

Winning "Positions"™

Continuing Education For The Dedicated Radio Programmer

Part 3 of a "PD" Mini-Series Programming To (And Through) "The Filter System" Of The Listener's Mind

The Attribution Of Perceptions

The marketing concept of "positioning", made famous by Ries & Trout*, probably applies more to the business of radio programming than practically any other consumer-oriented product.

Selling "Air"

Perhaps it's because what we sell is "air" (both to advertisers — and to our listeners). You can't feel it or touch it, so it's even more important to be able to *quantify it* in as many ways as are logically possible (or imaginable). In much the same way that McDonalds and Coca Cola look deep into the nuances of how their "P1's" perceive burgers and bubbles.

* Al Ries and Jack Trout were the authors of the book "Positioning: The Battle For Your Mind", first published in '81 (which expanded upon early ideas first exposed in an article they wrote for Advertising Age 1972).

Every radio station has a *primary position*. Usually it's their *brand* (like "Lite Rock", "Oldies Radio KOOL-FM", "Your #1 Hit Music Station", "NewsRadio 88", or "The New Country Leader"). But, with so many radio stations pitching "choose *me*, choose *me*", listeners tend to turn to different stations for different services. Sub-positions, if you will (aka perceptual attributes).

(Continued... see "Winning Positions" on Page 2)

The Failure Avoidance

$$\uparrow F + \downarrow S = 1$$

When your *will to win* won't let you do anything less than the very best, you instinctively know that you need to go *way above and beyond* mere "cume maximization" and "quarter-hour extension" to increase your ratings and enhance the atmosphere of excellence around your radio station.

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Winning "Positions"™

(continued from page 1)

Just as consumers like to specialty-shop at Safeway for groceries, Toys R Us for toys, and The Gap for jeans, they often tend to consider Station "A" their "music store", Station "B" their "news" store, Station "C" their "morning personality store", Station "D" their "place to relax", and so on. Some stations can occupy several positions in a listener's mind. While still other positions become bloody battlefields (as stations fight for footholds in the battle for "contest mountain" or "traffic hill" for example).

So it becomes increasingly important for you to know precisely which "positions" of attribution your station occupies in the listener's mind – and which one's your vertical competitor does. Pinpointing these *Winning Positions*™ also helps you identify where your competitor is most vulnerable – and where the marketing holes and positioning vacuums exist in your market.

How do you do this?

Ask listeners pointed questions! Like . . .

"Which radio station, if any, do you rely on for news in the morning?"

"Which station do you think has the best DJ's or personalities?"
"The best contests". "Station that plays the music that personally suits you best", etc., etc., etc.

Ask enough listeners about enough subjects, and you'll get a clear picture of what the audience thinks of your station (and your competition). And what you can do to improve your status. *Radio Index* research has identified over 50 sub-positioning attributes that listeners say they turn to a radio station for. Some, of course, are larger (and more important) characteristics than others – and the importance of various parameters will vary by format ("best music" is more important to a music station than "news reliance", while "traffic reliance" is much more important than "best contests" to a news/talk station).

Some positions can serve as "loss leaders" to get listeners in

"your" door (instead of the other guy's) by super-serving a certain (sometimes "hidden") positioning niche. For example, many Midwestern music stations in "Tornado Alley" find a big payoff in becoming known as "the weather station", even though their primary franchise may actually be "the oldies station". TW Tip # 10014

The #1 Rule Of Radio Positioning

Only go after a position you can truly FILL

Don't try to stake claim to a position you can't fulfill, or listeners could come to question your credibility about positions that you really *do* legitimately win. Ignoring this rule was the final nail in the coffin for AM Top 40 stations who lied to their audience, trying to trick listeners into thinking they were the "more music" station when, in actuality, their FM competitors had much lower commercial loads. Which brings us to . . .

Rule #2: Always Live Up To Your Position!

The "Hot Faucet" Theory

When listeners turn on the hot-tap in their kitchen or bathroom, they expect to get . . . hot water. In the same way they expect you to play "your" brand of music when they turn on their "Country faucet", for example. Or get your style of surveillance-packaging when they open-up their "news and information" tap. To paraphrase Johnny Cochran, "If it doesn't fit, you're in the shit". And the listener may place you in the penalty box of their mind (and maybe their diary!) forever. This is explosive stuff (and not to be toyed with, lightly).

