

Why Power Contests Work

Continuing Education For The Dedicated Radio Programmer

This week we'll expose one of the real "secrets" of radio programming that very few programmers know about — and fewer still fully understand. Even if you're already one of the enlightened few, hopefully you'll gain a new way of dealing with and expressing it as we examine the mystical math behind why forced-listen contest-marketing works so well (and so fast).

CASH Contest-Marketing

In real estate, it's location, location, location.

In contesting, it's cash, cash, cash.

Market after market, the research results are strikingly similar . . .

- As many listeners will go out of their way to listen to a station giving away a \$100 bill as will go out of their way to win a trip around the world.
- As many listeners will go out of their way to win \$1,000 cash as will go out of their way to win a brand new car.

- As many listeners will go out of their way to win \$10,000 cash as will go out of their way to win a new \$90,000 Porsche. (Moral of this story: while a Porsche is a great prize, you'll sustain the same level of added-sampling *nine times longer* by choosing big cash).

In short, money doesn't just "talk" — money screams!

(see Power Contests on page 2)

Part 1 of a "PD" Mini-Series

Programming To (And Through)

"The Filter System" Of The Listener's Mind

One of the most important dynamics in what drives radio listening (especially what the listener actually ends up "hearing" and remembering what's heard) is — what gets through "the filter system" of the listener's mind.

Penetrating The Brain's "RAS"

That's short for "reticular activating system"

(see Filter System on page 3)

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Programmer's Digest Publisher/Editor Todd Wallace is a 30-year programming veteran — as a #1 jock, PD, GM, and station owner. Over the past 24 years, he has provided programming consultation services to over 100 radio stations. Internationally recognized as the "founding father" of the "callout" research concept, over 200 stations have used his systems of "in-house" music, tracking, and perceptual research.

Why "Power" Contests Work!

(continued from page 1)

Most "Lifestyle" Prizes Are Niche-Appeal

Cute little "lifestyle" prizes (whether it be a new 10-speed or a weekend in the White Mountains) may make great consolation prizes, but rank amongst the ground-clutter on the radar-screen of what moves the ratings-needle. They just don't seem to motivate listeners to make that "listening appointment" like big money cash incentives do. Reason: most listeners' idea of "lifestyle" is different (as "personalized" as their own mind). But everyone can relate to cash. In the instant-gratification world of the late 90's (which is accustomed to "scratch'n'win"), a radio station doesn't coerce new or longer listeners by giving away water-park passes or "The Cheeses Of Nazareth" gift-box from the corner deli. **Winning big requires power-contesting!**

The "Forced-Listen"

When it comes to getting ratings, contests that require listeners to actually listen (listen once, listen longer, and/or listen more frequently) are generally more effective than contests that don't. That's why throughout the annals of programming history it's not uncommon to see stations that gave away a \$150,000 house via point-of-sale registration-mechanism being out-hustled (and thus out-rated) by a station that ran an hourly forced-listen contest like "Big Jackpot Hi-Lo", "The \$10,000 Mystery Voice", or "\$5,000 Cash Call" (where the longer you listen, the better your chances-to-win become). Many listeners seem to understand that better than some station management does.

Appointment-Marketing Every Hour

There's no doubt the concept of appointment-marketing works. Probably the best example is the famous "Free Money Birthday" contest (pioneered by Scott Shannon when he was OMPD at Z-100/NY and marketed by Film House as "Direct TV"). The concept: Tell enough consumers to tune in Thursday morning at

7:20 and you'll get a spike in your 7:15-to-7:30a quarter-hour.

Probably win the hour, too. And the *daypart*. And the *day*. Maybe even the *week*. And the *book*, if you repeat the drill often enough.

Something that's been *missing* on many radio stations lately, however, is *hourly* contesting — which can provide listeners with *multiple* listening-appointments throughout the day or week. (Wallace Wisdom: In many markets, this "forgotten basic" represents a *huge* marketing hole, in the Trout & Ries sense, *begging* to be exploited by a promotion-savvy PD).

Certainly, you should shine a white-hot spotlight on your #1 quarter-hour for PUR (7:15-7:30, Thursday morning). But... what about the "PWAUR" (Persons-Who-AREN'T-Using-Radio) in that quarter-hour? In most markets that's about 70-75% of the 12+ population on any given individual Thursday! (Even on a Mon-Fri cumulative basis, Cumulative Ratings for the total market only add up to about 45%!) What about the morning/breakfast listener whose wake-up routine means he/she hears your station only between 6:15 and 7:00am? (Or a 7:45-8:30am listening window?) Sorry, you've just missed 'em!

