

MANAGER'S BUSINESS REPORT™

MBR

Radio Business Report, Inc.

17 Years

November 2000

Wall Street's thrills and spills

Radio CEO's have been riding a stock market roller coaster this year. Can their stomachs handle it?

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News in Review

Sumner Redstone bets on BET. An L.A. FM sells for a cool quarter-billion.

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Programming & Positioning™

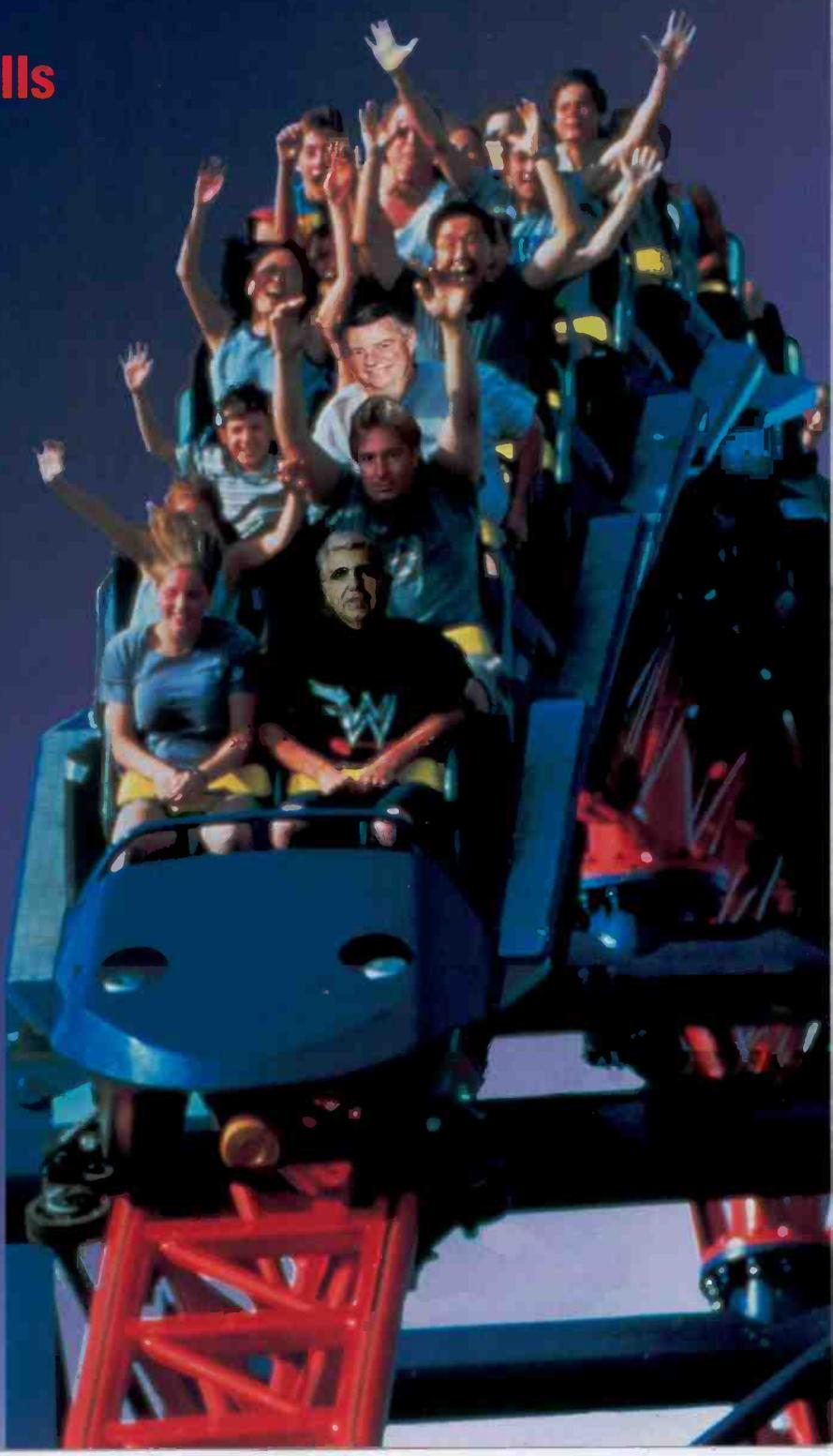
It takes a whole cast of characters for Phil Hendrie to put together his show. The thing is, he works alone.

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Attorney George Borsari says it's the FCC that's dragging its feet and ignoring the public interest, not broadcasters.

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Double-digit parade continues into August

According to the Radio Advertising Bureau, radio picked up 10% more business during the month of August than it did during the same month last year. Double digit gains are always welcome, but this year August's 10% and July's 11% seem like a slump after radio got off to a start well above 20% for the first half of the year.

Nonetheless, Wall Street continues to batter radio stocks. The much-reported slowdown in dot-com advertising as more and more Internet businesses go belly up has seemingly spooked the herd of investors. For those looking long-term, it may be quite awhile before many radio stocks will be available at such attractive prices. Many groups are buying back shares themselves.—Dave Seyler

Radio Revenue Index

July revenues continue the double-digit parade

While national business in July went into a bit of a summertime siesta, local continued on at a relatively strong pace, giving radio an 11% gain over the same month in 1999. Local business was up 11%, led by a 15% gain in the East. The East topped the chart in national business—its 17% gain contributed to a 9% uptick overall.

The Southwest and West also enjoyed double-digit gains in local business, but were victimized, if such a word is appropriate for a gain, by the slowdown in national. The Midwest is the only region in recent memory to record single-digit gains in both categories at the same time.

Aug 2000	Local	National
All markets	11%	6%
East	10%	1%
Southeast	10%	1%
Midwest	10%	2%
Southwest	18%	24%
West	12%	11%

Local & Nat'l revenue Aug 2000
All markets **10%**

Jan-Aug 2000	Local	National
All markets	16%	24%
East	18%	28%
Southeast	13%	20%
Midwest	13%	15%
Southwest	15%	31%
West	19%	26%

Local & Nat'l revenue Jan-Aug 2000
All markets **18%**

Source: RAB

Format Focus

Each month MBR will focus on one of 15 format groups, showing how it performs compared to the others in several different categories. Sources include the Arbitron Fall 1999 survey and the RBR Source Guide database

*The New-Talk-Sports group is predominately used on the AM dial. It's greatest strength is in the very largest markets—good enough to make it #1 overall. Kids aren't tuning in, but older, wiser people are.

News-Talk-Sports Demo	Rank	Rating
12+	1	15.1
AM dial	1	66.3
FM dial	12	1.6
1-50	1	16.9
18-34	9	6.4
25-54	3	12.4
35-64	1	16.7
Market sizes:		
1-50	1	16.9
51-100	4	11.1
101-150	4	11.3
151-200	4	10.6
201-276	4	10.0

Superduopoly Dimensions

Industry Consolidation
(as of October 16, 2000)

Superduopoly: 58.2%		
Market	# of stns	pernt
1 to 50	904	57.5
51 to 100	709	62.2
101 to 150	467	56.4
151 to 200	471	56.1
201 to 250	413	60.6
251 to 276	160	52.3
Total consolidation: 78.5%		
Market	# of stns	percent
1 to 50	1,265	80.5
51 to 100	902	79.2
101 to 150	639	77.2
151 to 200	645	76.9
201 to 250	523	76.8
251 to 276	238	77.8
All markets	4,212	78.5

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Year-to-date stock price performance

Radio stocks continued to tumble as Q3 ended. You'd think that radio had belly up.—JM

Company	9/29/00 Close	YTD Net Chg	YTD Pct Chg
Ackerley	10.000	-8.125	-44.83%
Adelphia	27.563	-38.062	-58.00%
Alliance Bcg.	0.012	-0.238	-95.20%
Am. Tower	37.688	7.126	23.31%
Am. Comm. Ent.	0.280	-1.595	-85.07%
Beasley	9.688	-5.812	-37.50%
Belo Corp.	18.438	-0.625	-3.28%
Big City Radio	4.313	-0.437	-9.20%
Ceridian	28.063	6.501	30.15%
Cir.Rsch.Labs	9.625	7.625	381.25%
Citadel	17.000	-47.875	-73.80%
Clear Channel	56.625	-32.625	-36.55%
Cox Radio	17.438	-15.812	-47.55%
Crown Castle	31.063	-1.062	-3.31%
Cumulus	6.125	-44.625	-87.93%
DG Systems	4.250	-2.875	-40.35%
Disney	38.250	9.000	30.77%
Emmis	24.750	-37.570	-60.29%
Entercom	29.938	-36.312	-54.81%
First Entertain.	0.060	-0.581	-90.63%
Fisher	72.000	10.250	16.60%
FTM Media	1.063	-11.687	-91.66%
Gaylord	23.875	-6.063	-20.25%
Gentner	12.313	-1.687	-12.05%
Global Media	1.063	-3.625	-77.33%
Harman Intl.	39.100	11.038	39.33%
Harris Corp.	28.438	1.751	6.56%
Hearst-Argyle	20.000	-6.625	-24.88%
Hispanic Bcg.	27.875	-18.234	-39.55%
Infinity	33.000	-3.188	-8.81%
Interop	3.125	-10.250	-76.64%
Jeff-Pilot	67.875	-0.375	-0.55%
Launch Media	6.813	-12.125	-64.02%
NBG Radio Nets	2.031	-1.063	-34.36%
New York Times	39.313	-9.812	-19.97%
Pinnacle Hldgs.	26.625	-15.750	-37.17%
PopMail.com	0.469	-2.531	-84.37%
Radio One, Cl. A	8.313	-22.354	-72.89%
Radio One, Cl. D	7.063	-23.604	-76.97%
Radio Unica	3.875	-25.000	-86.58%
RealNetworks	39.750	-20.406	-33.92%
Regent	5.563	-2.937	-34.55%
Saga Commun.	16.500	-3.750	-18.52%
Salem Comm.	12.688	-9.937	-43.92%
Sirius Sat. Radio	52.875	8.375	18.82%
Spanish Bcg.	11.750	-28.500	-70.81%
SpectraSite	18.563	7.688	70.69%
SportsLine USA	13.813	-36.312	-72.44%
TM Century	0.730	0.105	16.80%
Triangle	0.008	-0.012	-60.00%
Tribune	43.625	-11.438	-20.77%
Viacom, Cl. A	58.500	-1.938	-3.21%
Viacom, Cl. B	58.625	-1.813	-3.00%
WarpRadio.com	1.031	-3.594	-77.71%
Westwood One	21.438	-16.562	-43.58%
WinStar Comm.	15.500	-34.667	-69.10%
XM Sat. Radio	43.063	4.938	12.95%

Major stock market indices		
The Radio Index	121.610	-134.450
Dow Industrials	10650.550	-846.570
Nasdaq comp.	3672.650	-396.660
S&P 500	1436.510	-32.740

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MBR Stats

Top 50 Radio Groups

Lowry's expanding his lead

The numbers keep getting a bit bigger, but there's been no change in the rankings of radio's five largest group owners since we last published BIA Financial Network's rankings in May (*RBR* 5/29, p. 6). Clear Channel, of course, has moved above the 1,000-station mark. That's 4.7 times the number of stations owned by number two, in terms of FCC licenses held, Cumulus Media (which has fewer stations now than in May, due to a number of restructuring deals). In fact, Lowry Mays' Clear Channel has slightly more stations than #2-15 combined (1,083).

