

Turned



RADIO WORLD'S MANAGEMENT MAGAZINE

**vol. 4 no. 8
August 1997**

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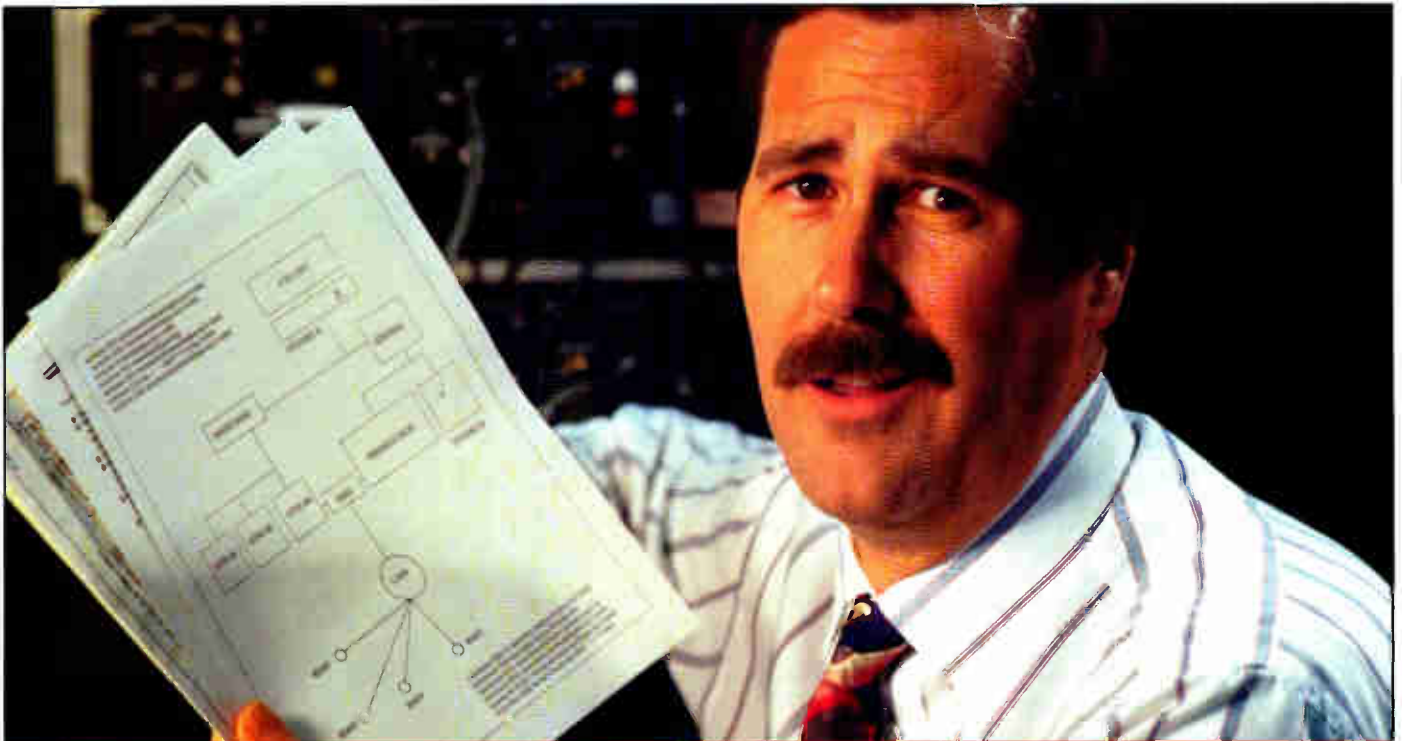
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Ciao — for Now



Scanning the radio dial during long car trips is a skill I have refined. Since I was a kid, I have enjoyed picking up stations in other parts of the country, looking for the right frequency and a clear signal.

The scanning has become more meaningful in the past few years as I've learned about the industry, and as the call letters and the people behind them have taken on a new significance.

Now, for the first time in my life, I have the chance to check out radio stations in every market along Interstate 70 and other roads between Washington, D.C., and Berkeley, Calif.

This month I'm pulling up roots and moving with my *francé* to the West Coast, where a long-term, grad school program awaits him.

I won't be straying far from the industry, however. Once I settle in Northern California, I'll be working for Keith Hatschek & Associates, a public relations company in San Francisco that counts a number of broadcasting companies among its clients. I'm sure I'll see many of you in Las Vegas in April — and, perhaps, in New Orleans in a few short weeks.

Leaving behind a magazine that I've come to consider my "baby" is difficult. It's also hard to say goodbye to such a dedicated, hard-working group of writers. I appreciate them for ensuring that every story is as accurate and up-to-date as possible before it goes to the printer. They, along with Skip, Sandy and Dale — who make the sales calls and provide us with pages in the first place — are the lifeline of the magazine.

And, of course, I'll miss keeping up with the business of radio on a daily basis, as well as the friends I've made during the past couple years while working on the magazine.

In the September issue you'll notice a new face on page four. Alan Haber, whom many of you may recognize from the pages of *Tuned In* as well as those of sister publication *Radio World*, will step in and guide the magazine into its next phase.

Thanks to everyone who has helped the magazine evolve, supporters and critics alike. I'm sure we'll cross paths again while traveling from one place to another, searching for the right frequency and a clear signal.

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World Radio History


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double take

"If you encourage and motivate good people to do better work, things will happen."

— Mel Karmazin, chairman and CEO, CBS Station Group,

See page 25. during the 1997 Radio-Mercury Awards



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World Radio History

WASHINGTON

by
Thomas C. Hall



Dichotomy of D.C. And Its Radio Market

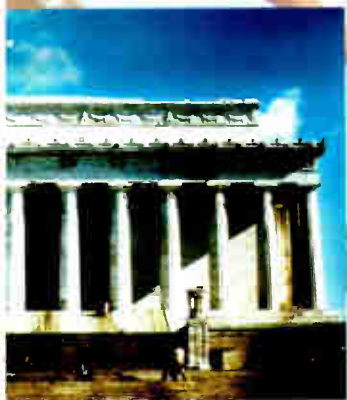
America has a love/hate affair with Washington: The nation's capital is either its proudest monument or worst embarrassment, depending on one's perspective.

The truth? It's both.

And just as insiders know there is a real Washington beyond the monuments, the city's strength as a radio market may surprise you.

Washington may be "only" the eighth-largest radio market in potential listeners, but it ranks right up there with New York for No. 1 in news radio. Moreover, its affluent, educated population puts Washington fourth nationally in radio revenues, a \$220 million market in 1997 — and growing. That's the good news. You also may have heard that Washington is the Murder Capital (it's not, but it's close) of the country, and its residents elected a convicted cocaine user, Marion Barry, as its mayor.

But not all the District of Columbia's wounds are self-inflicted.



In 1995 Congress created a presidentially-appointed Financial Control Board to take charge of Washington's finances and public schools, and it is restructuring the District's flawed relationship with the federal government.

Like any major U.S. city, Washington has lost much of its wealth and tax base to its suburbs. But unlike anywhere else in the nation, all the District's suburbs are in other states — Virginia and Maryland.

When viewed as a region, Washington is indeed an impressive market. And despite its current crises, the District seem to have hit bottom and is already on the rebound.

New, privately-financed stadiums are now nearing completion for both the Washington Redskins football team and the newly-renamed Washington Wizards (no more Bullets) basketball franchise. A huge new convention center is being planned downtown, and both Congress and President Clinton have proposed

significant tax breaks to boost business and job growth in the District.

A renaissance in downtown Washington, combined with its already formidable suburbs, would only enhance the attractiveness of the city's radio market.

Washington is unique, and so is its radio personality. More than anywhere else, D.C. is an FM town.

"Washingtonians spend more time on the FM dial than in any other major market," says Steve Swenson, general manager of WTOP(AM). "We may be the eighth-largest market, but we're 18th in AM listening."

Swenson should know: His all-news WTOP is ranked 16th with a 2.9 share 12+ in the Winter '97 Arbitrons, with only one other AM station, talk outlet WMAL (fourth overall, with a 4.9 share in the same book), above him in the market.

Not good for AM

In part, geography is the cause — the Washington area is fairly flat and coastal, so FM signals carry farther than those of local AM stations, which suffer from low-wattage restrictions and poor

frequency assignments. But the problem is mostly the demographic: Washington has the highest concentration of college graduates (and lawyers) per capita, as well as the highest income level per capita in the country. That ain't good for AM.

"Washington is the lowest-penetration AM market in the country," says Bennett Zier, general manager of resurgent WGAY(FM) and not-so-resurgent WRC(AM), the area's fifth- and 23rd-ranked stations, respectively.

Talk radio, which has become synonymous with the AM band, has difficulty bridging the Potomac on AM, with the exception of WMAL, which features nationally-syndicated talk icons Dr. Laura Schlessinger and Rush Limbaugh, along with spots by local financial guru Ric Edelman.

"It just shows that people will tune in if it's good — it doesn't matter where it's produced," says Jim Gallant, WMAL operations director.

On the FM side, Washington talk radio goes to extremes, from National Public Radio to the notorious. Where else could a former Watergate burglar, G. Gordon Liddy, parlay his notoriety into a successful talk show, as Liddy has on WJFK-FM? By contrast, even controversial Iran-Contra rebel Oliver North can't breathe life into ailing WRC(AM).

"You're really talking about entertainment — it's not the same as talk on NPR," Gallant says.

The NPR 550-station empire is based in Washington, and its local FM affiliates include flagship producer WETA(FM), a traditional blend of classical/folk music and news. NPR's other local star, American University station WAMU(FM), somehow pulls off a quirky blend of bluegrass in the afternoons, with hard-hitting Inside-the-Beltway punditry in the brunch bracket. Its popular, back-to-back "The Diane Rehm Show" and "The Derek McGinty Show" are now syndicated nationally.

"The mix of programming we have really should not work — any radio consultant would tell you it's crazy," says WAMU General Manager Kim Hodgson, who also happens to be chair of the NPR board. "But all I know is, we continue to be the No. 3 or No. 4 public radio station in the country."