The simple solution is obvious, of course... If you cover your 6, 8, and 7 o'clock hours with contest fairy-dust, you could reap much bigger rewards (perhaps even triple the response!) Consider the recent example of how Chancellor's KHKS is spreading their "\$10,000 Thursday" contest over 10 hours (giving away \$1,000 an hour). **Net result:** Kiss is the #1 radio station in Dallas/Ft. Worth in the just-released Winter 1998 Arbitron. (Coincidence? I think not)

Now, The Mystical Math Behind WHY It Works

Okay, as promised, here's how contests spike quarter-hours...

(see Power Contests on page 4)

"The future ain't
what it used to be."

Baseball Hall-Of-Famer **Yogi Berra**

(Perhaps Yogi was able to foresee
a Radio world turned upside down)

"An assertion not responded to is an assertion agreed to"

— Political Consultant and Strategist **Roger Ailes**
(on why mud-slinging has become a political artform)

Quote Worth Requoting

TW Tip #3015 and #9011:

Think how this applies to radio "positioning"

Elements Of Stationality

How can you extend the useful life of your promo's (especially image promos that will have an expanded flight)? One effective little trick is to use two "station voices" (one male and one female, which therefore gives you a chance to mix'n'match the tracks into male/female tandem reads).

Cost: A downside: it could effectively double the cost of your present voiceover-budget. However, several production companies have both male and female voices in their stable, so you may be able to "do a deal" while at the same time

simplifying the process (just fax the copy to one place and get back two reads by Fed-Ex or ISDN).

The Wallace-Wisdom Quick-Take: "Twin" station image-voices add impact through variety, making your promotional announcements less predictable while preserving their "punch". The crunch question becomes: is it worth paying twice the voice-over price if you know you'll effectively double the life of your promotional message? (If you're in a highly competitive market, the answer is probably YES!). TW Tip #6002, #9010, & #18001

**"Voice Of The Station" x 2 =
Twice The Image**

Part 1 of a "PD" Mini-Series

Programming To (And Through)

"The Filter System" Of The Listener's Mind

It all stems from the basic desires of simple human nature (which hasn't changed for eons) — we *all* want to be successful, good looking, wealthy, warm, and loved.

Psychiatrists, physicians, physiologists and other egg-heads have been studying the RAS for years. Radio programmers should, too. Because the PD who understands how it works can use it to extend TSL, generate more frequent listens, and perform other seemingly impossible feats of magic.

I like to call it "the filter system". It's the personalized "stoplight" inside a listener's head that governs which specific outside stimuli is allowed to "pass through" (and thus "register" in the listener's brain). Every human being's filter is different, based upon years of conditioning and "value" judgments of what's "interesting", "exciting", "frightening", and/or "appealing". And what's *not*. It all stems from the basic desires of simple human nature (which hasn't changed for eons) — we *all* want to be successful, good looking, wealthy, warm, and loved.

How The Filter Applies To Radio

We all use our filters as we encounter the blitz of daily messages from all media — as we watch TV, as we read newspapers and magazines, and as we listen to the radio. If not for our "filter", our brains would go into information overload. (Some of ours do anyway!)

You and I could both listen to the same newscast on your radio station and yet "hear" different stories (because our respective filters allow different things to penetrate to our memory).

- That's why recall-reinforcement is so important during an Arbitron sweep.

- Using quick sounders, sigs, and even verbal "audio flags" can efficiently signal a listener's mind that "this is something you'll want to hear".
- It's why jingles with a memorable melodic logo ("Kiss-F-M") work so well (when you've got 'em "singin' your song", you're at least half way to bein' home and hosed!)
- That's why a traffic-stab or a bulletin-intro can instantly cause a listener to perk-up and listen closely
- And why listeners pay more attention to a financial news story if you flag it with "in X-109 money matters . . ." than they would if you just read it cold.
- It's the reason a growing number of stations today are using sweepers that remind listeners that "Magic 88.8 is an Arbitron-rated station". True, this statement doesn't mean jack to the average listener (sans diary), but it's another gentle little nudge that could remind an Arbitron diarykeeper that they should be recording their radio listening habits.

