

## Tramping

Continued from Page 1

cities would pack up, jam the roads heading to the countryside, and set up camp. It's here that the idea of singing around a campfire probably began. All you need is a guitar. Many of these songs are Czech folk music, but a lot is imported from the U.S. and other parts of the world. More significantly, almost none of this music was available on government-run stations during the Communist era.

Enter Zdenek Petera. Armed with an economics degree and a taste of commercial radio from his worldly travels, Petera jumped at the chance for a Prague radio license when frequencies were made available by the newly democratized Czech government. He had no doubt about the format of his station: It would emulate the music people sang along to while *tramping*. It would be country music in the purest sense ... *music from the country!*

Stations in Europe don't have call letters as we do. Instead, you register your station name with the government, and that's what you're officially known by. Petera decided to call his station "Country Radio," and it was an instant hit. Today, a local ratings service puts Country Radio solidly in first place with shares averaging in the high teens, rivaling the kinds of numbers you see in America's hard-core country markets.

But Prague's Country Radio doesn't sound very much like Country radio in Dallas or any other American city. It's much more traditional and folk-based. While the station does sprinkle in the sounds of Trisha Yearwood and George Strait, etc., you're more likely to hear the likes of Hank Williams Sr. and Bobby Bare. Toss in some renegade stuff from Dwight Yoakam and Lyle Lovett, along with Bob Dylan and Peter, Paul & Mary, and you've got a station that suits itself perfectly to a large number of Prague's residents.

In the Czech Republic, it is difficult for a competitor to move over and grab a slice of that 18 share. The country's bureaucrats have a tight rein on radio formats, and they're loath to allow format changes during the license period. Operators are pretty much stuck with whatever they promised in their application. So, for now at least, entrepreneur Zdenek Petera and his partners in Metromedia International have a lock on the working-class radio listeners of Prague.

### Pirate Radio 1

Metromedia's first investment in this city actually occurred at another station in town, and there couldn't be a greater contrast between the two. Like Country Radio, Radio 1 acquired its license as soon as the government made it available. Unlike Country Radio, it was on the air before it was licensed. Radio 1 started out as a pirate station.

Ten years ago, when the scent of democracy filled the air in this country, Vladimir Vintř — who with his graying long hair and denim outfit could be central casting's offering as road manager for a rock band — went on the air with an unlicensed, free-form, counterculture FM station. Broadcasting from a WWII bunker high above the city, the station played a lot of rock and blues music shunned by the government stations. It sounded a lot like the old KSAN/San Francisco or its progressive counterparts

## PD Edwards: The Missing Link At WLNK

Former KZQZ/San Francisco PD Mike Edwards has been tapped to program WLNK/Charlotte. He fills the hole created when Stacy Cantrell resigned from the Jefferson-Pilot Pop/Alternative Hot AC late last year.

According to VP/GM Rick Jackson, "When you have a critical management position open, you never know if you're going to be lucky enough to time it right and find the person you really want; we did."

Corporate VP/Operations & Programming Don Benson added, "Mike's experience will make him



Edwards

a great addition to our team. We obviously waited a long time to fill this position because we were looking for the person who was the right fit. Mike is it, and we're delighted to get him."

Noted Edwards, "KZQZ is off to a good start, and I'm leaving it in good hands so that I may accomplish a career-long goal — to join Jefferson-Pilot in the Carolinas."

Edwards, who begins his new duties on May 18, previously programmed WMGS/Wilkes Barre, WKSE/Buffalo, and WDCG/Raleigh.

around the country.

The station weathered an uneasy existence with the government (including a temporary equipment seizure) long enough to become licensed. Radio 1 effectively has the same format as it did when it was a pirate station. Broadcasting from a small downtown studio, it's equipped with all of the modern digital accessories you'd find anywhere, but it still has the air of a college station: some 30-40 personalities — working one-hour to four-hour shifts anywhere from once to five times a week — constitute its weekly lineup, and each air personality decides what to play, drawing from broad guidelines.

Perhaps the most "American-like" station operating in Eastern Europe, certainly under Metromedia's umbrella, is Radio Juventis in Budapest. The company owns this station outright, and its three top positions are staffed by expatriated Americans.

### Auditorium Testing

One of the first stops on Matt Spangler's and my tour of Budapest was an auditorium test on behalf of Juventis. In an old, office building downtown sat about 30 Hungarian men and women ranging in age from about 25-49. The group appeared to be composed of student-types, along with working- and middle-class radio listeners.

On the other side of the glass, Owen Leach — who, along with former partner Frank Cody, probably tested enough Americans on their music preferences to populate a large metro area — was at the controls of the test. "It works here the

exact same way it works back home," he said. A song plays, the respondents dial in their responses, and the TV screen in the control room displays the results.

