

From the Editors of *The M Street Journal*

THE

1991 EDITION

**STREET
RADIO
DIRECTORY**

COMPREHENSIVE MARKET DATA:

AM and FM Stations

USA and Canada

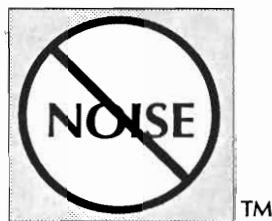
Program Formats

Arbitron, Birch, and Willhight Ratings

The M Street Radio Markets

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THE M STREET RADIO DIRECTORY

1991 EDITION

Edited by Robert Unmacht

David K. Brazier, Associate Editor Data Processing

Geov Parrish, Associate Editor

M Street Corporation

Alexandria, VA and Seattle, WA

The editors gratefully acknowledge the assistance and contributions of:

Steve Ahern
J. T. Anderton
Steven G. Apel
June Barns
Pat Barnes
Marianne Bellinger
Joe Costanzo
John Dresser
Bob Gilbert
David Gleason
George Greene
Phillip Wayne Huff
Chip Kelley
Jim Korn

T. J. Lambert
Suzanne Lavery
Pat Martin
Pat McCrummen
Greg Monti
Tony Niskanen
Sean Ross
John R. Sally
Neil Sargent
Nick Scott
Joe Stalings
Tom Taylor
Joe Tunnell, III
Art Vuolo

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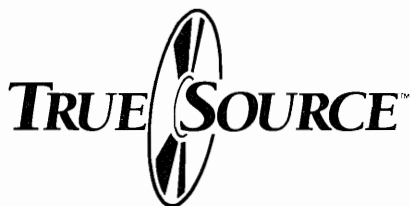
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Radio changes constantly; stations, personnel, formats, addresses, facilities and just about everything else about radio changes hourly. Our job, mission, and curse is to try to keep up with these changes. We update our database daily, report on those changes weekly in *The M Street Journal* and summarize them yearly in this directory.

We believe our directory is more accurate than others available today. More accurate thanks to a network of people interested in radio. It is these people who anticipate, locate, and report the changes in radio that make this directory possible.

As with any set of information this large and volatile, some errors are inevitable. We invite everyone to call, fax, or write with new or corrected information for this directory. Whether you run the largest station in the country or simply think radio is something special, we would like to hear from you. We can't be everywhere ourselves, but with your help, we can come closer than anyone else providing broadcast data.

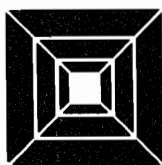
The data found in this directory is part of a much larger database that has been compiled over the last eight years. We have selected the most frequently requested items for inclusion in this book. Customized reports of stations, ownership, market information or mailing labels are available through our Alexandria office. Call (703) 684-3622; fax (703) 684-0320; or write us at P.O. Box 3568, Alexandria, VA 22302 for details.

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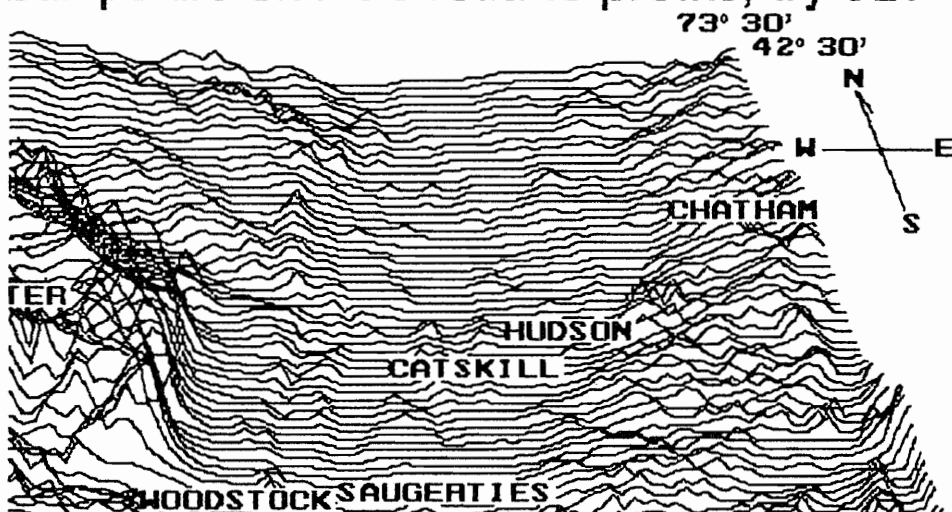
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The M Street Radio Directory contains estimates of audience shares from surveys taken by the above ratings companies. The figures we show are taken from the latest survey published before our deadlines. The particular survey used in each market is shown in **The M Street RADIO MARKETS** section, but not in the individual station listings. Ratings are not shown for stations that received less than a .1 share or stations who have changed their format since the survey.