Last week in "PD" we discussed the phenomenon of how addressing your station's "invisible" cume can put points on the board fast (as you help "remind" diarykeepers to take your station out of the "back" of their mind and put it to the "front" of their mind). Figuring out ways to penetrate the listener's filter-system is your *best* first step at shepherding nomad cumers into your station's corral.

Caution: Often a listener's filter-system can sort-out a lot of our little programming tricks better and faster than we can, so be careful not to fall victim to subliminal effects that a subconscious mind could make note of. As we noted last week in the "PD" article about "pavlovian tip-offs", stationality elements that can trigger a *predictive response* of what's likely to follow (like 4 minutes of spots always following whenever you do the weather).

But it can go much deeper than that. The good news is: you can use it to your advantage. See the example on page 4 about how you could apply the "filter" to get the most from your sticker campaign.

This brings us to another dynamic which applies to how listeners listen to the radio

"The Ever-Passing Parade"

The basic premise is that people respond to things only *when* they're interested. But just because they're not interested this morning, doesn't mean they won't be tonight . . . or some other time in the future. This is why you (and your jocks) get tired of hit songs and station promo's *long* before the average listener ever does. (Before we had today's scientific methods of callout music research to pinpoint "burnout", the old rule of thumb used to be that just about the time your jock-staff is sick of a song is about the time it's beginning to become a *big hit* with the audience).

How else does "the filter system" apply to radio-listening lifestyles? Stay tuned.

TW Tip #1005 and #20005

Next Week: Part 2 Of The "PD" Mini-Series On "The Filter System"

- ☒ The "Problems" Radio Faces Being "Full Page, Front Page"
- ☒ The Passive Majority vs. The Vocal (Active) Minority
- ☒ "Broad"casting and "Mass"-Marketing "One Listener At A Time" (Why "One-On-One" Works Best)

Lifestyle File™

Hot Hollywood Health-Tip:

When you MUST lose 5 pounds in 2 days:

- ⇒ Take a garlic capsule and two papaya tablets before each meal for two days.
 - ⇒ Try to avoid "the whites" (sugar, salt, flour) during this period. It works!
- Some Hollywood stars do it twice a week!

TW Tip #21002

Why "Power" Contests Work!

(continued from page 2)

- A major cash prize provides so strong an incentive to listen that many listeners go out of their way to listen to a radio station they otherwise wouldn't listen to (or, the more likely scenario, they make a point of listening longer to a station they already do come).
- These represent listening-patterns that would not occur without contest stimulation — thereby "lifting" Persons-Using-Radio levels — with the entire "lift" going to the station that causes the most listeners to "go out of their way" (usually the station offering the prize that most listeners want to win — usually cash).

The water mark for what constitutes "major" cash in a listener's eyes is usually at least \$5,000, but apply your own logic and local knowledge to this example — just don't fool yourself into thinking it's "less" just because you have budgetary constraints.

Many stations choose to *ignore* the strength of contests based on what they consider low levels of participation. Usually only 1-2% of the audience will physically take-part in a contest on a daily basis, with between 10-18% participating weekly (variables include market history, the number of stations promoting, and the size of prizes being offered). The nay-sayers cry is "why would we target only 2% of our audience when 98% aren't going to participate today?" "The math" is not that simple.

Here's How The Math Really Applies . . .

For this hypothetical example, we'll use the Phoenix market which normally has 3,100 Arbitron diaries over the course of a 12-week sweep . . . or an average of 258 diaries a week. And we'll say that your station performs at a 5.0% AQH share level.

On a total day/total week basis (6am-Midn, Mon-Sun), typical PUR-levels of 16% translate into about 41 diaries controlling an "average" quarter-hour, 12+. (This of course, varies by demo, daypart, hourpart, and day of the week). What it boils down to is this: to get your 5 share requires that you maintain an average of 2 diarykeepers listening to you (out of 41) in each quarter-hour. 2 divided by 41 is 4.9% (that's your "five-share").

For this example, let's say daily contest-participation-levels are 1.5% (a reasonable expectation). Out of 258 diarykeepers monitoring "this week in time", this means that 4 listeners would be "influenced" to "go out of their way" to listen "abnormally".