The biggest change in the Top 10 groups is the move up to 7th from 11th by Emmis Communications, which has been making major acquisitions in radio rather than television. Cumulus, meanwhile, has dropped out of the Top 10 due to its swaps and station sales.—JM

Ranked by BIAfn's 1999 estimated revenue
 (as of 10/2/2000)

Rank	Radio Group (parent company)	1999 Radio Revenues (in \$000s)	Number of Stations	Number of Markets	Stock Symbol
1	Clear Channel Communications	3,175,993	1095	182	N:CCU
2	Infinity Broadcasting (Viacom)	2,143,850	187	41	N:INF
3	ABC Radio Inc. (Disney)	406,875	52	25	N:DIS
4	Cox Radio Inc.	382,005	83	19	N:CXR
5	Entercom	358,600	98	18	N:ETM
6	Citadel Communications Corp.	319,850	209	42	O:CITC
7	Emmis Communications	254,200	24	8	O:EMMS
8	Radio One Incorporated	233,025	51	19	O:ROIA
9	Susquehanna Radio Corp.	221,550	29	8	
10	Hispanic Broadcasting Corp.	214,625	46	13	N:HSP
11	Cumulus Media Inc	213,425	230	45	O:CMLS
12	Bonneville International Corp.	173,500	18	6	
13	Spanish Broadcasting System	138,700	25	9	O:SBSA
14	Jefferson-Pilot Communications	133,400	17	5	N:JP
15	Greater Media	122,050	14	4	
16	Beasley Broadcast Group	118,625	42	11	O:BBGI
17	Saga Communications Inc.	94,115	51	11	A:SGA
18	Journal Broadcast Group Inc.	70,400	36	8	
19	Entravision Communications Co.	67,400	67	24	N:EVC
20	Tribune Broadcasting Company	60,800	4	2	N:TRB
21	Nassau Broadcasting Partners LP	59,725	31	9	
22	Inner City Broadcasting Corp.	57,350	17	8	
23	Sandusky Radio	56,000	10	2	
24	Regent Communications	51,965	47	10	O:RGCI
25	Barnstable Broadcasting Inc.	50,400	25	5	
26	NextMedia Group	46,750	54	11	
27	Buckley Broadcasting Corp.	41,925	17	7	
28	Fisher Broadcasting	40,105	26	4	O:FSCI
29	Salem Communications Corp.	37,850	73	33	O:SALM
30	Lotus Communications Corp.	34,375	22	7	
31	Renda Broadcasting Corp.	31,600	19	6	
32	Blue Chip Broadcasting Ltd.	28,800	19	5	
33	South Central Communications	27,135	13	3	
34	Pamal Broadcasting Ltd.	26,100	19	5	
35	Big City Radio	26,050	15	9	A:YFM
36	Hearst-Argyle	25,700	2	1	N:HTV
37	Ackerley Group	24,100	4	1	N:AK
38	WEAZ-FM Radio Inc.	24,000	1	1	
39	Triad Broadcasting Company	23,280	42	7	
40	Simmons Media Group Inc	22,925	19	3	O:SMGI*
41	Midwest Communications Inc.	22,600	21	5	
42	Midwest TV Incorporated	21,900	2	1	
43	Mega Communications Inc	21,300	20	9	
44	Brill Media Company	21,275	13	6	
45	Arso Radio Corporation	21,200	11	1	
46	Service Broadcasting Corporation	21,100	3	1	
47	LBJ-S Broadcasting LP	20,900	5	1	
48	Curtis Media Group	20,850	14	2	
49	Hubbard Broadcasting Incorporated	20,200	4	1	
50	Zimmer Radio Group	18,725	32	4	

*IPO pending
 Source: BIA Financial Network's MEDIA Access Pro Radio Analyzer
 (For more information, call 703-818-2425 or visit www.bia.com)



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Viacom buys BET for \$3B

Viacom (N:VIA) is buying BET Holdings for \$3B. No cash is changing hands. BET will be purchased for Viacom non-voting Class B (N:VIAb) stock and debt assumption. BET founder Bob Johnson will stay on as Chairman and CEO to run the cable TV network which targets the African-American audience. He'll report directly to Viacom President/COO Mel Karmazin.

Although Johnson said a year ago that BET would buy stations to launch its own radio group, BET was not a successful bidder in the Clear Channel (N:CCU)-AMFM merger spin-off derby and never bought a single station. To date, BET's only radio operation is a programming interest in two channels planned for XM Satellite Radio (O:XMSR), one Urban AC and one Jazz.

Even so, synergy with radio is one of the things that attracted Karmazin and Viacom CEO Sumner Redstone to BET. In a conference call with analysts and reporters, Karmazin spoke of how well BET's cable operations would fit with other units of Viacom, including Infinity's (N:INF) Urban stations and billboard assets. "It's a great opportunity to do some cross-selling," he noted. Karmazin also suggested that BET would be able to draw on CBS News resources, along with the obvious programming opportunities with Viacom-owned UPN.

Although Redstone said he would have been happy to pay cash for BET, no cash will change hands and Johnson will become the owner of about \$1.5B in Viacom stock—terms he insisted on. The merger into Viacom will consist of \$575M in debt assumption and \$2.425B in non-voting Class B (N:VIAb) Viacom stock. The number of shares to be delivered to BET owners Bob Johnson and Liberty Media Corp. (O:LMGA) will be determined by a formula based on trading 20 days prior to the deal closing.—JM

KFSG sold for record-breaking \$250M

It's the highest price ever paid for an LA radio station, the second highest price ever paid for a single station and the most for a "stick" anywhere. Raul Alarcon's Spanish Broadcasting System (O:SBSA) is paying \$250M in cash for KFSG-FM Los Angeles. The seller of the 96.3 MHz, 54kw facility is The International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, which sold its only other stations (a combo in Bakersfield, CA) four years ago. Dr. Paul Risser says the church, which got into broadcasting back in the 1920s, is still interested in broadcasting programs in L.A., but decided that selling the valuable signal would allow the church to make more efficient use of its resources. The sale was brokered by Randy George of Sterling Associates.—JM

Election 2000: The results (sort of)

Here's the scoop for broadcasters and how the results of the election will affect you. First, Senators John Ashcroft (R-MO) and Spencer Abraham (R-MI) have been defeated, leaving two vacant Republican seats on the Communications Subcommittee. Subcommittee Chairman Conrad Burns (R-MT) barely squeaked by, but has won another term in the Senate. Among other members up for reelection, Senators Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX), Bill Frist (R-TN) and Trent Lott (R-MS) were re-

turned by the voters, but Sen. Slade Gorton (R-WA) is in a race that is still too close to call. None of the subcommittee's Democrats were up for reelection this year. Regardless of the outcome of Gorton's contest and the presidential race (Democratic Sen. Joe Lieberman's Connecticut seat will go to a Republican if he becomes Vice President), the GOP will continue to control all committee chairmanships in the upper chamber.

Sen. Rod Grams (R-MN), recently a hot name in LPFM, has been defeated by investment company president Mark Dayton. The introduction of Grams' "LPFM-lite" bill started a massive campaign by the NAB to garner more and more support for his bill. Although Grams will be able to shepherd the bill through the lame-duck session of Congress in December, it still faces the imminent threat of a presidential veto. If his bill, with 56 co-sponsors, does not get through this Congress, someone else will have to be the front man in the next Congress.

On the House side, Representatives Mike Oxley (R-OH) and Billy Tauzin (R-LA) easily won reelection and can now vie for the Chairmanship of the Commerce committee, following the retirement of Rep. Tom Bliley (R-VA).

With a close tally in Florida and the presidential race still uncertain as MBR went to press, the FCC Chairmanship is also unknown. Rumors have it that if Texas Gov. George W. Bush (R) wins the race, Pat Wood III (currently Chairman of the Texas Public Utilities Commission) will take current FCC Chairman Bill Kennard's place. On the other hand, if Vice President Al Gore (D) takes the race, current FCC Commissioner Gloria Tristani will likely move up as Kennard also moves up, possibly to a cabinet post.—ED

Riding the 2000 radio revenue roller coaster

Radio came roaring out of the chute in 2000, notching fabulous revenue gains over the record-breaking results of 1999, as recorded on a monthly basis by the Radio Advertising Bureau. Numbers which just are not seen in these reports became commonplace, particularly on the national side. Beginning in February, the West enjoyed a string of gains in national business the like of which we have never seen and do not expect to see again: +4%-+8%-35%-49%. It's nothing less than astonishing when a monthly gain of 35% clearly constitutes a slump!

Both local and national business peaked in May. Local business at that point was up 18% for the year and national was 35% ahead of the game.

The dot-coms, which had a large part in building these increases, have had just as large a part in bringing them to an end. However, although the outrageous gains of the first five months came to a halt, radio business continued with strong gains through the summer. Monthly gains for June-July-August were 14%-11%-10%, all built upon solid results in the bread-and-butter local category.—DS

AFTRA/SAG strike is history

AFTRA and SAG board members voted overwhelmingly 10/28 to approve the new contract with ad agencies and big advertisers announced a few days earlier. Although official ratification by

135K union members isn't expected to be completed until late this month, the strike against TV and radio commercial producers is over and actors were free to go back to work 10/30. The six-month strike, the longest talent walkout in Hollywood history, is estimated to have cost \$125M in the L.A. area alone.—JM

Radio provisions of AFTRA/SAG contract

- An overall economic package of over 8%.
- Recognition of jurisdiction of commercials on the Internet.
- Participation in the AFTRA-Industry Cooperative Fund and the AFTRA Individual Account Retirement Plan, in addition to the AFTRA Health & retirement Plans.
- Establishment of a joint committee to investigate and identify factors, which will assist in developing and implementing a monitoring program for radio commercials.

Source: AFTRA

ABC Fires Drudge

A big surprise to many in the industry: ABC Radio Networks has, in effect, fired syndicated online news gossip columnist Matt Drudge by not renewing his 18-month contract that began 7/99. The somewhat controversial decision came down from above ABC Radio Networks President Traug Keller. ABC Broadcast Group President Bob Callahan made the decision, as reported in *The Washington Post* 11/13. The Sunday night show ends under ABC syndication next month.

Controversial? Well, the show that has been cleared in 135 markets, nine of the Top10, was described in the *Post* story to be on the fast track to move from weekends to nightly. His show was rated #1 in the time slot on WABC-AM NY. However, good ratings and good clearances may not be enough. ABC says the program only made \$400K per year.

ABC spokesperson Julie Hoover stresses to RBR Drudge was not fired, per se: "One of the points that really didn't come out in [*The Post*] was that we simply did not renew his contract. This really doesn't seem like a hot area to program—Sunday night Talk shows. They just don't do that well, and so for the time being, once Matt Drudge goes off the air, we'll just probably not do anything for a while and then consider what our options are"

But what about the mention that Drudge was slated for weeknights? "It was an idea that had been floated. Neither side was truly enthusiastic about it, including Matt Drudge. Neither side thought this was the greatest thing since sliced bread. Ultimately, ABC Radio Networks decided that evening talk shows simply were not a good business—it didn't matter if it was Sunday night or weeknights. It simply was not a good business. So the decision was made that even doing it during the week was not a good idea."

The *Post* quotes Drudge as questioning ABC/Disney's motives and claims ABC's O&O stations want the controversial columnist to continue the show even without the network's sponsorship: "I see it as punishment for daring to report on ABC's activities," Drudge said in the article. "The whole notion that this is a political payback for my Web

reporting is an explosive accusation, but I'm willing to make it."

