)

The AUTHORIZED "BOSS" Memos

(Continued — from page 6)

This "#1" station is doing more than you know to keep it all going. There are things happening which don't concern you which are being done to glorify you as a "Boss" Jock to keep those little plastic boxes filled with commercials, which you also take for granted. Did you ever work at a station as sold out as this one??? Everything would be cool if, for your three hours, you would DO YOUR THING 100%. Not a repeat of yesterday's show, not the same shticks and cliches you've been doing for two years . . . but some imaginative, original, entertaining projection of your great star personality! Not when you "feel like it". Not when someone from a magazine is watching (and the change is as obvious as a record playing at 55 rpm). Think about where you've been . . . think about what we've got going. What more of a motive do you need??? For three lousy hours, if everyone produces, we can keep it going. There are about 15 jocks and two PDs just in LA whose goal in life is to shoot you (us) down.

"Produce" does not mean, during your 3-hours, worrying about spots for your album, talking to chicks on the phone, worrying more about football odds than crossing records off the list, thinking about your concert, freaking about an engineer, reading and re-reading your press clippings, or whatever it is which cuts down your efficiency.

"Produce" means to professionally come on for three hours on KHJ, doing your thing and doing our thing. It's that simple. But it doesn't ever happen consistently. If you aren't consistent from day to day, then how the hell can the station be??? Sure, everyone reading this has had some good, even brilliant, shows in the last few weeks. Just like Roman Garble-Head has called some good plays in the past few weeks for the Rams.

"Produce" means to MIX UP THE GODDAMN GOLDENS . . . PLAY ALL THE RECORDS, and LET THE NEXT GUY KNOW WHAT YOU PLAYED (yesterday this "#1" station had two songs repeated in 45-minutes because someone wasn't producing . . . BE UP WHENEVER YOU OPEN THAT MAKE (that is Show Biz!) . . . to PLUG THE OTHER JOCKS (that's right, there are seven other guys reading this) . . . SELL MORE MUSIC (not "6-in-a-row, ho-hum-yawn-I-get-to-split-now") . . . MENTION AREAS (remember? real people out there? you know, human beings who listen to radios?) . . . GET EXCITED ABOUT THE CONTESTS (if you can't sell LOCATION X you can sell anything. That's a hell of a prize . . . a lot of bread . . . remember when you used to do your own news????!!! . . . WOODSHED COPY SO YOU DON'T SOUND LIKE AN ILLITERATE FOOL OR YABA-DABA-DABA USED-CAR SALESMAN TRYING TO GET 50 LICENSE NUMBERS INTO 30 SECONDS . . . and . . . PROGRAM THE RECORDS. NOT JUST FOR INTRO TIME . . . OR HOW LONG THEY RUN . . . BUT WHAT PEOPLE (remember them again? they make up the ratings on the next page!) WANT TO HEAR.

That's what you're here for. And that's what's expected of you. Until everyone gets serious and produces, we're going to be just what we are . . . a mediocre . . . just barely . . . unimpressive . . . "WE CAN PICK 'EM OFF NEXT MONTH" . . . half-ass "#1"! The Hooper starts Wednesday. "#1" by .9% sucks!

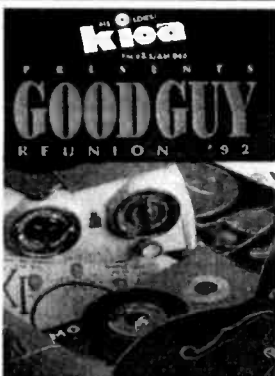
TW Tip #8158 and #7226

Coming Up In Issue #45

The KHJ Boss Memo dated July 10, 1967. Sneak preview — "Sell the Contest! Sell the music! Sell the other Boss Jocks! Entertain! Keep it moving so we can move UP!" And the mechanical support behind *The KHJ Boss Garage*

RJ Today

can be reached in Kaneohe, Hawaii via e-mail at whodaguy@lava.net



Programming Note:

The Most Effective Promotions Of All Time DJ Reunions

will appear in "PD" issue #42

Kipper McGee, PD of K-Best95 in San Diego, will share his secret recipe for making this sponsorable station event a ratings success

Deep Background

Another Todd Wallace Insight Interview

Tracy Johnson — Part 1

One of the hottest radio stations on the planet is Hot AC KFMB-FM (Star 100.7) in San Diego.

And one of the hottest radio promotions these days is Fairwest Direct's *Listener Rewards Program*, which makes the most of P1 and top-TSL-quintile listeners in much the same way that airlines target their most frequent flyers.

Put the two together and you've got a winning recipe for ratings success — and a case study we can all learn some great promotional lessons from.

We know that Frequent Flyer programs are so successful at incenting consumer-loyalty that literally every major airline in the world has one. They're literally afraid not to — for fear of losing market share (and thus revenue and profits).

Radio has never had such a mechanism in place, that allowed stations to track the "listening transactions" of their listeners in a similar manner — until, that is, Fairwest Direct came out with the Listener Rewards Program last year. Now it's licensed to 63 stations around the world, with more coming on board every week.