Do you think that reaching *one-fourth* of them (i.e., one diary) in each quarter-hour of the day is an achievable goal for your \$10,000 contest? (Hint: I do! And I speak from experience!)

What's happened here? PUR has increased from 41 diaries controlling a quarter-hour to 42. And your station has increased its quarter-hourly diary-count from 2 to 3. To calculate quarter-hour share, divide 3 by 42 and . . . *voila!* . . . you find that your station's AQH share is now up two share-points to 7.1%. (Nothing up my sleeve — notice that at no time did my hand leave my wrist!). Are we having fun yet?

Wallace Wisdom: Remember, that to affect this kind of across-the-board increase requires that you "cover" all ratable hours of the week with the artificial support of an enticing prize that will cause abnormal forced-listening — and drive-up PUR.

TW Tip # 1004, #3014, #4005, #20004

Next Week: We'll look at specific examples of contests that accomplish such artifice stimulation. And — we'll zero-in on **The Magic Of "Mental Participation" Contesting**. You'll see why it's the most popular type of contesting with listeners (on the "Q-score" scale of likeability). Also next week, I'll reveal the single **most effective contest** that I know of. (It *always works!*)

Practical Application Of "Filter System" Mentality: Sticker Campaigns That Cut-Through

If you use a car-sticker as a pre-requisite for entering your new \$1,000 contest, the listener who doesn't have a sticker (90-99.99% of your audience!) will quickly deduce that "this isn't for me, so I don't have to listen".

Solution: Use your sticker as a "bonus" not a "price-of-entry".

Textbook example:

"When the X-109 Unmarked Car pulls you over, Mr. X will ask what radio station ya' listen to. Tell him you listen to the new sound of X-109 and win \$100. Plus, if you have an X109 car-sticker or can show us the letters X-109 *written down*, you'll win *double*."

And remember, your X-109 Stick-It-To-'Em sticker helps our Unmarked Car find you".

See what we've done here?

- ✓ "The Unmarked Car" makes a listener think *any* car could be "ours".
- ✓ The listener doesn't feel penalized for not having a sticker on their car (some people, like me, just won't deface their car with a sticker). But they can still win by showing us X-109 "written down".
- ✓ Yet we've politely incited them to get a sticker ('cause they'll win double and it helps us find them).

TW Tip #3016 and #4006

One of the most commented-on pieces from "PD" issue #1 was my bit on how "Snap!" personifies a Steve Rivers-programmed radio station. Now, #2 in the continuing series — "Flow!"

You can always tell a Ken Dowe-programmed station because you hear *the Flow!*

You notice the synchronization of the music, commercials, and meaningful local jock talk. And — you hear the McLendon-esque "SPARKLE" that comes with the consistency of the promotions. TW Tip #9012

Snap2!
Flow!

What Most Stations Forget To Include In Their Web-Site

Contact Information. Snail-mail addresses and phone numbers. It seems that some webmasters (and PD's, too) are so enamored with the instantaneous contact capabilities of the new technological advances that they forget that some listeners use websites as a source for useful information. Like the physical address of where to pick up a contest prize they just won. Or — maybe the websurfer *doesn't want to* e-mail their favorite jock — maybe he/she was looking for something as low-tech as your request-line number (preferring to talk to a human being, rather than chatting online). ("Play 'Misty' for me").

Wallace Wisdom: We'd all be wise to keep in mind the timeless mega-revelation from John Naisbitt (in *Megatrends*) about "high-tech, high touch". His point: for every couple of steps forward that technology advances us, we'll need to pause (or even take a half-step backward) to allow society to "catch up" and get comfortable with the changes.

Think about it — do you have an easy-to-find "how to reach us" page on your website?

TW Tip #15008 and #16009

"Enhanced" Sites: The High Road And The Low Road

A lot of radio stations have gone to great pains to produce a spectacular website, with lots of bells, whistles, and shocks. But in their zeal for providing a great multimedia extravaganza to excite the upper echelon of computer geeks (who have the very latest in high-speed processing advances) they've ignored a greater number of websurfers. Those who are stuck with *less than* state-of-the-art computer equipment (or slow modem-speeds due to poor phone-line connections in the area).

Solution: Before you force-feed your enhanced site down everyone's throat, think about providing both a high- and low-bandwidth version.

