

THE RADIO WAVE
"Keeping Radio People in Touch"

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Issue #17

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THE RADIO WAVE
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SPONSORSHIP NOTICE

"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

G'DAY.

Welcome to issue 17 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

THE WORLD'S FIRST FEMALE DJ?

An interesting bit of radio history turned up on an industry newsgroup this past month. It claimed that the very first DJ was a woman. She was the wife of Charles Herrold, the founder in 1909 of "San Jose Calling", the world's first radio broadcasting station.

She played records given to her by a local record store in exchange for promotional mentions of the store. So that would also make radio's first "contra"deal!

I didn't know they HAD records in 1909. Anybody shed anymore light on this? ian@allaboutradio.net

WHAT A LAUGH

It's been tried before with little success...but here we go again. "All Comedy Radio" launches in July out of Hollywood.

It's being promoted as a syndicated radio network and will offer a mix of exclusive comedy programs in capsule form, specific day parts or 24/7 presentation to radio stations in all size markets.

Good luck to them. We need more laughs on radio and let's hope they can provide them.

SATELLITE RADIO

Across the US the biggest challenge to terrestrial radio increases. The SIRIUS network will have it first portable receiver available this month.

Now both KENWOOD and AUDIOVOX have receivers which can be moved from separate docking kits in the home or car.

KENWOOD's is called "Here2Anywhere" and AUDIOVOX' is called "SATELLITE RADIO SHUTTLE."

EMI BACK IN THE BLACK

Music company EMI Group say they've returned to profitability in its latest fiscal year. This is despite a slump in sales, attributing the good performance to lower costs and a refocusing of its business on a core of successful artists.

EMI's major hit-makers were Norah Jones and Coldplay.

Meanwhile it was the same old scenario. Give people the flick and kick up the profits. EMI Recorded Music shed 1,900 jobs, helping the division increase operating profit by 81 percent.

It said it had aggressively streamlined its artist roster to concentrate on "profitable, sustainable sales from artists with long-term potential."

The division blamed its 12.6 percent fall in sales on general market forces and a "significant increase" in digital and physical piracy.

It's interesting that nowhere was the Mariah Carey payout mentioned. Funny that.

THE MARIA CAREY CAPER

Want to make big money? Be a failure.

Well, judging by the ongoing stories of high-flying CEO's who've been rewarded with golden handshakes of millions of dollars for driving their companies into the ground, it would seem to be the way to go.

Or be a failure in another way. Like make albums that are stiffs.

Despite initially denying it, EMI/Virgin Records decided to part ways with the pop diva.

While Carey's original contract with the label would have paid her around \$100 million, the multi-album deal was "amicably" settled for \$28 million.

This followed the failure of her movie "Glitter", which was panned by everybody, and the soundtrack which only managed to sell 2 million worldwide. It's reckoned that EMI lost US\$10

million dollars on that little project.

I loved the statement Mariah Carey, or more likely her spin-doctors, sent out.

"This is the right decision for me. I look forward to the many new and exciting opportunities, which have now been presented to me. I wish Virgin well."

Yep. Must have been a tough decision.

PETE "I'M A BOY" TOWNSHEND GETS WRITING

And, while we're in a pop frame of mind it's worth noting that Rolling Stone has published an e-mail it received from the rock-guitarist and co-founder of The Who Pete Townshend.

In it he said he wanted to hurry up his autobiography, which he had planned to set aside for a while, so that we fans would get a better idea of his life.

This is one of the few statements he has made since he was cleared of child-porn charges.

He acknowledged using his credit card to enter a Web site advertising child pornography but said he was doing research for his autobiography. He denied being a paedophile and said he had actually campaigned against child pornography.

Of course the main character in his rock opera "Tommy" is a deaf, dumb and blind pinball wizard who is sexually abused by an uncle.

Seems Pete has a deep interest in this sort of situation. In fact he said he believed he was sexually abused as a young boy while in the care of his mentally ill grandmother.

You'd think that would have been mentioned at some point during the heavy promotion of the album when it was first released. Seems an obvious publicity generator was overlooked at the time.

Any thoughts? ian@allaboutradio.net

WE HAVE MAIL

Hi Ian

I have a question for you about entering the industry. I'm sure you get questions like this all the time.

I have read your ebook "The Beginners Guide to Becoming a Radio Star", and I have to say, it was a very interesting and insightful read. I find myself listening to the radio now and going "awww, so that's how they do that", or "I know what you're up to".

Anyway, I'm from NZ and I have always had an interest in radio, but have only recently gained the confidence to do something about it. I'm looking at doing a 3 year degree in broadcast communications.

Some of our larger radio stars have also done this very degree, but I really can't work out whether doing a three year degree is going to be more beneficial than doing a shorter 1 or 2 year course. Is it really the piece of paper that matters?

Also I am a qualified and experienced computer network admin (techo as some people call us).

This is a pretty swift career change for someone who's not been in their current career for very long, but I am looking to integrate the two careers (as most radio stations use computers now right?), do you think that the extra skill is going to help me to get my foot in the studio door, so to speak?

Hey, thanks again for a great book!

Scott

MY REPLY...

Hi Scott

A lot depends on which area of radio you want to work in.

