

THE RADIO WAVE
"Keeping Radio People in Touch"

4th.May 2003

Issue #16

Ian MacRae, Editor, ian@allaboutradio.net

By subscription only! Welcome to the 16th.issue of
THE RADIO WAVE
You are receiving this because you requested a subscription.
Unsubscribe instructions are at the end of this newsletter.

IN THIS ISSUE

- => Sponsorship Notice
- => G'day
- => Play My Request or else
- => Radio and the War
- => Mail
- => Satellite Radio Tries it On
- => More Satellite News
- => April Fool
- => More Mail
- => Hot Tip
- => Top Radio Prep Sites
- => A Final Note
- => Subscribe/Unsubscribe information

SPONSORSHIP NOTICE

Shameless personal plug for those subscribers living close to Sydney...

After almost two years in operation, The Ian MacRae Radio School has just announced an extension of its courses.

MacRae said: "We took into account comments from prospective students. Some said they'd love to do the course but couldn't afford it at this time. Others indicated they would be interested in a longer and more intensive course. So we've redesigned THREE new courses to meet these needs.

The 'biggie' is 'The Radio Broadcasting Certificate' (RBC) which represents the highest level of Commercial Radio Broadcasting training the school has to offer."

"Then comes the 'Commercial Radio Short Course' which is a light version and is designed for beginners who wish to gain

a quick understanding of the industry and learn basic studio abilities."

"And finally there's the budget course we call 'The Voice & Studio Workshop', which is an ongoing hands-on course, where students can turn up on any Monday evening."

"All practical lessons happen in our state of the art real radio studio where we teach the latest studio playout and editing systems."

"So now we're pleased to say we can help potential radio stars explore the world of radio broadcasting at the highest possible level and within their budget."

More information can be found at www.radioschool.org

G'DAY.

Welcome to issue 16 of the Radio Wave newsletter. the newsletter aimed at people who'd like to be in radio, newbies who've just started and full-time professionals.

Any comments you have about anything you read here please let me have them.

Anything you need help or advice with...ask. If I can't provide the answer I'll find someone who can. You'll find an example of that in this issue with an enquiry about Personal People Meters.

If you'd like to contribute an article...you're welcome.

You can reach me at ian@allaboutradio.net

PLAY MY REQUEST - OR ELSE

A listener sent over a dozen threatening e-mails from his mobile phone to FM Yokohama in Japan saying that, unless they played his requests, he'd blow up the station or fly a plane into it.

Police later arrested Ichiro Hirata an unemployed resident of Odawara.

What was interesting is that his requests for several oldies and a children's song are not in the station's format.

Terrorism is being used around the world in futile attempts to force change in many areas but this must be the first time it's

been used to force a radio format change!

RADIO AND THE WAR

President Bush was "all at sea" when he announced the end of the war in Iraq this past week. So what we need to know now is what effect the war coverage had on radio ratings.

The Arbitron people were still trialing the Personal People Meters in Philadelphia at the time so it was a perfect opportunity to get a credible sample of how the war changed listening habits.

The PPM enabled them to track how total radio listening changed as events in Iraq unfolded. During the first days of the war, listening went up by five percent overall. The higher levels of listening continued in the second week with a four percent overall increase.

News formatted radio stations were up 32 percent, Talk formatted radio showed audience increases of 17 percent, and Rock formats increased 9 percent. So increases were not just limited to news and talk formatted stations. Which leads us to...

MAIL

>From Mike Currie.

Ian,
Digging around on the net I came up with your article on ratings and how they operate under the current 'diary' system.

I am a night-time jock here in Auckland, New Zealand. Our format is Classic Rock. There are something like 23 FM signals alone in this city, so to say that we are spoilt for choice is a bloody understatement!. Everyone is scrapping for their piece of an ever-diminishing pie.

An 'all 10+' figure of 8% in breakfast would be damn near licence to print money!...

I have worked my guts out for the last 4 years doing nights, and in that time have seen 3 managers and three format changes. Admittedly, the current structure has been in place for 2.5 years and is stable, including the on-air line-up.

Which brings me to the ratings system. Auckland is a city of nearly 1 million people. There was, in the last survey approximately 3300 diaries sent to households. The results that came through were, well surprising to say the least this

time round.

Our position was strengthened immeasurably in our core 25-44 age group. I now rate No.1 nights in this bracket, with another of our brands coming a very close second. Split it down a bit more and in the 35-44 I'm still No.1, but have a clear lead of just under 6 points.

Not that I'm complaining (hell no!), but it makes me worry that maybe next time the diaries wont end up in the same place and I'll take a big tumble. Questions will be asked by management, my 'style' will be changed and I'm back to square one again.

It's not surprising that most D.J's can be completely cynical of surveys...get the numbers and everyone falls all over themselves to praise you and help get more resources for your show. Take a fall (without changing your style or show content 1 iota) and all of a sudden everyone is concerned at this 'downward' trend. No wonder us D.J's are a schizo lot!!

It would be an extremely interesting experiment to implement PPM here for a 2 year span and compare the figures to the diary system. It seems to be brutally honest and could really shake a few stations up.

The only question I have regarding it is with passive listening. Does this count when you're in a retail outlet where a radio is on?, you're not REALLY listening, you're probably more intent on choosing your product than listening to music...

Anyway, enough of me ranting, I've got to go do some prep!! I'd be keen on any feedback...

Cheers

Mike

ANSWER: That's a very interesting question Mike about passive Listening. I'll get the man who knows all this stuff, David Rogerson, to answer.

