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THE RADIO WAVE  
"Keeping Radio People in Touch"

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Issue #11

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By subscription only! Welcome to the 11th. issue of  
THE RADIO WAVE  
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SPONSORSHIP NOTICE (SHAMELESS PERSONAL PLUG)

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"The Beginners' Guide To Becoming A Radio Star".  
is a far reaching e-book for radio beginners or people who  
want to make radio their career. All the information you'll  
discover here is "the basics" of radio. Stuff that applies  
anywhere in the world where professional commercial radio  
is established.

[www.allaboutradio.net](http://www.allaboutradio.net)

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G'DAY.

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Welcome to issue 11 of the Radio Wave newsletter.

Firstly a huge thank you to all those subscribers who have  
forwarded The Radio Wave to others in the industry. I've had  
a whole heap of new people signing on to our newsletter.

If you've been with me from issue one you'd know that this started as a spin-off from my e-book for beginners. (See above)  
If you haven't...you know now!

It has, since then, rapidly grown and expanded and is now reaching everyone from beginners to experienced pros. (love that expression.)

I've given a lot of thought to this project over the past few weeks as I've watched the subscriber base expand and received more and more e-mails from people in the industry expressing their thoughts and frustrations.

I get the feeling there is a definite need for a publication such as this especially for people at the coalface of radio... the on-air people and program and music directors.

While the broadcasting newsgroups do fill a very real need, a newsletter like this would seem to be a more personal vehicle, because there is somebody actually running the show. A sort of cyber-ringmaster. That's me!

I'm increasingly getting a feeling that there is a potential in this newsletter that is far greater than I ever initially envisioned. And, no, it's not a potential for me to make money although if I ever get time to write another e-book you guys will be the first to hear about it! :

In fact I don't make a cent for my time in putting this together and replying to the many emails I'm getting for help and advice. Maybe if we grow the list a lot more I can run some (low key) ads or something.

What I am getting is a sense of anger and frustration with certain aspects of the industry. Especially management and ownership. And I'm getting this response from countries around the world. Everywhere from the Philippines to Ireland to the US, the UK, Australia, Italy, New Zealand and many other places where commercial radio is established.

Is the business of radio being taken out of the hands of the creatives and entertainers and into the hands of the bean counters? Don't all shout at once!

Here's the point of this rave.

If we, (and by "we" I mean you as a subscriber to this missive), can build the subscriber base of The Radio Wave we can change it from a small bunch of muttering, grumbling radio people to

a voice that forces the powers that be to listen. In numbers is strength.

I feel we're at the point of either having something big that we all can be proud to be a part of, or just having a nice, regular e-letter that's kinda interesting but doesn't actually achieve much.

Here's the crunch. I'm asking you to, right this instant, forward a copy of this to EVERYONE you know in the radio industry.

Especially in the US market where we need to build our subscriber base...but...in fact...anywhere in the world.

Just ask them to send an empty e-mail to [radiowave@allaboutradio.net](mailto:radiowave@allaboutradio.net) and I'll put them on the list. As you know they can unsubscribe at any time and I do not pass on the data base to anyone.

Meantime, if you'd like to contribute an article for future editions feel free and your thoughts and comments are always welcome to: [ian@allaboutradio.net](mailto:ian@allaboutradio.net)

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RESEARCH, RECALL & RUBBISH  
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Two rival Australian radio networks have commissioned research into why some commercials have better recall by listeners than others.

And, goodness, what do ya know? The network that plays no more than two ads, DMG, found that only 6% of listeners recall 3 or more ads in a long break and 87% of listeners would turn off during a block of 8 commercials in a row.

Meantime, the network that plays long blocks of commercials, Austereo, found that frequency, (the number of times a commercial is played) was the important factor, regardless of the number of commercials a station plays in a break.

It found a "clear and direct link between the frequency an advertisement is played and the ability of listeners to recall that advert later in the day."