I've been monitoring the success of this program with great interest* because I'm attracted to the idea of rewarding listeners based on *real* listening. That way, not only do you get listeners to listen more, and listen longer, but you don't run afoul of Arbitron Law as you do it.

* For further background, see "PB" issue #20, page 4 and issue #32, page 5

To get more first-hand knowledge about how this promotion works, operationally, I called on the VP/General Manager of KFMB AM & FM, Tracy Johnson, whose reputation as one of the world's most knowledgeable and successful radio programmers precedes him.

PB: Tracy, first, tell us a little about Star 100.7 — its heritage, its angle of attack, and what makes up the Star stationality.

TJ: We're known as one of the country's first "Modern AC" stations, having debuted in June 1994. Since then, we've built the station on an up-tempo mix of contemporary pop music for adults and what I consider the best lineup of personalities in America. And we pride ourselves on our bigger-than-life promotions and interactive approach with listeners.

PB: What kind of marketing has Star done in the past?

TJ: In addition to mass marketing such as outdoor and television, we have concentrated most of our resources on the product itself. One of the most effective methods of marketing is simply creating talk in the market through what happens on-the-air, from our "Whirl Til You Hurl" roller coaster marathons to our on-air "Say It And Win" campaign, to a bumper sticker promotion we titled "Put Star on Your Car".

PB: How involved in *contest-marketing*, specifically, has Star been in the past?

TJ: Very involved, but the emphasis has been on how those contests can increase the personality, the stationality, and presence of the personalities on Star. It's not so much the prize we give away, or the listeners who play those contests, but how we can *involve non-participants* in the *entertainment value* the contest-marketing affords.

PB: I'm assuming that *winning the workplace* is important to Star's programming strategy as it is to most other AC stations — how would you elaborate on that?

TJ: Jeff & Jer give us a great start in the morning and a large part of our strategy has been to capitalize on their strength. Therefore, converting Jeff & Jer listeners to midday TSL is a primary objective. As you

know, that's as much a function of making the station prominent to listeners as it is simply providing the mood that matches the workplace. So, while we spend a lot of time and money in making sure the music is perfectly compatible with at-work listening, we look for hooks, or benchmarks, that help listeners use the station in that key daypart.

PB: Obviously Star's promotional heritage means you can afford to do practically anything you want to target the workplace.

So, with everything from telemarketing to direct-mail and fax-back promotions available to you, what prompted you to look at the Listener Rewards program for Star?

TJ: Part of our appeal has been the emphasis on making the station *personal* and *interactive* with listeners, creating a station that is easy for them to participate. Traditional contests, like "listen for the winning song-of-the-day and be the 10th caller to win" or "listen all day at work for your name and you could win" just don't get it done for us. It's not fun, and it *eliminates* a large part of the audience — they just won't jump through all those hoops to play the game. When Fairwest presented the Rewards program, we knew it was exactly what we were looking for. It's easy to play, it's fun, and listeners don't have to compete with other listeners to win. They can *all* win, and control their own destiny in earning points and choosing what *they* want to win. (Continued on back)

"It's not so much the prize we give away, or the listeners who play those contests, but how we can *involve non-participants* in the *entertainment value* the contest-marketing affords"

Deep Background

(Continued)

PB: Why don't you explain how the program works.

TJ: The listener gets a freeloader computer disk, which they can either pick up, have mailed to them, or download from the HiStar web-site (www.histar.com)

✓ The instructions are — just install this screensaver on your computer to see if you've won \$10,000, which is a *strong* call-to-action.

Install to see if you're an instant \$10,000 WINNER



To Install: Click on File (Win 3.11) or Start (Win 95/98/NT), then click on Run, type A:\SETUP, and click on OK

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telling their friends about your station. If someone you give a copy to wins 10 thou, so do you (using sponsored cash to make the prizes liquidatable).

✓ Then there's a loyalty-listening plan where listeners accumulate what we call Star Listener Points, just like you would frequent flier miles.

✓ You do it immediately by making copies of your disk. Also by listening for the password of the day, by listening for the song of the day, and for other on-air points giveaways at strategic times of the day.

✓ Then you can use your Listener points to get rewards such as free CDs, concert tickets, movie passes, trips, or a new car from Pacific Honda.

PB: And the general "pitch" to listeners subtly *encourages* them to listen longer.

TJ: Right, the explanation to listeners is that "the Star Freeloaders Program is designed to reward you for what you do best — listening. The more you listen to Star and the more you participate in Star events, the more opportunities you have to win".

PB: I understand the first listener to reach 100,000 points wins a Honda S.U.V. from one of your sponsors, Pacific Honda. What are some of the other big prizes and how are they won?