Drudge had indeed dared: The *Post* reports Drudge called "ABC Monday Night Football" Executive Producer Don Ohlmeyer a liar; obtained the manuscript of a book for Disney's Talk Miramax "The Insane Clown Posse" imprint, saying it contained sexual information about some investigators involved in President Clinton's impeachment; and included Disney Chairman Michael Eisner as one of "the latest incarnation of vampires" who "have sucked the blood from the fourth estate, leaving behind infotainment formaldehyde," in his "Drudge Manifesto" book.

MBR observation: We doubt that ABC would drop Drudge over the above issues. \$400K is not a lot of money for a net that size—weekend programming is notorious for not bringing in the bucks. What we do wonder is why ABC Radio Networks President Traug Keller wasn't the decision maker here. If Drudge doesn't self-syndicate, you will probably see another network pick him up real fast: "Matt Drudge is a talented on-air individual creating compelling radio. We would be interested if he is available. Many of our affiliates carry his program with good ratings results," Premiere Radio Networks President/COO Craig Kitchin told *RBR* 11/13.

Add XM to SRI measurement agreement for sat. radio

Statistical Research Inc. (SRI), which produces RADAR ratings for network radio, has also cinched the satellite radio market for audience measurement. SRI added XM Satellite Radio (O:XMSR) 11/8 to the short list that already includes Sirius Satellite Radio (O:SIRI). While no firm methodology or estimates have yet been arrived upon, the three entities, agencies and advertisers will be working together to develop measurements and related services for this medium set to launch next year.

SRI does say it will first "attempt to define the universe of satellite radio consumers and how they are using the service." Initial audience measures, based on the subscriber numbers, will provide weekly and daily cumes for both XM and Sirius. As satellite radio matures, SRI says it will work toward producing reach and frequency estimates for refined time periods, specific demographic groups, and format preferences.

MBR observation: The cart before the horse scenario? Carat USA's Matt Simpson mentioned recently that one satellite net offered audience estimate numbers and methodology for his consideration, while the other had not. Those numbers have since been retracted due to the fact that it was all speculation, at best. "I was told by RADAR, you might as well put your finger in your mouth, lick it, hold it up and say which way is the wind blowing," attests Simpson.

SRI measurements need to be based on statistically sound XM and Sirius subscriber bases for agency buyers to be convinced.—CM

American Tower optimistic after another DC setback

US District Judge Paul Friedman refused (11/7) to let American Tower (N:AMT) continue building (the construction was originally halted 10/5) its 756-ft DTV/TV/radio/cell tower in DC, saying

he saw "no need for emergency action in a dispute that could cost the DC Government millions."

Indeed it could. ATI is suing DC for \$250M—the tower is already half built (280 feet), upon a permit originally issued in March. ATI attorneys wanted Friedman to allow construction to continue—because if not, the company may begin losing contracts to other entities. "Our implication is that there are other projects that we have underway and if tenants were to believe that valid construction permits can be revoked based upon political whims, then they may have a problem making commitments to us," AT VP/GM Bob Morgan tells *MBR*.

Friedman's ruling did, however, leave AT another construction opportunity—a follow-up hearing is set for 11/16.—CM

Heritage talker WWDB-FM flips to 80s Hits

Beasley Broadcasting flipped what is known as the first (about 25 years ago) FM Talker WWDB-FM Philadelphia at 5PM 11/6. GM Dennis Begley is out and sister station WXTU-FM GM Dave Donahue is in. "The Point" is targeting P25-54 with 80s hit artists such as Bryan Adams, The Cars, Steve Winwood and The Police. Most of the WWDB staff has been laid off, including news anchors Pat Farnack and Earle Bailey and hosts "Gross," "Homer," Jay Sorenson, Hilarie Barsky, Kent Voss and Steve Martorano, among others.

WWDB lost listeners over the last two years by switching from all Talk to News-Talk and losing Dr. Laura and Rush to competitor WPHT-AM. Ironically, in the Summer Arbitron P12+, WWDB and WPHT were tied at 15th place for the market.—CM

WAAF yanks DJs off air for playing mock confessions; Catholics pressuring charges

Entercom's heritage rocker (and *Billboard* Rock station of the year) WAAF-FM Boston/Worcester pulled afternoon drive jocks Tom Birdsey and "Rocko" off the mic 90 minutes before their shift ended 10/27 for refusing to stop airing mock secret taped confessions from a Catholic church.

PD Dave Douglas says management was in on the joke, but after an enraged Boston Catholic diocese spokesperson called the station citing the joke as equivalent to a hate crime, he had to pull the plug. "Although I do support Rocko and Birdsey as air talents and give them the opportunity to create cutting-edge radio, I felt that at this particular time, this bit needed to stop," he tells *MBR*. "And we will not be airing any more of these types of confessions."

Rocko and Birdsey returned to the airwaves 10/30, no further punishment was issued. The tapes, supposedly from a listener, had a gambler, child abuser and a woman having an extramarital affair. Last year, they were suspended after fooling Don King into thinking a call they made was from Mike Tyson.

The confessional chapter may not be over: in the 10/4 *Boston Herald*, a story about the Catholic League of Massachusetts wanting Attorney General Tom Reilly to look into whether the two violated state privacy laws has surfaced. While WAAF

asserts the confessions weren't real, the *Herald* story says Rocko & Birdsey told friends they were. The Catholic League believes airing secret taped confessions breaks Massachusetts' privacy laws. That carries a punishment of up to \$10K fines and five years in prison.—CM

RateTheMusic.com allies with Mediabase

Premiere Radio Networks' Mediabase 24/7 and RateTheMusic.com have launched a strategic alliance to launch an online music testing service that will provide national music results to the broadcast and music industries. Mediabase 24/7 will deliver weekly "Rate The Music National Results" to its 1,000 affiliates and industry subscribers through RateTheMusic.com's website. More than 500 major market stations will provide listeners access to the website, providing large national sample sizes. The info will be marketed and available through Premiere. "Smart programmers understand the significance of Internet music testing and many are already taking advantage of this powerful new tool, in addition to their traditional music call-out," says Rich Meyer, Premiere EVP.

Mediabase monitors over 1,000 stations in the top 140 markets, 24/7.—CM

Arbitron releases August InfoStream ratings

Arbitron has released its InfoStream webcast ratings report for August (10/25). By far, the most listened to webcaster was NetRadio.com, occupying 34 out of the top 75 Aggregate Tuning Hours (ATH) spots. The Top Ten: 1. NetRadio 80s Hits channel, 311,600 ATH; 2. Virgin Radio, 264,800 ATH; 3. NetRadio Vintage Rock channel 264,400; 4. NetRadio Hits channel, 263,400; 5. NetRadio Smooth Jazz channel 257,600; 6. Net Radio Alternative channel 254,800; 7. KNAC.com, 254,500; 8. NetRadio Quiet Classics channel, 208,400; 9. WABC-AM, 194,100; 10. NetRadio Route 1 Country channel 179,300. Dropped off the Top 10 from previous months are KPIG.com (now #15), SmoothJazz1059.com (WJZW-FM Washington) (now # 23) and WGMS.com (now #35). Arbitron InfoStream measure more than 900 stations/channels that represented 10M ATH in August.

Arbitron says the ratings for July were incorrect for 11 channels because of incomplete data. Stations streamed by Activate.net were also inadvertently noted as being streamed by another company.

MBR observation: When we see absolutely no entries from highly trafficked listening sites such as RushLimbaugh.com, Spinner.com (owned by AOL), Soundsbig.com, KIISFM.com and others, we wonder what significance publishing the numbers has. Unless the companies or stations subscribe to the service, they don't exist on the list—the credibility that Arbitron's radio ratings provide is definitely not spreading to the webcasting side just yet. The study is good for now in showing specific improvements from study to study. With more webcasters on board in the future, it will gain credibility for comparative analysis. Don't get us wrong, the service does have value and it has to start somewhere.—CM

rbr.com NAB Radio Show interviews



RBR's next-door neighbor on the floor, Glen Hamilton, President of Media Site Manager, was interviewed by RBR's Jack Messmer.



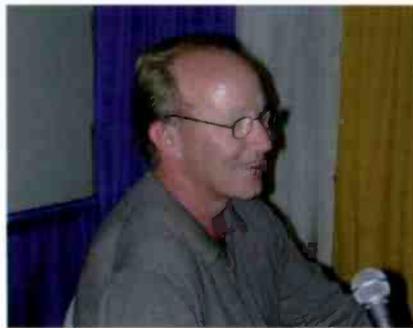
Interep Chairman Ralph Guild gave rbr.com listeners the low-down on the rep business.



NAB President/CEO Eddie Fritts announced a record turnout for the Radio Show in an interview with RBR's Jack Messmer.



Bob and Sheri talk about morning drive syndication to 58 affiliates with Carl Marcucci.



Dave Adams, Spot Traffic President, explains his company's revenue model with a smile.



There was no way to miss RBR on the NAB Radio Show exhibit floor.



Premiere Radio Networks President Kraig Kitchin tells RBR's Carl Marcucci what's cookin' in the network biz.



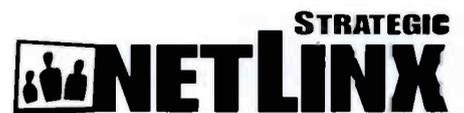
VP Marketing Bill Piwonka of Measurecast gives details on his company's near real-time webcast measurement ratings service.

Hear these and other NAB Radio Show interviews at rbr.com



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With Strategic NetLink, put your morning show's bits, personalities and features on the Internet today and make changes on-air tomorrow. Now you can select listeners from your audience, let them listen by computer, and see their feelings instantly. To turn your listeners on like never before, call 312-726-8300 or visit us at www.strategicmediaresearch.com.



Each month we ask a few general managers from around the country to share with us, and you, their views of the industry. This month we quizzed:

Steve Jason- GM of L.M. Communications Inc.'s WCOO-FM and WYBB-FM Charleston, SC

Daryl O'Neal - GM of Simmons Media Group's KAHK-FM Austin, TX

1

What do you feel are the most important issues for the new FCC to address?

Jason: The hottest issue is LPFM and as a commercial broadcaster, I am against LPFM for all the reasons that everyone else is. I am hoping that the new FCC will reexamine the current policies and basically, do away with it. The second issue is EEO and my position on that is that the current requirements are cumbersome and overbearing and do not help improve the hiring of minorities. So I would like to see those rules revisited. The third area is the deregulation of the Telecommunications Act. I feel that too many companies have just gotten too big, making it impossible for the smaller companies to effectively compete, especially when they own not only the competitors but the syndication as well. They own the products that the smaller guys use.

O'Neal: There are three issues: analog to digital, LPFM and Internet radio. The real issue is that as the lines blur between these delivery systems, how in the world is the FCC going to keep interference at a minimum.

2

What do you want the new President to do for broadcasters?

Jason: Well, it depends who is elected. I am not pro-Democrat. I think that the Democratic Party is anti-business and do not believe that the policies that they are promoting are good for business, or even for the communities as a whole. Assuming that we have a Republican President, I would like them to continue deregulation and decentralization of government. Also, I would like them to figure out which government programs are unnecessary. I think that the Republicans will do that, where the Democrats will do nothing but raise taxes, increase regulation, increase bureaucracy and create more hurdles for broadcasters to leap through.