The research also found ad recall was "not affected by the number of ads in a break and was not affected by its position in a break." The research also found that "the number of ads in a break has no discernable impact on ad recall"

It also found that WHERE the commercial is placed in a break

"has no discernable impact on ad recall."

They've gotta be joking! Are they seriously claiming that an ad played in the middle or at the end of a four minute break will have the same listener recall as the one that was played first in that break.

I believe that the average listener finds their attention drifting off seconds into that first ad. That's if they don't punch the button to find some music somewhere else.

To try to get us to buy the story that listeners really don't mind long commercials breaks and in fact absorb the whole block equally is an insult to anyone's intelligence.

I have to agree with the finding that frequency is the key driver for ad recall. But then that's pretty bloody obvious too isn't it? The more you hear an ad the more you're going to recall it. Duh!

Honestly, it makes you wonder why radio stations waste their money on studies like this. All they need to do is ask anyone with any length of experience in the industry especially on-air presenters or PD's.

Seems to me both research companies have missed the one key factor when it comes to listener recall.

If commercials were more creative.more entertaining.more compelling and not so boring, bland and predictable maybe the audience would recall them more and actually not have the urge to hit the off button when a break comes on.

It never ceases to amaze me how much time and money is spent on getting the music, the promos, the I.D.'s and the presenters right for the station sound yet commercials rarely have to meet any criteria except that they bring in money.

I'd love to get your thoughts on this whether you agree with me or not.

[ian@allaboutradio.net](mailto:ian@allaboutradio.net)

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DIGITAL RADIO UPDATE  
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In the previous issue of this newsletter I mentioned that the American Federal Communications Commission had endorsed the IBOC ("In Channel-On Band") system for digital radio and had given the go-ahead to that broadcasting method.

Meantime in Europe and Australia the Eureka system has been endorsed as the preferred way to go.

So now it looks like we have two competing systems. Here we go again! A replay of the AM Stereo shambles and the competition between VHS and Beta video, (Unfortunately VHS won that one!)

The drawback with the Eureka system is that it makes existing radio receivers redundant and the punters will have to buy new digital radios which, at this stage, are pretty expensive. No doubt the price will eventually come down but right now you'd be looking at about US\$500 or more.

The Eureka system also means new frequencies for all existing stations and AM and FM would be on equal footing in terms of sound quality. Which is hardly something the current FM operators are going to be too thrilled about.

The American IBOC system however allows stations to broadcast both analogue and digital signals on the existing band which means they wouldn't have to lose their current frequencies.

This is very much a plus factor as far as the stations are concerned. Add to this the fact that the U.S. military are currently using much of the spectrum that would be used for the Eureka system and they're not too keen to give it up.

The Eureka system is by all reports far superior in sound. It makes AM sound like FM and raises FM to CD quality.

So what's the future for digital radio? Looks like nothing but confusion for some time. Which is probably just the way the FM stations like it.

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## ARCHIVES

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Requests are increasing for back editions of The Radio Wave. Up till now I haven't minded bundling them up and sending them out. But it's getting a bit out of hand so I've put them into a file which you can access at my e-book web site. They're free of course.

Just go to <http://www.allboutradio.net> and click on RadioWave Archives.

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## SPAM FILTERS

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With the increasing problem of sp\*m more and more onliners

are using anti-sp\*m programs.

Many ISP's have installed sp\*m filters which prevent what THEY believe to be a Sp\*m email being delivered to you. Which, in concept sounds great, but it's gone too far. And to make matters worse you can now buy similar software to install on your home computers.

The result is that many legitimate emails are not being received by the person they were was sent to. Some filter programs notify the addressee that an email has been stopped but many just dump the "suspect" email in cyber space.

A lady I know who is recovering from brest (intentionally misspelled) cancer has had her newsletters from a cancer support group blocked because of the word brest. (again mis-spelt)

This is absolute stupidity.

I had a number of the previous edition of The Radio Wave bounced back because of the word bulls\*\*t which popped up in a quote from a newsgroup.