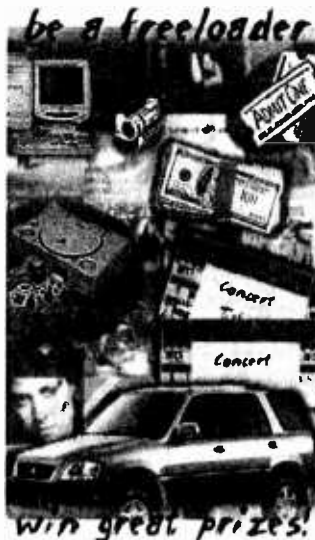
TJ: We've sent listeners on concert trips all over the country, to the Grammy Awards, the American Music Awards. We've given away DVD players, a private meeting with Alanis Morissette at her concert, offered tickets to every concert that's come through town, CD's, lunches, dinners, movies, books. You name it, we've offered it. We're now working on putting up some really cool things, like laser surgery to correct vision and more. We like to find things that listeners can use points for that they can't, or won't, be able to get on their own.

PB: You launched the "Star Freeloaders" program with some very clever creative, including a custom jingle that was done in a Big Bad Voodoo Daddy swing style — which I thought was very effective in dumbing down the essence of the promotion into a 60-second song that any idiot can understand. Who produced the song for you? Was it an in-house job?

TJ: Most of our production elements are created in house by Tom Watts, who is simply the best there is! The song you mention is actually a parody of the song "Zoot Suit Riot" by Cherry Poppin' Daddies, and it *is* terrific. Our production partner, Premiere, produced it for us. Tim Pilcher should get all the credit. He's a true genius. The whole key is making this easy and fun to play. Our production elements help create the sizzle and explain the contest simply.

PB: And I understand your follow-up explanation promos were also very effective at explaining how easy it is to join the program. What's "the secret sauce" in your explanation process?

TJ: The contest is pretty easy to play, but has a lot of "moving parts" . . . and that can be complicated if you let it be. We follow the recipe of "keep it simple". We put a lot of effort into *breaking the whole program down into the most significant parts*, and then we focus *most* of the attention on *that* part of the execution.



That's simple:

- You already listen to Star and we want to thank you
- Get the software — keep listening to Star to earn reward points

■ Listen for how you can use your points for fabulous prizes. Almost all of our time on-the-air is spent telling people what they can win, how they can earn more points, and *selling the sizzle*. Everything else is details, and we handle most of the details on our web site. (www.histar.com)

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TW Tip #3194, #4106, #7206, #15059, #16067, #17046, and #18021

Next Week Part 2 of the Tracy Johnson Interview

- The long-term possibilities of Star's Freeloaders program
- How to make the Listener Rewards program pay for itself
- "Addictive" listening-patterns
- How to sell Listener Rewards to staff (the key benefits)
- How targeting computer-users infiltrates the workplace
- And Tracy Johnson's cogent advice about how to make any programming or promotional element work

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As the radio industry rapidly consolidates, the first phase appears to be pretty well over. Most markets are now controlled by a handful of players.

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The old limits on numbers of stations owned kept this logical development from occurring. Now radio operators are extending their reach in the same way newspapers have done for years with regional editions.

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DeepBackground

Another Todd Wallace Insight Interview

Tracy Johnson — Part 2

Last week, in Part 1 of our exclusive interview with Tracy Johnson (VP/GM of KFMB AM & FM in San Diego) we discussed the way his FM station, known as "Star 100.7", has implemented Fairwest Direct's *Listener Rewards* program (which Star has renamed "The Freeloader's Program").



This week we'll delve into the long-term possibilities of using such a loyalty-marketing program, the various liquidation opportunities that can bring in NTR dollars, and how the key benefits tend to sell themselves.

PD: Tracy, do you see your Freeloaders program as a long-term promotion that keeps building with several phases, or is it more a one-shot project. Just how do you envision it?

TJ: I think it will gain long-term momentum, and keep getting better. We're planning to be in it for the long-haul.

PD: The license fee for this promotion, I understand, costs between \$13,000 for smaller markets to as much as \$49,000 in Top 5 U.S. markets — but I'm hearing from several stations that they're actually *making* big money on it by tying in advertisers. What's been your experience at Star regarding cost liquidation?

TJ: So far, so good. We've promoted it so well on the air, that advertisers are excited to be a part of it, and I think that will continue to increase. We've definitely *made* money on it.

PD: How many sponsors have you involved so far?

TJ: We have one main sponsor, and several partners that participate on a lower level, with screen crawls and hot-links to web-sites, etc.

PD: What kind of feedback are you getting from your clients about participating in this promotion?

TJ: Our main partner is *raving* about the promotion. They can't believe the traffic it's created in their business where listeners can get the software. They're *very* happy — and that makes us happy.

PD: In addition to forced-listening incentives, do you also use it as a "forced traffic" generator (like so many

points for visiting a sponsor — or so many more if they actually buy a selected product)?

TJ: Yes, we offer bonus point codes at sponsor locations regularly, and even have tied-in some clients' web-sites with bonus codes.

PD: We've all heard how many frequent flyers get "addicted" to earning mileage, and as a result, they go out of their way to fly their favorite airline even if it's not the most direct-route. Do you see signs of any such "addictive radio listening", where listeners go out of their way to listen more, or listen longer, to Star?