Example: KYXY/San Diego's opening screen gives surfers a choice between downloading the "animated" version (requiring 2-5 minutes to load) or the less-complicated "non-animated" version. (www.kyxy.com)

Remember, in a world where we curse our microwave because 20 seconds is "too long" to heat hot water for coffee or tea, how long it takes your website to launch into "warp-speed" may affect whether you're allowed to make an *impression* or be "tuned-out". TW Tip #15007 & #16008

Are You Home-Page-Less?

If so, 1998 is probably going to be the year you'll want to do something about that. *Radio Index* research revealed that late last year only 2-3% of consumers had surfed a *radio station's* website "over the past week" (certainly not enough to constitute such critical mass as to demand your presence on the internet). But *this year*, that surf-a-station stat has almost *doubled* in just a few months — and seems to be accelerating!

What this means: If you aren't already, you need to be planning some type of web-site awareness. TW Tip #1008, #15006, and #16007

News Update Ticker

Great examples of updated news summaries on radio station websites:

Capital FM in London (www.capitalfm.co.uk) has scrolling headlines on their *home-page*. Click on a headline as it scrolls and you get the full story in detail.

Clear Channel's WOAI/San Antonio (www.woai.com) has one of the sharpest interactive websites in the business! The homepage is loaded with instant information (sports scores, San Antonio news headlines, even an instant-poll (where you can both cast your vote and view up-to-the-minute results)). Click a ticker and you get a 5-minute summary of national and international news (along with easy hyper-links to ABC, CBS, MSNBC, FOX, CNN, and the Weather Channel). Really spiffy.

KFI in Los Angeles (www.kfi640.com) and **WCBS-AM/New York City** (www.newsradio88.com) both feature updated headlines — not on their home-page, but just one click deeper. TW Tip #10009, #15005, and #16006

Leadership Cliff's Notes

Morale + Bonuses = Winning Teamwork

Building Morale By Rewarding Teamwork

Ratings-productivity bonuses are an effective way to reward your air-staff for their hard work, dedication and artistic excellence (encouraging them to maintain their focus throughout a sweep).

It's like the added incentive that a Super Bowl ring gives to NFL players to *lift their game to "the next level"* during the Playoffs.

Here's how to structure a bonus arrangement that rewards "the team":

- ✓ Plan a bonus "pool" that every jock/personality (or perhaps even every staff member) gets a share of.
- ✓ Base the bucks on a *per-tenth-of-a-sharepoint* gain over the last book (or year-to-year, if seasonal cycles affect your station's ratings performance). For example, \$1,000 for a

0.1 improvement, \$2,000 for 0.2 increase, etc. In this case, if the station is up 0.2, all the jocks split \$2,000 equally.

- ✓ **Include *all* full-time Air Talents in the plan** and part-timers at a lower-rate (like 25 or 30% of what the full-timers get).
- ✓ **Do it every book.** Try to enhance it with new twists.
- ✓ **Nice touch:** Kick it off by giving everyone an envelope with a crisp \$100 bill inside, saying "this is a down payment on your bonus — but it's yours to keep no matter what".
- ✓ You'll be scraping your staff off the ceiling, they'll be so high on how great their station is! Think they'll do a great show, every set, every day? Bet on it!

TW Tip # 6004, # 7004, and #8001

"Coach McKay, what do you think of your team's execution today?"

"I think that would be a good idea!"

— former Tampa Bay Bucs Coach **John McKay**

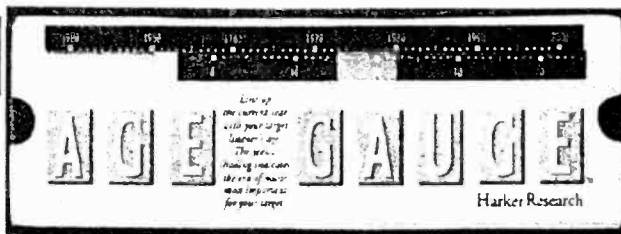
(responding to reporters' pointed questions, after his team lost yet another game, circa 1977)

About Teamwork

Forgotten Basics: Eras Of Musical Influence

Various camera-angles of audience research have revealed that most music-radio listeners tend to prefer hearing old favorites from the years when they were most "musically active". The "targeting window" varies by format, demo, and gender, but the broad overview is that listeners tend to be most-drawn to songs popular when they were between the ages of 15 and 22. A "secondary support line" expands that age-range to between 13 and 24.