If you're looking at being in management as a long-term proposition probably an extensive 2 or 3 year course by a reputable supplier would be good for you. It would give you an overall understanding of the industry.

However, if you're looking at being on-air I personally think the course would be a waste of time (and money),

The AFTRS (Australian Film, Television and Radio School) course here in Sydney is eight and a half months and that's long enough if you want to be a radio star! However, they only take a limited number of students every year so it's not easy getting accepted.

The longest course my radio school offers is 10 weeks and is pretty intensive but is designed to give a basic grounding on

everything a beginner needs to know.

I would suggest you should try to get some time on a community radio station as at least it gets you on the air and gives you a chance to put together a demo of your work. The only downside of community radio is that you can fall into bad habits if there is no one in charge who can direct you.

Your experience in computer network admin. will certainly be an extra skill that would be welcome in most radio stations. The more multi-skilled you are the easier it is to get a job on air.

In answer to your question then...I don't believe having a piece of paper is going to do much for you at all in terms of an on-air career.

Glad you enjoyed the book. Hope you find it helpful.

Regards, Ian MacRae

NETWORKING

I reprint the following without comment. The article says it all.

WHY WORRY ABOUT WHO OWNS THE MEDIA?

MoveOn Bulletin Op-Ed

by Eli Pariser

It's like something out of a nightmare, but it really happened:

At 1:30 on a cold January night, a train containing hundreds of thousands of gallons of toxic ammonia derailed in Minot, North Dakota.

Town officials try to sound the emergency alert system, but it isn't working. Desperate to warn townspeople about the poisonous white cloud bearing down on them, the officials call their local radio stations. But no one answers any of the phones for an hour and a half.

According to the New York Times, three hundred people are hospitalised, some are partially blinded, and pets and livestock are killed.

Where were Minot's DJs on January 18th, 2002? Where was the late night station crew? As it turns out, six of the seven local radio stations had recently been purchased by Clear

Channel Communications, a radio giant with over 1,200 stations nationwide.

Economies of scale dictated that most of the local staff be cut: Minot stations ran more or less on auto pilot, the programming largely dictated from further up the Clear Channel food chain.

No one answered the phone because hardly anyone worked at the stations any more; the songs played in Minot were the same as those played on Clear Channel stations across the Midwest.

Companies like Clear Channel argue that economies of scale allow them to cut costs while continuing to provide quality programming. But they do so at the expense of local coverage.

It's not just about emergency warnings: media mergers are decreasing coverage of local political races, local small businesses, and local events. There are only a third as many owners of newspapers and TV stations as there were in the 1970s (about 600 now; over 1,500 then).

It's harder and harder for Americans to find out what's going on in their own back yards.

On June 2, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is considering relaxing or getting rid of rules to allow much more media concentration.

While the actual rule changes are under wraps, they could allow enormous changes in the American media environment.

For example, one company could be allowed to own ABC, CBS, and NBC. Almost certainly, media companies will be allowed to own newspapers and TV stations in the same town. We could be entering a new era of media megaliths.

Do you want one or two big companies acting as gatekeepers and controlling your access to news and entertainment? Most of us don't.

And the airwaves explicitly belong to us -- the American people. We allow media companies to use them in exchange for their assurance that they're serving the public interest, and it's the FCC's job to make sure that's so.

For the future of American journalism, and for the preservation of a diverse and local media, we have to hold the FCC to its mission. Otherwise, Minot's nightmare may become our national reality.

PIRATE RADIO (?)

Having been involved in "pirate radio" some years ago I don't know whether this can be regarded as real pirate radio. But I like what these guys are attempting and look forward to sampling it.

They say they are just a few hours from launch as this newsletter goes out.

PRESS RELEASE

FAB New Pirate Sound for Internet Radio.

A new style of pirate radio is emerging from the underground. The internet webcaster. Unlicensed by the authorities, and paying no royalties for the music they play, they are less likely to pump out dance or jungle music, and more likely to play rock, jazz or oldies.

One such internet pirate station is FAB Radio. Describing itself as "the internet oldies pirate station".

The station is expected to start test transmissions at the end of May, and goes online from June 1st at Noon (UK time).

FAB Radio operates from an office that was once a store room in a small Stoke-on-Trent based computer shop, with the online studio shoehorned into a former walk-in broom closet.

To listen to FAB, all web surfers have to do is go to: www.fabradio.co.uk , and click on the icon on the home page.

FAB aims to bring back excitement and fun to classic hits/oldies format radio playing GREAT hits from the 1960's and 1970's.

It differs from other stations working the same format in that it harks back to the all-hit radio style of presentation of the period with a FAB40 "Solid Gold Survey" of listeners most requested music.

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

If someone wins a prize on your show imagine that it's YOU who's the winner. Same if they loose.

This will inject some genuine
reaction from you to your caller.

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

TOP RADIO PREP SITES

In the past students have often asked me how they can find out about songs that in many cases were around prior to them being born (or worse one's that their parents liked!)

Here's a good site that not only outlines the songs chart history, but also gives a commentary on what was happening in the world / music industry at the time. It helps to put the song into perspective. A worthwhile musical history lesson

www.gramble.com

regards

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COMMENT: Thanks David. Anybody else found a good radioprep site. Tell us all ian@allaboutradio.net

A FINAL NOTE FROM THE EDITOR.

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

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