TJ: We're too early in the stages to see if the program has a direct effect on P1 listener levels, but we look at the program as *another reason* for listeners to "make a date" with Star. And that's one of the elements that creates loyalty, and eventually, *fans* of the station. So, while it may not be a direct "cause and effect" relationship, I'm confident that it will be a key element of converting secondary listeners to primary ones as we become more important in listeners' lives. Also, marketing experts claim, and I agree, that it is four times easier to keep an *existing* listener than to recruit a new one. This program is terrific for *solidifying* that relationship with current fans.

PD: In West Palm Beach, I know that Jim Hilliard and George Johns at WRMF experienced a huge increase in web-site hits, going from something like 4,000 a week to over 52,000 a week after 10 days. You guys have one of the best web-sites in Radio. Do you have any stats about Star's web-site traffic and how it's been impacted by *Listener Rewards*?

TJ: The only direct statistic I can point to is that the day we made the program available for download for the first time, we experienced a tremendous increase on our site. I don't have the exact numbers at my fingertips, but it was *substantial*.

PD: I know you were just Down Under, visiting some of our friends at Austereo and ESP Media in Australia. If a PD from, let's say, Adelaide asked you to describe the greatest benefits of the *Listener Rewards* program for his or her station, the way you use it on Star, what would you tell 'em?

TJ: One, It's a great way to increase the *bond* with the listener and create reasons for listeners to "make a date" with the station several times per day. Two, It's the best way to control "clutter" on the air by offering prizes and rewards under one umbrella or concept. It provides dozens of opportunities to satisfy sales requests for "value added" programming.

(Continued on back)

Deep Background

(Continued)

And three, it expands the personality and presence of the station on-the-air and on the web-site.

PB: By the way, what were your impressions of Australia — and especially *Radio Down Under*?

TJ: I found Australia to be a fascinating country and one of the most enjoyable vacations I've ever had. The people are wonderful, very accommodating, and pleasant. As for Radio, it's not nearly as crowded in their major marketes, but they are executing some of the most creative ideas and concepts I've heard in years. Their promotions are "out of the box" and the personalities are refreshing.

PB: Now, I understand that sister station KFMB-AM, your News/Talk/Sports operation, is about to launch the program as well, and that you'll be adding some unique twists like sports trivia to differentiate it from Star's program. What are your expectations on the AM side?

TJ: We're still working on it, frankly. I think it could have as much benefit on KFMB as it does for Star.

PB: Was this an easy sell to the staff — or were there doubts in the beginning?

TJ: There were many questions and concerns, but not really objections. This is a complicated program to explain internally. There are a lot of new concepts and it's easy to let it become confusing. However, once we got it on-the-air and made it easy for the personalities to work with, the entire staff has embraced it and love it!

PB: I wouldn't be doing my job if I didn't ask a few devil's advocate questions. Are you worried that this only targets people who have access to a computer?

TJ: That is a good point, but who *doesn't* have access to a computer anymore? Especially in our target of making the station more usable in the *workplace*. It's fast becoming the communication medium of choice. Also, we understand that not *all* listeners will become participants, just like not *all* listeners would participate in other contests on-the-air. That's why we emphasize the *sizzle* of the prizes. It has entertainment value even if you're not playing along.

PB: In your experience, does the Rewards Program add a lot of on-air clutter to the station?

TJ: No, it *reduces* it — in a BIG way. Now, instead

of creating new contests or promotions for everything that comes along, we *combine* them into the Freeloaders umbrella. We are able to accommodate far more sales requests and make a bigger impact on *many* levels.

PB: Are there any down sides with this promotion that you've seen?

TJ: Not yet. It's all in how you handle it. The only potential downside I could foresee at this time is if we lose enthusiasm internally for it and make it less exciting or fun for our listeners, which *won't* happen.

PB: Would you call this more a cume promotion or a TSL promotion?

TJ: It's definitely a TSL/loyalty marketing project. My experience is that if you can give listeners more reasons to love the station, and feel devoted to it, they will listen more frequently and longer — and that's what increases TSL. But you also have loyal

P1 listeners giving copies of the program to *non*-listeners, so there is the potential for increased cume, too.

PB: What does your staff think of this "stealth" approach to marketing?

TJ: They love it! Now that they fully understand it, everyone's constantly coming up with more ways to make it work for us.

PB: Do you think there's any one format the Rewards program is best suited for — or any type of station that could benefit most from it?

TJ: Any format or station that would like to give their listeners more reasons to listen to their station (and remember it) should benefit. And I'd say that encompasses most stations.

PB: Are there any other considerations that a PD who is thinking about *Listener Rewards* should take on board?

TJ: Put *everything* you have into it, with a full commitment, or don't do it at all. But then, that's my philosophy for *any* programming and marketing element!



