

# RADIO FOCUS



Volume 18, No. 182

*A Publication of Programming and Marketing Trends/Issues*

April 2008

---

---

## Are You Memorable?

---

---

Take the time to listen to your station for one hour straight over the next couple of days.

After you've listened ask yourself: What was memorable in that hour? What, if anything, created emotion?

We're not asking about the music, we're asking about everything but the music. Most music touches on some emotion, which is a reason your listener wants to hear those songs.

Every format, every target (young, old, male, female) has the ability to be memorable in their own way.

Our industry is taking some pretty harsh criticism regarding our product. If there is one thing we are guilty of, it's that we are not taking enough time to communicate passion and emotion that creates creative and memorable radio stations. But this can be done if we just prioritize it.

It's one of the reasons we feel that satellite radio's music channels have not seen tremendous growth. Their music channels are not compelling, they are not imaginative. Musically diverse, yes; creative, no!

The good news is that well produced entertaining radio stations can and are impacting markets more quickly, especially when the competitive landscape is unimaginative.

Simply look at some of the Adult Hits stations that have debuted. Yes music was unique, but they were entertaining, fun to listen to, creative. They were/are memorable.

Creating compelling radio takes time and it takes hard work and it takes a team effort with a very well focused action plan.

❖ Don't just create a product promo with a recorded open, three hooks and a recorded close...

– Do find/create entertaining drops, listener comments, station imaging to insert between the hooks.

– Do have multiple opens and closes to the promos, ideally the voice work customized for the dayparts.

❖ Stop all the canned listener testimonials supplied from your production company ("You guys are the best" "I Love Your Station") Work at getting localized custom listener drops!

Go out and record listeners from your area (that will have your local accents). Get listeners to give specific comments about your station, your music, your morning show!

❖ Do experiment with new innovative ways to image stations. Consider song stamps that provide a listener benefit (How many times have you heard "Tell me the names of the songs you play") Even if it's only effective for a year, if it's right...do it!

❖ Do coach your voice talent on a regular basis. It's amazing what a little attention paid to the station voice means to his or her inflection in your sweepers and promos.

❖ Do coach your air talent to be memorable by stressing the importance of every talk break on the station. Reduce "chatter that doesn't matter" and focus on engaging the listener and making talk breaks informative, fun, entertaining, talking about what people care about so they "remember" the talent and the radio station.

- ❖ Do introduce new music, talk about it knowledgeably, help the listener make new music discoveries or help them discover new things about artists and music they know.
- ❖ Do find a creative writer in your area and pay them to write one to two pages of sweepers each month to act as thought starters for you and the staff.

Step back and listen for that one hour. Are you memorable? If not, you're vulnerable!




---



---

## Digital Audio Platforms

---



---

Some interesting findings in the most recent Arbitron/Edison research web presentation on Digital Audio Platforms...

- 82% of all Americans 12+ have Internet access, with an ever-increasing majority on broadband. Within a few years, dial-up will be under 5% of all access.
- 46% of all Americans 12+ have listened to on-line radio, both terrestrial radio streams and Internet-only stations.
- 13% listened to on-line radio within the past week...that's 33 million people.
- On-line radio listening skews 25-54, evenly split male/female...weekdays 10A-3P is by far the heaviest on-line listening period.
- 53% of all on-line radio listeners also watch video on-line.
- 18% have listened to an audio podcast (up from 13% in 2007), 9% in the past month...that's 23 million people.
- 40% of all weekly on-line radio listeners have a personal profile page on one the social networks (MySpace, Facebook, etc.)
- For teens, the Internet has now overtaken radio for music discovery.

The entire presentation is available for download at [www.edisonresearch.com](http://www.edisonresearch.com).




---



---

## Hiring Interns

---



---

Many stations are looking to start an intern program over the summer or fall and in the Business Week Small Business magazine, they ran a helpful article by Alison Damast on "How to Hire/Recruit an Intern" that every department head who oversees the intern process should read.

- 1) *Figure out what the interns will do. Choose either a long-term project that has been neglected or daily tasks that will help your business run better.*
- 2) *Consider paying interns. Summer interns (but not those who work during the year) who work for credit may have to pay fees to their college. Make sure unpaid interns qualify as "trainees" according to the U.S. Labor Department.*
- 3) *Start your recruiting efforts with career services at a local university. They'll help drum up candidates. Then look for campus clubs related to your specialty and ask to be a guest speaker.*
- 4) *To draw out students during the interviews, ask about classes, clubs and the activities they excel in. Ask about interesting school projects, life challenges, how they handle stress and any regrets they might have.*
- 5) *On the first day, set goals and introduce the interns around. Otherwise, "the bar doesn't get set from the start and the students get lost," says Richard Bottner, President of InternBridge, a recruiting and consulting firm.*
- 6) *Assign a manager and "best buddy" to each intern and ask them to have weekly meetings for updates and feedback. Advice, encouragement, and constructive criticism are all important, says Bottner. "The only way students know they learned something and were successful is from feedback."*
- 7) *After the internship, check in with the intern quarterly and offer to advise them on their career. Write a letter of recommendation and encourage them to keep in touch.*
- 8) *If you're not able to hire star interns right away, try offering a part-time job during the school year – maybe four or eight hours a week. Ask you best interns for recommendations of other students who might work out well at your company.*

---



---

## Drops/Effects @ Soundboard.com

---



---

There is a great site for your production departments to obtain drops from movies, TV shows, basic sound effects, drops for the different holidays...Over 100,000 unique drops to utilize and achieve a more compelling production value to your station...it's [www.soundboard.com](http://www.soundboard.com).




