Douglas Finds Bell Motivates Field Staff

LOS ANGELES — Larry Douglas, RCA Western region promotion manager, is a low-key, contemporary music executive. But he keeps a cowbell on his desk, which he rings when he gets a long-distance phone call from one of his field men reports getting a record on a major station's playlist. "It's just another way of motivating 25 guys to keep up their interest," Douglas explained.

He rates enthusiasm, involvement with the music industry and details and the ability to take direction in a nationwide effort, as the prime requisites for a successful promotion man.

Douglas correlates the efforts of his team with a weekly listing of RCA product on 250 key stations. The lists are mailed special delivery each Friday so the promotion staff can study national airplay patterns during the weekend.

"I really think of the promotion job as providing a service to radio stations," said Douglas, "helping them to get their product on the air, and that will improve their sound." He feels it's part of his responsibilities to make broadcasters aware of excellent new releases on competing labels. "I tape broadcast shows, I write RCA's Steven's release all the country," he said, "and I know many of the field managers, so promotion men would do the same for a record they liked."

Douglas has also gone so far as to suggest and set up contests for radio stations on occasion.

He admits this tightening playlists and the switch of some FM formats to a stricter format have made this a particularly tough period for winning airplay.

On the west coast, major market outlets simply refuse to program a new release until it has reached the top 15 on the billboard chart. Other major RKO stations, with a closer eye on the playlists of secondary market stations which they feel have a strong program of picking his early hits. "When a program director doesn't feel like playing your record, he can come up with an endless variety of rationalizations," Douglas said. "One PD still refuses to go on Nicolson's "Coconut," because he says his station doesn't program novelty records."

Douglas began his music career eight years ago as retail stock clerk in his native Cincinnati and promoted for independent distributors before coming to New York for Columbia, and this year moving west with RCA. This is the kind of music we play," The station receives up to 100 calls a day demanding to know when new artists will be identified on records that are not introduced on air.

The pop song director considers WAIT and WNUS competitive, for those with a WGN and WBBM competitive, for the wave. The influence numbers: "FM stations have not become particularly competitive with AM, but have surpassed it in many areas of the country," Douglas said. "The last two years,"

"We are an equal opportunity station. We go to everyone."

Rockoff, who came to WLAK-FM eight weeks ago from the KNX FM in Los Angeles, said he enjoys WLAK-FM music 90 percent of the time. "People are looking for an escape, something beautiful and anthems that will get you to sit down and listen to records for 10 to 15 minutes at a time."

As for how WLAK's programming influences sales of records, Rockoff doesn't doubt that his type of programming affects record sales, the biggest selling artist of all time.


IMPORTANT!

THE MUSIC PROFESSOR will soon be starring in your mailbox.

You'll want him to star on your radio station.

WSMM-FM MOR

SAULT STE. MARIE, Mich. — WSWM-FM is now providing the population of the upper peninsula of Michigan and northern Ontario with a bright, upbeat MOR sound, according to program director Earl King. Lee Van Dam is in general management. King said the potential audience is 110,000 people. Lee is the assistant program director.

From The Music Capitals of the World

DOMESTIC

CINCINNATI

David Casdell, Shirley Jones, Susan Day, Suzanne Crouch, Brian Foster, Danny Bonaduce and Dave Madden, of "The Partridge Family" east, in five days recently at the new $30 million King's Island fun center, filmimg a seg for the upcoming ABC-Tv sitcom titled "I Left My Heart in Cincinn-

no," Alex Brown's Broadcast's scheduled live relays from the Ohio State Fair, Columbus, opened last week, have been con-

sidered as an extension of the theatrical hit with the International Broth-

erhood of Electrical Workers. Affected were the Bob Brun, 50-50 Club, the Paul McLean, "Midwestern Hayride" and six other WLW and WLTW talents.

Roger Flugel, branch manager of U.D.C., Inc., formerly Liberty/ UA Distributing Corp., has intro-

duced a new sales gimmick to hype the firm's weekly sales meetings. Invited guests are asked to sit in on musical dispense.

Inucumber, who recently introduced a three-year recording pact with General American Records here, has issued a single titled "I Caught You." She was formerly on the road with Dan and Dave, Joe Tex and Joe Simon.

Martha Reeves, former lead singer of Martha and the Vandellas and now making it on her own, in town recently for the taping of a guest appearance on "Soul Train," new syndicate show recently produced by General Ameri-

can Records in conjunction with WRC-TV in Washi-

ton. The series is presently being viewed in 25 major markets.

The Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra has just released a first recording titled "Symphony Jazz Quintet" on the SMS label. Vocalists are Frank Proto, piano and bass; The Smokey, sax; Paul Fischer, lead singer; Brad Byr, bass; and David Redwine, drums. The album is available at all major retailers in Cincinnati, New York, Chicago, San Francisco, F. G. Crough, Brian饮水器, manager, is Jack Pierce, manager.

of-16, for the Oct. 3-14 period. They followed with six days at the various NCO Club annexes in Fort McClellan, New York, and 6 Bookings were ar-

ranged for Steve Roshack of Harrisburg, Pa.

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BELL SACHS

PRESENTING JIMMY CASTOR, RCA, with his gold record for "Troglodyte." are from left to right: Buzz Wills, disc jockey for RFD, George Morris, manager of radio promotion, RCA, Jimmy Castor, Gene Settles, merchandising manager, RCA. The presentation was made at the Apollo Theater.

SEPTEMBER 2, 1972, BILLBOARD