Ironically, the District's downward spiral has been a market-maker for WAMU, which excels at getting local politicians in its studio for live grilling by its hosts and callers.

"Don't take this the wrong way, but

Washington Radio Market Overview

Station	Freq.	Format	1996 Est. Rev. in \$ Mil.	Owner	Arbitron 12+ Winter '97
WPGC-FM	95.5	CHR/Urban	19.0	CBS Corp.	6.5
WHUR-FM	96.3	Urban/AC	8.2	Howard University Board	5.6
WKYS(FM)	93.9	Urban/AC	9.5	Radio One Inc.	5.1
WMAL(AM)	630	News/Talk	12.0	ABC Radio Inc.	4.9
WBIG-FM	100.3	Oldies	9.8	Chancellor Media Corp.	4.5
WGAY(FM)	99.5	Soft AC	6.5	Chancellor Media Corp.	4.5
WMZQ-FM	98.7	Country	16.0	Chancellor Media Corp.	4.5
WWZZ(FM)	104.1	CHR	1.45	Bonneville International Corp.	4.5
WMMJ(FM)	102.3	Urban AC	11.0	Radio One Inc.	4.2
WGMS-FM	103.5	Classical	8.8	Chancellor Media Corp.	4.0
WRQX(FM)	107.3	Hot AC	14.0	ABC Radio Inc.	3.9
WJZW(FM)	105.9	Smooth Jazz	8.0	ABC Radio Inc.	3.8
WASH(FM)	97.1	Soft Rock	12.2	Chancellor Media Corp.	3.8
WJFK-FM	106.7	Talk	17.0	CBS Corp.	3.4
WWDC-FM	101.1	AOR	10.0	Capitol Broadcasting Co.	3.0
WTOP(AM)	1500	News	14.0	Chancellor Media Corp.	2.9
WHFS(FM)	99.1	Alternative	9.5	CBS Corp.	2.3
WARW(FM)	94.7	Classic Rock	6.5	CBS Corp.	2.0
WYCB(AM)	1340	Gospel	1.0	G. Cabell Williams	1.4
WPGC(AM)	1580	Gospel	0.8	CBS Corp.	1.2
WFRE(FM)	99.9	Country	2.3	James L. Gibbons	1.1
WOL(AM)	1450	News/Talk	3.4	Radio One Inc.	1.1
WTEM(AM)	570	Sports/Talk	4.8	Chancellor Media Corp.	1.1
WAVA(FM)	105.1	Christian Talk	2.0	Salem Communications Corp.	0.9
WILC(AM)	900	Spanish	0.5	iLC Corp.	0.8
WMDO(AM)	1540	Spanish	0.5	Los Cerezos Broadcasting Corp.	0.8
WWRC(AM)	980	Talk	4.0	Chancellor Media Corp.	0.8



Stations are ranked in order of Arbitron Winter 1997 12+ ratings. Information provided by BIA Research through its MasterAccess Radio Analyzer Database software.

the District's problems have been a gold mine for us: We made a conscious decision to cover it closely, and it has paid off for us," Hodgson says.

While most public radio stations pull in the kind of market share that would get the general manager fired in commercial radio, WETA and WAMU each boast about a 3 share, enough to cause commercial competitors headaches.

For example, WTOP(AM) — "All news, all the time" — has been airing in-house spots lampooning WAMU for having blue-collar bluegrass followed by "All Things Considered" for white-collar listeners — or stuffed shirts.

"Washington is a public-radio town, and the audience has grown locally over the last several years," says Craig Oliver, president of the Radio Research Consortium, a nonprofit group that conducts market research for NPR stations nationally. "It's a huge presence here."

Washington's radio skyline is shifting rapidly.

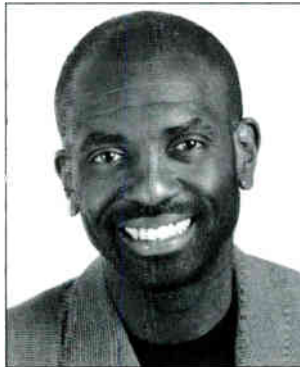
The \$60 million sale of jazz radio station WJZW(FM), which was completed in early July, set in motion a sweeping consolidation of ownership in the Washington radio market.

Sorting it out

When the dust settles later this year on a swirl of other deals still pending, just four companies — Chancellor Broadcasting, CBS Corp., ABC Radio and Radio One — will own 18 of the



Nationally-syndicated talkers Diane Rehm (top), and Derek McGinty of WAMU(FM)



area's 23 highest-rated commercial radio stations, or about 75 percent the Washington market.

Following last year's partial deregulation of the industry, some stations have changed hands twice, and the feeding frenzy isn't over.

"It's been a nightmare sorting all this out," says Charlie Ochs, general manager of WJZW and three other stations — WMZQ-FM and AM stations WBZS and WZHF.

All four stations were owned by Viacom until earlier this year, when Viacom was bought by Dallas-based Evergreen Media, which is merging with Chancellor Broadcasting to form the nation's largest radio conglomerate, with more than 100 stations.

WJZW was bought by ABC Radio from Chancellor, which was forced by federal regulators to divest three of its Washington-area stations to comply with ownership limits.

That still leaves Chancellor with eight stations in the Washington market, the most allowed by law, and the shake-up is likely to trigger format changes as well. Station managers are adjusting to a brave new world where some former competitors are now their corporate siblings, and vice-versa.

"You can wind up programming against yourself — it's a real fight to maintain your branding," says Jim Farley, program director for WTOP, a Chancellor-owned station. "Everyone's

continued on page 36 ■

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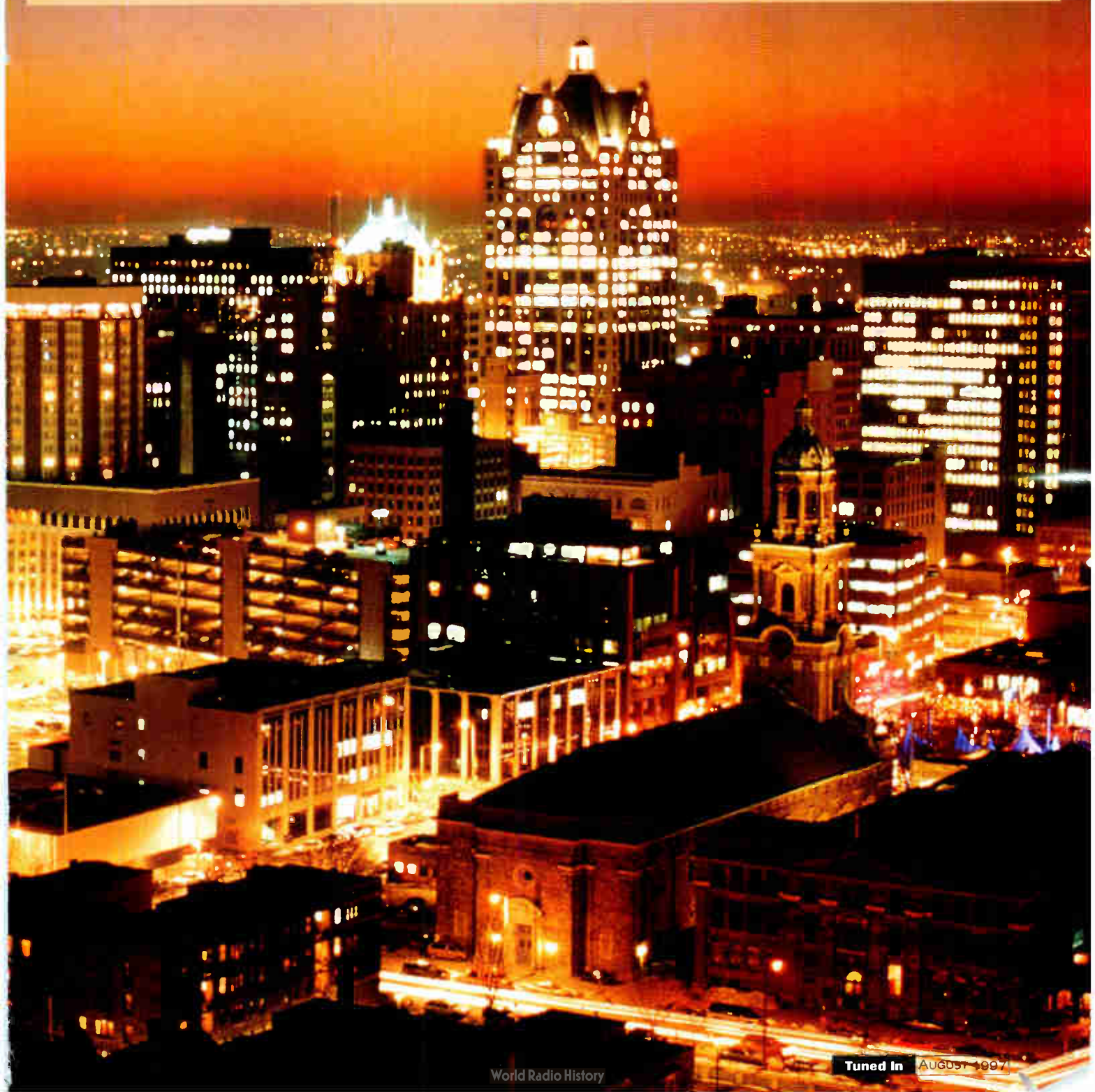
Stable Market Feeling Fizz of Change

by Rich Kirchen



After the long upper Midwest winter and chilly spring, summer in Milwaukee is a glorious, usually sunny, time. Church, ethnic and music festivals of all kinds fill the air with sweet sounds and the smell of charcoal.

Lake Michigan even gets warm enough to swim in — by August. Milwaukeeans love their fests and their Great Lake. They also pay close attention to their radio stations while at the beach, in the park or driving along Interstate 94.