Well, the hell with it. I'm not going to be censored by some dumb computer program and this is the last article you will see in this newsletter that intentionally mis-spells or alters words.

If you believe your anti-sp\*m program is doing this and you wish to continue receiving The Radio Wave most of these programs allow you to list incoming addresses of which you approve. Please do so. Thank you.

Meantime, as mentioned above, if you feel you may have missed some back issues they're all now archived at <http://www.allaboutradio.net>

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NEWS  
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Well, the Washington sniper(s) were caught. But I thought this story from before they were captured might interest you.

< CHARLOTTE, N.C. -- The producer of a syndicated radio talk show says it wasn't intentional.

The show got complaints from some listeners, who heard the Queen song "Another One Bites the Dust" being played -- moments after a report of a Washington-area shooting Tuesday that may be linked to the serial sniper.

The producer of the "John Boy and Billy" show said the song was put into the show's computerized play list, and was the first music track after the program's newscast. The song played about 10 minutes after news of the shooting broke.

The program is broadcast live from Charlotte but the songs can be different depending on the type of music the affiliated stations play.

The Queen song reportedly was heard on classic-rock stations, while other stations played a different song.

It can happen so easily. On the day of the Twin Towers terrorist attack I played "Learning to Fly" by Tom Petty. Just because I'd been too busy to check the screen for the first track programmed out of the news.

Meantime on October 16th. All Access Music reported this story.

< NOTRE DAME football radio analyst and former player ALLEN PINKETT has apologized for saying during SATURDAY's game against PITT that a receiver fell down as if "felled by a sniper."

The remark received static from listeners who felt it was insensitive in light of the sniper situation in suburban WASHINGTON, where PINKETT is from and where his mother and siblings still live.

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WE HAVE MAIL  
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WARNING! THE FOLLOWING LINK MAY OFFEND! THEN AGAIN...IT MAY NOT!

Hi Ian,

I got sent this link, (contains nudity)

<http://www.watchersweb.com/boobs4radio.htm>

I think there's going to be some very happy jocks. a novel way of a community station raising some money??

Anyway keep up your great work.

Cheers Mate

Daniel Elan

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MORE MAIL  
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I enjoy the emails from you about happenings in the industry. On your last one you quote from the ausradio newsgroup. How do get into this discussion list? I've found the site but can't find where to join.

I despair with the amount of automation and syndication these days.

I can understand it to a degree for small country stations that may be struggling but there is no excuse for a capital city station or major regional market to be running off computer or not local for over 50% of the day which appears to be the norm in some places.

Regards

Des Deighton

Hi Des.

Go to [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)  
then "Groups" and enter  
aus.radio.broadcast in search window

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AND MORE  
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Hello Ian:

Thanks for sending me the newsletter. I enjoyed it, especially the jock giving away the Phil Collins tickets.

You mentioned, that if I have questions about radio, or need help, that you might be able to provide information.

I guess what I am wondering is what do people ask you?

I'll try to be brief. I am blind, and I am working at a small suburban station in Westchester county NY. I am running an Audio Arts board using minidisks. Basically I am a board op.

Occasionally I DJ. I guess what I am wondering is: are there networking organizations or maybe job coaches that can help someone in my situation who is just above a beginner? I do not want to relocate; I realize that limits my opportunities.

I feel like I'm at a dead end. There aren't a lot of web sites that advertise radio job openings in the NYC area.

Certainly if I can find suitable work in this area, I would welcome that. My concern is that I may run in to problems dealing with employers concerning training and accessibility issues. I guess the answer to your question is both.

I am looking for either a job, or someone to talk to about finding another job. I lack perspective on whether I can realistically expect to find a board op type job, for example, in the NYC area. I hope I explained my inquiry more thoroughly.

Thank you in advance.

Nick Sarames

[nicksarames@msn.com](mailto:nicksarames@msn.com)

Dear Ian,

I'm writing to you from Shelton in the Uk, hoping that you can help.