O'Neal: There needs to be more of an acceptance for the good work that broadcasters do in the community. We really don't need LPFM. There are a lot of small broadcasters who are essentially LPFM. LPFM isn't going to hurt the major radio stations. It's going to hurt those of us in the small communities. We do so many wonderful things for our communities already. We need to be applauded for that.

3

How did you get into radio?

Jason: Well, it's a long story, but basically, after I graduated from the University of South Carolina with a degree in Advertising, I came back to Norfolk, VA where I was originally from. Since my goal was to own my own advertising agency, I interviewed with all the ad agencies in town. They all told me that I was a bright young kid, but I should get some experience in media first. So I then went to all of the television stations and they said that I was a bright young kid, but I should start in radio. I went to the radio stations, and they said I was a bright, young kid, but I should start in newspaper. I got really frustrated after a few of the radio interviews and finally told the woman to hire me without pay for a month to so that she could see how I worked. She hired me on the spot, paid me from day one and I have been in radio ever since. My personal goals were to become a sales manager by the time I was 30, a GM by the time I was 40 and own a station by the time I was 50. I accomplished the first two, and now have nine years to own a station.

O'Neal: I was a radio advertiser and did radio advertising exclusively for my family's business a long time ago. I had an opportunity to become an on-air personality and got hooked. So, I know that radio works and I am a prime example of what the industry can do.

GM TALKBACK



Steve Jason



Daryl O'Neal

time

If time is money, what could you get for an extra radio commercial every ten minutes?

If you're in the radio business to make money (and who isn't) you need

"Cash"™

Through an exclusive time-shifting process, Cash creates additional broadcast time to sell. It does it in real time, right on the air. It does it without reducing program content. It does it without affecting pitch or creating a "chipmunk effect." It does it in stereo or mono. It does it in variable amounts, adding from zero to five minutes, within two minutes to two hours.

Cash, from Prime Image - you don't need one unless you want to make some.

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Get your atlas ready because *MBR* is heading out to find out what makes state associations tick. In our new section, "State of the States," we will discuss the hot topics and concerns of each state association. This month, *MBR* associate editor Elisabeth Derewitz spoke with Ben McKinnon, Executive Director of the Alabama Broadcasters Association about their convention which was held August 18-20, and Scott Siler, Convention Chairman of the Arkansas Broadcasters Association about their convention which was held August 25-27.

ALABAMA

What concerns did the broadcasters have both locally and as an industry?

The major concern we have at the moment is LPFM, both locally and also as an industry. We have supported NAB's brief that they filed opposing the introduction of LPFM. The reason we supported it is because we feel that it will seriously degrade the FM band and cause tremendous interference and regulatory problems that will never end.

We are also concerned that the FCC has overstepped their bounds in their new policies regarding recruiting paperwork for affirmative action.

The local radio stations are concerned about direct broadcast satellites and what affect that will have with them. Also, when the FCC will allow them to go digital.

The TV stations are very concerned about digital television and the fact that they have to purchase this very expensive equipment. They are also concerned about must-carry, in regard to having to choose whether it be analog or digital.

Did discussion take place about political advertising?

Bobby Baker, Chief of the FCC Office of Political Advertising, spoke about the November election and what the stations should be worried about. He reminded the broadcasters that they have to carry announcements for federal candidates and even give

them program time if they want. I don't know whether our broadcasters will be asked to carry other announcements or not, but most of them will, if asked, because they are good citizens in their local communities.

How is consolidation affecting Alabama?

Well, at this time it hasn't really affected us that much. We have people on our board from all of the major groups and they are giving us great support, especially Cox. I think it affects attendance with some asso-

ciations. However, we had as good attendance as we have ever had at a summer meeting [about 160+].

What was the highlight of the convention?

The session with Baker mostly because broadcasters are so concerned about the political environment and atmosphere.

Do you know next year's dates and location yet?

It will be May 11-13 at the Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach, AL.



Bernie Barker with ABA President Maudie Bedford

ARKANSAS

What concerns did the broadcasters have both locally and as an industry?

We really looked at the Internet and how to successfully turn that into dollars for our industry, especially in small market radio. Most of us feel that if you're going to have a website for your radio station, you definitely need to be able to stream.

Jerry Hinrikus spoke to us about his market in Kansas, which he turned into a very prosperous business. Some ideas that he suggested were that instead of placing regular banners on your site, you should try to get local advertisers to advertise a page that is more correlated to their specific business. You should really hit it hard and do news, sports, weather,

athlete of the week, honor student of the week and do things like that that you would get more response from instead of just putting their symbol on top of your web page.

We also discussed some of the implications that LPFM could have on our industry. We are worried about possible interference from the LPFM radio stations.

How is consolidation affecting Arkansas?

We had about 300 people attend the conference and actually in our state, we've been very pleased that our attendance continues to rise. Consolidation has not hurt our attendance. We are one of the states which luckily has been able to get

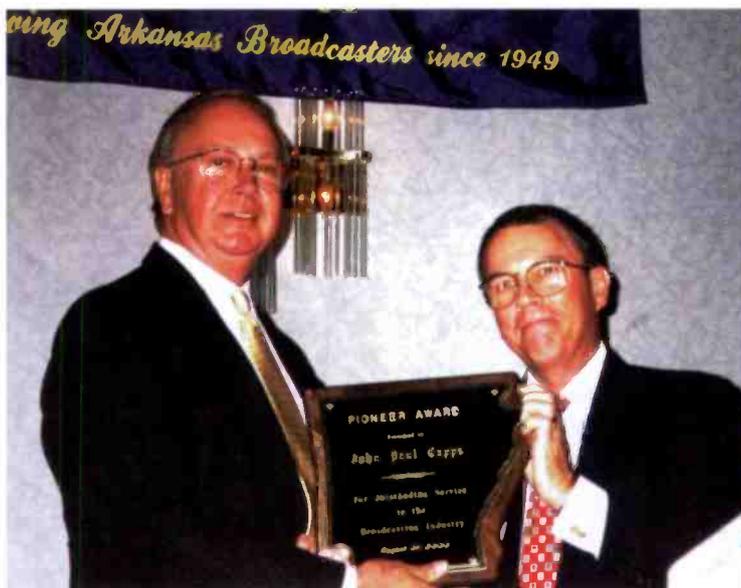
some of the bigger ownership groups to still be Arkansas Broadcasters Association members and attend the meetings.

What was the highlight of the convention?

I would say that the highlight was naming Senator Blanche Lincoln as our Arkansan of the Year. She is a great friend of broadcasters and she has done a great job in voting for broadcasters for the LPFM bill. She also votes with broadcasters on the digital spectrum for television.

Do you know next year's dates and location yet?

Yes, it will be August 15-18.



*John Paul Capps with Bill Cate
Pioneer Committee Chairman*



*Bobby Caldwell with Arkansan of
the Year Sen. Blanche Lincoln*

Network Radio Makes Waves

by Reyn Leutz



“If you believe that the message closest to the point of purchase is most valued, then radio shines”

Call it what you wish, the new paradigm, out-of-the box, or breakthrough thinking, network radio has stepped into the spotlight of today's media mix.

Listen and you'll hear what I'm talking about. The fact is that blue-chip advertisers now dominate the medium. Consumer packaged goods giants Kraft and Proctor & Gamble have leapt into the medium, having quadrupled their spending. Both historically regarded radio as a secondary medium. No longer. McDonalds is now also using network radio for the first time in years to bolster key promotional periods.

And let's not forget e-commerce. The radio craze by last year's dot coms may have down-shifted, but no one questions the research indicating that almost half of all online users have visited a web site as the result of something they heard on the radio.

Radio the new paradigm, radio as the breakthrough medium? Radio the brand-builder? Absolutely.

But aside from radio's proven ability to drive web traffic, what other developments have sparked advertisers newfound interest? One critical factor is reach. Five years ago, network radio's four-week reach, regardless of the demographic, peaked at 60%. Today, with the addition of strong stations in top markets, that four-week reach figure climbs to 90%—a number long reserved for radio's sexier counterpart, network television. And when you factor in the cost efficiency of radio versus television the comparison becomes even more dramatic.

Better stations also mean greatly improved market deliveries. Historically, if an advertiser purchased 100 TRPs nationally, they were lucky to achieve an overall index of 60 in the Top 25 markets. Today that index surpasses 100 and in some critical markets like New York, Chicago and Detroit, exceeds 140. Why the focus on the Top 25 markets? Because more than half of the U.S. population resides here, and as such, accounts for a high percentage of most advertiser sales.

The increased use of radio is further attrib-

uted to advertisers' embrace of recency theory. If you believe that the message closest to the point of purchase is most valued, then radio shines—particularly when you consider that almost half of all listening is in the car. Consumers in transit to a retailer like Sears or a grocery store truly become captive audiences. Kraft Foods knows this better than anyone. A full 75% of households don't know what they'll be preparing for dinner on any given evening drive home. As a result, Kraft uses PM Drive to influence moms by suggesting meal solutions using their brands either already at home or that can be purchased with a quick stop at the grocery store.

Furthermore, network radio will soon have amazing ability to split advertiser copy right down to the individual station level within each market. As business is increasingly won or lost on a local level, this can only enhance this medium's future use.

Here are a two recent success stories. In January, General Foods International Coffees boldly cancelled all television in favor of network radio. The results were remarkable as sales rebounded significantly versus the previous year. Mailboxes etc. also reported strong franchise results this past Christmas when network radio was incorporated into the media plan as a means to drive holiday gift-giving.

Network Radio is one of the few media that has proven and will likely remain very resilient to technological changes as people's listening habits change. Early next year, Satellite Radio becomes a reality and most new cars will be equipped for listening. Internet listening or streaming is also fast becoming a popular listening outlet. In fact, consumers will soon be able to tell their computer exactly what they want to hear and a private, personalized radio station will appear as a "bookmark". And if you think that wireless web radio is in the distant future, think again. The technology is already here and is flourishing.

Network radio will continue to make waves. Advertisers interested in continued brand growth are sure to increase its usage.

NATIONAL NEWS

NATIONAL SPORTS

"WHITE HOUSE REPORT"
with April Ryan

"HOLLYWOOD LIVE WITH TANYA HART"
The Hottest Gossip from Tinseltown

"USA MUSIC MAGAZINE"
The Urban Sound of America with John Monds

"THE BEV SMITH SHOW"
National Nightly Talk Show

"COMING SOON"
Movie Review with Lorraine Turner

"BLACK COLLEGE FOOTBALL WEEKLY"
NABJ Award Winner

SPM URBAN NETWORK
Integrated Marketing Promotions

AMERICAN URBAN RADIO NETWORKS

WE INFORM

AURN delivers...

- Hourly news keeping African American listeners in touch with current issues throughout the day, everyday;
- The "White House Report," coverage of national news events connecting African American's with a direct line into The White House;
- "The Bev Smith Show," the only national nightly talk show that explores today's issues affecting the African American community;
- Comprehensive sports coverage on the Black Collegiate scene.

WE ENTERTAIN

AURN is...

- "Coming Soon," daily movie reviews on the latest box office coming attractions;
- "USA Music Magazine" America's top urban entertainment program featuring the best in urban music, news and interviews on the industry's hottest stars;
- "Hollywood Live with Tanya Hart," a daily show that goes behind the scenes to bring listeners the juiciest gossip on Hollywood's celebrities.

WE ARE THE URBAN VOICE OF AMERICA

AURN offers...