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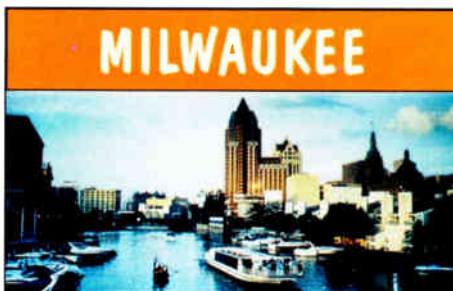
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Because of Milwaukee's slow but steady economic and population growth, and low population turnover, folks here develop long-running relationships with their radio stations. Listeners in the 29th-ranked Arbitron market remember which station played what music and at which frequency. And they don't usually jump right over to the latest programming fad.

"Radio is a primary source of entertainment, unlike in L.A. or New York," says Fred Jacobs of Jacobs Media, a Detroit consulting firm that has worked with Milwaukee stations. "In a market like Milwaukee, radio counts and people count on radio. So when you do good stuff, you get noticed."

Milwaukee radio executives and some outside consultants characterize Milwaukee as a typically conservative Midwestern market. Listeners like their radio solid, not flashy.

"You're not going to see the latest fashions in Milwaukee first," says Jack

Lee, CEO of the Milwaukee Area Radio Stations trade group and a 30-year market veteran. "It has not been a leader in a lot of areas, radio included."

If a station owner wants to launch a new format in Milwaukee, it's likely to take longer than in other markets to catch on with listeners, Lee says. But once listeners get into the habit of tuning into a station, they're hooked, he says.

"Once you have a loyalty, you got 'em," Lee adds. "That's bad news if you want to launch something new."

Despite a reputation for stodginess, Milwaukee has seen some fairly successful launches in recent years.

Rush Limbaugh and talk radio have carved out their audience; a modern rock station astounded naysayers by knocking off the No. 2 album rocker; smooth jazz has performed better than many expected; a modern adult contemporary station launched in June is off to a good start.

More along the lines of a city that clings to the past, one of the success stories here is a classic hits station, WKLH(FM), the perennial ratings leader in Arbitron's survey of listeners 25-54. WKLH, owned by Saga Communications of Grosse Pointe Farms, Mich., ranked fourth in revenue with an estimated \$7.3 million in 1996, according to BIA Research. WKLH led the market with a 10.4 share of listeners 25-54 in the four-

Milwaukee Radio Market Overview

Station	Freq.	Format	1996 Est. Rev. in \$ Mil.	Owner	Arbitron 12+ Winter '97
WTMJ(AM)	620	News/Talk/Sports	10.8	Journal Broadcast Group Inc.	9.3
WMIL(FM)	106.1	Country	8.8	Clear Channel Communications	7.6
WKKV-FM	100.7	CHR/Rhythmic	2.2	Clear Channel Communications	7.4
WLZR-FM	102.9	AOR	4.4	Saga Communications LP	6.9
WKLH(FM)	96.5	Classic Rock	7.3	Saga Communications LP	6.8
WISN(AM)	1130	Talk	2.8	SFX Broadcasting Inc.	5.7
WOKY(AM)	920	Adult Standards	2.2	Clear Channel Communications	5.6
WKTI(FM)	94.5	Hot AC	8.1	Journal Broadcast Group Inc.	5.6
WMYX(FM)	99.1	AC	2.8	News Corp.	5.4
WZTR(FM)	95.7	Oldies	2.5	Shockley Communications Corp.	4.0
WLTQ(FM)	97.3	Lite AC	2.5	SFX Broadcasting Inc.	3.9
WLUM-FM	102.1	Modern Rock	1.7	All Pro Broadcasting	3.8
WJZI(FM)	93.3	NAC	1.3	Shamrock Communications Inc.	2.7
WAMG(FM)	103.7	Rhythmic AC	2.1	News Corp.	2.2
WFMR(FM)	98.3	Classical	1.2	Saga Communications LP	1.8
WMCS(AM)	1290	Black AC	0.65	Saga Communications LP	1.8
WEZY(FM)	92.0	Easy	0.9	All Pro Broadcasting	1.6
WNOV(AM)	860	Urban AC	0.65	Courier Communications	1.5
WFM(FM)	106.9	Modern AC	—	Saga Communications LP	1.2
WTKM(FM)	104.9	Polka	0.4	Scott A. Lopas	1.0

— No information available



Stations are ranked in order of Arbitron Winter 1997 12+ ratings. Information provided by BIA Research through its MasterAccess Radio Analyzer Database software.

book average ending with Winter 1997.

WKLH has succeeded for more than a decade, despite predictions from competitors that listeners would tire of its library of classic album-oriented and rock-based hits.

"WKLH worked because it played into the hands of Milwaukeeans — nostalgia," says Tom Joerres, president of Saga's five-station Milwaukee radio group. "We played the classics — '60s and '70s, and now the '70s and '80s. It was a perfect fit."

Confounding the experts is the underperformance of oldies station WZTR(FM) in a city that is the mythical home of Laverne and Shirley and the Happy Days gang. That condition may change: Clear Channel Communications bought the standalone station from a local owner in early July.

Another sign of a market that savors consistency is the continued strong showing of news/talk/sports station WTMJ(AM), the leader in 12+ ratings with a 9.3 share in the Winter '97 Arbitrons and revenue champ at \$10.8 million, according to BIA Research. WTMJ has been a dominant player here since the heyday of AM. The station, and hot adult contemporary WKTI(FM), are owned by Journal Communications of Milwaukee, the owner of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel newspaper, an NBC television affiliate here, and two television and nine radio stations in other markets.

The heyday of AM never entirely left the city. Milwaukee ranked first on the list of the top 50 markets with 30.5 percent of 12+ listeners tuned to the AM band in Fall 1996, according to a survey of Arbitron numbers by Eastman Radio Research, a division of the Katz Radio Group.

Milwaukee radio executives attribute this phenomenon to the presence of two strong AM stations, WTMJ and WISN, the home of Limbaugh, Imus and local PM drive talk king Mark Belling. A third AM, nostalgia WOKY, attracts the older crowd — to the tune of \$2.2 million in '96, according to BIA.

"You've got three viable AM stations and most markets don't," says Chuck DuCoty, vice president and general manager of WISN and WLTQ(FM).

Another plus for AM in Milwaukee is that two of the three black-oriented stations — WMCS and WNOV — are on the AM band.

The top-performing stations in the market, besides the talkers and classic hits WKLH, are country WMIL(FM), which ranks second 12+, sixth 25-54

and second in revenue; active rock WLZR-FM, ranking fourth 12+, a surprising second 25-54 and fifth in revenue; hot AC WKTI(FM), third 25-54, seventh 12+ and third in revenue; "bright" AC WMYX(FM), eighth 12+, fourth 25-54 and sixth in revenue; and light AC WLTQ, ranking 10th 12+, 10th 25-54 and seventh in revenue.

Many observers, viewing the success of country WMIL, believe Milwaukee could handle a second country outlet, but no owner has been willing to risk taking on the station, which has been owned by Clear Channel since early this year. On the other hand, consultant Mike McVay of Cleveland recently published an article suggesting Milwaukee was ripe for a contemporary hits station to challenge WKTI, which straddles the CHR and AC playlists.

The consensus on a candidate for a format change is Heritage Media-owned WAMG(FM), which switched from soft AC to rhythmic AC a year ago and is struggling. General Manager Carey Merz acknowledges that the station is "not where we would like it to be" but says Heritage has no plans to change formats again. The station is likely to be sold in News Corp.'s acquisition of Heritage.

All the leading Milwaukee stations have long-running morning teams that challengers have been unable to dislodge for more than a decade. WTMJ has morning anchor Robb Edwards; at WKTI, it's Bob Reitman and Gene Mueller; at WKLH, Dave Luczak and Carole Caine; and at WLZR, Bob Madden and Brian Nelson.

Milwaukee's station ownership was stable as well, until consolidation belatedly but furiously came to town.

"The first wave of consolidation was in the top 20 markets and Milwaukee kind of got passed by," DuCoty says. "But it didn't take long to catch up."

In fact, as recently as late 1996, it looked like Milwaukee might avoid an all-out consolidation assault.

Until then, only one AM/FM combo had been sold by a local owner to a series of new owners, the last of which was Clear Channel. But since January, several deals have been consummated.

SFX Broadcasting struck a deal to buy Hearst radio stations, including the two in Milwaukee; Heritage and its three Milwaukee stations were acquired by News Corp. and await new owners; Saga bought two Class A FMs for \$5 million to expand its Milwaukee stable; Clear Channel bought the standalone oldies FM for \$14.5 million; and two other standalone FMs formed an

Milwaukee Financial Snapshot

Market Rank: 29
Revenue Rank: 31
Number of FMs: 17
Number of AMs: 14

Revenue 1993: \$53.0 mil.
Revenue 1994: \$58.9 mil.
Revenue 1995: \$62.9 mil.
Revenue 1996: \$64.5 mil.
Revenue 1997: \$67.0 mil. est.

Revenue Growth
'90-'95: 7.4%
'96-'00: 5.0%

Local Revenue: 85%
National Revenue: 15%

1995 Population: 1,641,000
Per Capita Income: \$15,757
Median Income: \$36,036
Average Household Income: \$42,121

Source: 

"alliance" (see sidebar on page 16).

The only stations not in play are the two owned by Journal Communications, which, in turn, is constrained by cross-ownership rules from acquiring more stations here.

No one believes the dust has settled on consolidation here, but expect Milwaukee to end up with three or four group owners. So far, none of the ownership changes have resulted in format shifts.

"Stations have not been blown up, moved around, artificially changed," Jacobs says. He attributes that to relatively stable, long-term management remaining in place at most stations.

Journal Broadcast Group welcomes the competition and believes it will be able to keep pace with the radio groups from out of town, says Carl Gardner, executive vice president of radio.