What this means: An Oldies station whose P1's are 42 needs to note that the musical era of greatest influence on them was 1971-78 with a secondary thrust encompassing '69-'80. (Curly question: Why, then, do so many Oldies stations resist songs from the 70's?) But don't stop there. To fully understand your musical target, go beyond the median-age and look at your *total* target. If it's 35-to-49, that means songs from '78-85 best hit your young-end while the 49'ers



year for years '64-'71. **The TW Challenge:** When did you last analyze the musical eras of *your* library-list? Research Consultant Richard Harker has devised a clever slide-rule called the "Age Gauge" that quickly computes the optimum era of music most important for your target. Contact: (919) 954-8300. *TW Tip # 1007 & #2003* P.S. It looks a *lot* cooler than the above scanned photo!

News & Surveillance Ingredients

News

"News Cred": The Journalistic Corollary To "Rock Cred"

If you're the PD of a music station, you know the importance of "Rock credibility" to an artist's image (without that "hip" foundation of Rock music in an artist's formative background, the clock ticks very quickly on their "use-by" date). And no amount of hype ever seems to overcome terminal unhiphness. *(TW Tip #2002)*

The same philosophy holds true for a music station trying to establish an image of news or information credibility (even if only in the morning/breakfast daypart). Without genuine *journalistic cred*, most music stations aren't really taken seriously (even though they do the news every morning). Here are some innovative ways you can address this predicament, quickly and proactively:

Hire a local TV news anchor (with a high Q-score) to do your morning newscasts. Not only will this instantly "legitimize" your news broadcast, it adds a "visual" — many listeners can actually "see" the anchor (in the theater of their mind) when they "hear" him/her reading the news on your station. (Radio with pictures! Who'd'a thunk?). Even better if you choose a TV personality who has "it" (the definition of "it" in TV is: looks, voice, and charisma). *TW Tip # 6003, #9015, 1007*

"From the KTAR News Center..." When I was OMPD of KTAR/KKLT in Phoenix, K-Lite, like most Soft AC's, had *no* news image in the listener's mind. One of the 1,001 improvements, on our list of objectives to become a better radio station, was to add news credibility without increasing the time-requirements. We knew from our research that sister-station KTAR was clearly the market-leader in news perception (their news-reliance attribution tested as high as the local TV stations!) One of the action steps we took was to have K-Lite's Morning Show Co-Host prepare her newscasts in the KTAR newsroom (just 20 steps further down the hall). The newscast was then billed as "K-Lite News On The Hour — now reporting from the KTAR News-Center, here's **Monica Nelson**". Using smoke and mirrors K-Lite newscasts suddenly acquired an air of authority they didn't have before (many K-Lite core listeners who used to cross-cume to KTAR for their morning news "fix" felt satisfied that they'd heard the KTAR "brand" of news (without having to physically change stations). Net result: KKLT's ratings in the morning daypart increased. *TW Tip #10008 & #9016*

Surveillance Experts. Additionally, KKLT utilized KTAR's high-profile traffic and weather experts (adding even more authenticity. (Remember, it takes no longer to have an *expert* do a surveillance bit than it takes to do it "flat").

Bottom line: *Instant News-Cred* for *no* extra dollars. *TW Tip # 9013 and #10005*

News

The News-Writing "Rule Of Three"

A slick little news-writing trick being used by a lot of TV newsrooms these days involves the practice of succinctly including **three very short action-summaries or angles** within a story to better paint a mental picture for viewers. Research has shown that viewers (and, I would submit, *listeners*) find it catchy, informative, and easier-to-understand. (See how it works?) It's based on the scientific fact that **the human ear seems to best assimilate things-said in three's**. "Of the people, by the people, for the people"; "Veni, Vidi, Vici"; "A tisket, a tasket, a red-and-yellow basket". (Anyway, you get the idea).