- Innovative programming to keep African Americans informed;
- Entertainment promotions to keep our listeners excited and involved;
- News our audience needs with a Black perspective;
- Quality service and added value for America's Top Advertisers.

REACHING AND TOUCHING BLACK AMERICA LIKE NO OTHER



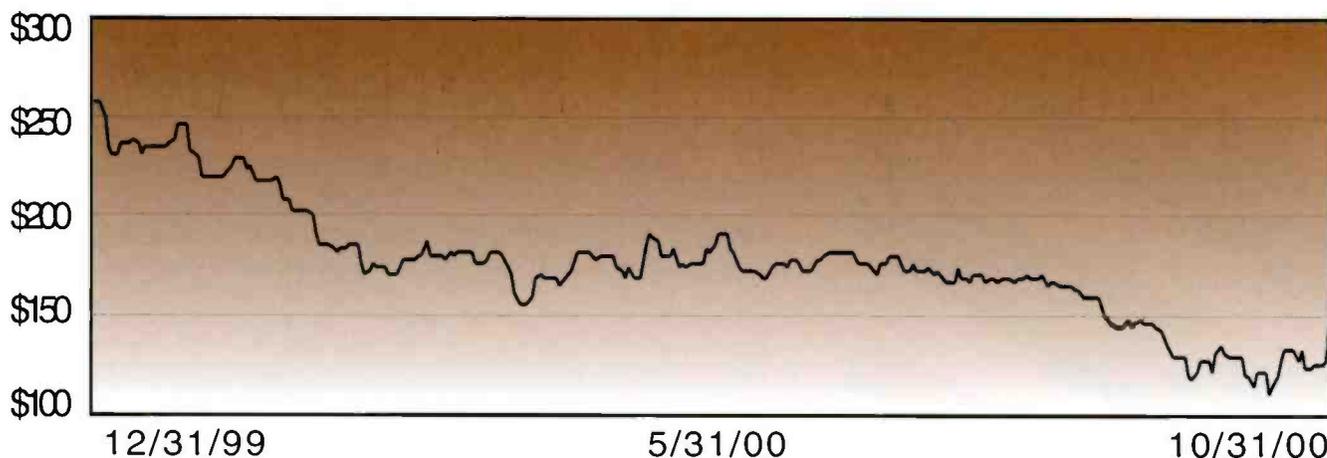
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NEW YORK, NY 10017
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CHICAGO, IL 60601
(312) 558-9090 • FAX: (312) 558-9280

DETROIT - 1133 WHITTIER ROAD
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The Radio Index



RIDING THE WALL STREET ROLLER COASTER

By Jack Messmer

What a thrill ride the year 2000 has been on Wall Street! With the exception of dot-com stocks, no sector has taken a ride as harrowing as radio stocks.

Just like climbing the first hill of a giant roller coaster, 1999 had seen radio stocks move steadily upward. The overall market had been climbing as well, but radio was one of the strongest sectors. The Radio Index (TM), calculated daily by MBR's sister publication, *Radio Business Report*, finished out the year with a record high close of 256.06 on 12/31/99. What no one knew at the time was that the peak had been reached. Although some individual stocks didn't hit their all-time highs until as late as March or April, the industry had begun a Wall Street slide that would take The Radio Index back nearly to the 100 mark where it began the last day of 1997.

What happened?

We've all heard about the dot-coms. Throughout the second half of 1999 and first half of 2000, Internet companies flush with cash from either venture capital firms or IPOs used radio heavily as the fastest and most efficient way to put their newly minted brand names before the public. Investment capital was plentiful, low interest rates made

bonds unattractive and each time an Internet stock quadrupled or quintupled in its first couple of days of trading, five more wannabe's joined the IPO que. Ad dollars that no one had been expecting poured into radio stations, particularly those in the largest markets—and especially those in markets with lots of Internet companies, such as Seattle and San Francisco-San Jose. It was the best of times—and even now, with 20-20 hindsight, no one can say it was the worst of times.

But mistakes were made.

Giddy with delight at the "bump-rate" prices being offered by Internet newbies desperate to get their name on the air, some stations bumped spots previously scheduled (at normal rates) by long-established customers. Those customers haven't forgotten.

Although it appears dot-com ads never accounted for more than 5-6% of total business at even the groups which got the bulk of the buys, and industry-wide the percentage was much lower, when many dot-com companies failed to deliver the results they'd promised *The Street*, the market for new dot-com IPOs dried up and investors perceiving (quite correctly) that dot-com ad spending would slow down dramatically started selling off radio stocks. While a correction was indeed in order, for both the dot-com retreat and higher interest rates as the Federal Reserve flailed helplessly against rising OPEC oil prices, each time a new report came out about the decline of dot-com advertising, already-corrected radio stocks were hit with another "correction," then another, and another...until no one can say whether or not the radio sector really bottomed out in mid-October or still has another plunge ahead.

Cumulus first to disappoint

When it comes to thrills, chills and spills, you can't beat Cumulus Media (O:CMLS). The small market mega-group shocked Wall Street and the radio industry in March when it announced that it was revising financial results for most of 1999.

***"In the course of reviewing its year-end results in conjunction with its annual audit, the company concluded that certain revenues and expenses for the first, second and third quarters of the year were misallocated. The misallocation relates principally to revenue associated with contract sales spanning more than one accounting period. The restatements that result from these misallocations have, in most instances, resulted in revenue previously recorded in one quarter shifting into the immediate subsequent quarter."*—Cumulus Media, 3/16/00**

The President of Cumulus' radio operations, Bill Bungeroth, exited, to be followed a few months later by Executive Chairman Richard Weening. Executive Vice Chairman Lew Dickey, Jr. took on the CEO mantle, consolidated all headquarters functions in Atlanta (from Milwaukee and Chicago) and set out to fix the company's problems. Meanwhile, angry shareholders filed several class-action lawsuits, which are still pending, charging the company and its executives with securities fraud.

Cumulus' stock, which had traded above \$50 in January, immediately fell below its \$14 IPO price and by the third quarter was in penny stock hell, stuck well below \$5.

Good results, bad press

As a group, radio stocks took their first hit from a front page story in the 3/6 issue of *Barron's* which sounded the alarm over a drop in dot-com advertising and repeated hackneyed (and false) claims that consolidation had reduced the number of formats available to listeners.

"We've made breakthroughs in many categories. It's not just dot-com," Jeff Smulyan, CEO of Emmis Communications and Chairman of the Radio Advertising Bureau stated, as he and other panelists at a Kagan Seminar on Radio Acquisitions & Finance 2000 responded to the still-fresh *Barron's* blast. The real news, said Smulyan, was that radio claimed over 8% of total ad spending in 1999

after decades of being stuck around 7%.

Barron's may have overstated dot-com's importance to radio's revenue growth, but forces were lining up to make the third quarter a real challenge to radio operators. The unexpected windfall from dot-com dollars a year earlier left radio with high hurdles of year-ago comparables to clear with their Q3 and Q4 results. Economic growth was being restrained by the Federal Reserve's interest rate hikes and a strike by AFTRA and SAG actors against the producers of radio and TV commercials, which began in April, dragged on through October, preventing an untold number of major national advertisers from launching new ad campaigns.

Los Angeles spooked Wall Street when its July radio revenues came in just 3% above the previous year. When the rest of the nation was added in, July revenue growth was 11%, but investors remained nervous.

"When Los Angeles had 3% in July, that really got people's attention. A single digit really hadn't been seen in a while," noted James Boyle, an analyst with First Union Securities.

Radio proves its mettle

Honesty may be the best policy, but Radio One (O:ROIA) CEO Alfred Liggins learned in September how badly The Street can over-react to candor. With radio stocks already beaten down, Liggins saw his company's stock price, which had peaked at \$32.50 (adjusted for a split), plunge to less than \$6 after he acknowledged at an investment conference in San Francisco that ad sales had softened in Q3.

Fortunately, Radio One was able to report Q3 results which analyst James Marsh of Prudential Securities proclaimed "fabulous," and the company's stock price has recovered somewhat.

The big disappointment for Q3 came from Citadel Communications (O:CITC). While Infinity (N:INF), Clear Channel (N:CCU), Cox Radio (N:CXR), Entercom (N:ETM) and several other radio companies were beating The Street's somewhat lowered post-dot-com expectations, Citadel announced a downside surprise. The company had suffered \$2M in cancellations in September and same-station growth for both revenues and broadcast cash flow were only 1% for Q3. The company's already battered stock price immediately fell by nearly half.

"Citadel was a big disappointment to us. We had been pretty bullish on the stock and were kind of blind-sided," noted Marsh.

"I can take the heat and I will take it," CEO Larry Wilson told analysts in his quarterly conference call. For now, though, his company is

in Wall Street's penalty box and Citadel will have to show a few quarters of improved results to attract investors back to its stock.

No other company reported as severe problems with cancellations as Citadel, but the softness which had been reported in September was evident when RAB tallied the month. National spot sales came in 6% below the previous year—the first negative number to appear in ages—although that was more than offset by a 6% rise in local ad sales—still a far cry from the double digits that had been routine earlier in the year. Overall the radio industry gained 3% in September. That dropped the year-to-date gain to 16%, with one quarter to go.

For the most part, Q3 results gave Wall Street some reassurance

"I was mostly pleased and pleasantly surprised," said First Union's Boyle. "There were not too many major positive blowouts, but for the most part folks came out with numbers that either met expectations or beat expectations. Some of the same-station growth rates were quite good."

"It was in line with my expectations," said Prudential's Marsh. "From the investor's standpoint, there was clearly a sigh of relief when they saw the numbers from the third quarter." He was also cheered by guidance companies gave on what to expect for Q4 and 2001. "I think investors walked away believing that the numbers analysts had been talking about for the last four months are probably pretty good for 2000 and for 2001."

Although most radio analysts on Wall Street had remained consistently bullish on the sector (and even the pessimists issued stock valuations well above the depths to which stock prices sank), many investors had feared that the numbers they were getting from analysts were painting too rosy a picture of the radio industry.

"I think that's why people were stepping away from the group," Marsh said. "Analysts were up in arms, saying some of these stocks were so inexpensive, how could people not own them? The problem was, no one believed the numbers."

"Wall Street hardly ever looks back, it always looks forward, and typically can look forward three, six months out and beyond," noted Boyle.

Share prices can get hit on a projection of bad news and get hit again when it shows up. "The numbers [current radio stock prices] are not unreasonable to some extent, given that they're essentially factoring in worst case contingency," Boyle explained. "As the industry proves that won't happen in Q1 and early Q2,

things probably will change very quickly.”

“We have entered the tough comps. They are here, but like all things, even tough comps end,” Boyle added. “Wall Street is expecting the tough comps to end, but it’s what happens afterward that is still very wide open to debate. You have some people who believe normalized growth will go back to or below pre-dereg levels—which almost seems illogical given the structure post-dereg with clusters and superduopolies. It makes sense that the growth rate will be higher, it’s just how much higher—even if dot-coms completely disappear—most of the other traditional categories are extraordinarily robust.”

Not all radio stocks are equal

“I think you’re going to see a divergence of performance,” Marsh said of the future for public radio stocks. “Companies which showed that they can deliver even in relatively tough periods are going to be viewed differently than those that couldn’t. The Cox numbers looked fabulous. The Entercom numbers looked strong. Radio One looked fabulous. There were a lot of companies that looked like they were in a different business than Citadel.”