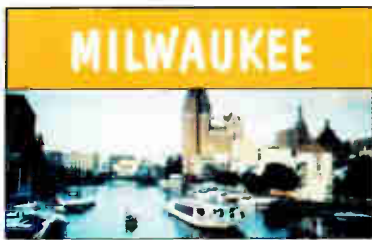
"I think that, frankly, having weak operators as competitors has tended to drag the market down," Gardner says.

The Milwaukee market has been headed upward despite the preponderance of single-station operators prior to this year.

Annual revenue, not including sports, stands at about \$60 million, according to Lee.

That's a significant increase from the early 1990s when revenue was running in the \$40 million to \$45 million range.

The factors behind the ongoing revenue growth include the local



economy's bounce-back from the early 1990s recession and the general health of the Milwaukee and national economies. Two other factors boosted radio revenue in 1994 and 1995:

The market's two daily newspapers merged, and a strong CBS television affiliate switched to Fox. So, not only were some strong competitors to radio in flux, they also decided to spend heavily to advertise their changes.

So far this year (Jan.-May), radio revenue is up an estimated 7.7 percent, with the bulk of the increase coming from national advertising.

Milwaukee's economy has benefited by diversifying from the old stalwarts like beer (Pabst Brewing Co. closed down, Miller Brewing Co. cut back) and automotive (American Motors Corp. went the way of the its godawful Pacer), according to Lee.

"It's a good, solid, steady growth market," says Bill Lynett, owner of smooth jazz WJZI(FM). "It's not a southwest or a southeast market, but it's a good growth market."



Rich Kirchen has covered Milwaukee radio for six years for the *Business Journal* of Milwaukee and has listened to Milwaukee radio for 38 years. He does a Friday morning-drive triple-A show on non-commercial station WMSE(FM).

Joining Forces for Survival

Willie Davis and Bill Lynett were the last of the independents in Milwaukee radio, so they decided they needed to ally themselves to survive.

In what they believe is the first-of-its-kind business arrangement in the country, the two longtime Milwaukee radio station owners announced at the end of June that they had formed a limited liability corporation called Milwaukee Radio Alliance to operate their Milwaukee properties.

Nearly every major station in Milwaukee that wasn't already part of a group had been snapped up in the consolidation wave that first hit this market in May 1996. That left Davis' All Pro Broadcasting of Los Angeles, which has owned WLUM-FM since 1979 and also owns WMCS(AM), and Lynett, who oversees Shamrock Communications of Scranton, Pa., which has owned WJZI(FM) — formerly WQFM(FM) — since 1973.

Aware of the impending impact of deregulation, they began discussions about two years ago on some type of combination, Lynett says. They initiated a joint national sales staff six months ago and escalated discussions on a more extensive sharing of their resources. Neither was interested in selling their Milwaukee properties, despite the opportunity to cash in big by selling. Both have turned down numerous

offers to sell their Milwaukee FMs.

"It was two guys who really feel an allegiance to Milwaukee versus lining our pockets and walking out," says Lynett, who stubbornly clung to an album rock format at the long-fading WQFM before switching to smooth jazz WJZI in March 1996.

Ironically, Davis-owned modern rock WLUM helped deliver the final blows to WQFM.

Davis has a long association with the Milwaukee market. He was an All-Pro defensive end for Vince Lombardi's 1960s Green Bay Packers, serves on corporate boards in the city and is married to a Milwaukee native. Those connections are important to Davis, who says he wants to stay in Milwaukee radio.

"Bill Lynett and Willie Davis are in Milwaukee today because we really care and want to be part of the Milwaukee radio scene," Davis says. "The skew to bigness takes away all the independents."

Davis-led All Pro also owns KCKC(AM) and KCXX(FM) in San Bernardino, Calif. Shamrock Communications, part of the Lynett family Times-Shamrock group, owns nine radio stations in addition to WJZI.

Perhaps the most unusual element of this partnership is it is literally 50-50. Lynett took the title of CEO at Davis' urging and will oversee Milwaukee

General Manager Dan Maneia, who had been acting general manager of WLUM.

But on the big decisions, Lynett and Davis will get one vote each as the only two directors. In case of a tie vote, they've agreed to hire a mediator. And what if they can't agree on which mediator to hire?

"We laugh, because if we can't agree, then we'll have a tough time picking an arbitrator," Davis acknowledges.

Under the new alliance, all three stations will be managed by one general manager and will share local sales direction.

WLUM and WJZI will be co-located in WLUM's new offices and studios in suburban Wauwatosa. WMCS, a community-oriented station aimed at black adults, will maintain its offices and studios in Milwaukee's central city.

The three stations will possess a greater "critical mass" that should make them more appealing to advertisers, Davis says.

The stations' ad time will be sold both individually and as a package, he says. In 1996, WLUM earned about \$1.7 million and WJZI earned about \$1.3 million, according to BIA.

Lynett says the duo has no interest in selling now after months of negotiating the LLC.

"After all the b.s. we went through, it's not worth the extra couple dollars to just to sell right away," Lynett says.

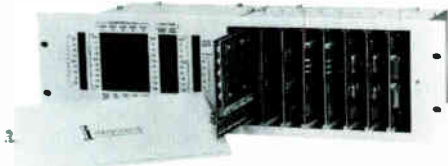
— Rich Kirchen

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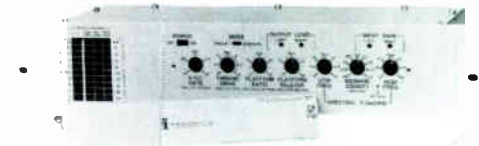


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All the News That's Custom Fit

News Services Cater to Individual Stations

by Doug Hyde

Like virtually every other facet of the industry, the landscape of radio news is changing. Not so long ago, news broadcasts relied mostly on the spewing of the Associated Press wire — a reporter in Miami, for example, would have to sift through reams of paper detailing ski conditions at 75 different ski resorts in Montana to come up with three or four minutes of newsworthy material.

Today, news services are becoming much more efficient, adopting new technologies and creating new services to better serve their client stations.

Managing the bottom line at radio stations in the post-telecom era has changed the way Associated Press has marketed and developed its news services, according to Christine Gabor, director of marketing of broadcast services for AP.

“Our job has become even more challenging. We now have to communicate the depth and breadth of AP’s service offerings through multiple corporate, regional and station levels, as each level could be involved in the decision-making process,” Gabor says. She adds that AP has redesigned its products to better fit the needs of radio station clusters.

“We know that news and information can add significant value to a station’s programming. In fact, power/conversion ratios are typically high for established stations that air news consistently. We are in the process of improving our products and offering new programming options to better reflect the radio industry’s increasing focus on costs,” Gabor says.

AP currently offers an array of services designed to cater to radio stations that target specific demographics. The depth of the news services ranges from “AP DriveTime,” an AM drive service for music-intensive stations; to “AP HeadLines” for full-service stations; “AP NewsPower,” a full-service wire for news-intensive stations and “AP News-Talk” for large market news/talk and all-news stations.

Gabor says that there is currently a high demand among radio operators for news wire services and user-friendly newsroom software, as well as radio-ready news features. “Overall,” she says, “we see an increasing demand for services requiring little or no production.”

Providing wire service content that is ready for over-the-air broadcast has also been a priority of United Press

International, according to Howard Dicus, general manager of UPI. “We try to make it easier for stations that don’t have a backup news staff. We give every story a two-sentence lead, and the maximum length of our story is 300 words. It must be written in such a way that it is ready to be read over the air,” Dicus says.

Dicus says that UPI made these changes to better serve the time-pressed listener. “There is a lot less interest in long-form news. Everyone either wants it to fill a couple of minutes or one hour, so there’s no middle ground.”

Mike Blackman, news director of Curtis Media outlet WPTF(AM) in Raleigh, N.C., adds, “We don’t take long for our newscasts. Today’s news is down and dirty, get in quick and get out,” he says.

Darryl Brown, senior VP of affiliate marketing for ABC Radio Networks, says that the cornerstone of ABC news services is the ability to provide timely, ready-to-air actualities and live clips. “We will lead off with the top story and have a reporter live from the event. We will have live updates from the Oklahoma City trial or any major crisis,” Brown says.

As one may expect, covering hard news stories of both a national and regional nature is a high priority to wire service providers and news operations in general. “The most important component of information for stations, regardless of market segment, is state and local news, weather and sports, followed closely by breaking news and national news,” Gabor says of a study that was commissioned by AP last year.

Blackman adds, “We (WPTF) use AP to cover North Carolina. AP has reporters in Charlotte or in the mountains, while

we have our own staff to concentrate on Raleigh, Durham and Chapel Hill.”

In addition, radio stations have expressed a greater interest in utilizing wire services not only as a source of news stories, but also as a source of entertainment news and show prep for a station’s air personalities. UPI has responded to this demand by creating a “PowerPrep 3.0” service designed specifically for this use. “PowerPrep 3.0 includes information, trivia and humor that fits in with a particular format,” Dicus says.

Additionally, ABC Radio Networks offers morning prep services tailored to country, urban, rock, hot AC and CHR formats that utilize audio actualities. “We use anything in entertainment that fits in with the lifestyle. Entertainment is becoming a major focus for stations that are trying to get younger [demographics],” according to Brown.

In addition to wire services, AP and UPI also have devised long-form news programming. AP All News Radio is a 24-hour live news and information format service that is updated on the hour. “We have developed this service so that stations in any size market can easily air it as much or as little as they like,” Gabor said. UPI Radio has developed the UPI Morning Show, a dual-anchored AM newscast that Dicus calls “a cross between the Today Show and Morning Edition. There is some hard news, but it is conversational.”

Like AP and UPI, which each offer long-form news programming, ABC Radio Networks has created several services for radio stations. Brown notes that ABC offers stations flexibility. “We provide newscasts on the hour from five minutes for information-based stations, to two minutes for music-based stations, and we try to tailor the newscasts for different demos,” he says.

While CBS Radio News offers hourly news updates and news features such as the Osgood File, CBS also offers the Spectrum Network, a newscast targeted toward young adults.

