



JOEL DENVER

CHR

CONTEMPORARY HIT RADIO

'WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE'

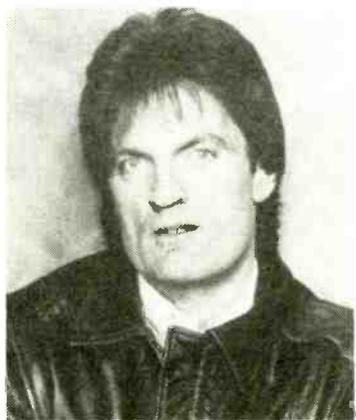
Shannon Launches Pirate Radio

It was a sneak attack on the city. The word on the streets had been to look for an early April kickoff. But at 5am on March 17 KQLZ was born — just five hours after Westwood One closed the deal with former owners Outlet Communications.

VP/Programming Scott Shannon gracefully laid the former KIQQ (K-Lite)/Los Angeles to rest. Thanking the audience for listening and suggesting similar-sounding dial alternatives, he turned off the Lite with the help of Earl Grant's "The End."

"Since everyone out here borrowed just about every liner and idea I'd used at Z100, it became necessary to do something different. We have a renegade attitude, as does our music."

Then the ambience quickly shifted. Shannon segued into an air-check montage of legendary L.A. stations — KRLA, KBLA, KFVB, KMET, and KHJ. Seconds later, there was a quick legal ID and time check. Then the speakers roared as Shannon declared, "It's 5:03, Southern California... It's time to wake up." On the heels of that pronouncement came this recorded sweeper: "The mothership has landed..."



Scott Shannon

Pirate Radio 100.3-FM... Welcome to the jungle." And that was followed by the Guns N' Roses tune of the same name.

Joining Shannon during the sign-on were OM Randy Kabrich, Shadow Steele (aka Shadow P. Stevens from WEZB (B97)/New Orleans), and WHITZ (Z100)/NY PD Steve Kingston.

Not A Format, An Attitude

Just what is Pirate Radio? According to Shannon, it's a well-defined departure from the beat-oriented CHR music heard on KIIS-FM and KPWR (Power 106) but is clearly more than just a modal rocker playing AOR-to-CHR crossovers. (See "Swashbuckling Songs" sidebar.)

Furthermore, Shannon says Pirate Radio is not a format but an attitude he conceived six years ago while putting Z100 on the air. "We were actually a New Jersey station, and one had never made a ratings impact in New York before," he recalled. "I told the sales department to look at Manhattan like Europe and to look at us as Radio Caroline, the pirate radio station broadcasting offshore. I never forgot the concept.

"Since everyone out here borrowed just about every liner and idea I'd used at Z100, it became necessary to do something different. So we went to work developing the Pirate Radio concept, which works great — we have a renegade attitude, as does our music."

X Marks The Spot

KQLZ's studio is just as raw and simple as its on-air sound — what Shannon calls "no-frills radio." The station is temporarily housed in-



The Pirate Radio studio (on top) may not be a pretty sight, but it worked well enough for the station to hit the air. New studios are in the works. Shown just below the temporary setup, minutes prior to sign-on, (l-r) are Z100/NY PD Steve Kingston, who came in for the debut; Westwood One Radio Group VP/Programming Scott Shannon; and OM Randy Kabrich.

side a loading bay at the WWI offices. Entry is gained through an easy-to-locate sliding metal cargo door... it's the one with the spray-painted X.

Inside there's no beautiful view to gaze at for inspiration, only a lot

of boxes and a hastily-painted logo on the wall. A control board sits on a plywood riser, complemented by a couple of three-deck cart machines, two CD players, a mike, outboard audio processing, and two speakers. There wasn't even time to get request lines installed for the launch.

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Swashbuckling Songs

What does Pirate Radio sound like? It will be 85% current and, according to Scott Shannon, "Randy Kabrich, Shadow Steele, (Z100/NY PD) Steve Kingston (who came in for the debut), and I spent four days just deciding whether to play **New Kids On The Block**, **Debbie Gibson**, and the **Bangles**. We've invested lots of time and money on our music systems. No doubt this station does have unique music for the city, and it will only get better."

Pirate Radio's first two hours played like this musically:

5-6am

GUNS N' ROSES/Welcome To The Jungle
ROLLING STONES/Start Me Up
ROXETTE/The Look
DEF LEPPARD/Pour Some Sugar On Me
CHEAP TRICK/The Flame
POISON/Fallen Angel
FORD & OSBOURNE/Close My Eyes Forever
MIDNIGHT OIL/Beds Are Burning
FIXX/One Thing Leads To Another
BON JOVI/Born To Be My Baby
MADONNA/Express Yourself
VAN HALEN/When It's Love
WHITE LION/When The Children Cry
JOAN JETT/Little Liar

6-7am

AEROSMITH/Dream On
DEF LEPPARD/Armageddon It
FINE YOUNG CANNIBALS/She Drives Me Crazy
GUNS N' ROSES/Paradise City
U2/In The Name Of Love
ROD STEWART/My Heart Can't Tell You No
ROBERT PALMER/Addicted To Love
BANGLES/Eternal Flame
MANFRED MANN/Do Wah Diddy
WHITESNAKE/Is This Love?
MADONNA/Like A Prayer
DEF LEPPARD/Rocket
MILLI VANILLI/Girl You Know It's True
R.E.M./Stand

First Impressions

Several market observers had this is to say about upstart **Pirate Radio**.

• **KPWR (Power 106)/L.A. PD Jeff Wyatt**: "It's an excellent radio station; well-done, well-produced, and with an edge that really could make it explode. Shannon's sending a clear message right now to the audience with his pirate concept. It's pretty cool. But it's tough to tell who the station will affect the most. By establishing his own identity, I feel he'll be drawing individuals — not necessarily huge wads of cume — from other established stations."

• **Pollack Media Group Chairman/CEO Jeff Pollack**: "I had a radio station in mind that I would do if I was programming **KIQQ**, and

Pirate Radio is exactly what I envisioned. There was a massive hole for this station; it's what L.A. needs. I predict it will be number one in the market, drawing from **KIIS-FM**, **KLOS**, **KLSX**, and to a minimal degree, **Power 106**.

• **KIIS-FM/L.A. PD Steve Rivers**: "I think it's an early April Fool's joke myself. What we're hearing is not what the real deal is all about. So I reserve comment until they put the true format on the air. My staff is charged and ready for the battle. We're sharper than we've ever been. The worst that will happen is that L.A. will be a better radio market. **KIIS-FM**'s number one goal is to be the best that we can be regardless of who's across the street."

Liner Notes

Image building is very important for any new station, and **KQLZ** is no exception. Placing a strong emphasis on production, the station used radio static and frequency sweeps sound effects to accompany its liners, many of which are being delivered live.

Among the liners pressed into action:

- The mothership has landed... Pirate Radio 100.3-FM... Welcome to the jungle.
- Transmitting throughout North America, this is Pirate Radio... Welcome to the jungle.
- No wimps allowed... No commercials allowed at Pirate Radio... That's the way we like it.
- This is Pirate Radio, 100.3-FM... Don't tell anyone.
- Do not attempt to adjust your radio receiver. You are on the new FM, Pirate Radio.
- Pirate Radio 100.3-FM... Crank it up nice and loud... Open your windows and piss off your neighbors.
- Transmitting live at 100.3 this is Pirate Radio... No disco ducks allowed.