TW Tip #3202, #4109, #7214, #15062, #16072, and #17047

For more information about the *Listener Rewards* Program, call Reg Johns at Fairwest Direct (619) 693-0576 E-mail: reg@fairwest.com

To Reach "PB": Call (480) 443-3500 Fax (480) 948-7800
or E-Mail TW3tw3@aol.com

Dr. Don's Timeless Rx

(Continued — from page 4)

DDR: . . . that came about was rather innocent — I was talking on-the-air about a friend of mine who did something in the Duluth Armory and whenever he'd laugh there'd be a (snort) at the end. And everybody cracked up. So Steve Rudus, my engineer at the time, isolated the snort, so we had that track going for the rest of the show. And we just kept it going.

PB: Is that how you get a great drop, you make 'em? Or did you hijack them, or import them, or all of the above.

DDR: Well, I've got to give credit to our great staff for that. Most of the good tracks that we used, and we had probably 320, most of them were suggested by people in the station, and created by our staff, not by me. But, you know, you take it from wherever. Especially if it works.

PB: Since much of a morning show stems from spontaneity, what or how much should be rehearsed?

DDR: You know, I get credit for a lot of spontaneity, which I never had very much of. If you do it *right*, people shouldn't recognize it.

PB: How do you get yourself in a good mood on-the-air when you're not really in one?

DDR: Sometimes I had to hit myself below the belt!

PB: You may have retired from "active duty", but you still listen to the Radio in the morning. When it comes to "entertaining morning radio", what do you think has changed over the years since you were on-the-air?

DDR: The biggest thing I can see is that taste has gone right out the window. And it's just a darn shame there isn't room in the market for an old KFRC type station, where you can go for the wide demographics, rather than so narrow a target. I think you get yourself into a corner where even if you capture all the audience that's interested in that niche, it's still an "also-ran".

PB: What do you think has stayed the same? What'd'ya' think remains timeless?

DDR: I think the warmth that some of the better personalities still have and exhibit. I think the sharing of little things will always be in. You know, talking about going to the circus the night before and a few interesting things from it. Listeners still seem to be attracted and intrigued when you talk about everyday life.

My running argument has always been that whatever worked in the morning would not work the rest of the day — and vice versa.

PB: How important should music be in a great morning show?

DDR: Well, like I said earlier, my running argument has always been that whatever worked in the morning would not work the rest of the day — and vice versa. And people, except for maybe young males 18-24, most of them are interested in the weather and information, even the most mundane things.

PB: How many songs an hour were you able to squeeze in at WFIL or KFRC?

DDR: Well, a lot more at 'FIL than KFRC. You know, we did two 5-minute newscasts an hour, so sometimes I'd only get two records in each half hour. But nobody tuned to 610 in the morning for the music — maybe because I was awfully difficult to dance to.

PB: How about service ingredients?

DDR: One time I had a boss tell me, "Y'know, I listened to you all the in on my morning commute and I never heard you tell the time even once". So I said, "Let's get out the tape". And sure enough, there actually were about 20 or 30 time-checks, but they just weren't noticeable. So after that, I started double-timing it, "8:14, 14 after 8" and it tended to register in listeners' heads better.

PB: What are your thoughts about format structure, as it applies to how well you're able to entertain.

DDR: Well, obviously, you have to have at least a rudimentary format structure. You don't to have chaos on-the-air, you know, you don't want the "8:19am news". In all honesty, I probably *broke* more format rules than I followed. But I always understood *why* they should be broken at the time or at the moment.

PB: Did you think that "the format" was overly restrictive and prevented you from doing other things you'd like to have done or did you always figure out a way to do them?

DDR: Well, first of all, the dirty little secret is — you can get away with almost anything — ONCE!

PB: Better to beg forgiveness than ask permission!

DDR: Right! I have to tell you, on Elvis Presley's birthday (back when he was still alive), we dug out *Heartbreak Hotel* and played it. This was on KFRC. And Michael Spears, the PD at the time, came in just livid, "What were you doing, what did you think you were doing, why did you play that Elvis record?" I said, "Because it's his birthday, he's still a strong

(Continued — see Dr Don's Rx on Page 10)

"Sunscreen" For Radio Everybody's Free (To Legal ID)

by **Clarke Ingram** (OM/PD, WPXY-FM, Rochester) and **Scott Fybush** (Reporter, "R News", Rochester)

As featured in the June 7, 1999 issue of Todd Wallace's **Programmer's Digest** (480) 443-3500

Ladies and gentlemen of the radio industry of 1999: **SAY THE CALL LETTERS.**

If I could offer you only one tip for the ratings, call letters would be it.

The use of call letters is required once an hour by the FCC, whereas the rest of my advice has no basis more reliable than this morning's R&R Hot Fax. I will dispense this advice, now.

Enjoy the power and beauty of your airshift.

Never mind. You will not understand the power and beauty of your airshift until you no longer have one.

But trust me, in 20 years you'll listen to old airchecks of yourself and recall in a way you can't grasp now how good you really sounded, and how many attractive, single women actually called you on the request line.

You are NOT the geek that you imagine.

Don't worry about being fired. You will.