“On the Spectrum Network, we talk more about issues and events that are of interest to younger demos,” says Harvey Nagler, general manager of CBS News, Radio. Like ABC, CBS also offers its affiliates services for news feeds, actualities and live call-in interviews with correspondents around the globe.

"We are able to supply live call-ins and bring listeners the news from where it happens. We will send additional correspondents to an event just to do one-on-one interviews. It's a popular facet of the industry and extremely important to network affiliates," Nagler says.

Additionally, CBS also offers the Morning Resource, which offers show prep material delivered on-line or via fax.

Public radio networks offer an alternative to the quick, fervent style of contemporary commercial radio news with more in-depth news reporting.

"It's a more relaxed delivery. We're not quite as rapid-fire as commercial news stations. We are able to devote more

time to explore the issues in depth," says Dale Spear, director of programming for Public Radio International (PRI). "We cover a lot of the same events, but we will spend one hour on a single topic. The commercial stations cover the events, and we cover the whys."

PRI utilizes an array of long-form news programs, with the help of AP news wire services, producers and stringers around the world.

National Public Radio, with 570 affiliates across the country, concentrates on domestic and national news stories gathered from AP and UPI news sources, as well as reporters from around the world.

"Stations look to us for national and

international news," says Kathy Scott, director of communications for NPR. "Our affiliates range from the largest markets to small rural towns, so we leave the regional news to the stations," Scott says.

In addition to news programs such as "Morning Edition" and "All Things Considered," NPR also features talk programs such as "Fresh Air," an interview show with what Scott calls "a strong arts and literature presence," and "Talk of the Nation," a call-in show on which listeners are encouraged to discuss the news events of the day.

Dicus suggests that news services will need to focus on news that is directly relevant to listeners if they are to be successful in the future. "I'm not saying that we shouldn't cover Bosnia," Dicus says, "but issues such as consumer affairs, medical news and lifestyle news are of direct relevance to the listener. People driving to work will be interested in the roads and the environment — those are issues that directly affect them. In the future news directors will need to be more in touch."

Doug Hyde, a free-lance writer based in Tampa, Fla., is a regular contributor to Tuned In. He can be reached at (813) 225-0535, or via e-mail at radioguy22@aol.com

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by Vincent M. Ditingo



Cultivating New Business Dollars from Newspapers

The advice sounds obvious, but it is often taken for granted or overlooked. The key to sustaining revenue growth in a fiercely-competitive commercial media industry, which now extends to many of the telecommunication markets, has been and continues to be new business development.

For radio owners, especially those with evolving local station groups, that translates into capturing more new ad dollars from the medium's prime competitor: newspapers.

By demonstrating to the traditional as well as the more recent newspaper advertiser the demographic targeting, reach and frequency of radio, along with new economic efficiencies, radio can finally secure larger portions of newspaper ad budgets, which account for more than \$13 billion in sales annually. In fact, these primary newspaper advertisers, many of which still fall under the automotive category, are in position to become a major source of future profits for radio as the medium moves beyond the crossroads in new business development.

Actually, radio's latest consolidation wave is happening at an opportune time for targeting existing newspaper business. Published reports using data from the Audit Bureau of Circulations show a decline in weekday circulation for many major market newspapers. (Newspapers in many of the nation's small and midsize markets have been losing adult readers for years.) Coinciding with this current drop in readership is an average rise in newspaper advertisement rates.

Another advantage of today's radio salespeople over newspaper salespeople is the perception throughout the advertising community that radio has a younger demographic base than newspapers, thereby attracting the many advertisers seeking an 18- to 34-year-old audience.

Proof in the pudding

If there is any remaining resistance among front-line radio sellers as to the reasons for cultivating newspaper advertisers, station managers need only to point to the results of the Arbitron/Edison Media Research study conducted for RAB earlier this year.

Even though newspaper advertisers believe that radio is the best medium for reaching people repeatedly, they single out the newspaper as the one medium that helps consumers decide where to shop. They also see newspapers as more cost-effective than both radio and broadcast TV.

The findings of the study are not a complete revelation for radio executives who have been targeting newspaper and other print budgets for years. Indeed, 80 percent of those station general managers and general sales managers questioned for the RAB study listed taking business away from newspapers as "important."

When approaching manufacturers, retailers and service/supply companies that routinely purchase newspaper

space, radio account executives must illustrate first the ad dollar advantages and the benefit of additional impressions in creating a campaign that combines newspaper with radio. In this way, newspaper advertisers can see better cost-efficiencies for building market shares. Many stations may soon discover that an all-radio campaign from a traditional newspaper advertiser will follow.

By drawing a comparison between radio and newspaper sales data, radio can paint a compelling picture for an advertiser.

Such work is also being done on a national level. For example, Interep launched an unwired network program late last year designed specifically to develop new business from newspaper ad dollars. Called CityNets, the program calculates for newspaper advertisers the significant gains in impressions as well as reach and frequency when either a portion of their newspaper budgets for target markets is placed on radio stations or the ad budget is allocated solely to radio.

Trends in Business Applications, Marketing Systems and Strategic Planning



Convenience Strategies at the Forefront of Marketing Plans

If you notice even the most common occurrences in your daily lives, you will see that our increasingly automated society is moving closer toward the futuristic age of the TV series "The Jetsons" much more quickly than anticipated.

For instance, major oil companies are experimenting with systems at the gas station in which a robotic arm automatically extends from a gas pump to fill up your tank. And it has been reported that Shell is looking into the feasibility of home delivery — filling up your car while it sits in the driveway.

What this suggests to forward-thinking marketers is implementing consumer convenience strategies that address the immediacy of today's businesses. The operative words here are convenience and immediacy.

It is no secret that the successful media salesperson of the late 1990s will live and die by immediacy, which has always been radio's inherent edge over other media. The reason? Many of today's consumers react quickly to media, whether it be channel or station surfing or purchasing an advertised product as expeditiously as possible.

Developing RBDS and on-line applications for radio will eventually take consumer convenience strategies to the next level. As one model has suggested, listeners may one day store text of advertisements — transmitted digitally from the station — to either a specially-equipped radio receiver or a computer disk. Listeners may then use this information immediately to receive a discount on the advertised products or services.



Vincent M. Ditingo is a business writer, media consultant and educator, as well as president of Ditingo Media Enterprises, a New York City-based strategic communications and training company. Contact him at (212) 308-8810.

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READER SERVICE 19



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Elaine Merritt

General Sales Manager/WLBC

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READER SERVICE 39

Lights! Radio Creative! Action!

Special Feature

The 1997 Radio-Mercury Awards



Top to bottom: CBS' Mel Karmazin; One Hundred Grand winners Winchell and Kuisel; Dick Clark Fellowship winner Napoli; Paul Harvey: The Fabulous Sports Babe, winner Howe and Tom Joyner.

It was your basic star-studded affair: hankies peeking out of tuxedo pockets and the nervous, clutched hands of nearly 1,100 radio broadcasters, independent radio production professionals and advertising agency creative types.

Creativity was in the spotlight on this grand night, but there were no spotlights in evidence. There were no red carpets, no glitterati. Nevertheless, the night was bright and majestic, with a jubilant Broadway-styled musical comedy production rolling out between awards. This was a night of creative splendor: the 1997 Radio-Mercury Awards.

Better radio creative

Funded by 60 radio broadcasting concerns as a way of fostering better radio advertising creativity, the Radio-Mercury Awards have been around since the Radio Creative Fund, which runs the awards, was conceived in 1991 by Jim Thompson, who at the time was president of Westinghouse Broadcasting's radio division. The first Radio-Mercury Awards ceremony was held in 1992.

The Fund's executive committee, comprised of some of the top talents in broadcasting, is co-chaired by Thompson, co-chief executive officer of Craven Thompson Communications, and Gary Fries, president and CEO of the Radio Advertising Bureau.

The RAB assists in the administration, and is a large financial

by Alan Haber

1997 Radio-Mercury Award Winners

The One Hundred Grand Radio-Mercury Award
Savant Productions, Los Angeles
Ortho Antstop Fire Ant Killer
"Instant Death"

Music & Sound Design
Gold Award (Tie) (\$10,000)
Martin Williams, Minneapolis
Target Stores
"Hit The Target"

supporter, of the Radio-Mercury Awards. Fries says he is "very impressed with the commercials that won."

Awareness of radio creativity, he notes, "and the willingness of creative directors to utilize it and focus on it rather than assigning it to the junior copywriter in the creative shop at the agency is growing tremendously."

Progress is being made, but there's room to grow. "Do I think it's there yet?" Fries wonders. "No. I think we've come a long way down the road, but I think we have a lot further to go to really raise radio creativity to the level that it's going to be on an equal playing field with all other creativity."

A record 982 commercials were entered in this year's competition versus 815 last year, according to Gordon Hastings, president and CEO of the Radio Creative Fund and former president of the Katz Radio Group.

The regally-attired assemblage witnessed winners collecting \$225,000 in cash prizes. The winners were picked by 50 judges (40 in the preliminary round and 10 in the final round) in five categories: humor, nonhumor, radio station-produced, music and sound design, and Hispanic. An award for best public service announcement was also given.

Prizes

The top prize, The One Hundred Grand Radio-Mercury Award, found its way into the welcome arms of husband-and-wife team April Winchell and Mick Kuisel, copywriter and creative director, respectively, of "Instant Death," produced by Savant Productions of Los Angeles for Ortho Antstop Fire Ant Killer. The funny, successful spot, which affirms that "killing fire ants shouldn't

be a full-time job, even if it is pretty fun," suggests that listeners "kick fire ant butt."

"Instant Death" has been anything but a morbid experience for the duo. In late April, the commercial drew acclaim by winning the \$50,000 Grandy, the top prize at the Advertising Club of New York's International Andy Awards.

Winchell was thrilled to have hit big with the spot for the second time. "In this day and



Radio legend "Cousin Bruce" works the crowd (top), and Dr. Joy Browne does a little psychoanalysis.



age, to be discovered on the radio is ironic and wonderful," she said. "And we love radio. It's a wonderful thing."