The majority of these estimates were compiled through surveys conducted by either The Arbitron Company or the Birch/Scarborough Research Corporation who report their estimates on a quarterly basis. A number of radio markets in the Pacific Northwest are surveyed by Willhight Radio Research. Willhight's surveys do not always coincide with the Arbitron and Birch survey periods. The dates of the Willhight surveys are given in the MARKET section. Estimates for Puerto Rico are from Asesores Inc.

The term "ratings" is used to describe the audience estimates published in The M Street Radio Directory but "audience share" is a more accurate description. The published numbers represent the percentage of all radio listeners twelve years old or older (12+) who tune to a particular radio station in a theoretical "average quarter hour" on any day from Monday to Sunday between the hours of 6:00 A.M. and 12:00 Midnight. This figure highlights some relative strengths and weaknesses of the stations competing in a market, however it tells only a small portion of the story of competition in a market.

Taken alone, the audience share reveals nothing about the actual size of a station's audience. An estimate of the number of people tuned to all radio stations in an average quarter hour is needed to derive the audience size from the share. These more specific figures are not included, because of their volume, and because the ratings companies would have little to sell if we published them. Our inclusion of audience shares from the ratings companies is based partially on their hopes that persons needing fully detailed information will subscribe to their services

ABOUT RATINGS

UNDERSTANDING RATINGS METHODS

by: Steven G. Apel

Steven Apel is the President of Media Perspectives Research Corporation and a former Research Project Director for the Arbitron Company. Media Perspectives provides marketing and audience research as well as strategic consulting for radio broadcasters seeking to maximize ratings and revenues. He may be contacted at Media Perspectives, 2901 Elberta Lane, Marlton, New Jersey 08053, telephone 609-985-7474.

Why Measure The Audience?

Neither programming nor advertising time is the basic commodity that radio stations produce. Audience is.

Commercial radio stations survive by selling the attention of their listeners to advertisers. The more listeners paying attention, the more valuable the product they produce. This rule also applies to most non-commercial stations. Financial support from businesses in return for underwriting announcements tends to be in proportion to the number of listeners reached.

Since their incomes are related to the volume of product they produce, radio broadcasters need to measure the size of their audiences. This is not a simple task.

Estimating the Size of the Audience

Unlike other businesses that produce a product, radio broadcasters have no direct means for monitoring production. XYZ Corporation, for example, can count the number of "widgets" it produces as they roll off the assembly line. Since radio listening occurs in places far removed from the radio station, direct measurement of the volume of product produced, the size of the audience, must take place indirectly.

Surveys which gain information about the radio listening habits of a randomly selected sample of the population and then project this information for the population at large provide an estimate of audience size. The key word in the last sentence is estimate. Although audience ratings figure may be fairly close to the truth, they are only estimates and are subject to error.

Broadcasters and advertisers need to understand the basics of ratings survey methodology in order to make more effective use of the ratings in buying and selling advertising time. With this knowledge, radio managers will be better able to use ratings data as one source of input in evaluating their stations' performance and devising strategies for improvement.