“Yes, you’ll probably see tiers, both in operational performance as well as stock price,” agreed Boyle. “Typically, the faster growers of late, going forward, will continue to be in larger markets, those with a higher percentage of turn-arounds, and certainly those groups with targeted niche formats that get the extra benefit of macro-demographic improvements, or at least recognition by the advertisers. Traditionally, larger cap companies would get tossed into that when you talk about stock price performance.”

Looking forward, both analysts remain bullish on the overall radio industry:

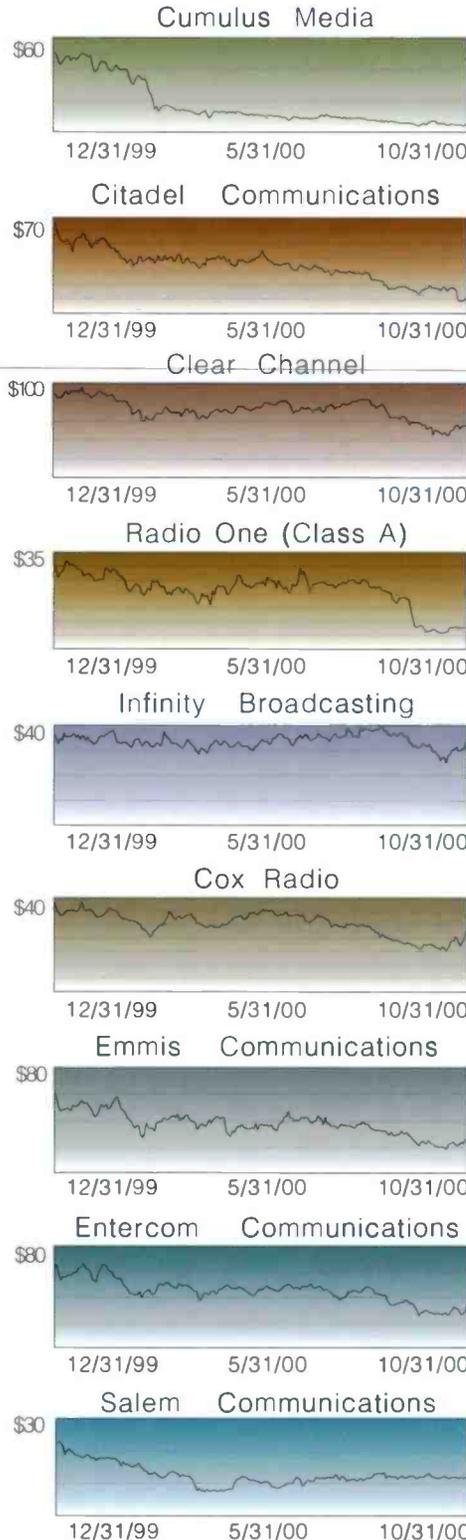
“We’re looking for roughly high single-digit growth in the fourth quarter for revenues, roughly in the 8% range,” said Marsh of his forecast at Prudential. “That ought to get us to 13-15% for cash flow growth. That’s very similar to what we’re looking for next year, obviously the first half of the year being a little softer for the top line and the second half of the year being a little bit stronger—which, I should point out, is not dramatically different than what we’ve been looking for out of the radio group for the last three years. Companies have outperformed, very dramatically, those initial expectations. That’s why it’s been a great group to own.”

For Q4, Boyle says investors are focused on same-station revenue gains, which he is pegging at 6-9%, and same-station BCF gains of 10-14%. Various groups, he notes could underperform or outperform those parameters.

“For 2001 in radio, we are forecasting 8.3% growth overall, with 8.5% at the local level,”

Boyle said. “We presume BCF should generally fall in the 11%-16% area.”

Although both recently downgraded Citadel and other radio stock each, Marsh and Boyle have maintained their highest ratings on most of the radio stocks they cover, although with lowered price estimates. Boyle also upgraded Cox because of its strong performance.



The analysts' picks

Here are the ratings Marsh and Boyle give to the radio stocks each covers. At both firms, “Strong Buy” is the highest rating, followed by “Buy.” First Union’s next level is “Market Perform,” but Prudential calls it “Accumulate.” Next is “Hold” and finally the rarely if ever seen “Sell.”



James Marsh
Prudential Securities

- Clear Channel: Strong buy
- Radio One: Strong Buy
- Salem Communications: Strong Buy
- Regent Communications: Strong Buy
- Infinity Broadcasting: Strong Buy
- Citadel Communications: Accumulate (downgraded from Strong Buy)
- Hispanic Broadcasting: Hold (downgraded from Accumulate)



Jim Boyle
First Union Securities

- Clear Channel: Strong Buy
- Emmis Communications: Strong Buy
- Cox Radio: Strong Buy (upgraded from Buy)
- Radio One: Buy
- Saga Communications: Market Perform (downgraded from Buy)
- Citadel Communications: Market Perform (downgraded from Strong Buy)
- Cumulus Media: Market Perform

Station Profiles

Station: WEBK-FM
Frequency: 105.3 FM
Web address: www.webk.com
City of License: Killington, VT
Market served: Rutland, VT
Power/antenna height: 1,250 watts @ 2240 ft. HAAT
Format: Adult Alternative/Freeform
Owner: Killington Broadcasting, Ltd.
GM, PD, MD & SM: Dan Ewald
Webmaster: Michael Cunniff



K-105 guests and staffers, with Ewald on right.

How would you describe your format and programming? Any unique shows?

(all Dan Ewald) We are an "Adult Alternative" station, a.k.a. Progressive Adult radio. Specialty shows are "Northbound Train" a Grateful Dead show Sundays 10p-12m, "Planet Ska" Thursdays 8-10p, "Everybody's Blues" Sundays 8:30p-10p, "Putumayo World Music Hour" Sundays 10a-11a and "The Reggae Connection" Wednesdays 8-10p.

How would you describe your listeners?

Our listeners are adults 25-54 years old...people who "get it"!!! [the station's tagline: "For people who get it"], meaning we don't broadcast, as 95% of all broadcasters do, to the lowest common denominator. We broadcast to a little more high-end, more sophisticated listener who likes new music. Here we are in a society that creates all things new, with the exception of music, it seems sometimes. So obviously its a double entendre because of the nature of the signal. We do have a strong signal, obviously, but the mountains do cause havoc with it.

Describe any events you sponsor.

We do "Mountain Jam" every year. It's a weekend of music in the mountains, usually the first weekend in August. It's in the clubs on Friday night in Killington, about six or seven music venues. We bring a bunch of bands up. And on Saturday, we're outdoors at Pico Mountain with six or seven bands from 1PM 'til 10PM. About 1,500-2,000 people show up. And then back Saturday nights at the clubs again. You buy one ticket and its good for all. We tie it in with the restaurants too, to get discounts on meals.

Tell us about your local advertiser base.

Our advertisers are local and resort businesses.

Who is your national rep and what percent of your advertising is national?

No national rep.

What is the maximum number of spots you would run in an hour and why?

No more than 12 spots an hour, i.e. 12 minutes otherwise. We are a music station, not a shopping network.

Describe your website and streaming strategy.

Our website is designed to be helpful to all the millions of visitors coming to the region who want to know what's going on. The streaming [supplied by Web Radio] simply backs that all up since so many folks want to know what's happening in Killington prior to their visit.

Tell us about the station's imaging and on-air talent.

Our imaging is low-key, low ego, respectful to the listener. On-air talent follow along and are to be intelligent and informative about the music we present.

What do you think about your station adding a digital broadcast signal, should the FCC approve it?

We would love to add a digital broadcast but I have no idea how we are going to be able to afford the equipment replacement/upgrades...it's going to be expensive.

ONE-MAN SHOW: PHIL HENDRIE

Premiere Radio Networks' Phil Hendrie is a one-man show. Most of what he does could be considered a mock call-in show. Flawlessly, he creates outrageous character voices while simultaneously employing a standard host voice to give the impression of an interview or conversation with a call-in guest. These wacky characters often inflame the callers in the most humorous ways. Hendrie can sound like an old Jewish woman just as well as a Latino gangster. To most of the audience, it is seamless and real. Hendrie runs 4-7P West Coast; 7-10P East Coast on 68 affiliates. Here, Phil gives the low-down on his unique and hysterical craft.

How do you pull off these very convincing guest character voices?

Well, I do character voices and I have a telephone in the studio, which I call our talk show line with. I do a character voice over a phone line. I used to have a falsetto when I was in my 20's and 30's, which is what we would call the Mickey Mouse voice. "Hi boys and girls." I can't do that anymore. I literally have to push my voice up to a really high register and it's really very difficult to do. But, I have to take a deep breath and warm up. It's a half-hour of getting into the character.

You are going from one voice—you being the host, to the caller, to the guest caller, all in one shot. How can you switch that quickly and pull it off so effectively?

I don't do any digital storing and I don't do any pre-recording. I don't do any tape at all. In fact, I do everything live because when I was a disc jockey and would do the typical pre-recorded disc jockey bits, I found that between the time you recorded it and the time you ran it on the air, you might not think it's funny anymore. Or it might not be as funny as you thought it was. The best way to be humorous, in my opinion, is to be live and to have the opportunity to flip your way out of a bit that may be bombing or to try something different on the spur of the moment. So, I don't do any pre-recording, I don't set any phone calls up and I don't have people call in. All of the phone callers that come into my show are bonafide, real-live human beings that were listening and decided to call in.



Often it's the people who don't catch on that make the show so funny.

I like to think that we are funny without them. The people that call in and get suckered in are callers. A radio listener is a radio listener. Maybe they fill out Arbitron diaries, maybe they don't, but they listen to the radio. A caller is a completely different animal. He may be listening to you, he may not. He is extremely active. He maybe likes the sound of his own voice. He probably writes a lot of letters to politicians. He probably writes a lot of letters to radio stations. He probably has a lot of bumper stickers on his car. He probably is a social activist and has a phone tree. He is probably a professional pain-in-the-ass. Talk show callers are a distinct breed apart from a radio listener. And it is the caller we use and set up and manipulate to the general entertainment of our listener.

Tell me when this first started surfacing, these characters. Were you first a DJ and then started doing this stuff?

I always like doing character voices, but I want to do them in a way where they can almost be an ensemble and part of a broader cast of characters. So I began to incorporate that into my show about ten years ago when I first got into Talk radio. Then, just by happenstance, people would call and would want to talk to the character. Rather than do what other people have done in the past, which is "Oh no, that's just

Phil doing a character," I would say, "Oh yeah, sure. I have the guy here. Do you want to talk to him? Sure, hold on." We created that extra little bit of theatre by the audience calling.

My first station was WBJW in Winter Park, Florida in 1973. I was a midnight to six DJ on the AM station and then I went to the FM. From there I went to upstate NY and worked on an Oldies but goodies station. I was pretty much doing standard disc jockey fare. The atmosphere of the 70's was decidedly different than it is now. Personality radio was really frowned upon in those days because it was all about the music. Then I got into Album Rock back in Orlando at WORJ, WDIZ, which was programmed, by the way, by Ken Stevens at that time. Ken is now the GM at WNEW in NY.

Then I went to Miami and New Orleans doing AOR. I did WSHE in Miami and WNOE-FM in New Orleans. This was a time when Rock radio was literally, "That was the Grateful Dead and Peter Frampton just ahead of that. There is going to be a Superbowl Rock at the Tangerine Bowl in Orlando. So get your tickets now." Everything was all about getting stoned and listening to music. I had to facilitate that.