---



---

## The Ideal Prospect

---



---

In the March newsletter, Richard Mecham talked about sales being a "process". This month he'll address the first step in the process, identifying the "ideal prospect"...

When you're sitting at your desk trying to determine what new business clients to call on, I think it is helpful to ask yourself a series of questions before making that phone call. First, would the prospect be able to spend a significant amount of money if they were motivated to do so? Have you heard them on radio, seen them on television, on billboards, in the newspaper or magazines, on the web, is there a potential co-op source, etc.?

Third, is there a decent match between your station's audience and the potential audience your prospect is trying to reach?

Fourth, if you were successful in converting this prospect could it lead to other business opportunities for you? Could it be a source of referrals and recommendations?

And last but not least, is there something in your "gut" that tells you that this prospect should be on your radio station? Is there something inside of you that says you really have a lot to offer this prospect and that you really want to help?

If the answer to most of these questions is yes, **Make The Call!** You have just significantly improved the odds of getting the appointment and you are well on your way to closing that first sale!




---



---

## Tomorrow Has Come

---



---

Roy H. Williams, The Wizard of Ads, writes... When *The Cluetrain Manifesto* was published in 1999, it smacked of silly futurism, like Maxwell Smart's shoe-phone and Dick Tracey's TV-wristwatch.

Both of which are now possible.

**"If there is any one secret of success, it lies in the ability to get the other person's point of view and see things from that person's angle as well as from your own."  
- Henry Ford**

Second, can you gain access to the key decision-makers in the organization? I read an article on [Radio Sales Today](#) that talked about the "Bully with the Juice". The Bully is the financial decision-maker who will ultimately approve the purchase. It is the person that controls the company's purse strings, the company's equivalent of Emperor Caesar. Only he can give the thumbs up or down on any decision to spend the company's money. If you're not talking to the Bully, you're wasting your time.

Likewise, the societal shift predicted by *The Cluetrain* is already happening. Can you feel it?

Here's a look at a few of the **95 Theses** of *The Cluetrain Manifesto*. These statements were laughed at when they first appeared 8 years ago, but no one's laughing anymore:

### **Markets are conversations.**

*Are your ads a conversation with your customer, or are they a pompous lecture?*

**Markets consist of human beings, not demographic sectors.**

*Are you marketing to people with names and faces and favorite places, or are you marketing to a "target"?*

**Conversations among human beings sound human. They are conducted in a human voice.**

*Are your ads written the way people talk, or the way ads talk?*

**Whether delivering information, opinions, perspectives, dissenting arguments or humorous asides, the human voice is typically open, natural, uncontrived.**

*Would the public describe your ads as "open, natural and uncontrived"?*

**In just a few more years, the current homogenized "voice" of business – the sound of mission statements and brochures – will seem as contrived and artificial as the language of the 18th century French court.**

*Wow. That's already happening. You've noticed it, haven't you?*

**Getting a sense of humor does not mean putting some jokes on the corporate web site. Rather, it requires big values, a little humility, straight talk, and a genuine point of view.**

*What are your values? Do you admit your mistakes? Do you talk straight, or go sideways? Are you willing to say what you really think?*

**Companies attempting to "position" themselves need to take a position. Optimally, it should relate to something their market actually cares about.**

*I've said it often: "Most ads aren't written to persuade. They're written not to offend." Do you have the courage to take a position and suffer the wrath of those who disagree? Will you choose who to lose?*

**Bombastic boasts – "We are positioned to become the preeminent provider of XYZ" – do not constitute a position.**

*In my 1998 book, **The Wizard of Ads**, the fourth of my Twelve Most Common Mistakes in Advertising (chapter 35) was: "**Unsubstantiated Claims**. Advertisers often claim to have what the customer wants, such as 'highest quality at the lowest price,' but fail to offer any evidence. An unsubstantiated claim is nothing more than a cliché the prospect is tired of hearing. You must prove what you say in every ad. Do your ads give the prospect new information? Do they provide a new perspective? If not, be prepared to be disappointed with the results."*

**Is your business in step with the fast-coming future?**

2008 is off to a fast start. Be sure you're in step.

The Internet has become our phone book, dictionary, encyclopedia, sales brochure, research vehicle and back fence for gossip. Like it or not, you're going to have to do a better job online if you want to flex your muscles in 2008.

Roy H. Williams



Contributing writers:

Dan Vallie • Jim Richards •  
Mike Donovan • Harv Blain • Greg Dunkin

Radio Focus is published monthly by Vallie/Richards/Donovan Consulting, Inc. All material is copyrighted.

Duplication is prohibited without express written consent of the publisher.

Subscription rates are \$120/year or \$65/6 months

... satisfaction guaranteed, or you get a cheerful refund for the unused portion of the subscription.

Radio Focus, P. O. Box 299, Greensboro, GA 30642

706-453-1202 ☎ phone / 706-453-1204 ☎ FAX / [www.vallierichardsdonovan.com](http://www.vallierichardsdonovan.com)

You may call, write, fax or e-mail to begin your subscription.

**"You never achieve success unless you like what you are doing." - Dale Carnegie**