Why An Estimate Can Be Wrong

The accuracy of radio audience estimates is often limited by two factors: 1) Inability to gain a truly representative sample of the population. 2) Distorted reports of listener behavior that result from the method used to collect radio listening information from people.

These factors may account for some of the fluctuations in a station's audience rating over time. They often explain why ratings surveys conducted by different companies at the same time can produce conflicting results.

A Non-representative Sample Can Cloud Accuracy

If all people were alike gaining a representative sample would be rather simple. However, people are not alike. Variations in individuals' age, sex and ethnic background are demographic distinctions that radio broadcasters and advertisers consider important. As a result attaining a representative sample requires that individuals of all of these demographic categories be included in proportion to their occurrence in the general population.

Over or under-sampling one or more demographic groups can skew the results of a ratings survey. For example, a sample which contains too many women and too few men will tend to artificially inflate the audience for female skewing stations while inaccurately diminishing the audience for male oriented outlets.

Audience ratings firms employ weighting procedures to compensate for such deficiencies. In these procedures the values of the answers of a particular group are multiplied or divided by a number which compensates for the degree to which they are over or under represented.

Although weighting can compensate for some of the problems caused by a non-representative sample, it doesn't cure all of the ills. Even with weighting applied, under-representation of a particular group limits the ratings' ability to reflect the full range of radio stations listened to by members of that group.

Non-response Also Limits Accuracy

A non-representative sample is not always the fault of the ratings firm. Their studies often begin with a representative sample, but not all individuals in the sample respond to the survey. This “non-response bias” introduces another kind of distortion that can make ratings estimates less than 100% accurate.

Typically, only half of all people who are asked to take part in a ratings survey actually participate. While they provide information about their radio listening habits, the habits of the other 50% remain unknown. An unanswerable but troubling question is; “Are the listening habits of the non-responders significantly different than those of the people who responded?”

How Data Collection Techniques Can Affect Accuracy

North America’s radio ratings firms collect information about a person’s radio use through either a diary or personal interview. The Arbitron Company uses a diary in which the listener keeps a log of their listening over the course of a week. Canada’s BBM Bureau of Measurement also uses a seven-day listening diary. The Birch/Scarborough Research Corporation places telephone calls in which listeners are asked to recall their radio listening during the preceding twenty-four hours. Willhight Radio Research gathers radio listening data in the northwestern United States through telephone interviews. No firm’s data collection technique provides a perfect measure of listening.

Radio Listening Diaries Collect Information Differently Than Telephone Interviews

Radio listening diaries can capture highly detailed information about radio use and track changes in listening throughout the day. Distinctions between weekday and weekend listening can be determined and a reliable weekly reach figure can be computed for each radio station.

Telephone interviews are less likely than diaries to produce detailed information on radio usage. In telephone interviews, listeners are asked to reconstruct their radio listening. Since listening is often a secondary activity, many people are doing something else while listening to the radio and may not remember tuning in to some stations or may not recall exactly when it was that they switched from one station to another.

In addition to the lack of detail in contrast to the diary, the one-day recall telephone interview cannot produce a truly reliable measure of the number of people who listen to a station over the course of a week - the station’s cumulative audience or weekly reach. This may result in a significant under-counting of audience. Just why this under-counting can occur is explained in the following example.

Suppose that there is a radio market in which two stations compete. WMUS is a music intensive station and KNTK has a news-talk format. In addition, KNTK broadcasts play-by-play coverage of a local football team’s games on one day each week. Now suppose that a large number of football fans participate in telephone interviews which capture information about Friday radio listening. These people all listened to WMUS. On Saturday, these individuals tuned to the football broadcast on KNTK. Since the interview did not cover Saturday listening, the football fans interviewed about Friday listening are not counted in KNTK’s weekly cumulative audience. Now, suppose people with little interest in football comprise the sample asked about Saturday radio listening. Few report listening to KNTK on that day. When information about Friday and Saturday listening is combined to produce an audience estimate, the cumulative audience of KNTK is calculated to be lower than it actually is.