Radio is also a wonderful thing for the winners of the gold \$20,000 humor award for the Little Caesars "Family Dinner" commercial, produced by Cliff Freeman and Partners. The spot, which suggests that jacking up the heat to create a top-notch pepperoni pizza is the wrong way to go, was copywritten by Ian Reichenthal and Wayne Best.

The evening's master of ceremonies, the ever-jubilant Cousin Bruce Morrow, kept the show moving as broadcasting's brightest stars graced center stage, from event chairman and CBS Station Group Chairman and CEO Mel Karmazin to ABC Radio's Paul Harvey, the recipient of the first Lifetime Achievement Award for his contributions to radio as an advertising medium.

Harvey, who received his award from CBS' Charles Osgood, provided the evening's most profound and warmest moments. After telling the audience that his wife Angel thanked them "for this chance to get dressed up and to stay up long beyond her husband's bedtime," he proclaimed, "I love advertising. Accentuating what's positive!"

The packed house hung onto Harvey's every word. "To those of you who commit yourself to a client because you personally believe absolutely in your client's product, thank you. I know what that sometimes costs. But the reward is enhanced professionalism for us all."

Harvey tipped his hat to his staying power. "I remember Angel's father — in his nineties — had coal black hair and was riding jumping horses," he said. "Energetic, vigorous and virile. Yet, each birthday the family insisted on a reunion dinner which they always whispered might be 'Dad Cooper's farewell dinner.' Well, he ended up having outlived just about everybody at that table. And this is fair warning to you pitch-men warming up in the bullpen: Longevity runs in the family."

WOR(AM) personality Dr. Joy Browne, who did a bit of psychoanalyzing of actors on-stage, presented one of the humor awards. Radio funnyman Tom Joyner, who shared the stage with the Fabulous Sports Babe (both are ABC Radio Networks personalities), gave a nod to the creative people in the room.

"Yeah, the creative people," Joyner said, with a laugh. "And they're giving away money. Big bucks." The creative people "are my new best friends in here

Here are some of the award winners. All finalists and winning commercials can be heard via RealAudio at the RAB's RadioLink Web site (<http://www.rab.com>).

Humor

Gold Award (\$20,000)

Cliff Freeman & Partners, New York
Little Caesars
"Family Dinner"

Radio Station-Produced

Gold Award (\$20,000)
WHUD(FM), Peekskill, N.Y.
The Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival
"Your Life Is Not..."

PSA

Gold Award
WUSL(FM), Philadelphia
"Wadia Jamal"
Stop the Violence/Increase the Peace

Music & Sound Design

Gold Award (Tie) (\$10,000)
World Wide Wadio, Hollywood
Twentieth Television-Gordon Elliot Show
"Hidden Message/Moving"

Nonhumor

Gold Award (\$20,000)
Radioland, Portland, Ore.
Full Sail Brewing
"Don't Drink Our IPA"

Hispanic

Gold Award (\$20,000)
Badillo Nazca S&S, San Juan, Puerto Rico
San Juan Star
"Perrita"

now, you know," he noted, with another laugh. "Creative people have never been so good to me than when they have money."

Eye on radio

One of the special moments of the evening came when soon-to-be high school junior Sara Napoli, from Medford Lakes, N.J., won the 1997 Dick Clark Fellowship for her "Drunk Driving" PSA, which she wrote, produced and voiced.

Administered by the National Association of College Broadcasters at Brown University in Providence, R.I., The Dick Clark Fellowship aims to stimulate and motivate young people to write for commercial radio and pursue radio writing as a career.

Napoli, a student at Shawnee High School, has her eye on radio communications as a livelihood and looks up to Dick Clark and Charles Osgood. She had heard of a girl from a nearby town

who was hit by a drunk driver while walking home from a party. "I really wanted to portray how it is a preventable crime," said Napoli. "People don't realize that."

But they do, sometimes, realize other things. Tonight, for example, people likely realized that those finalists who didn't win on this night were winners anyway simply by being in the company of those who did.

"If you encourage and motivate good people to do better work, things will happen," event chairman Karmazin observed during his remarks.

Things are happening. "The Mercury Awards have not only spurred a great new visibility and interest in doing great radio creative," said Hastings, "but it has also driven dramatically the interest in radio overall...as an exciting in-your-face, front-of-mind advertising medium."

Master of Ceremonies Morrow said he felt radio in the room.

"I'm so proud of this community tonight," he said. "They responded, they listened. They became the listeners, and I think that's wonderful. The talent was in the room, the energy was in the room and the most important thing — radio emotion was in the room. Just goes to prove it's getting bigger and better all the time."

To be placed on the mailing list to receive an entry form for next year's Radio-Mercury Awards, contact the Radio-Mercury Awards, 261 Madison Avenue, 23rd Floor, New York, NY 10016. Include your name, title, company and address, along with your telephone and fax numbers.

Alan Haber writes on the Internet and radio personalities for Tuned In. Look for him next month on the editorial page ("Time Spent Listening") of the magazine. He may be reached via e-mail at zoogang@earthlink.net

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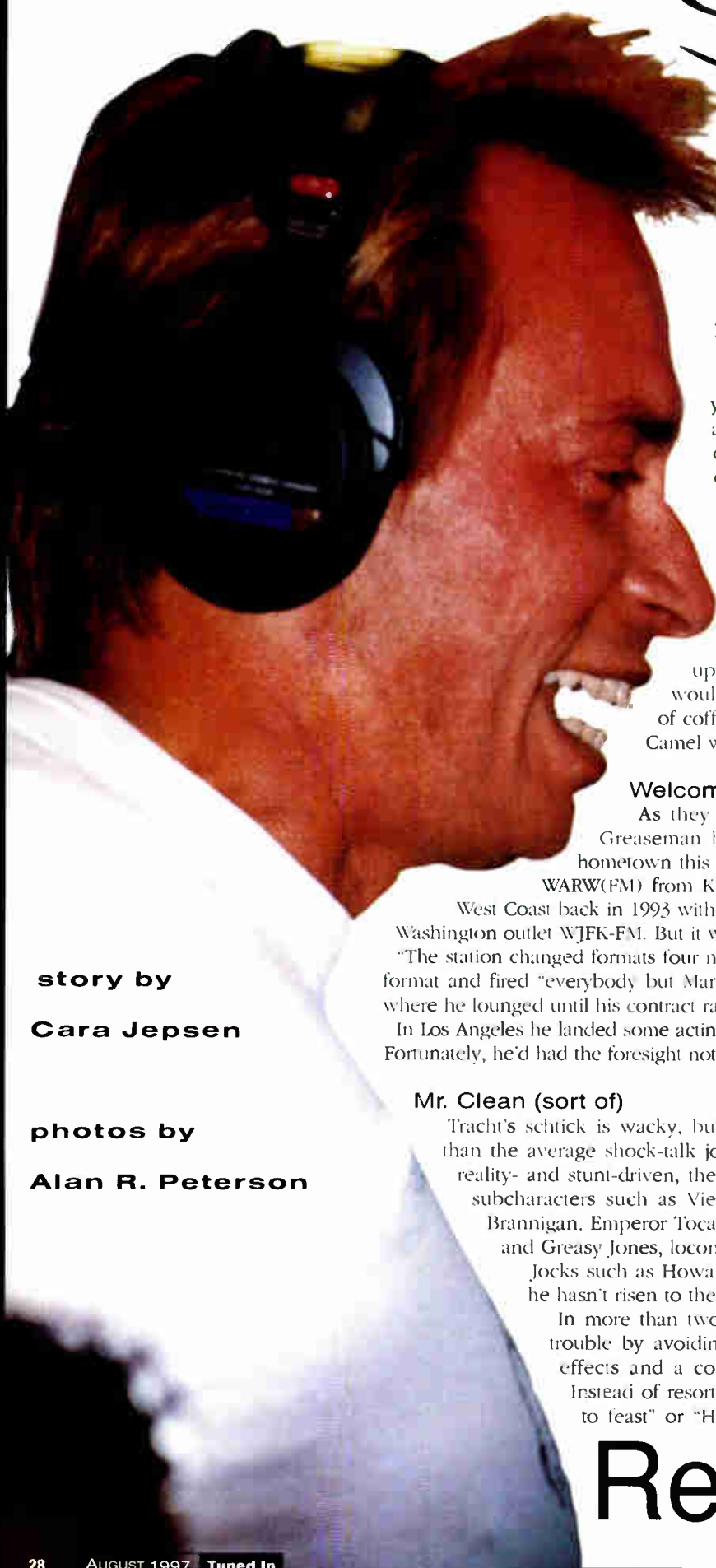
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SCHWEI



It's just past dawn in Washington. The Greaseman, aka Doug Tracht, is dialing a listener named Terry. A sleepy woman with a raspy voice answers the phone. They exchange pleasantries, and the Greaseman immediately picks up on her smoky tone.

"Light a Camel, I know you need one," the deep-voiced Tracht says in a rich, cartoonish voice. "Shake a leg over the edge of the bed — what is it, a Newport Extra Light?"

"Benson & Hedges," she corrects.

"Well, shake one from a crumpled pack. I know you've got the deck sitting there next to the clock radio, and one of those disposable \$1.19 lighters. In the old days Bogie used to keep English Ovals in a thin gold case, and he'd have a lighter that cost \$3,000 that he picked up in Morocco with diamond studs in it. He'd open that case with a flick of a wrist."

Greasman launches into a five-minute rant about the lost art of smoking. The off-the-cuff editorial is full of hilarious image delivered in a fast and furious tone.

Terry, who hasn't said more than two words, lights up. "Ah, that's good. The only thing that'd make it better would be if you had a little naked boy bringing you a cup of coffee... Let me borrow that Benson & Hedges and light a Camel with the tip of it. There we go."