It was actually a lot of fun. It wasn't very creative. The creative days of Album Rock, which were the late 60's, were well behind me. Then I came to LA and worked at a variety of stations: K-WEST and KNX-FM. I was in San Diego briefly at KGB-FM, I then went to KLSX when it was an Album Rock station

and it was the first Classic Rock station. I was doing mornings there with a partner and trying to be funny, and really being kind of crappy and not enjoying my life at all. I got fired.

That was about 1988 and that's probably when the turn came for me in terms of me needing to do something good and needing to be proud of myself instead of crap radio. That is when I decided that Talk Radio was going to be the best way to creative free-form radio again. I sent out tapes to every station that I could think of and every market that I could think of. I must have sent probably 110-120 tapes out. I got hired at this little, tiny AM in Ventura—KVEN back in August of 1990. That's when I began to develop monologuing and radio theatre, doing radio character voices, interacting with the audience on that level, doing things beyond political talk, doing lifestyle talk and standup comedy.

And from there you went to Miami?

No, from there I went to Atlanta and refined it even more. I developed more characters. Then from Atlanta (WSB), I went to WCCO in Minneapolis for a year. Then I went to WIOD Miami and KFI in October, 1996.

It was three years later in October of 1999 that I started syndicating with Premiere.

Is this something you can do for television? Have there been any offers?

I've talked to probably about a dozen television production companies. They all want to talk to you. Fox Television, New Line Cinema. I mean there are all kinds of people and they all say the same thing, "Well, you are a really interesting guy. What do you want to do on TV?" I say that I've never wanted to do TV. I have no interest in doing TV. I'm so in love with radio and what I do with my show is radio-specific. You can't take what I do and put it on television.

That was what I was thinking.

And that is because it is a show that is perfectly designed for radio. TV people hear it. They laugh at it and think it's great. And then they bring you in and say, "How can we put this on television?" And I generally say to all of them, "You can't. You can't do it. Unless you want to animate it, but that's not interesting." There are so many animated shows, forget it. Dick Clark actually pitched an idea. He was the only guy who pitched an idea.

Let's hear it.

It was a horrible idea that had to do with silhouetting a face. I would be talking to myself,

but I was silhouetted in front of a live audience. It sounded like in the "Hundred Thousand-Dollar Pyramid"—a nightmare version of it. I've got to hand it to the guy though. He actually came to the table and said, "Here's something that we would like to do." I don't think you can actually do my show on television. If I ever have a TV show, I don't honestly know what it would be. What I would like to do is late night horror movie like the ones that I grew up watching. We would run a "Frankenstein" clip and then I would come out of a coffin. I love that television, but it is not around anymore.

What about your voice? You could do so many different TV voices.

I did a couple of "King of the Hills." I've done a "Futurama" and a "Simpsons".

What are some of the best shows that you have ever done?

Well, I think the things that I've enjoyed the most is that we used to do these prize fights in Miami where I had Angela Lansbury vs. Larry Holmes, where she would stay with him for two rounds and then get annihilated. We do baseball games. We did a sendoff of baseball games. I had the Florida Marlins vs. a team of blind musicians. We had the Dodgers play a team of spokespeople such as Juan Valdez and the Cream of Wheat porter. That is fun for me. I really enjoy that. Then we did a show once with a cat named Vick Prell who was a radio psychic and that was a lot of fun for me.

So he was like a guest on your show, so to speak?

No, he was a host. He had one of those pukey voices. We had these old women call in saying, "I'm 71 and do you see any romance?" The juxtapositioning was fun for me to do. I like it when I get into a really good bit. I did a bit on the air where Dennis Quaid was beating Meg Ryan because her film career was better than his and he was drinking heavily. She would say, "I'm sorry honey. I didn't mean to do 'Courage Under Fire.'" And then *slap*, he would hit her. Just little radio dramas like that I really dig if I can get my head into that place. And the character bits that I have done are good.

And then we had another guy, Bob Green. He is a grocery store clerk and he weighs you going into his store and weighs you going out. If you weigh more coming out, then he realizes that maybe you have been sampling or grazing in the produce section. So

he will put his finger down your throat and make you puke-up whatever, just to make sure there isn't any of his food in there.

How do you come up with these characters and story lines?

We have this really great writer, Melissa Morgan, who comes up with a lot of premises. We also have daily lives. I came up with the grocery thing just being in the grocery store, thinking, "Look at that guy! He just took a grape!"

So it's not LSD, but more of a Seinfeld thing.

Yes, it is junk! It's smack. It's like with Maria in the store. I said, "Look at this guy. He is picking the grapes. He is stealing!" I started talking like Bob and started saying things like, "If you think you are going to rape me for a bag of grapes, forget it!" The idea of the grocery store guy that feels he is being raped for a bag of grapes. We had him on one time selling mobile homes. No, he had written a book, Mobile Home Sales: The Rape of the American Consumer. But basically, he said that buying a mobile home in America with all the tornadoes and hurricanes that we have, might as well be going through real good rough jail sex.

Why is the Phil Hendrie show a good choice for advertisers and buyers?

I think because people listen to it. We have a strong core of young men, 25-44 and they are an active, money-spending group of people. Also because Phil Hendrie provides a release and relief, I think, from the sort of droning Talk radio that we hear. I mean we are an entertaining and funny show. People can actually tune us in on an afternoon drive and have fun driving home. They get a release from the day's worries and in the process, are able to listen to the advertiser's message. The thing about our show is that you have to pay attention to it. It is not a background show. If you are having to pay attention to it, you are actually having to pay attention to the advertiser's message too.

Our advertisers are in for the long haul. This is a thing I felt was important and I said this to Premiere. I said, "If we are going to do this, we have to make sure that we have the stations understand that this is not a 90-day turnaround show." However, it is a show that builds extreme fan loyalty, extreme listener loyalty, and great TSL. So it is long range success, not flash in the pan, and certainly not something that is here today and gone tomorrow.

What makes marketing work?

In July we discussed how effective marketing campaigns begin with a thorough understanding of consumer behavior. The basic premise was that your marketing would be more effective if you focused on converting P2's and P3's to P1's rather than attempt to bring in new light listeners.

In today's world of tightening budgets and increasing clutter, effective marketing must also be efficient. Efficiency refers to 'bang for your buck.' Using the concept of converting P1's, we might say that an efficient marketing campaign converts the most P2's and P3's into P1's for the least amount of dollars. In order for a marketing campaign to be truly effective, it must be efficient.

Efficiency is inversely related to waste. That is, the more efficient a campaign, the less waste it has. In contrast the less efficient the campaign, the more marketing dollars are wasted. In the case of radio, waste comes from spending money to reach people who will never give your station more than about an hour a week. Based on that level of listening, you'd need 22 of those folks to equal just one P1. You're far more efficient bringing in or converting one P1.

How do you find the right people? If you think about it, your future P1's are currently P1's to your competitor(s). Since radio is a zero-sum game, the potential share for your station is the sum of your competitors. For example, in the illustration below, we show four stations: our station, the Hot A/C has a 6-share; the top three competitors (the A/C, the Soft A/C and the CHR) have a combined 12-share. The total share for the "format" in this case is an 18-share. The best we could hope for (if all our competitors went away) would be an 18-share. Even in that unlikely scenario, 82% of the market would NOT listen to our station.

Still, many marketing plans make the mistake of over-reaching that 82% who would not listen (in any significant extent) to our station. That makes the plan inefficient.

Let's take an example to illustrate waste. This is an example of a 50-person market where the red people represent our P2's and P3's. They are also, in most cases, P1's to our competitor stations. Our marketing objective is to reach and convert those P1's. In a typical mass marketing campaign (using TV, for example), we blanket the market with 'Gross Rating Points.' GRP's focus on the mass, not the P1's.

In the case shown, we reached 86% of the market (a very expensive and nearly impossible reach). Still, as you see we completely missed two red people and 1/2 of a third red person. Why? They either don't watch TV, don't watch it during the time we ran the schedule, or simply didn't see the spot enough to have it make any impression on them. As a result, we wasted 93% of our marketing money because it was misallocated to those low or no-value listeners (i.e., people who spend less than an hour a week with the station).

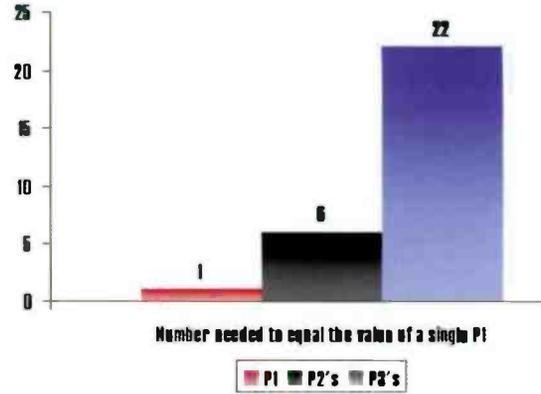
Let's compare that with a targeted direct marketing campaign. Because of the tools like Prizm, MapMaker, and PD-Advantage, we can be much more targeted in the message delivery than ever before. As such, we eliminate the waste inherent in mass media because we simply don't focus on those low or no-value listeners. In the second example, we reached only 18% of the market, but we effectively delivered the right message to 86% of the REAL target. In this case, your marketing budget was much more efficient because it delivered the right people at significantly less overall cost. In fact, an evaluation of the efficiency of any campaign is can be expressed as the Cost-Per-Targeted-Person (or Point).

Finally, efficiency is maximized when conversion is highest. In the example above, one can argue that a well conceived and executed target marketing program brings higher conversion of P1's because it fits the same methodology that Arbitron uses.

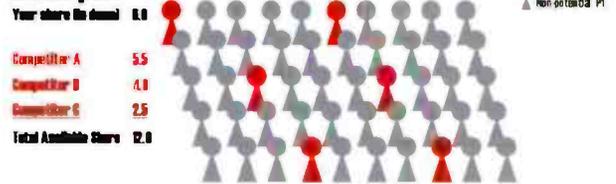
If you think about it, Arbitron employs a direct marketing strategy. They know that it takes repeated, varied, and frequent contact to entice someone to complete and return a diary. In many cases that begins with a postcard, followed by a phone call to qualify and place the diary, followed by the diary in the mail, and then additional contact to retrieve the diary. That process of repeated, varied, and frequent contact converts around 30-50% of the target sample population to return the diary (a truly remarkable conversion).

Because of the one-to-one nature of direct marketing campaigns, you can see that they have a much higher likelihood of conversion to P1 listening than a typical one-size-fits-all campaign. Higher conversion rates mean less waste on your marketing campaign.

Tripp Eldridge is Executive VP and COO of Direct Marketing Results.

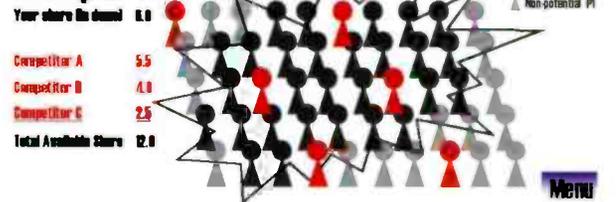


Example:



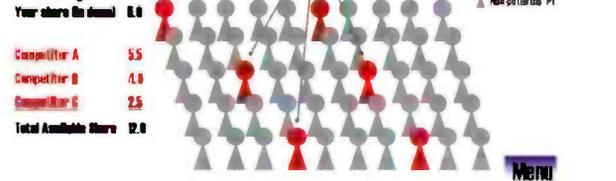
-Covered 86% of the market (42/50)
 -Reached 60% of true target (24/40)
 -Only 7% of the campaign was on target (2/42)

Example:



-4% of market covered
 -82% of true target covered
 -82% of the campaign was on target (5/6)

Example:





WHAT A DIFFERENCE EDUCATION MAKES

By Paul Weyland

The number one reason stations are not selling and keeping more direct accounts is that we are not educating our clients on how the radio process works, much less on how marketing and advertising

is supposed to work or how to calculate return on advertising investment. Sadly, the average broadcast salesperson is not much more educated about marketing and advertising than the average client.