Or worry. But know that worrying is about as effective as trying to serve a major market with a thousand-watt daytimer. The real end of your job is apt to be something that never crossed your worried mind, like a sudden format change to Jammin' Oldies at 4pm on some idle Tuesday.

Say one thing every day that scares your GM.

Prep.

Don't be reckless with other people's headphones. Don't put up with people who are reckless with yours.

Edit.

Don't waste your time on Arbitrends. Sometimes you're ahead, sometimes you're behind.

The book is long, and in the end, it's only one month.

Remember the awards you receive.

Forget the complaint calls. If you succeed in doing this, tell me how.

Keep your old airchecks. Throw away your old memos.

Backtime.

Don't feel guilty if you don't know what format you want to work in.

The most interesting jocks I know didn't know at 22 what station they wanted to work for.

Dr Don's Timeless Rx

(Continued — from page 9)

DDR: . . . artist, and it should have been played". Well, he said, "Why didn't you check it out with me first?" And I said, "Michael, because I *knew* you'd say no".

What I always try to do is what's best for the radio station. No, actually, what's best for *the listener*. I try to put the listener in the driver's seat.

PB: How about phone bits, what's your opinion of where they fit into the morning mix? Did you use many phone bits when you were on-the-air?

DDR: You know, for me that was not my thing, it was not something I desired, something I didn't do very often. But, somebody else could do it well and make it work. It comes down to knowing your own strengths (and interests). And doing *you*.

PB: There are a couple of schools of thought about established "benchmark bits" which occur at certain set times in the morning. Some say it helps listeners set their body-clocks, others say it makes a show too predictable. Where do you stand on the issue?

DDR: The only one I did was "feeding the dog". Every morning about 6:10, I would feed the dog. I remember one time, Spears sent me a photocopy of his stopwatch, which showed that the bit went 7 minutes! (But if you never heard me feed Roscoe, that wouldn't be hard to envision!)

PB: Did you ever use any pre-fab syndicated bits?

DDR: Like *Hiney Wine* or something? We looked at that and turned it down, I suppose because the radio station felt they were paying *me* to do those things, rather than take somebody else's work. Now for somebody just starting out, it could be great.

PB: How 'bout "off-the-air" performance?

DDR: I think you need to be very careful because you are representing, not only the radio station, but *yourself* — and you should be somebody who you should be proud of, too.

PB: I know you were very involved in volunteer work, not only at KFRC but at all the stations you worked at.

DDR: I tried to do charitable things for everybody and everything, all the time. My old boss in Duluth, Burns Nugent, once put it best when he said, "That's what you call paying your civic rent".

PB: What kind of public service projects did you get involved with?

Well, for openers, I did a lot of golf tournaments, 'cause I love to play. And the March Of Dimes Super Walk, even back when I was walking on crutches. In fact, I did the very *first* "Super Walk" that was ever held. Anyway, in total, someone once told me that all the charity drives I participated in raised over 10 million dollars for charities. But often, you know, it would often be small things, that only affected maybe a few people at a time, that were the most meaningful.

PB: Most people look at morning shows as a team effort. How many assistants should a good morning show have and what are their most important duties?

DDR: Well, first of all, if you can get 1,000 people to listen to you and talk about your show, that's the very best. But obviously, you're looking for who's at the station. We had maybe half a dozen people, including all the news people, traffic reporters, and engineers.

PB: Do you have any other professional mottos or "words to live by" that today's generation of performers could benefit from?

DDR: #1, Give your employer everything he/she is paying for, but #2, remember you have responsibilities to the people you love, too. So never shortchange your family. Because someday your radio career will be gone, and then where will you be if you don't take good care of your relationships.

PB: I know you've had a great marriage partner of 40 years. How important is that?

DDR: Oh, absolutely vital! And not only that — Kay was really good at keeping the groupies away!

PB: The screening committee!

DDR: Right, they had to get by Kay, she stood at the door! We met when I worked in Fort Dodge, IA, one of those cities where hitchhikers hold up signs that say "Anywhere but here!" We really would try to be low-key with the family, as far as my celebrity was concerned, and let them grow up as normal as possible.

PB: Any advice for the young personalities just starting out?

DDR: Just that they should know that part of the maturing process is about *always bouncing back*. I was fired from my first 3 jobs in radio, but didn't let that get me down. And I went on to the very best jobs of my life.

PB: Finally, let's do some rumor control. It's been reported several places that you were dangerously ill, so let's dispel those rumors by reporting that you are actually quite *dangerously well!*

DDR: Well, it's true I *did* have a heart attack. But it was a mild one, very minor. Which, if you're going to have a heart attack, that's the kind to have! What it is: If you picture the cardiovascular system, I have what they call "branch disease". That means some of the little tiny branches way up at the top are a little clogged, but the main ones remain free. The Dr. said that it's no cause to change anything I do in my life. I still swim an hour every morning to stay fit.

TW Tip #5115 and #6211

To hear a time-tunnel sampling of the Dr. Don air-act, visit Rick Irwin's Reel Top 40 Radio Repository (www.reelradio.com).