Welcome back

As they enjoy a fictional smoke, the woman welcomes the Greaseman back to Washington. Tracht returned to his adopted hometown this spring, moving his syndicated Westwood One show to WARW(FM) from KLOS(FM) in Los Angeles. He'd made the move to the West Coast back in 1993 with high hopes after owning morning drive for a decade at Washington outlet WJFK-FM. But it wasn't all sunshine and palm trees.

"The station changed formats four months into it," he says. They adopted a music-intensive format and fired "everybody but Mark and Brian and me. They put me in late-night exile," where he lounged until his contract ran out this spring.

In Los Angeles he landed some acting gigs playing bad guys on a couple of NBC TV movies. Fortunately, he'd had the foresight not to give up his D.C. house while he was gone.

Mr. Clean (sort of)

Tracht's schtick is wacky, but his Nino Greasemanelli character is more inventive than the average shock-talk jock. The tone of the show is playful, and rather than reality- and stunt-driven, the content is more like an aural comic book filled with subcharacters such as Vietnam supersoldier Sergeant Fury, Lawman Big Dick Brannigan, Emperor Tocafacius, Medical Man, Carlos the International Terrorist and Greasy Jones, locomotive engineer.

Jocks such as Howard Stern have baited Tracht on the air in the past, but he hasn't risen to the occasion. Indeed, his show is basically clean.

In more than two decades of radio, Tracht has deftly sidestepped FCC trouble by avoiding potentially explosive topics and substituting sound effects and a colorful made-up vocabulary for controversial words.

Instead of resorting to conventional terms, he'll say that "Daddy began to feast" or "He couldn't get Little Elvis to put on any weight." The

Returns to Wa

story by

Cara Jepsen

photos by

Alan R. Peterson

FEET!

The Greaseman

colorful list of euphemisms, which also includes skewering, ta-tas, ten-hut, unto-ward gamma-hootchery, that feted fusilage, the slap-slap-slap and bosco-lingus, allows Tracht to safely describe just about every part and function of the human body.

"English is a great language," he says. "It should be used, and no one's using it the way they should. People are stumbling around and grunting and saying 'hey' instead of taking advantage of it."

To hear him tell it, the attention to language and detail is what brought him back to Washington. "You have to pay attention to a show like mine. It's not background noise. The subtleties and twists of language are more for the morning, when there's nothing cooking but the radio and you're stumbling out of bed and nobody's talking but me. It's the same with driving — everyone is sitting in their cars with their jaws set and looking out the window. It's no good at night, when you're cooking dinner, the TV's screaming and the kids are running around."

The Bronx native's interest in radio was piqued in his childhood, when he'd tune into WABC(AM) jocks such as Dan Ingram. He learned the craft at Ithaca College in the late 1960s and got his alias while at WTKO(AM), where all the other jocks threw around the word "cooking" with abandon. In an attempt to one-up his colleagues, Tracht declared he was cooking with grease. The other DJs noticed, and began referring to him as The Greaseman. The name stuck, although the character has changed over the years.

"The show has changed dramatically since the early Greaseman days of the 1970s, or it would get stale," he says. "There was extreme affectation when I first started. Now the character sounds more like I sound. As you become more comfortable with yourself, you let more out. I've been spilling my guts lately."

"The character and reality are getting so closely intertwined that no one can tell where the other character leaves off and reality begins. Sometimes I tell a story and the producer and assistant are standing behind me and going, 'Did that really happen?'"

Tracht is a voracious reader whose choice in books would probably be applauded by The Greaseman. "I read the New York Times best-sellers, all the crap that's out nowadays — not Tolstoy and all that. I read Dean Koontz and all the latest Seven Deadly Sins, the icepick-to-the-back-of-the-head type of stuff."

He's been putting some of that literary knowledge to work. This fall, Simon & Schuster will release his first book, "And They Ask Me Why I Drink."

"It's a delightful romp through the life of a man who needs a checkup from the neck up," Tracht says in his Greaseman voice. "People will read that and they'll say, 'The guy's nuts. Grab 'em!'"

Before that happens, Tracht hopes to pull more affiliates on board. He's been



slowly rebuilding his list of cities since his return in May, picking up Jacksonville, Fla., and Roanoke, Va.

"As we get more affiliates, people from other parts of the country have been calling," he says. "It adds more energy to the show, so life is schweeit!"

As for the cities that aren't with the program: "We should call the local yuckapucks and say, 'What's going on? Why don't you have the Grease? Just make a call to Westwood One and bingo, bango, jing-a-jong jango, there you go.'"

Cara Jepsen is a Chicago-based freelance writer who writes a media column for the Illinois Entertainer and is a regular contributor to the Chicago Reader. Her last story for Tuned In was the Chicago Market Watch.

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JUGGLING ACT

by
**Frank
Montero**

FCC Main Studio Rule Unrealistic — and Impractical — for Broadcasters Today

For many years the FCC has enforced a rule requiring broadcasters to maintain a “main studio” for each station that is licensed. While the rule seems fairly straightforward and logical (after all, you need a main studio to run a radio station), the fact is that many do not really understand what it requires.

As a result, the rule has generated considerable confusion and expense for some broadcasters, and many feel that it no longer serves any purpose in this day and age.

The trick lies in understanding exactly how the FCC defines a “main studio.” What many broadcasters consider to be their main studio does not qualify under the FCC rules. And when you explain to many broadcasters exactly what the FCC rule

requires, they frequently look at you like you're crazy.

Define ‘main studio’

First, let's start by getting straight exactly what is and what is not an FCC “main studio.” Every station must maintain an office within its principal community coverage area that it designates as its “main studio.” This studio has to be able to originate pro-

gramming (but it need not be the place from which programming actually originates). It must be linked to the station transmitter by phone line or microwave (even though that link may never be used).

It needs to be staffed by at least two people (even though they may have virtually nothing to do and are nowhere near the station sales and programming departments). And it must have a telephone line and a copy of the station's license (even though the sales office, business office and the place where all community contacts originate may be

located many miles away). In essence, a main studio need be neither the main office of the station nor the station's actual studio.

To highlight the confusion, let's



consider a station that is operating under an LMA (or time brokerage agreement). Usually, the programmer has his or her own studio from which the programming and sales operations originate. That studio is where all the action happens. But, make no mistake, it is not the "main studio." In fact, the programmer's studio might be located many miles away or may be located with the programmer's own station in another city. The owner of the station, however, even under the LMA, must still maintain his or her official main studio.

If the programmer's studio is located within the principal community contour of the station, the owner could locate his main studio with that of the programmer. But if the programmer's studio is located elsewhere, the owner has to keep a completely separate location in compliance with the rule. In fact, the owner has to pay rent for the main studio, maintain sufficient equipment there to originate programming, keep a phone line open and pay the salary of two employees to stay there. Maintaining a main studio entails many expenses, even though there is nothing really happening there.

Typical situation

Now let's consider a situation more typical in these days of ownership consolidation, where owners may have as many as seven or eight stations scattered around a metropolitan area. Logically, such group owners frequently operate their several stations out of one central location in which the sales staff are located and all the studios operate. However, if the stations are scattered in such a way that the community contours of the stations do not overlap, the owner may be forced to maintain several separate main studios (in addition to the real operational studio), even though there is nothing going on at those locations. That means several lease payments, several phone lines and at least two additional employees for each additional main studio.

Finally — perhaps one of the most confusing and annoying aspects of the rule — the FCC still requires stations to maintain their public files within the community of license of each station. That is, within the city limits of the community. Therefore, if your main studio is located outside of town but legally within the contour of the station's signal, you are forced to keep

your public file at some location in town away from the studio, like the public library or city hall, because the FCC won't let you keep it at your studio, even though your studio is properly located.

Petitioners have argued that the main studio rule no longer serves its purpose and results in an unnecessary drain on station resources.

There are many who believe that it is time for these rules to be updated. The main studio rule was adopted before there were LMAs and at a time when radio broadcasters were only allowed to own one AM and one FM in a market. In fact, the original rule required a

station's main studio to be in the station's city of license, which, at the time, corresponded nicely with the requirement for the public file.

The world of radio has changed dramatically since then, and many broadcasters believe that it is time for the rule to be rewritten.

Recently, in response to a petition filed by a group of broadcasters, the FCC has issued a notice of proposed rulemaking that, if adopted, would change both the main studio and public file rules in ways that reflect the realities of the broadcasting industry today.

Arguments

In the original petition filed roughly a year ago, the petitioners argued that the main studio rule no longer serves its purpose and results in an unnecessary drain on station resources by forcing broadcasters to maintain multiple-leased premises that are unused.

A group of small and minority broadcasters echoed the sentiment. The minority groups, in fact, presented one

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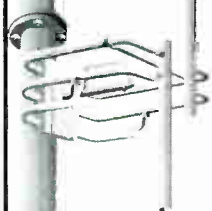
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READER SERVICE 60

► continued from page 31

of the more interesting arguments. They claimed that, in this age of consolidation, station prices in major cities have increased dramatically. This has effectively priced out small or minority broadcasters who are bidding for these stations.

As a result, many are bidding on cheaper stations licensed to communities outside major urban areas, but with signals that reach all or part of the city. When the station is purchased, the new owner sets up shop in the city where his audience is. However, the main studio rule still requires the broadcaster to keep an unused main studio back near

The FCC has proposed relaxing the main studio rule by replacing the community contour standard "with a new standard that gives licensees flexibility..."

the station's city of license. This results in a cash drain that essentially offsets the bargain of purchasing that remotely located station.

The petitioners proposed that the FCC change the rule to allow broadcasters to maintain a main studio that is reasonably accessible to the residents of the station's community of license. They also encouraged the FCC to liberalize its waiver policies for the rule, which are currently some of the most stringent.

Relaxing the rules

The FCC's proposed rule change essentially tracks the petitioners' suggested changes. For the main studio, the FCC has proposed relaxing the main studio rule by replacing the community contour standard "with a new standard that gives licensees flexibility yet continues to ensure that the main studio is reasonably accessible to a station's community of license."