In an attempt to moderate the effects a one-day recall interview can have on weekly come, both Birch and Willhight follow their detailed one-day recall questions with probes about the stations people listened to on prior days. Although this may reduce the potential for suppressing some stations’ reported weekly cumulative audience, the production of weekly come listening estimates through a different line of questioning than that which produces quarter hour listening estimates raises questions about the reliability of come estimates.

Different Data Collection Methods May Favor Different Stations

Ratings produced through diary collected data can favor different types of stations than estimates which result from telephone interviews. Historically, the less intrusive telephone interview has been more successful than the diary in gaining the cooperation of younger listeners. Diary based surveys have generally attracted a sample of older listeners.

Stations which target listeners under age 35 often attain a higher rating in a telephone interview

ABOUT RATINGS

study than in a concurrently conducted diary study. Stations appealing primarily to listeners over age 35 usually fare better in diary-based surveys. Consequently, Album Rock, Contemporary Hit and Urban formatted stations tend to be more competitive in Birch's telephone surveys. Easy Listening, News, Talk and some Adult Contemporary formatted stations tend to gain higher ratings in the Arbitron diary system.

Data Collection Methods May Measure Awareness Rather Than Listening

Diaries and telephone interviews both attempt to measure actual listening, however there is no guarantee that they actually do. It is quite possible that some ratings estimates are more a measure of listeners' awareness of a radio station than an indication of station use.

The potential for measuring awareness rather than behavior is greater in telephone interviews than diary-based studies. The telephone interview relies on an individual's ability to remember details of their previous day's radio listening. Since radio listening is a "low commitment" activity to which little thought is given, a listener who is unexpectedly asked about this listening and unsure of exactly what station they listened to, will often mention the name of the first station that comes to mind. When this occurs, a well promoted radio station can win credit for listening that never occurred. This station can gain ratings points which really belong to a competitor.

People who participate in diary studies know while listening to radio that they are being asked to supply information about their radio usage. This often lessens, but doesn't eliminate, the risk that awareness rather than behavior will be measured. Not all listeners complete their diaries at the time they are listening. When they don't, the diary changes from an actual record of radio usage into a report of recall and is subject to the imperfections of memory. Just as in recall interviews, listeners may give credit to the stations they are most aware of fail to report listening to stations which have a lower profile.

People Who Are Confused Can't Report Listening Accurately

Another problem in capturing accurate information about radio listening is the "un-aided response" technique employed in both the diary and personal interview methods. Un-aided response asks listeners to volunteer information about the stations they use. For a station to get ratings credit, the listener must accurately report the station's name. Since they needn't know the name of a station to use it, this task often proves difficult for some listeners who do not pay close attention to the radio. These listeners may neglect to report listening to stations they use less often. In addition, they may get the name of a station wrong.

Since each of these mistakes are costly to the broadcaster in terms of lost ratings, the broadcaster must help the listener achieve the necessary accuracy. Of all the problems that impact on the reliability of ratings, this is the one area in which a broadcaster's actions can have a direct impact.

How A Broadcaster Can Improve The Chances for Ratings Success

Selection of call letters or an on-air slogan that is appropriate for the format the broadcaster is offering along with continual reinforcement of this name both on the air and through outside promotion may minimize reporting errors and increase listener awareness in order to gain ratings victory.

The call letters or name of a station must be easy to conceptualize and write in a diary or mention to a survey interviewer. Call letters or slogans that relate directly to the station's programming or the benefits it offers help the listener to link listening behavior with the appropriate station. Including the radio station's frequency in on-air mentions and in promotion helps listeners to accurately report listening since many listeners identify stations by dial position.

Two elements are vital to ratings success. The first is good programming - a station without good programming cannot capture a sizable audience. The other is effective promotion - both on-air and off-air promotion is needed to assist listeners' in supplying information about their radio listening behavior to the ratings companies.

Informed users of ratings need to remember that radio audience estimates reflect a combination of individuals' actual use of radio stations, their awareness of radio stations and the method employed to gather information from radio listeners.

