

THE RADIO WAVE

"Keeping Radio People in Touch"

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Issue #4

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THE RADIO WAVE

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It's written by Ian MacRae, whose 35-year track record
in the industry culminated in the establishment of a

popular radio school in Sydney.

<http://www.allaboutradio.net>

WELCOME TO ISSUE FOUR

O.K. We're into issue 4 and it's really encouraging that the number of people signing on to the list continues to grow. If you've just joined us...welcome. Maybe you'd like to receive the issues you've missed out on. Well just e-mail me and I'll send them to you.

radiowave@allaboutradio.net

As I pointed out in the very first edition of this e-letter I want you to regard this regular communication to be yours as well as mine.

If there's anything you read in it now or in the future that you would like to comment on...feel free.

Anything you need help or advice with...ask. If I can't provide the answer I'll find someone who can.

Anything you want to market or promote (even yourself)...go ahead.

If you'd like to contribute an article...do it.

Through THE RADIO WAVE we can keep in touch with each other regardless of where we are in the world.

You can reach me at radiowave@allaboutradio.net

INDUSTRY NEWS

"Being Vocal About Being Local"

Just two weeks back XM Satellite Radio had passed the 100,000 subscribers mark and appeared to be on track to reach

its target of 130,000 by the end of June. At years end it should have close on 350,000 paying listeners signed on.

If you don't live in the U.S.A. and aren't sure what satellite radio is...it simply is...(simply?)...100 channels of radio available straight off the bird into your receiver via a small dish in your car or home. For this access to a choice of channels you pay a monthly fee.

How can terrestrial radio survive a challenge like this?

Obvious answer. Build listener loyalty. How do they do this? Well, one way they sure as hell WON'T build it is by playing wall to wall music. You can get that off the satellite without commercial or other interruptions.

Listeners will be loyal to real live on-air personalities.

And what's more they'll always go for good local radio with local presenters being involved locally over national or syndicated radio pumping out generic formats.

On this topic Jim McVay sent THE RADIO WAVE this contribution from Cleveland, Ohio:

Researching media trends, listening to the local market, having the privilege of talking with a few program directors, and my recent experience to re-enter the "World of Radio" I have formulated the following opinion.

Farming new quality talent (not necessarily younger talent) has more obstacles than ever before.

Stations are utilizing the polished tools in their markets on other day parts, and other markets with in the same radio family to fill evening, and weekend voids. This helps ratings and sometimes pushes up the numbers especially during sweeps.

The downside to this is when your favourite power tool breaks, after using it for a decade, how can you possibly replace it with a duplicate, when the model has been discontinued. The new tools have different options,

and benefits, or the same options, just packaged differently (although beneficial) may not be entirely understood, or comfortable.

Comfort and familiarity are very important in the media, especially broadcasting. When PD's are unfamiliar with the "new" and upcoming talent in the market (or lack there of), how can the listener's be expected to be in the "comfort zone" with these rising stars, when they are called on stage to shine.

From index cards, and reel to reels to PowerGold, and Edit Pro. Advancements in the last decade are just signs of things to come. Technology is a tool to accentuate, not replace home-grown talent, and familiarity.

These "power" tools should be taken advantage of on speeding up the learning process in the industry, and taking the edge off of the "learning curve", not to make the process itself obsolete.

Cliff notes are used to help the information be absorbed quickly and accurately, once the text has been read. When you have the cliff notes, and the text is misplaced, key information to relate is lost.

("Cliff notes" are small booklets, that are a brief overview, of a story. Romeo and Juliet (as an example). The booklet explains the plot, and key point, chapter by chapter...as a study aid)

Up and coming "talent polls" should be established by privately own stations, as well as the Clear Channel, Cumulus, Infinity, and other conglomerates. Regional PD's must be on the pulse of the new products, in order to plan for upcoming trends, mechanical failure of current tools, or complete burn out. Local colleges and weekend talent in other markets are a great start.

Personality is what radio is built on (waves, frequency, watts, amps, excluded,) that is what will keep building success, familiarity, branding, strong books, and ultimately "maximum profitability".

Jim McVay

jmcvay@andrewsmoving.com

I guess what Jim is saying here is...with the lack of job opportunities brought about by satellite radio and other forms of syndication where will the new talent come from?

Another comment came from Doug Holder in Australia.

Dear Ian,
Thank you for Radio Wave # 3. Also - purchased the book, great!!

<http://www.allaboutradio.net>

Thought I'd like to comment on Satellite Radio and all the other new technology ways of delivering bulk programming.

Generic networked programs can only ever, at best fulfil a small part of radios function. Even satellite radio with 100 plus channels each aimed at a particular interest group can only be a music CD, a talking book or an encyclopaedia.

There is no one-on-one intimacy, no instant locally specific information no companionship.

Now I'm coming from a position of never having worked in REAL radio (although I'd very much like to).

I have however owned and operated three narrowcast stations (Yeah OK - but wait !) in three very different markets. A 1 watt narrowcast licence is not exactly a licence to print money.

Of necessity it has to be just about a one man operation -
you get to install the equipment, do the shifts - with the help of a computer - and you also get to be the sales force, out there talking to potential advertisers. The support from local business is huge because you are going to be local.

Almost without exception all the people I have talked to want to have LOCAL radio and that's not just in the country. One of my stations was in the Brisbane

market area but the residents still felt they weren't being served by the metropolitan stations, or for the usual reasons by their community station. I believe the future of radio is in being local.

Footnote: The current restrictions on format and tighter regulation now make low power narrow less of an alternative.

Regards, Doug.

dougholder@bigpond.com

Any thoughts YOU may have on all this...let me have 'em.

radiowave@allaboutradio.net

-----HOT TIP-----

When you're on-air and working your own board never, ever cross your arms over each other so your left hand is on the right and vice versa. It's easy to do this if things get busy but it will only lead to your brain becoming confused and a disastrous cock-up will follow shortly there-after.

-----HOT TIP-----

TOP RADIO PREP SITES

This suggestion from Nick Baltinos my partner in The Ian MacRae Radio School and the genius behind <http://www.netFM.net>

ANANOVA IMPROVES OUT OF SITE

News site <http://www.ananova.com> has dramatically improved its content with great articles which are updated daily.

What's also good, is that the articles are short and to the point, great for radio presenters.

COMING UP

Radio consultant DAVID ROGERSON says: "One of the most frequent questions I get asked from both Programme Directors and on-air personalities is the best way to go about critiquing their on-air sound.

Today's competitive radio environment means we are all striving to make sure today's programme is even better than yesterday's.

It is my experience that listeners are even more discerning than they were around five years ago. They may not always like what they know, but they know what they like!"

In the next issue of THE RADIO WAVE David gives six quick tips on what to look for when critiquing your on-air sound.

A FINAL NOTE FROM THE EDITOR.

The plan is to grow the list of people taking this e-letter, increase the content and encourage interactivity from our readers.

To do this I need your help.

If there is anyone you know either in or outside the radio industry who would like to receive THE RADIO WAVE please direct them to <http://www.allaboutradio.net> where they can subscribe for free. (You don't have to buy the book. There again, if you want to.....)

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