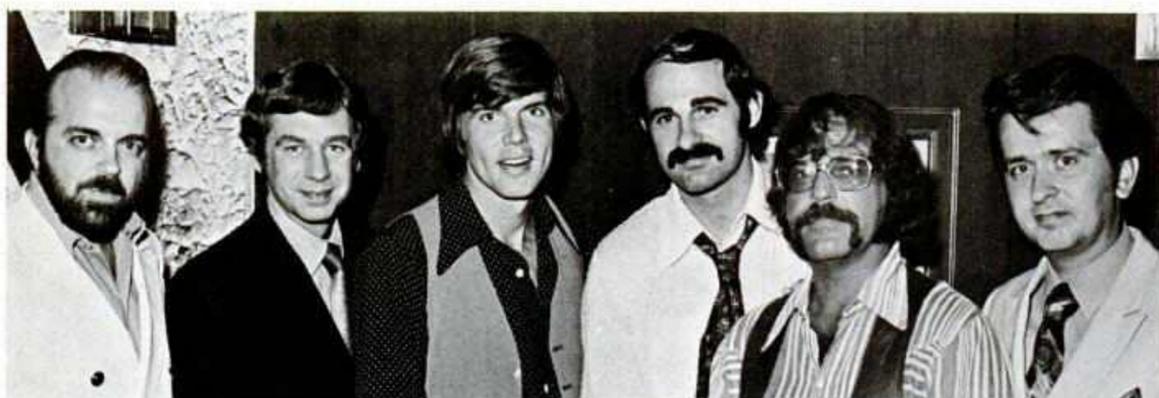


Radio-TV programming



COLUMBIA RECORDS artist John Davidson, third from left, met Dallas area radio personalities at a luncheon held in Dallas recently. Pictured with him are, left to right, KVIL program director Ron Chapman, KLIF music director Jim Taber, Davidson, Jack Schell and Hugh Lampman of KVIL, and Lee Miller of KWXI-FM in Fort Worth.

U.S. Radio Is Ignoring Foreign Play Exposure, Asserts Nathan

By CLAUDE HALL

NEW YORK — U.S. radio stations are not playing fair, according to John Nathan, president of Overseas Music Services Inc.

"The so-called international record business is mostly one way," Nathan said. All you have to do is look back and count the number of U.S. hits the past few years that were produced overseas. The percent is very small, he said.

The fault is two-fold, he said. First, although radio stations in Europe have a tremendous percentage of U.S. hits and British hits on the air (so much so that the government in many countries has had to step in and demand the stations play a definite percentage of local product), it's almost impossible for a foreign record to get airplay in the U.S.

"I just got back from Italy and I brought copies of the top 10 singles back with me. Most of them were weak, but three or four were very good and should be played on U.S. radio stations," he said.

International director of operations for MGM Records until forming his own firm. Nathan spent several years in Europe, working out of Paris. "In Europe, a radio station will play U.S. or British records even if the records haven't been released in their area, merely because the record is a hit in the U.S. But if I went to a U.S. radio station and told the program director that 'this Italian record is No. 1 in Italy and I'd like you to consider it for airplay,' he'd laugh."

Nathan pointed out that "Eloise" by Barry Ryan several months ago sold more than 1.8 million copies in Europe and the U.K., but nothing in the U.S. This was a prime example of the injustice done to foreign records in the U.S., he felt.

He also felt that U.S. record companies have to take a lot of the blame. A good example, he said, was the recent winner of the "Un Disco per L'Estate" on R.A.I., the Italian network. This is a contest to find the best record every summer and winning it assures you of several hundred thousand sales. "Lady Barbara" by Renato on CBS Records won this past contest, yet the record was never released in the U.S., Nathan said.

WCAP Shifts To 25-35 Yr. Listener Goal

LOWELL, Mass.—WCAP is phasing out its "loose-knit" MOR format and will program toward a 25-35-year-old target audience, said program director Eric Marengi. The 1,000-watt station will program better than 50 percent non-abrasive Hot 100 chart oldies, blended with current easy listening singles and carefully selected country and top 40 records, he said.

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WGAR 'Promo' Sparks New Play

CLEVELAND—Amidst a flurry of "diversionary tactics" ranging from on-the-air promos about "all-request" to "all-news" and "all-talk," WGAR set out this past weekend with a unique blend of oldies and current records directed at the 18-40 age listener here.

The current records will be mostly softer-sounding disks, but "Were going to break more new records than any station in town," stated new general manager, Jack Thayer, who unveiled his format Sept. 3 at a private meeting of radio executives at Blair Radio in New York.

The diversionary tactics included an impromptu two-hour talk show by an air personality en route to WMCA in New York.

One newspaper advertisement read: "Mike Reineri, call WGAR, but please turn your radio down." The ad resulted in several people calling WIXY in Cleveland, where Reineri does a music-talk show each day, and asking him on-the-air if he was joining WGAR.