As to how the new "reasonable accessibility" standard should be measured, the FCC has requested comments on three proposals. One would be to require that the main studio be located within the principal community contour

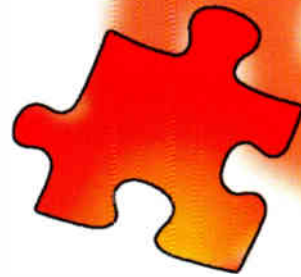
of any station licensed to the community in question.

Another proposal would be to use a "straight mileage" standard so as to require stations to maintain their main studio within an established radius from the center of the city of license.

Still another proposal would allow a broadcaster with multiple stations to colocate the main studios for all its stations at one location, provided that it is within the combined community contours for those stations and provided that the studio is within a given distance of the community center.

For public files, the proposed rule would introduce the long-overdue change allowing broadcasters to keep their file at the station's main studio.

The public is invited to file comments or letters with the FCC in support of or against the proposed changes and is invited to share their thoughts and ideas on the various proposals. Comments must be filed by August 8, and reply comments (those addressing issues raised in the first comments)



must be filed by September 8.

If you have any questions about this proceeding or would like to know more about how to file comments, you can contact Victoria McCauley of the FCC's Policy and Rules Division at (202) 418-2130, or consult your communications counsel.

Frank Montero is a communications attorney and partner with the Washington law firm Fisher Wayland Cooper Leader and Zaragoza, L.L.P. Contact him at (202) 775-5662; fax: (202) 296-6518, or via e-mail: fmontero@fwclz.com

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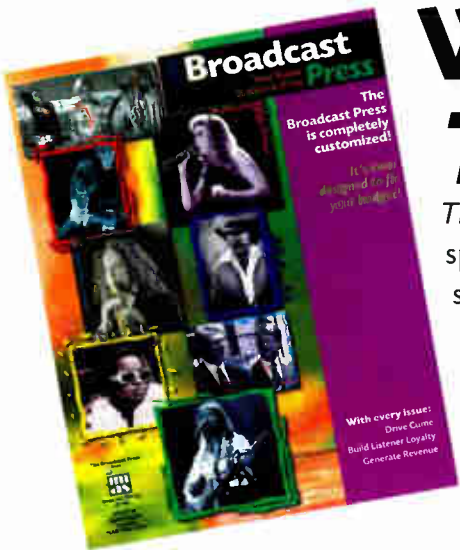
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► continued from page 11

feeling their way," he says. "We're waiting to see if we're going to cooperate and be friends, or beat each other's brains out."

No one knows that better than Steve Streit, program director for both WGAY(FM) and WASH(FM), which are also Chancellor properties. Thanks to a recent change to a soft AC format at WGAY, its numbers have risen dramatically — at the expense of soft rock WASH. The Winter '97 Arbitrons show WGAY with a 4.5 share 12+, up from 2.9 last fall. That's good enough for fifth in the Washington market, while WASH slipped to 12th overall, its market share sliding from 4.9 to 3.8 in the same period.

"It's definitely a fine dance," Streit says. "We do overlap, but we're comfortable in that overlap."

Chancellor is keeping country music station WMZQ-FM but selling business-

who doesn't," Ochs says. "I just spent four years consolidating and streamlining staffs, and now I have to pull it all apart again."

Concentration of ownership is intensifying because now the major players in the industry can own four times as many stations in each market as they could.

"Scott Ginsburg (CEO of Chancellor) has made it very clear he wants to focus on the top 10 markets," says Steve Swenson, general manager at WTOP. "We're after superduopolies."

Consolidation is already having an effect on Washington's radio advertising practices. Radio only draws about 7 percent of all advertising dollars, which has helped keep prices competitive, but concentration of ownership is driving up prices, experts say.

"Washington has always been a strong radio market, but I'm concerned that the interests of advertisers could get lost in



Morning team (l-r) Tim Brant, Frank Harden and Andy Parks of WMAL(AM)

trols the young male demographic in this market," Cover-Lewis says. Among Washington-area men in the age 18-34 bracket, CBS owns four of the top eight stations, except for locally-owned WWDC-FM, the top-rated station in that niche.

WTOP's Swenson downplays the effect of consolidation on advertising, however. "Planners are still trying to reach a certain cost per point, or a target audience," he says. "What we see are 'spectrum buys,' where a certain advertiser wants placement in all country formats — then, it doesn't matter who owns the station."

Rather than producing blandness or sameness, consolidation is providing more choices, not fewer, as larger broadcast companies attempt to have signals in as many sectors as possible.

"It tends to produce exclusive formats, but more programming diversity," Swenson says.

CBS Corp. owns five stations in the Washington market, including No. 1-ranked WPGC-FM, a top 40/urban station broadcasting from Greenbelt, Md. It also owns WJFK-FM, a Fairfax, Va.,-

Washington has always been a strong radio market, but I'm concerned that the interests of advertisers could get lost in the stampede for dollars on Wall Street.

— Deborah Cover-Lewis

formatted WBZS and health/fitness station WZHF to Douglas Broadcasting of Palo Alto, Calif.

Country hasn't been cool to WMZQ of late, with the station slipping from a virtual tie for first to fifth in the Winter '97 Arbitrons.

The sales, mergers and swaps are forcing station managers to juggle personnel as well.

"It's so strange deciding who stays and

the stampede for dollars on Wall Street," says Deborah Cover-Lewis, president of Media Vision, a Bethesda consulting firm.

"I call it the gun, the duffel bag and the ski-mask syndrome — I'm concerned that the large companies will prohibit a lot of smaller advertisers from using radio, by pricing them out of the market," Cover-Lewis says.

For example, "CBS pretty much con-

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based talk/shout station that carries not only Liddy, but syndicated schlock-jock Howard Stern. Stern's show is No. 1 in morning drive among twenty- and thirtysomethings, running neck-and-neck with the WMAL trio of Tim Brant, Frank Harden and Andy Parks.

In what would normally be a head-to-head battle, classic rock station WARW(FM) recruited Doug "The Greaseman" Tracht back from Los Angeles in May to take on Stern in the same early-morning slot. But CBS can't lose: It owns both WJFK and WARW.

The competition may be a family affair, but it shows that Washington is a hot radio market: In 1993, both WJZW and low-power WBZS sold for \$20 million, while the jazz station alone brought three times that much in the deal that closed last month.

In addition to WJZW, ABC Radio owns WRQX (Mix 107), a hot smooth jazz station whose market share is rising, and the top-rated AM station, WMAL.

Radio One, the largest African-American owned radio group, relocated its corporate headquarters in June from downtown Washington to Prince George's County, just outside the District. Its WKYS(FM), oldies WMMJ(FM) and talk outlet WOL(AM)

largely target an African-American audience. It also operates two stations in nearby Baltimore.

The above-average ethnic ratio in Washington, which is 27 percent black and 7 percent Hispanic, is reflected atop the Arbitrons.

WHUR-FM, owned by Howard University, holds the No. 2 spot in the latest Arbitrons by targeting the age 35-54 African-American cohort, a group with powerful political and economic clout in Washington.

It is closely followed by Radio One-owned WKYS, an urban/rap thumper at No. 3 overall.

CBS-owned and No. 1-rated WPGC (with a 6.5 share) succeeds by appealing to both black and white twenty-boppers, and its main competition is not the more ethnic-oriented stations, but WWZZ-FM (Z 104), a CHR station owned by Bonneville.

Dan Mason, president of CBS Radio, says that despite the growing size of the corporate entities that own the stations, individual station managers are encouraged to develop their station's identities.

"I think the 'corporate culture' concept is overplayed — that sort of thing gets worked out real quick," Mason says.

Washington Financial Snapshot

Market Rank: 8
Revenue Rank: 6
Number of FMs: 20
Number of AMs: 24

Revenue 1993: \$167.0 mil.
Revenue 1994: \$193.4 mil.
Revenue 1995: \$206.8 mil.
Revenue 1996: \$211.7 mil.
Revenue 1997: \$220.2 mil. est.

Revenue Growth
'90-'95: 5.8%
'96-'00: 5.0%

Local Revenue: 70%
National Revenue: 30%

1995 Population: 4,194,800
Per Capita Income: \$20,722
Median Income: \$47,825
Average Household Income: \$55,973

Source: 

Thomas C. Hall covers media and politics for the Washington Business Journal. He is a former folk-music show host for KWAX(FM) in Eugene, Ore.

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WCIK(FM) began broadcasting from the small town of Bath, N.Y., 14 years ago.

"What started out as tiny studio and two production rooms has grown to a network of eight full-power FM stations and four translators," says Chief Engineer John Travis, who has been responsible for designing and upgrading the facilities.



All music and programming is stored on a Broadcast Electronics Audiovault. The set-up consists of nine workstations and 12 9-GB hard drives. The system is mirrored with six drives on each side, allowing engineers to have walk-away time and still sound live.

Control of on-air content is possible from any computer using PC Anywhere.

Audio is distributed to each of the eight stations via a Moseley DSP 6000 digital microwave system. The network encompasses 10 links, each capable of carrying four channels of audio.

"We have a large studio, a full newsroom and five production rooms," says Travis.

Radio Systems consoles are used throughout and range in size from the RS-6 to the RS-18. Each room also contains the Audiovault, a Radio Systems-Sony DAT machine, a Telos One hybrid, and an Electro-Voice RE 20 mic, as well as a Sony CDP-261 CD player and an AIWA ADF-810 cassette deck. Two of the production rooms utilize SAW (software audio workshop) for creative editing. "We are ready for the next century," adds Travis. "We don't know where the growth of this network will take us, but we are grateful for the opportunity to fill our airwaves with good news."

Facility Spotlight offers a look at innovative radio facilities. Share your cutting edge with us. Contact Linda Sultan at (703) 998-7600. x141.



Today WCIK(FM) and its seven sister stations — WCIH(FM), WCII(FM), WCID(FM), WCOT(FM), WCOG(FM), WCIY(FM) and WCOU(FM) — can be heard from Jamestown to Binghamton on Route 17 and on the New York State Thruway from Buffalo to Syracuse.

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