And Rule #3: Look for Marketing Holes

Positioning Vacuums No Station Is Addressing. When you find one, take steps to live-up-to-it and make it part of your station's multi-layered U. S. P. (Unique Selling Proposition) to listeners. Stake claim to it and spread the word (remember, you can use your own air "free"). TW Tip #1020, #3035, & #19007

"This is a country driven by brand-buyers.
Coke doesn't win the taste-test,
it wins the brand-test."

— AOL CEO **Bob Pittman**
(on the importance of being a sociologist when reading the market)

TW Tip #3034, #1019, and #7010

- ✓ Learning The Lay Of The Land With "Format Face-Offs"
- ✓ How To Construct A "Positioning Mosaic" Of Your Station
- ✓ Benchmarking: To Chart Your Upward Progress

Next Week: Winning Positions, Phase 2

#4 in the "PD" Mini-Series:

"The Filter System"

Harmless "Dirty Tricks"

Toying With Your Competitors' Psyche

True Confessions. Back in the days when C. E. Hooper Ratings and Birch Reports were the only monthly ratings measurement available, I used this little trick to psych-out and demoralize the competition, jujitsu-style (they did it to themselves).

Here's how it worked:

- One of our female staffers would call a competing jock at home, impersonating a Hooper Ratings interviewer (conducting the interview in exactly the same style and wording).

- The jock, of course, said he (and four other people) in his household were listening to (Magic 88.8).
- Next day, he told everyone at his station (including management) that he'd been called by Hooper. Thus, everyone expected the next month's ratings should be stellar!
- What it did, of course, was to *plant a timebomb* in everyone's head that exploded a few weeks later (on "ratings day").
- When the numbers released weren't in the stratosphere, there was a collective uneasiness on the competition's staff (the "Holy Shit!" effect, where management thinks, "Wow, if Hooper hadn't called Johnny Venture, our numbers would've been in the crapper – come to think of it, they *must* really be in the crapper! We better change something – fast! Let's fire Johnny Venture!" Good clean fun 'round the ol' Radio Ranch! TWTip# 7011

The Failure Avoidance Formula

"42.7% of all statistics are made-up on-the-spot".

— Radio Course Leader **Gerard Duignan**
New Zealand Broadcasting School, Christchurch
(on paralysis by analysis) TW Tip # 19008

(Continued from Page 1)

It calls for examining every angle – and every factor (both on-air and off) that could impact, directly or indirectly, on radio listening. It calls for leaving no stone unturned in the never-ending quest for programming excellence. As one of Radio's great teachers and mentors, **Ken Greenwood**, is fond of pointing out: "**You can't freeze-frame Radio**". Indeed, it is *always* a moving target!

A few years ago (like 20!), we developed a little formula that seems to put it all into clearer perspective.

$$\uparrow F + \downarrow S = 1$$

F is Failure. S is Success.

By reducing the probability of Failure, you've simultaneously increased the probability of Success.

When Failure chances decrease, Success opportunities must go up. And vice versa (the books always seem to balance).

The diagnostic theory and philosophical tools of this Failure Avoidance Formula, when fully understood, permit you to analyze such things as your station's programming vulnerabilities, sales potential, a political campaign, a marriage, a football team's performance (or lack thereof) . . . in fact, almost *any* areas of human life

where **SUCCESS** is sought.

Practical Applications

In applying the Failure Avoidance Formula, you identify all those areas where the chance of failure is high, rank them in importance, and propose remedies (starting with the most urgent, important, and immediate vulnerabilities, thus *eliminating* (or at least minimizing) those areas where failure is *most* probable.

The end result: your chance of success increases in direct proportion to the decrease in the chance of failure.

"How To". Make a list of everything – *everything* – that stands in the way of your programming success and great ratings on your station(s).

Your short-list might look like this:

- Need a defining morning show to stop morning daypart "splash" to other stations
- Need to market with TV or direct-mail blitz to get the word out
- Need weekly music research to keep finger on the pulse of the audience
- Need contest-marketing overlay that commands attention and compels listening
- Need to build a street-fleet to "get out and meet 'em"

- Need a strong loyalty-marketing mechanism to keep 'em

The trigger: One by one, deal with each item on the list.