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GUIDE TO USE

To help you get the most information from the station listings please read through this guide. The inside column shows a sample of what is being described in the outside column.

Please examine the samples at the right.

The listings are arranged in lines. We use six different types of lines always in the same order:

- City
- Call Letters
- Frequency
- Address
- Applications & Permits
- Market Information

Yakima

KZTA 1000/w ND-D [SS] 5s 7c 7c
930 Big Bang, Inc. 509-248-4722
Box 2489, 98907 1510 Hartford Rd., 98907
[KIHS]
Yakima Arbitron .9 Birch 2.3

City of License is followed by the stations in frequency order. AM stations first then FM stations.

Yakima

Call letters are followed by Power/Facility:
For AM stations the day power is listed first and the night power second (i.e. 5000/250w).
Next is the AM antenna configuration:

KZTA 1000/w ND-D

- ND non-directional, full time
- ND-D non-directional, daytime only
- DA-D directional days
- DA-1 same directional pattern
day and night
- DA-2 different directional
patterns day and night
- = station shares time with another
station

FM stations list their effective radiated power followed by the antenna height above average terrain. FM stations whose ERP or HAAT is different for horizontal and vertical polarizations list the figures as (h) and (v). "DA" indicates a directional antenna is used.
= station shares time with another station

KIHS 630w 590ft

GUIDE TO USE

KZTA 1000/w ND-D [SS]

Format codes follow the power/facility in square brackets. Please see the section **FORMAT CODES** for a complete explanation of our format classifications and their codes.

KZTA 1000/w ND-D [SS] 5s 7c 7c

The last items on the Call Letter line are the change codes. The last digit of the year of the change is followed by a code for the type of change:

- c call letter change
- f frequency change
- l city of license change
- n new station on air
- s station sale
- t format change
- p facilities change

930 Big Bang, Inc. 509-248-4722

The frequency line includes the owner of the station and the station's business office phone number. If we do not have a phone number the area code is given.

A "+" preceding the owner indicates the company (not necessarily under the same name) has a ownership interest in stations in other markets.

Box 2489, 98907 1510 Hartford Rd., 98907 [KIHS]

Addresses, up to two are shown. The city and state are assumed to be the city and state of license unless otherwise listed.

Any AM or FM affiliate in the same market is shown in square brackets following the station addresses.

cp 105.7;100000,777

The Applications & Permits line, if any, shows applications not yet granted or rejected and construction permits not yet on air. Listings correspond to the facilities descriptions above.

Yakima Arbitron .9 Birch 2.3

The last possible line in a station listing is the Market Information. The primary market area served is followed by any ratings (see **ABOUT RATINGS**) and any secondary market.

FORMAT CODES

As the broadcast industry itself evolves, so do station formats, and classifications/definitions are amended from time to time to reflect current trends. Here is the current set of format classifications in use:

AC Adult Contemporary

An adult-oriented pop/rock station, with no hard rock, possibly some non-rock music, and often a greater emphasis on non-current music. AC-OL would be an oldies based AC.

AP Album - Progressive

Eclectic rock, often with wide variations in musical style.

AR Album - Rock

Mainstream rock & roll. Can include more guitar-oriented "heavy metal".

AS Adult Standards

Standards and older, non-rock popular music (1940-1980), appeals to older adults. Often includes softer current popular music.

BG Black Gospel

CH Contemporary Hit Radio (Top-40)

Current popular music, often encompassing a variety of rock styles. CH-RB would be Dance/CHR, CH-AR would be rock based CHR.

CR Classic Rock

Rock orientated oldies, often mixed with hit oldies of 60's, 70's and 80's.

CW Country

Country music, including contemporary and traditional styles. CW-OL would be country oldies.

DR Drama

Radio dramas, often pre-1950.

ET Ethnic

Programs in languages other than English, French or Spanish. Often brokered and/or block-programmed.

EZ Easy Listening

Gentle, background music, often cover versions of popular songs. More up-tempo varieties of this format include soft rock originals.