Ask your sellers how many of them have ever taken a marketing class. Usually, the number is no higher than 30 %. Now ask those marketing students what they remember from that class. Usually, nobody can remember much. No wonder so many clients perceive us as "pests" just eager to make a sale instead of as "resources." It's literally a case of the "blind leading the blind."

Because our sellers aren't well educated, they're not capable of telling clients a good, cohesive story about how their businesses could directly benefit from a good marketing, advertising and radio campaign.

Let's examine the facts:

- Educated salespeople, who educate their clients first about marketing, then advertising, then their individual medium, always sell more than uneducated salespeople.
- Educated clients buy more than uneducated clients because they understand the benefit and result of teaching viewers and listeners who they are, what they do and how to get in touch with them.
- Uneducated clients are ignorant, not stupid. They are naturally suspicious of buying something they don't fully understand.
- Uneducated clients who are "sold" first and not educated often have unpleasant experiences with broadcast stations because they don't use them properly. They usually have no idea of the difference between a good spot and a bad spot. They have no concept of the importance of "owning" a day or daypart or program on your station. And uneducated clients have unreasonable expectations of what broadcast advertising will or will not do for them.
- Uneducated clients usually have no logical basis for determining how much they should be spending with a broadcast station. Uneducated salespeople also, in many cases, have no logical basis for determining how much the client should really be spending on their station. Instead, they'll create a budget for the client "out of thin air." Or, they don't question how the client came up with the budget that he is giving them. In either case, the client remains uneducated about how to calculate return on advertisement dollars spent.
- Uneducated clients may not be able to "see the forest for the trees." They may have marketing problems (location, pricing, poorly conceived or packaged product or service, distribution problems) that they can't recognize...problems so severe that even the best-conceived advertising program in the world could not help them. An uneducated salesperson would probably overlook marketing problems - or might recognize them, but never address them, for fear of offending the client or blowing the sale.

Because the client correctly perceives that the radio salesperson really doesn't know what he's doing, the relationship becomes a case of the "tail wagging the dog." The client winds up writing or approving spots that don't work, placing schedules that are too thin or advertising products or services that are ill conceived, poorly priced or hard to get. He also has unrealistic expectations about the results of his campaign and when they don't come true he will say, "I tried radio and it didn't work."

The solution for this dilemma is to educate your salespeople as quickly as possible, so they can start educating their clients properly. You'll be amazed at how much more your people can sell when they and their clients are finally on the "same page."

Paul Weyland is President of Paul Weyland Training Seminars. He also teaches Media Sales at the University of Texas. He can be reached at (512) 236-1222 or by email at weyland@swbell.net.

Metro/Shadow makes its Marks: Looking to expand the market for its traffic and other information beyond its current base of broadcast outlets, Metro Networks/Shadow Broadcast Services has named Richard Marks Senior VP, Information Services. Marks was one of the founders of Shadow. Two others also received SVP stripes in operations, Steve Candullo for the Eastern Region and Ian Epstein for the Western Region. Working with Candullo will be Meg Delone and VP, Sales, Eastern Region.

AURN finds the Wright stuff: Marketing and advertising exec Vernon S. Wright, Jr., has signed on with American Urban Networks as Senior VP, Marketing & Sales. Among his resume highlights is a stint at SFX Radio Networks.

ATS to Singer for its supper? American Tower Corp. has named Bradley Singer Executive VP, Strategy. He comes from an investment banking position with Goldman, Sachs & Co. And this just in: Justin D. Benincasa has been promoted to Senior VP. He's been with ATS since 1995.

Cox tells O'Brian to Beat it: But not the way you may be thinking. Veteran programmer Dale O'Brian will be assuming the PD chair at Cox's CHR WBTS-FM "The Beat" in Atlanta, where he will join the management team of VP/GM Lori Rechin-Sheridan.

Real Networks has named Randy Tinsley VP, Corporate Development. He will concentrate on growing the business via partnerships, investments and acquisitions.

More than a 'PAT on the back: Spanish Broadcasting Systems has named Roberto Torres to the National Sales Manager slot for its two New York City FMs, WSPQ and WPAT.

No longer Allied, yet promoted within the company? That's the case for Interep's Beth Russell, who was just named VP/Regional

Executive. She'll work out of the Chicago office. She exits the New York office of Interep's Allied Radio Partners. Also, two are joining Interep as Director of Marketing: they are Stephen Friedman and Elly McGuire.

Rocky and Vowinkle? Hispanic Broadcasting Corp. has gone cross-town to find a GM for its New York stations, WADO-AM and WCAA-FM. WAXQ-FM GSM Stephanie McNamara is exiting Clear Channel's Classic Rocker to take the helm at the HBC outlet. At the corporate level, HBC has named Scott Vowinkle to the position of VP/GM of its Hispanic Marketing Group, which is responsible for all aspects of sales, marketing and promotions in all HBC markets.

Alisa Joseph will be operating out of Arbitron's Los Angeles digs as VP, Advertiser Services. She started with Arbitron in 1995 as an account executive.

Urban radio specialist Radio One Inc. has hired Mike Abrams as Programming Coordinator. He will work primarily on programming which Radio One will provide for African-American services to be broadcast on XM Satellite Radio.

Internet service GlobalMedia.com has brought in Mike McHenry as VP, Sales & Marketing. He exits media firm Loudeye Technologies in Seattle.

Peaks and Valeos? Equipment manufacturer Gentner Communications Corp. has named James A. Valeo to the position of VP, Strategic Operations and General Counsel. He will focus on mergers, acquisitions and partnerships.

Scott Shirah has taken control of Cox Interactive Media, so to speak. This after VP/CFO J. Lacey Lewis promoted him to Controller of the company's Internet arm.

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5-7
NAB European Radio Operations Conference, Berlin, Germany (202) 775-3527

6-7
Women in Cable & Telecommunications Leadership Conference, Washington, D.C. (312) 634-2330

7-9
RAB Fall Board Meeting, Dallas, TX (972) 753-6740

8-12
National Association of Farm Broadcasters Kansas, MO (651) 224-0508

12-14
Canadian Association of Broadcasters Calgary (613) 233-4035

13-15
Association of National Advertisers Seminar, Rye Brook, NY (212) 697-5950

January 2001

6-9
Consumer Electronics Assoc., Las Vegas, NV (703) 907-7600

13-17
NAB Winter Board of Directors Meeting, Carlsbad, CA (202) 775-3527

February 2001

Radio Advertising Bureau RAB 2001, Dallas, TX (972) 753-6740

Feb 7-8
NAB Radio Group Executive Fly-In, Washington, DC (202) 775-3527

Feb 10-13
National Religious Broadcasters 58th Annual Convention, Dallas, TX (703) 330-7000

Feb 26-28
Great Lakes Broadcasting Conference & Expo, Lansing, MI (517) 484-7444

Mar 10-13
NAB State Leadership Conference, Washington, DC (202) 775-3527

Apr 22-26
NAB 2001 Convention, Las Vegas, NV (202) 775-3527

Sept 5-8
NAB Radio Show, New Orleans, LA (202) 775-3527

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SAY IT AIN'T SO, BILL!

By George Borsari



In a recent speech, FCC Chairman Bill Kennard ripped into the broadcast industry because not all networks were going to carry the presidential debate. During the same speech, the Chairman went on to chastise the industry for dragging its feet on the DTV conversion.

First, the debates: How many networks carrying the same programming can you watch at one time? Why does every channel have to have the same programming, however meritorious?

The answer, of course, is that you can only watch one channel at a time. There is absolutely no reason to have all television stations carrying the same programming. In fact, the licensees and the network executives were exercising their programming discretion, consistent with a policy formally adopted by the full Commission, specifically recognizing that broadcasters can consider other stations' programming in determining how best to exercise their judgment.

The Commission for the last 60 years has tried to assure broadcasters that it would neither act as a censor of the airwaves nor seek to predetermine broadcast content. The Chairman of the FCC has just demonstrated his personal rejection of the formal Commission policy. The Democratic Chairman should not have pushed the industry to carry programming that his

party's campaign thought would be beneficial to its candidate, and the industry should not have capitulated.

The debates were scheduled to be carried in their entirety on CSPAN, CNN, the Fox News Channel, public television, and at least one broadcast network. So, to what purpose was the Chairman's speech? There was zero possibility that anyone who wanted to see the debate could not have seen it either over cable or as a free broadcast. The purpose then of the speech must have been to prevent the networks from giving their audiences the choice of either watching the debate or viewing alternative programming. Mr. Chairman, what is it about your concept of the public interest that compels government to try to deprive viewers of a choice of programming?

The digital television conversion status is even more troubling. The Chairman accuses the industry of dragging its feet, yet the Commission itself has known for years that it had to act on such fundamental policy issues as must-carry for DTV stations, and DTV receiver compatibility with cable, for the conversion to work.

Years ago, a senior cable executive gave a widely publicized speech to the NCTA Convention, in which he postulated that the best move for the cable industry was to adopt a DTV receiver standard different from that adopted by the broadcast industry. The obvious purpose was to ensure that the public, which was not going to buy two different kinds of digital TV sets, would continue to rely on cable for its programming, thereby blunting any advantage the broadcaster had with a superior picture. This the Commission knew, but nonetheless it did not act.

Similarly, digital must carry, a concept loathed by the cable industry, remains unaddressed despite the fact that the Commission has known for years that it must eventually face the issue. Quite apart from the main unresolved issue of full digital and analog carriage, the Commission has not yet even decided the simple issue of stand-alone digital must carry, and we know and the Commission knows that whatever decision the Com-

mission makes will be appealed, thus delaying implementation for many years.

Digital television is rapidly turning into an industry disaster. Although broadcasters have met or exceeded the conversion goals, no revenue stream has been identified to pay for the costs of such conversion. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been and will be spent to broadcast programs to a public that cannot receive digital TV signals. The whole process threatens to implode because the Commission will not enact the basic, fundamental rules that the industry needs to complete the process.

The Chairman's objective, of course, is to move broadcasters quickly off the band currently occupied by Channels 52-69 to free up the spectrum for auctioning to the wireless industry. Never mind that the broadcasters were told that they could use those frequencies until the digital conversion process was complete. Never mind that free television to rural areas will be destroyed by the early termination of broadcasters' use of the band. Never mind that if the transition to digital is not done properly, it is ultimately the public that will suffer.

In order to hasten the departure of television stations from Channels 52-69, the Chairman is now proposing that a "squatter's fee" be imposed on broadcasters who do not surrender their analog channels, regardless of whether the statutory test of 85% set penetration has been met. This may reflect the Chairman's frustration with the industry over low power FM, may have been dictated by the White House to generate more revenue for the US Treasury, or may be an aberration influenced by the phases of the moon. In any case, there is no excuse for the Chairman's recent peculiar disregard for the public interest in connection with television programming, nor for his unwarranted criticism of broadcasters' digital conversion efforts.

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