++++
Mike first of all thank you for your interest and the invitation to consider extending the PPM service into Auckland. Having been a group program director I sympathise and empathise with your ride on the ratings roller coaster.

One thing to keep in mind with the PPM (Portable People Meter)

is that it uses a sample of respondents who form part of a panel of people, in much the same way TV uses a similar methodology to measure TV ratings.

Panels tend to provide more stable ratings over a period of time as opposed to a diary service which is moving from one sample of people to another sample, often a week later.

Your question on passive listening is a good one, and a question which people have raised on a number of occasions. The reality is that the primary function of Arbitron's PPM pick is to measure up a person's minute by minute exposure to radio and or/TV, 24 hours a day, 7days a week, 365 days a year.

The question of how closely someone is listening and whether they are absorbing the message is one for other forms of research and the creative power of the station or message being broadcast to answer.

While the PPM picks up minute by minute exposure and stores the information, it is up to the individual country or their representative body to decide on how they want this exposure to radio to be reported locally.

In the USA for example, to be reported as a listener to one quarter hour of radio, you would need to have been exposed to a total of five minutes in a given quarter hour if you were carrying the PPM (they don't have to be 5 continuous minutes as a diary would ask, but an aggregate total of any 5 minutes of listening in the quarter hour).

So using your electronic retail store as an example, if you were only exposed via the PPM to a station for a total of 3 minutes in a given quarter hour, under the USA reporting system then you would not be counted as a listener to that station.

In then end, we need to go back and remember why ratings were first introduced. Their basic function all those years ago was to help advertisers, who in those days sponsored programs in 15 minutes blocks, ascertain how many people were potentially exposed to their product message.

Since then programmers and the like have taken this data and cross referenced it to produce a wealth of useful information which assists in better programming and marketing to the needs of listeners.

The PPM is a passive way of measuring actual listening, whereas a diary relies on an individual's recall and reporting who you listened to.

David Rogerson
Managing Director
Strategic Media Solutions

e: smpacific@aol.com

SATELLITE RADIO TRIES IT ON

The U.S. NAB is concerned that XM Satellite Radio has announced a new service that will allow them to broadcast local weather information.

The NAB says that could be a step toward XM broadcasting local content as opposed to its agreed-upon exclusively national programming.

XM terrestrial based repeater stations were supposed to be solely to fill in the gaps in areas where the satellite transmission was a bit fuzzy but the NAB is worried that the satellite broadcaster is moving toward terrestrial based stations fed by satellites.

How could they suspect XM of being so sneaky? Never!

Meantime XM seems to be doing OK anyway. They say in April they passed their 500,000 subscriber mark.

MORE SATELLITE NEWS

Again in the U.S. a company called KVH Industries has launched a satellite TV antenna that will deliver a TV service to vehicles equipped with back-seat video systems. It will cost about US\$2,500 per car, SUV or min-van and will be aimed at "Directv" subscribers.

Another competitor for terrestrial radio. The only way to compete?

Be local.

APRIL FOOL!!

I've gotta say it's becoming more and more difficult to think of new and original April Fool's Day stunts.

I liked this one pulled by Dave Elswick from talk station KARN in Little Rock.

He had listeners convinced that Government was going to tax walking to raise funds to build more sidewalks across America.

He interviewed a certain William Maxwell who he claimed was the Director of the "Surface Transportation Agency" about the Government's plans to have people carry small pocket devices that would track their walking habits to determine their tax rate.

The phones ran hot with indignant callers attacking the "guest" until they were let in on the joke.

That's the secret of a good stunt. Give it credibility. Make it "the impossible possible".

MORE MAIL

Hey Man. Lovin' the service you provide, always look forward to it!!

I was wondering if you could place this somewhere in the next email that comes to us.

"3BA Ballarat afternoon Announcer Ray Kington married Power FM AtWork Network Announcer and Music Director Bec White over the Easter Long weekend in Sydney."

Two radio announcers getting married!! Gee what do ya think we talk about most of the time!!

Regards,

Ray Kington

COMMENT: Congratulations Ray and Bex. Hmm. One AM and the other FM. Dunno about these mixed marriages.

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

In the days of TOP 40 Radio
D.J's would actually talk and
be passionate about the music.
Now they seem mostly oblivious
to it. People who listen to
music radio like music! So why
not show a little enthusiasm
for it? Get involved. Or at
least tell them what they're

listening to.

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

TOP RADIO PREP SITES

A call for help came from a young lady who'd bought my on-line book for radio beginners.

www.allaboutradio.net

She wanted some additional tips about newsreading and asked where she could find them. Here's my reply. Thought it might be of interest to others.

Hi Karlien.

Let me suggest a couple of links that will give you news reading tips.

One is <http://www.newsript.com/delivery.html> which will also give you good tips on news writing.

The other is an Australian site at

<http://www.radioinfo.com.au/>

You will need to register the first time you visit but it's free. Go to THE NEWS DOCTOR.

This is updated and changed regularly. Also the site is a very good one for general information and showprep.

Glad you found the e-book helpful and good luck with your future career.

Ian MacRae

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

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

NEXT ISSUE
Stuff.

COPYRIGHT INFO.

Copyright 2003 Ian MacRae

AllAboutRadio-RadioWave mailing list

AllAboutRadio-RadioWave@allaboutradio.net

<http://www.allaboutradio.net/mailman/listinfo/allaboutradio-radiowave>