FA Fine Arts - Classical

Fine arts ("classical") music, often including opera, theatre, and/or culture-oriented news and talk.

FF French

French-language programming.

HA Comedy

Comedy monologues, sketches, music and dramas.

JZ Jazz

Jazz music, usually a variety of styles; sometimes black-oriented.

NA New Age

Mostly instrumental, often mixed with soft jazz and/or soft AC. Often called "New AC".

NX News

All-news, either local or network in origin. Also in format description if a significant block of time is devoted to news.

FX Farm News

OL Oldies

Formerly popular music, usually rock oldies, with 80% or greater non-current music. CW-OL indicates country oldies; RB-OL, black oldies.

PT Pre-teen

Music, drama or readings intended primarily for a pre-teen audience.

RB Black/soul - Urban

Black-oriented music and programming primarily for a black audience; can cover a wide range of musical styles, often called "Urban Contemporary"

RC Religious - Contemporary

Modern and rock-based religious music.

RG Religious - Gospel

Traditional religious music; can be black-oriented (BG) or country-oriented "southern gospel" (SG).

FORMAT CODES

RL Religious

Local or syndicated religious programming, sometimes mixed with music.

SA Soft Adult Contemporary

A cross between Adult Contemporary and Easy Listening. Almost wholly non-current, soft rock originals; can also be mixed with adult standards.

SB Soft Urban Contemporary

A mix of soft Urban, Adult Contemporary and Jazz, often heavy in oldies.

SG Southern Gospel

Country flavored gospel music.

SS Spanish

Spanish-language programming. Spanish-language equivalents of English formats include SS-CW (ranchero music), SS-AC ("modern" music), SS-SA (salsa, tropical) or SS-VA (variety), and formats such as SS-EZ or SS-NX-TK, which match English language formats.

SX Sports

Listed only if all or a substantial block of a broadcast day is devoted to play-by-play, sports news, interviews or telephone talk.

TK Talk

Talk, either local or network in origin; can be telephone-talk, interviews, information, or a mix.

HT Health Talk

All fitness or motivational talk formats.

MT Financial Talk

All financial or "Money-Talk".

VA Variety

Incorporating three or more distinct formats, either block-programmed or simultaneously.

ADDITIONAL CODES:

Z Station currently off air

r Relays another station's programming

s Simulcasts

* Non-commercial station

& Satellite

X-Y Formats combine

X/Y Formats are dayparted

- Format is about to change or is unknown

m AM-drive

a Afternoon

e Evening

n Night

l Late night

y Weekends

FORMATS

M Street format data produces the following format counts.

Primary Format	Commercial	Non-Comm.	Total	% AM	% FM
1 Country	2,433	6	2,439	53%	47%
2 Adult Contemporary	1,817	18	1,835	39%	61%
3 Top-40 (CHR)	702	73	775	10%	90%
4 Religion (Teaching, Variety)	442	294	736	51%	49%
5 Oldies	688	0	688	54%	46%
6 News, Talk, Business	520	98	618	84%	16%
7 Variety	103	407	510	18%	82%
8 Adult Standards	405	0	405	90%	10%
9 Classical, Fine Arts	49	294	343	5%	95%
10 Spanish	315	27	342	71%	29%
11 Soft Adult Contemporary	312	2	314	41%	59%
12 Alternative Rock	52	258	310	3%	97%
13 Rock	287	10	297	12%	88%
14 Urban, R&B	226	33	259	44%	56%
15 Easy Listening	208	11	219	29%	71%
16 Contemporary Christian	116	44	160	41%	59%
17 Classic Rock	158	1	159	7%	93%
18 Jazz & New Age	56	71	127	8%	92%
19 Gospel	87	8	95	84%	16%
20 Urban AC, R&B oldies	75	1	76	63%	37%
21 Southern Gospel	70	3	73	82%	18%
22 Black Gospel	66	2	68	94%	6%
23 Ethnic	38	19	57	84%	16%
24 Pre-Teen	4	0	4	75%	25%
Total operating stations	9,229	1,680	10,909	44%	56%
Stations off the air	(228 AM and 95 FM)		323	71%	29%
Construction permits	(181 AM and 686 FM)		867	21%	79%
Total stations and construction permits			12,099	43%	57%