I thought "In The Year 2525" an odd selection until I saw the results on the screen; big scores on that one. But thanks to restrictive radio programming in the old days, there are large gaps in the pop and rock repertoire. Motown stuff, for example, doesn't budge the needle. The station also plays a generous amount of local product. That's important, because it thrives on local appearances, and the bands they play often lend support.

As our trip came to a close, I realized how different, and yet how similar, European radio was from its American counterpart. Most of the differences were behind the scenes: In Europe, there was more government regulation and red tape, a somewhat less intense attitude among salespeople, and none of the frenzied consolidation pressure that hangs over us in America. Commercial radio is barely eight years old in this region of the world, and the attitudes that filter throughout these facilities are the same: Radio is king here ... the Internet, Nintendo and other electronic alternatives haven't made a dent yet, and the possibilities for radio are limitless.

The similarities? You can hear those on the air. A lot of the music, the promos, stopsets, and sweepers could play anywhere. You really don't have to know the local language to hear great radio. When the announcer and his support staff have passion, it somehow comes through whether or not you know what they're saying.

### Savadove

Continued from Page 3

potential to be a top radio station, and we are going to figure out how to do it and do it right."

### Global

Continued from Page 3

cellor Marketing Group will design and execute integrated marketing campaigns for these national marketers, which will add incremental revenues to Chancellor's sales base."

Global Sales Development currently works with 160 stations in 32 markets. The company has an established working relationship with Chancellor that has generated over

\$12 million in new revenues.

Glander added, "Chancellor Marketing Group is dedicated to servicing the needs of major corporate promotions that are locally executed — in the stores and on the streets — and that is what Chancellor Marketing Group will deliver. Creating an entire division dedicated to this function will enable Chancellor Media to make the most of this revenue opportunity."

## UPDATE

### Prager Now Katz Media VP/Chief Info Officer

David Prager has been promoted to VP/Chief Information Officer at Katz Media Group in New York. He had been Director/Systems Development & Technical Planning for Katz's corporate information services department since 1996.

"In the two years that David has been with us, he has played an integral role in developing our technology platform and improving our daily operations," said Sr. VP/Director of Information Services Gerry Boehme. "He understands the importance of designing systems from the user's point of view, and he knows how applications need to function within our company and our industry."

Prior to joining Katz, Prager was a systems architect with Applied Information Services.

## Bloomberg BUSINESS BRIEFS

Continued from Page 8

Spanish Radio Network). In December, Radio One agreed to acquire KZWC and KZSF for \$22 million from Z Spanish, but the group opted to "refocus [its] resources elsewhere," Radio One/CEO Alfred Liggins said.

### ABC

Continued from Page 3

Boehme told R&R that Katz is "in discussion with several groups" to fill the ABC space. He declined to identify any of the potential new business, but added that "nothing is final."

Katz President Stu Olds, who is vacationing and not available for comment this week, said in a prepared release, "[ABC Radio Division President] Bob Callahan's decision to break the long-standing ties with Katz was due to the introduction of AMFM Networks and the dramatic impact it had on the ABC Radio Networks." Olds said the Amcast staff will be retained for current and prospective clients.

Simultaneous with the Interep/ABC deal, 25-year Interep veteran Pine becomes President of ABC Radio Sales. President of Interep East since 1993, Pine will oversee all of ABC Radio Sales operations and is currently in the throes of hiring a sales staff for the new group.

### Sales

Continued from Page 18

Two other key things to bring along are success stories and items that show the value your station provides. For example, spot schedules show market impact vs. expenditure levels. Other options (e.g., promotions) provide added value to increase the effectiveness of the on-air campaign.

### Sax

Continued from Page 3

Radio continues to stand out as a strong advertising medium that adapts to changing lifestyles. The effective use of radio involves taking advantage of its potential benefits by correctly designing and implementing a buy using the best stations with the right mix of creative and commercial exposure.

Waco, TX when he joined the label in 1994. He'll soon move from Dallas to Nashville.

"George was the spearhead of the ABC development program and is the right person to be running the group," Interep Chairman Ralph Guild told R&R. He said that Interep is recruiting inside and outside of the company.

Guild and his college buddy-turned-business partner, Daren McGavren, formed the rep firm McGavren-Guild in the early 1960s; that later became Interep. While Guild and his contemporaries may witness a shrinking demand for rep firms as the industry consolidates and advertisers go directly to the group instead of engaging a middleman, Guild appears to be king of the hill.

"Even though the scale has changed, the value of a rep firm hasn't changed," Boehme told R&R. "From the broadcast group perspective, a group still needs representation within cities. It comes down to selling the group, not just the stations. As for advertisers, the groups don't provide the markets that the advertiser needs all the time."

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### Hodgson

Continued from Page 11

great-sounding station that probably can be doing better; and WEMP is still hanging in there, contributing about a point in adult demos."

In addition to being GM for Direct Marketing Results and Rich White & Associates' Regional Manager, Hodgson previously managed KLTH/Kansas City and KKLZ & KMTW/Las Vegas.