WGAR actually went request for one day in its "diversionary" period, in order to graph music

tastes and the audience flow of the market. This, too, was spurred by a newspaper ad that read: "Make WGAR total request radio and we'll compute all of the requests to determine the sound Cleveland really wants to listen to. That's what the new sound of WGAR will be. And it's up to you to create it."

WGAR checked the requests against the playlists of other Cleveland stations to find out where the listeners were coming from. Early in the morning, the majority of the phone requests came from the older listeners, but the requests were from the 12-24 age group by noon and from 11-17 years old by 4 p.m., Thayer said.

Thayer explained the new WGAR format in New York with the aid of his new general sales manager, Dick Janssen, and morning air personality, Don Imus. Janssen had been a manager in the Metromedia Radio operation, as had Thayer. Imus comes from KXOA in Sacramento, where Thayer was recently general manager. Thayer has also brought Don Lund, program director of

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"I've got it at home; it's a tremendous record."

Language is not a barrier, he felt. "Don't tell me that kids in Europe understand what Mountain or the Led Zeppelin are saying. . . . I have enough trouble understanding the lyrics myself. The kids don't care most of the time about the language."

Nathan, who represents CTI Records, Anvil Records, and Lionel Records in their overseas licensing and distribution situations, felt that if a record reaches No. 1 or even second or third in France, Italy, or Spain, it "must have something commercial to it. Possibly 50 percent of these would have international scope and appeal . . . if they could just get the proper exposure on radio and the distribution by the record companies. But it would take a long-term education process to educate both record companies and the radio stations. Record companies won't release the product over here because they don't think the radio stations would play it."

He said if he had money enough, he'd start a campaign to educate both the radio and the record business to the value of foreign product.

LP's Stir Confusion in Top 40

NEW HAVEN, Conn.—Albums are creating considerable confusion in Top 40 programming, according to Bill Hennes, program director of WNHC.

The confusion results from two separate factors: First, record companies are sending albums and relying more and more upon the radio station to break out a single from it. But even more confusion results as an aftermath, Hennes said. He pointed to a recent Simon & Garfunkel album from which Columbia Records has just released another single. "The sales of that single may be slower because it's appealing to different people. . . the album has already reached one listener; the new single is for a different segment of your audience."

"You just don't have the same guidelines on an album as you do on a single, anyway. In the old days, you could determine a large part of your programming by the sales figures of singles records; with albums, you have to go by the sound of the cuts, choosing those best suited for your format. You can research and research, but it's a very tough situation at the moment."

For example, he said, "do

you play some of the cuts from the 'Woodstock' soundtrack? Most of those tunes are already golden oldies."

WNHC had, for a period, gone very heavy into album cuts, but Hennes had to back off. "I was finding more and more that the record companies were releasing singles of the cuts I'd already worn out. But for an equal number of times I'd been right about which cut to play, I'd also been wrong."

"I'm still playing album cuts from time to time, like the 'Grapevine' cut from the recent Creedence Clearwater Revival album. But what am I supposed to do when the record company releases it as a single—play it again? How can you keep the sound of the station fresh that way?"

Wants Job Done

Hennes, who started out in radio at WBRB in Mount Clemens, Mich., said he "believes in nonsense programming. . . I'm interested in getting the job done. I feel that you have to be 100 percent involved in

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END OF THE LINE?

Dear Editor,

Tell me something? Where do old disk jockeys go? It is with mixed feelings that I send you this letter. On one hand, there are some good things about this industry. On the other, there is the fact that I have been in this business for six years now and I woke up two weeks ago and discovered to my shock and dismay that I am 30 years of age. Now I know . . . that's not old. But I made a promise to my family—and above all to myself—that I would be in an important position in this industry by the time I reached this age or get out. Now I have done a little traveling around the country and listened to some of the so-called powerhouse stations and I find myself worried. Worried because I haven't been discovered as yet. Sounds stupid? I hope not. After listening to other jocks in major markets I truly do not know why they are there and I am here. No, it's not conceit. Kindly don't think me an ass. I am, you see, my own worse critic. I don't like the way I sound and never will. But . . . I do like it better than 90 percent of what I hear on other stations. Funny, but listeners, even from far off places such as New York and California, tell me the same thing. Can they be wrong? Can I be wrong? I guess so. So, here I sit with a firm decision made at last. I am getting out while I am still young enough to find honest work. It's been a blast while it lasted. Would you believe I have been offered a job driving a lunch wagon in Los Angeles . . . to tide us over until something else comes up? Funny part is that it pays more than the radio business has paid so far. Then, too, I could sell motorcycles, which is what I am doing here, to supplement my income.

A Disk Jockey

EDITOR'S NOTE: In a few days or weeks, the above air personality will resign his present job at a "good" radio station in a decent-sized market because the radio industry is not paying him enough to support his wife and children. How many other skilled professionals is the radio industry losing each week?