TRADE PRESS: YOUR STATION HERE

By Sean Ross

Sean Ross is radio editor of Billboard. His phone number is 212-536-5028. His fax is 212-536-5358. Phyllis Stark, Billboard's Radio Promotions writer, can be reached at 212-536-5032. Craig Rosen, Billboard's network/syndication reporter and West Coast radio correspondent, is at 213-859-5318.

Trade publications want to hear from you, but a lot of radio stations don't realize that. They assume they have to report their playlist to a trade, or subscribe to it, for somebody to be interested in what happens at their station. They see some stations, or industry personnel over and over in the trades and they assume those are the only stations or people we want to cover.

It's not true. But it is frequently a self-fulfilling prophecy. As with radio sales, most orders have to be asked for. And you just have to know how.

There are more than 10,000 radio stations in the U.S., and hundreds of broadcast-related companies. To cover them, my two Billboard Radio colleagues and I probably make 200 calls a week. That's probably a few more beat calls than the people in comparable jobs at, say, Beverage Industry Weekly make. You guess as best you can where those 200 calls should go. If something happens at the other 9,800 stations, you have to hope they tell you about it, or someone else does.

The Z100s and WBCNs and the other stations you see everywhere do have one advantage. They have huge staffs, and thus somebody to churn out the pictures and press releases. If WMMS Cleveland or WYNF Tampa, Fla., sends out five pictures a week, there's a greater chance that one of them will get used than the station that sends out one or two pictures a year.

But the law of averages works for you too. If you make the phone call, there's a much better chance of your news being used than if you don't.

So when should you call?

When there are people changes or format changes at your station. It isn't the biggest thing the trade covers. But as long as radio remains a business of constant change, helping people keep up with it is still job one.

This is the kind of news that trades compete to have first. So when there's a change at your station or company, call us or fax us. Don't write. Don't wait four weeks to send out a press release on your new GM until you have a picture taken. We'd rather have it without the picture.

And don't call only when the news involves your own station or company. The best way to develop a rapport with a trade reporter is to become that person's eyes and ears in a distant market. Again, some radio news we can anticipate. Otherwise, we have always depended on the kindness of strangers.

Trades are always looking to share your promotions, especially the unique ones. The things that make your promotions stand out in the market are also the ones that make them interesting to the trades. After the first few days of U.S. mobilization in the Persian Gulf, there were too many stations sending care packages or troop dedications to the Gulf to cover. But the station that sent flea collars to the troops got written up.

We always get more pictures than we can run. We never get enough great ones. Again, there's a misconception that we can only use black and white pictures. They're preferable, but we can work with color also when the contrast is good.

It helps to take your pictures from close enough range that you can see the people involved. Exciting stunts involving morning teams on billboards and the like often make for dull pictures because nobody has a telephoto lens. It also helps to stage your pictures so that they aren't just four people standing around with their arms around each other. (91X San Diego sent in a picture of the Divinyls standing around with airstaff. But it was a better-than-usual picture because the lead singer appeared to be acting out the words to their hit, "I Touch Myself.")

Because they depend on your calls, trade reporters are generally accessible. I had one MD tell me how hard I was to reach. When pressed, she admitted that she had never tried, but that her PD, who had never tried either, had told her I was hard to reach. In retrospect, we decided, he was probably trying to keep her from job hunting. I return 95% of my calls, although I'm sure there is one from somebody in Latvia collecting jazz CDs (or the like) that I haven't gotten back to.

Because trades want to talk to you, it isn't necessary to work through an outside public relations firm. They represent an extra step in the process and as such they're only likely to slow things down and decrease your chances of getting publicity. And because they don't know radio, they're nor likely to be able to answer most questions a trade reporter would have.