Applying the "Rule Of Three" to your story-sentences serves to give the listeners what they want, keep them up-to-date, and make them satisfied they haven't missed anything (since they're now getting *three* sides of the story). It keeps it simple, makes it clear, and keeps a listener's focus. It's easier to read, easier to hear, and easier to understand, easier to "get" (Oops, that's 4!) You catch their attention 'cause it's shorter, tighter, and brighter. (Oh my God, I can't stop! But then, you shouldn't either!!!) *TW Tip # 9014 and 10006*

Next Week

Attribution Research: How To Win The "Traffic-Reliance" Perception

About "TW Tips"

At the end of each quarter, we'll issue a free "PD Index", to cross-reference every TW Tip into the following programming categories —

- 1000 series - The Audience
- 2000 series - Music
- 3000 series - Promotion/Marketing
- 4000 series - Contests
- 5000 series - Mornings
- 6000 series - Talent
- 7000 series - Leadership
- 8000 series - Morale
- 9000 series - Presentation
- 10000 series - News/Info
- 11000 series - Public Service
- 12000 series - Operations
- 13000 series - Talk
- 14000 series - Technical
- 15000 series - Internet
- 16000 series - Computers
- 17000 series - Sales
- 18000 series - Production
- 19000 series - Research
- 20000 series - Ratings
- 21000 series - Life
- 22000 series - Bookshelf

Contest Corner: Win The One You *Want*

Free movie-tickets have long been a staple in the prize-closets of most radio stations. But all movie-premiums are not prized equally by listeners.

Movie Premiere or "Anything Goes" Pass
Going By The Numbers. Research shows far more listeners would prefer to win a "pick-a-ticket" pass that gets them into any movie, at any time, at any of a movie-chain's theaters city-wide than they would a pass to a one-time "exclusive" premiere event.

Here's why: (Read this aloud, in your best Rod Serling, or Jack McCoy, impression): You're a listener in a large metro market, out of disposable cash, but would like to treat your sweetie to a movie this weekend. Your "favorite" radio station, X-109, apparently thinks you'd rather win a pass to their "exclusive" premiere of the latest Spice Girls movie, clear on the other side of town, on a night when you/n'your'honey would rather be home watching "Friends", "Seinfeld", and "ER". Meanwhile, your "other" favorite station has opened up their "Magic 88.8 Box Office", giving you a chance to win the movie of your choice. (Cue "Psycho" music). Suddenly you're perceiving your "other" favorite station in a whole new light, and weighing the benefits of switching. ("They seem to really understand me better, what I do, how I live, what I want, and what I need").

Wallace Wisdom Quick-Take: Certainly there are times when a movie "premiere" can command

"hot ticket" status (like the hoopla knee-deep around the recent run of "Titanic"). But truly *prime* film events usually happen only once or twice a year, leaving you with "lesser" premieres to promote the rest of the time. (Too often movie-chains require that you promote a string of "B-movie" premieres for them in order to "qualify" for being the solo presenter of a blockbuster event).

Competing side-by-side, with everything else equal, the contest featuring the "name your movie, name your theater, name your time" prize nearly always appeals to more listeners than the one-shot premiere (the larger the metro, the more this tends to hold true). And remember, the "freedom-of-choice" prize still gives you the flexibility to imaginatively promote the "hit" movies, too (with none of the shackles of "requirements" imposed by the movie chain). For example, if your competition has the "official" premiere of Titanic, you could still promote "see Titanic when YOU want to see it". Or you could tie-in with an upscale restaurant to feature the same menu as "the last supper" on the actual Titanic.

Bottom-line: Always keep in mind, the sustainable thrust of your contest-image may only be as strong as your weakest prize.

"Warm-fuzzy" add-ons to a movie-giveaway: "Dinner and a movie" has more appeal than just a movie-pass. Throw in baby-sitter money and the appeal increases even more. TW Tip #3017 and #4007

Weekly TRACKING Research

"3 things you should never see while they're in the process of being made: sausage, elections, and audience research."

Paraphrasing Will Rogers

Every Week: Preference Share (P1's, core, fans, etc.), One Week Cume Rating, Long-Term (1-Month) Cume Rating, Daypart Share (6-10, 10-3, 3-7, 7-M, Weekends), Quarter-Hour Share, Total-Rated-Time-Periods Share of All Daypart Actual Listening, Better/Worse Ratio (Stations Improving/Deteriorating), Preference-Switching Growth/Loss, Weekly comparison of QH rolling averages (3-week to 6-wk to 12-wk)

Monthly: Average-Age, Daypart-Recycling, Daypart Retention & Splash, P1-Sharing/Cume-Dupl, Age-Profile Graphs (3-year spans), TV Campaign Awareness (Past Week vs. Past Month Recall, Share Of Mind, Power Ratio Indexed To Preference-Share), Workplace Listening, In-Car Listening, Personality Impact (Pos/Neg/Net)

Quarterly Winning Positions™: Music That Personally Suits You Best, Best New Music, Best Oldies, News Reliance, Traffic Reliance, Weather Reliance, Most Community Involved, Best Contests, Best Prizes, Best DJs/Personalities, Seen Car Sticker, Have Car Sticker, Surf'd The Net, Surf'd A Radio Station Website.