Click on any of the following collections for some real ear candy —

- The Keith Smith Collection for DDR at his best: his 2,500th Show, recorded in 1984. (1 hour, 13 minutes)
- The Jeff March Collection. DDR on KFRC 1978. (20 minutes)
- The Dick Stoddard Collection. Dr. Don on KFRC 1973 (8 minutes) and Dr. Don with Charlie Van Dyke on KFRC 1974. (18 minutes)
- The Uncle Ricky Collection has a rare clip of Dr. Don on WFIL, circa 1968 (about 3 minutes in length as part of 'FIL's agency presentation).

Special thanks — to Bobby Ocean and Elizabeth Salazar for arranging the Dr. Don interview and providing many of the insightful questions and classic photos in issue #39.

News & Surveillance

Experts Perceived Expertise Is More Important Than Q-Score Likeability

A lot of stations think they can instantly jump-start their image perceptions (like weather or sports reliance) by hiring a local television celebrity with a high Q-factor. And indeed they can! (See "News Cred" in "PD" issue #2, page 6 for background).

But when it comes to some surveillance ingredients, where listeners truly *rely* on credibility, it's more important to choose the expert who knows his/her subject than it is to choose a "well-liked" celebrity. Weather is a good example. If winning "weather mountain" is an important attribution goal in your action plan, you'll be better served by choosing a full-fledged meteorologist whose credibility you can document (by research) than going for the guy or gal with the pretty smile — because in times of weather emergencies or weather-affected morning drives, listeners will seek out the expert whose experience (and forecasts) they *know* they can *depend on*.

Wallace Wisdom: In the hierarchy of principles, the higher principle nearly always turns out to be *credibility*.

TW Tip #10062

Concepts

Capsule

(Continued — from page 1)

Listeners relate best to those air personalities who have mastered the true art of *human communication*.

Even though thousands of listeners may be listening when the mike is cracked open, a truly *great* personality has a certain knack for making each listener feel *special*, like they're being spoken to personally and individually (the classic "one-to-one" relationship).

Where this can get complicated is when a PD imposes rigid format verbiage that becomes part of the air talent's ongoing spiel. Now, some personalities are great at delivering such branding messages and positioning statements effortlessly and very believably (so nonchalantly and sincerely, in fact, that listeners think that's what they really *wanted* to say anyway). But *most* personalities *don't* have this gift. And that's where overt formatting can drive your station's image perception off the rails.

We're now seeing some stations trying to tie their positioning statements into *repetitive branding efforts* so that

the "position" is mentioned literally every break (sometimes even twice!) in the hope that the position becomes part of the brand.

I submit that this is a practice that needs to be re-thought.

Certainly, you want listeners to *know* your position. But mentioning it *every* set of *every* show, *every* day of the week, 52 weeks a year, to the point where it gets monotonous (even obnoxious), could actually have the exact *opposite* effect of what you're trying to achieve.

For several reasons —

First, you don't want to be known as a station that is constantly "pitching" its listeners. When listeners come away thinking "all they do is hard-sell me about how great they are", your message isn't going to get through. (Listeners have their bullshit-buzzers poised, just waiting for your next "claim"!)

Worse yet, if you make the mistake of *forcing* your personalities to convey an unnatural message, especially a repetitive one, you're impeding their ability to form a *one-on-one* bond with their audience, one listener at a time.

But here's the most important reason (and it's one of the dirty little secrets of marketing that not very many radio programmers are aware

of, much less know how it applies to overt formatting practices): **the more you say it, the less listeners absorb it (in fact, they actually *un-learn* the message).**

Here's the supportive evidence that I urge you to take on board (and take to heart). About 20 years ago, the Association Of National Advertisers distributed a rather technical, but very profound book written by Michael Naples (former Director of Marketing for Lever Brothers) entitled *Effective Frequency: The Relationship Between Frequency & Advertising*. It was based on a landmark research study that produced two key findings.

■ **The 3-Hit Theory.** One of the findings became one of those basic truth we all consider "etched in stone". It was mainly this study that popularized the "3 hit" theory of television frequency (that the first time a viewer sees your spot, their interest is piqued, second time they become interested, and the third time they "get" your message and are ready to "act" on it. (And this is accentuated as you go on to the fourth, fifth, and sixth impressions).

■ **The Unlearned Message.** Here's where it gets serious (the key finding that most PDs have missed): Each successive time a viewer sees

(Continued — See Capsule Concepts on page 12)

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OLD RADIO TENET



“ALL THAT MATTERS IS WHAT COMES OUT OF THE SPEAKERS”

Concepts

capsule

(Continued — from page 11)
your spot, they learn your message a little more

UNTIL

about the 7th time (depending, of course, on how compelling the nature of the message is and how artful the creative was).