The best way to increase your chances of getting publicity is by having something to say, and by being willing to say it. If there's a programming issue that your research has raised, or that you've wanted to discuss with other PDs, there's probably a story there. And you can probably get some publicity for yourself by being willing to turn reporters on to it.

The same goes for guest columns. We're always looking for good ones, but they have to be about something topical. They can't be the same collection of truisms that fill a lot of consultancy newsletters, and it seems, the pages of many other trades. It may be entirely true, for instance, that the way to ratings success is finding out what listeners want and giving it to them. But it's never the whole story. And as a programmer, you probably don't find a lot of enlightenment in somebody else saying that.

So why would you want to tell your trade secrets to the whole world? Why, for that matter, would you want to spend any time calling the press when it has nothing to do with what comes out of the radio?

Well, on the trade secrets issue, remember that your competitor has a pretty good idea of what your station is doing, and even why. That they choose to do something different is because they have different ideas about broadcasting, not because they don't know where your stopsets are or how fast you turn over your powers. Trade profiles are for the people 1,500 miles away who wonder how your station sounds. Or for PDs in other markets wondering what's going wrong with top 40.

As for what benefit you derive from talking to the trades, there are a lot of things we've written in sales kits and resume packages. Good P.R. doesn't determine how your station sounds, but it can help make you money. And occasionally it does attract local attention to your station. I know of more than one local radio and TV columnist who didn't pick up something until a trade printed it. (Besides, unlike a local paper, we'll never attribute your \$10,000 giveaway to "a local radio station.") And if you have an opportunity to make friends, why refuse it on general principle?

Related to all this is the question of how to handle it when a trade calls you and you don't want to be called—something that inevitably happens to a radio station. It may be over

something serious—a contest that went wrong or a grudge match between two stations that somehow went public—or it may be relatively small—i.e., a trade has found out about your new morning show before your old morning team has found out they’re being replaced.

There are few secrets in a business of people who talk for a living. It just isn’t realistic to hire your new morning team on Monday the 2nd and hope that your old morning team doesn’t find out until Friday the 13th when you’re ready to fire them. If I’ve heard about it, the chances are pretty good that somebody else has too.

So when you’re asked about something before you’re ready to talk about it, there are three viable options. One is going public. If something isn’t a secret, it may not make sense to be mysterious about it much longer. (The six people in your market who might try to pre-empt your move to oldies are perfectly capable of doing it from rumor alone.)

The second option is to go off the record. Most trade reporters will respect a confidence because they have to deal with you again in the future. And leveling with us instead of dancing makes it easier for us to do our jobs.

The third choice is to refuse comment. I’d rather you didn’t, but I prefer it to lying—the choice of 15% or so of the people I call. It just takes one lie to destroy your credibility for life. And just like we have to deal with you again, you’ll cross our paths somewhere down the road. And again, it’s better to have friends than not.

You should also know the difference in comprehension level between the trade press and local newspaper people. Trade reporters have covered enough stunts to know that your new p.m. driver wasn’t really an unemployed hod carrier who sat on a billboard reading, “I want to do p.m. drive at Z104” for four days. Or when you’re a George Johns client and your nickname is Classy 100, it usually follows that you’re going to go AC, no matter what the listeners who are being invited on-air to “build their own radio station” are telling you.

Of course, it’s not so good to hoodwink local writers either. They’re already much fonder of NPR and college radio than they are of your vulgar commercial enterprise. They already want you to play more Bulgarian folk music. To deliberately embarrass one of the them by implying that the unemployed hod carrier has taken over your control room is to make sure there’s bad publicity coming when a contest goes wrong, or when a disgruntled ex-employee wants to complain that you hired his replacement two weeks earlier and didn’t give him a chance to say good-bye to the folks that he’s faithfully served for 27 years.

The best way to deal with the trade press (or any press) is to be helpful and direct, the way you would want your newspeople to be treated by their sources. Bring the good stuff to their attention. Deal as forthrightly as possible with the other stuff. And build long-term friendships.

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