In coming weeks, we'll focus on the nuances of how to get the most out of each of these trends.

TW Tip #19002

Which Key Factors Should YOU Be Benchmarking?

The *ONLY 3* reasons why Radio won't work —

♦ Wrong Copy

Non-persuasive or non-compelling copy that doesn't "ask for the order" or invite trial, traffic, or usage.

♦ Wrong Schedule

Not making use of daypart/hourpart delineations and/or OES (optimum effective scheduling) techniques to reach the greatest possible number of "earballs" and minds.

♦ Wrong Station

Using a station that doesn't hit the advertisers target (both demographically and psychographically). TW Tip #17001

Sales 101: Things A PD Should Know

Programmer's Digest

Preemptive Tactics And "Pulitzer Prize Plagiarism"

Whenever I take the Todd Wallace consulting "road show" to Australia or New Zealand, it's always been somewhat amusing to me to time how long it takes for a good promo or liner I'd write from scratch in, say, Sydney to appear on the competition in, say, Perth (or vice versa). The record, so far, is 20 minutes later! (How it happens: the competition in one market transcribes the promo they hear on my client station, then fax it to their sister stations elsewhere). Over the years, I've had to resort to "synchronized" start times on some contests and promo copy.

In some ways, it's flattering, I guess, to hear the exact same concept or verbiage you dreamt or conceived being regurgitated right back at you, word for word. At the same time it's also annoying. But — today's PD needs to learn to "deal with" the fact that idea-piracy and copy-cat tactics are just plain part of the biz (and have been for years). So don't dwell on it. Shit happens. Get over it! (The old adage "all's fair in love, war, and radio" really does apply!)

Mind you, I'm no virgin — I've done my share of "borrowing" ideas, bits, and concepts over the years. A favorite line I like to share with colleagues is "steal from me, steal twice". In fact, I stole that line! (Thank you, Michael Spears — or whoever you stole it from!)

The point is this: if you're going to "borrow" an idea, steal from only the very best (something Gene Cheaham, writing in Association Source, calls "Pulitzer Prize Plagiarism"). And *at the very least* put forward the effort to *adapt and customize it* with some local flair and unique twists.

How do you deal with a cross-town thief? Turn it around, have some fun with it, and use it to your advantage, like Buzz Bennett did during one of

Food For Thought

the all-time great CHR wars (in San Diego in the early 70's). As PD of KCBQ, Buzzy poked fun at KGB's preemption techniques on-the-air with a promo that invited all San Diego radio stations to send in for their free *KCBQ Copy Cat Kit* ("so you can get all of our ideas immediately when we think of them — instead having to wait hours or days before stealing them"). Q's listeners got the "leadership" message — and were amused at the same time. (And the preemptive strikes slowed).

Motivational guru's like Anthony Robbins encourage followers to "model" people who are already successful at doing what you want to accomplish. You might reason that the same applies to radio (copy-writing, contests, and campaigns). But again, if you must burgle, do it with some personalized pizzazz! Caveat: don't misinterpret this as a license to steal at will. You must be very cautious to make sure you're not infringing on legitimate trademarks or copyrights. These days, more and more stations are vigorously defending their intellectual property and material. (Think your competition won't turn you in? Think again!)

A great place to look for "liftable" stuff: airchecks from old radio wars. Some of the very best ideas have been around for years and *still* stand the test of time (e.g., "give us 22 minutes, we'll give you the world"). So flash back — and see what you find. Let me know if you need some help.

All The Best,

TW

Coming Next Week: My Favorite Contest (Find Out WHY!)

The "Magic"
of Mental Participation
Why it's the most "likeable" contest!

And . . .

Also . . .

Slotting Promos:
FIRST or LAST in a Stopset?
A "Point/Counterpoint" Face-Off

Part 2 of "The Filter System"
Dealing With Being "Full Page, Front Page"
"Broad"-casting "One Listener At A Time"

Subscriptions

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