At that point, a consumer tends to begin **UN-learning the message**. It no longer clearly registers with them in their mind, because they think they've already seen it. (Been there, done that, bought the shirt.) This is a classic example of “the filter system of the listener's mind” at work (see “PD” issue #2, page 1 for background) — with the viewer getting *desensitized* to information that's no longer “new” to them. Think about it: isn't that the way the life-cycle of a TV spot impacts on YOU? First you see a spot, then you like it, then you learn it. Before long you're tired of it, and then you begin to forget about it, or zap past it or tune-it-out (whether physically or mentally). This same principle applies to *all* media (not just TV). (For example, when was the last time you actually “noticed” a

billboard that says “Drink Coke”?) But it also applies to every impression that deals with how you market your radio station on your own air. After all, an impression is an impression (especially where the filter system of the mind is concerned!)

Case In Point:

Boiling this down to Radio —

let's say your station's time-spent-listening average is 7 hours a week (that means your P1's are probably listening to you between 10 and 14 hours a week to produce that kind of average). And let's say you think you're doing yourself a favor by constantly pounding your mantra “X-109, the station that picks you up and makes you feel good” set after set, hour after hour, day after day, etc., etc., etc.

Here's the math: Over the course of a week, your P1 core listener is probably hearing this message 15 or 20 times an hour. Times, let's say, 10 hours of weekly TSL (just to keep the math simple). That means 200 times a week. Times 13 weeks, or 2,600 times per quarterly ratings-sweep.

Now, at what point, do you think that message has lost its punch because your P1 listener has already heard it — and heard it — and heard it? The 7th time? Or the 10th time? Or the 20th time? Or the 100th time? Or

the 2,000th time (after a month or two). (Hint: Remember the *Effective Frequency* study says consumers start unlearning a message after about the 7th time they hear it.)

So, if you keep hammering it all year long, it just compounds the unlearning process even more! (In much the same way that after awhile, MusicRadio WABC listeners never used to notice the “WABC time chime” gonging its bells off! They'd heard it so many times, it no longer registered in their mind!)

The solution:

Two ways you can deal with this dilemma of “over-predictability” is by

- ✓ limiting the over-exposure of your important primary positioning promises, with planned spacing
- ✓ and most importantly, by spending the extra time to come up with *imaginative variations* and innovative new ways of conveying the main message effectively. Simply repeating it, ad nauseum, may be the “easy” way out, operationally (but I hope you're now convinced that this simpleton approach has a much lower payoff). If you take the time to put a little more depth and complexity into your stationality, you'll be pleased with the sparkling result (because listeners will be too).

TW Tip #1102, #3210, and #9181

Uniquely UK Sweepers/Splitters/etc.

95.8 Capital FM is again London's official #1 — by miles and miles and miles.

London's #1 Hit Music station, 95.8 Capital FM.

95.8 Capital FM, with the latest technology for traffic from the RAC. We keep London moving.

(60-sec feature): Hi this is Margherita Taylor with a countdown of Capital FM airplay. #3 (song clip). #2 (clip). #1 (clip) Capital FM Airplay.

One week, 100 gigs, one great city. Radio One. (promoting series of gig-events around London).

The UK's official #1 on the UK's official Top 40 station (followed by artist endorsement clip ending with "on Radio One").

(Tease news headlines over driving beat, followed by) v/o: "Radio One . . . Newsbeat".

(driving music continues throughout newscast)

You're listening to News Direct 97.3 FM. Your world in 20 minutes. News and information for London.

Virgin. Classic tracks and today's best music.

The Virgin Gig Guide ("what's on" feature intro).

Virgin Radio settles down to the summer of Sport, as we give away tickets to all the events — and loads, loads, loads of cash.

From the station at the heart of London's best day out — Heart 106.2

Radio City 96.7 plays today's best music for Liverpool, Merseyside and North Wales.

The *easiest* way through the workday, "the big easy" on Magic AM 1053am Talk Radio, home of the big boys breakfast

Another half hour of non-stop easy favourites on Magic AM.

Sun FM Sunderland's MOST music 103.4

Best music, best variety, 96.9 Viking FM.

Galaxy 105 — the Beat of Yorkshire.

Magic105.4 — *long* sweeps of easy favourites.

Century 105 with the best variety of music the heart of the Northwest (Intro to What's On feature): Heart 106.2 — stick THIS in your diary. (straight into produced events list).

Heart 106.2, with the perfect mix of music from the 80's, 90's, and the best of today. That's the Heart *difference*.

London's Heart 106.2 — accept no substitute. This is REAL music variety.

We're strting 30 minutes of continuous music from the 80's, 90's and today on 106.2 Heat FM.

Coming up next — the latest travel news and (artist) on London's Magic 105.4.

Galaxy 102, the coolest station in Manchester.

Key 103FM, the Voice Of Manchester, the world's coolest city. And when the sun shines, Manchester's even cooler.

96.3 GWR-FM plays Today's Better Music Mix for Bristol BBC Radio 4: The best channel of spoken-word in the world.

Five Live. (identifier for BBC Radio 5)

TW Tip #9182

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A Special EXCLUSIVE Report By **Jaye Albright** about the lack of Country fragmentation

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