I'm 22 years old and totally blind. I've wanted a career in radio since I first heard one. I'm currently studying a degree in broadcast journalism which I dislike immensely and would give up at the first reasonable opportunity.

I have been greatly influenced by the likes of yourself, Tony Windsor, Tony Blackburn, Kenny Everett and others.

We currently have no broadcast training facilities in this country, hence we have the detritus that is the British Radio industry. We particularly have not mentors or broadcasters that will take the time and effort to bring on the next generation such as you are doing. What advice can you give?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Sincerely

Paul Bryce

[bn403164@cr10m.staffs.ac.uk](mailto:bn403164@cr10m.staffs.ac.uk)

COMMENT.

I have contacted these two subscribers with my thoughts.

I have a friend who is blind (and isn't it good these two emailers don't use the PC phrase "Sight Impaired" which really tells you nothing) and I know that blind people have a heightened sense of sound which obviously makes up for their lack of sight.

They have an inbuilt feeland sensitivity for audio which makes them naturals to work in radio.

Yet so few stations are open to employing them. Certainly there are problems operating screen driven digital studio systems but surely nothing that can't be overcome.

If you are blind and work on air or employ someone in this category I'd love to hear how you handle this situation.

[ian@allaboutradio.net](mailto:ian@allaboutradio.net)

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Hi Ian. Our format at 2ST is the best from the 60's 70's etc. The last 4 decades. Nothing too heavy. Looking for new positioning statements for free. Any ideas?

regards Pete Brandtman 2ST Nowra (Aust)

No. Nothing original anyway. This is what consultants get paid mega-bucks for! Any ideas for Pete?

Meantime here's some thoughts from my book for radio newbies "The Beginners Guide to being a Radio Star."  
<http://www.allaboutradio.net>

<Having a positioning statement has been questioned by some experts. They say it's "old hat" and meaningless. They have a point.

Like, for example: ".playing more hits." More hits than who??

"The Best Mix." Prove it.

Positioning statements were designed to establish what a particular station was offering. The problem is now that so many stations are using them, and often similar sound-alike ones, that they've lost their clout.

Listeners these days are very cynical beasts and will not accept without question everything you tell them.

If the station doesn't deliver what is promised in the positioning statement it can actually go against them. Claiming that you play "more music" means you'd better be playing more than anybody else in town.

Slogans that mean nothing mean nothing to the listener.

In fact, not long ago, in a backlash against positioning statements, some stations were using very funny, satirical slogans. Tongue firmly in cheek they'd announce statements such as: " Hot FM. We play some music, talk a little, play a few commercials and then some more music."

\*-----HOT TIP-----\*

"Be yourself" is the advice most often given to beginners on air. I would add to that: "Be yourself but just a LITTLE bit bigger."

\*-----HOT TIP-----\*

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## TOP RADIO PREP SITES

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This issue, just for a change, I have for you NOT a site for on-air prep but a site to prepare beginners for the realities of radio. It's also very funny. To quote their home page:

"The radio business is a cruel and shallow money trench, a long plastic hallway where thieves and pimps run free, and good men die like dogs.

There's also a negative side."

Hunter S. Thompson

KRUD Radio is every radio station. What you will see and read on this site is all about the real world of radio. The KRUD website is for radio broadcasters AND the radio listener.

Here at KRUD, we expose radio for what it really is. From the DJ's to Sales, Engineering to Management, Promotions to

Research. The radio listener will discover a side of radio they never imagined existed... the real side.

<http://www.krud.com/>

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COMING UP NEXT ISSUE

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Dunno yet!

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A FINAL NOTE FROM THE EDITOR.

Just a reminder. Please help grow this letter so we can make our voice louder in the industry.

If there is anyone you know either in or outside the radio industry who would like to receive THE RADIO WAVE they should simply ask to be subscribed by sending a blank e-mail to:

[radiowave@allaboutradio.net](mailto:radiowave@allaboutradio.net)

As you know it's free and you can unsubscribe at any time.

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