- ✓ Need a morning show? Get one or grow one.
- ✓ Need TV? Buy it! (And don't overlook new effective-buying techniques like *Shark TV*).
- ✓ Need weekly research? Commit to it. (If your budget is tight, think about doing it in-house to make your dollars stretch).
- ✓ Need to make a money splash? Spread some.
- ✓ Need to press the flesh? Nothing's stopping you (fortunately, this is Radio – we can paint mental pictures that make your "street-fleet of one broken-down van" sound like you're *everywhere*!)
- ✓ Need loyalty follow-up? Companies like *FairWest Direct* make it turnkey simple. But if your budget doesn't allow farming it out, don't let that stop you — roll the ball yourself. (Dbase programs like *MS Works* dumb it down into simple steps that any idiot can follow!)

Suddenly, your problems don't seem so insurmountable, do they?

(Can you feel the momentum building?)

(Cont... See "Failure Avoidance" on Page 9)

Statements & Sweepers & Liners (Oh My!)

Working For The Weekend . . .
"It's a work-escape weekend
... on Houston's K-Lite"

(monitored on
then Soft-AC station,
KLTR/Houston, circa 1993)
TW Tip # 9030

**"KOPA/100 – where the
weekends are *better* . . .**

(lead-in to promo or liner
explaining various reasons *why*)
(monitored on KOPA/Phoenix, AZ
when Steve Rivers was PD,
circa 1979)

Killing two birds with one stone,
in "mo' better" fashion . . .

"Better Music and *More* Of It . . .
Sydney's 2DAY-FM"

(monitored on 2DAY-FM,
Sydney, Australia)

The Elements Of Stationality

Successful Morning Show Features

A "PD" Continuing Series Part One

There are certain Morning/Breakfast Show features that seem to work well wherever they're used. And it just so happens that you often hear them on the most successful wake-up shows the world over. Many of them are contests, but their real value is how they enable interplay between the air talent and the listener. Double-check the lists (this week and next) to see which features are "available" (would possibly fill a hole) in your market.

Bedrock Breakfast Benchmark Bits

"The Mystery Oldie". Or some variation, like "The Dreaded Morning Oldie", "Name That Tune", "The Speedy CD", "Song Scramble", "Magical Mystery Musical Moments", "Sneaky Snippets", "Stab In The Dark", "Face The Music", "Short Cuts To Cash", "The Killer Oldie", "The Impossible Oldie", "The Ultimate Oldie", "Mystery Memory", "Back Tracks", etc. This is mental participation at its simple best. Done in various ways – some personalities play a quick ("impossibly short") stab of the song, while others play a 10-second hook (minus the title), and still others play the entire song. Word to the wise: if you make it "too" hard (or obscure), a large percentage of your audience will throw up their hands in despair (subconsciously saying "I just can be bothered with this").

TW Tip # 2006, #5009, and #4015

"The Joke Of The Day". AKA "The Joke That Might Get (Personality) Fired", "The Emergency Joke Box", (compiling) "The (Personality) Book Of Jokes" (which will be sold for a charity), "The Clean Joke Of The Day", "The Morning Joke-Off", "Joke Du Jour", "Helium Hilarity" (where the punchlines are done by personalities who've taken a hit of helium, making them sound just that much funnier). The instruction to listeners should be "keep it clean (or cute) and keep it short". Entry-mechanisms range from mail-in (snail or e-mail) to fax or phone-in. Good way to have fresh (hopefully cutting edge, topical) humor on-the-air everyday. Interesting variation that PM Driver **Stu Evans** of KMJE/Phoenix has been doing for years: "The Joke Without A Punchline" – tell the set-up line, listeners have to call-in to get the punchline (which is never said on-the-air), then playback soundbites of listener reactions.

TW Tip #5010 and #4016

"The Up-Late Update". Also known as "The Monologue Minute", "Dueling Monologues". The drill: Playback soundbites of monologues from last night's TV variety shows. (Letterman and Leno are both available from Westwood One on a market-exclusive barter basis). Here's a neat little trick I pulled when I was OMPD of KKLT/Phoenix: Work hard to corner the market on monologues (both Leno and Letterman). Then you have something short that appeals to fans of both (Letterman fans can

be particularly chauvinistic). 90% of your audience will not have seen either one of the monologues, and 98% will not have seen both – so it's fresh humor. (In effect, you have the two best teams of comedy-writers working for your morning show).

This is a sponsorable feature (at premium-rate dollars). "Dave's Top Ten" can be added in the following set (or part of the same set) to make it a compelling listening appointment many listeners will go out of their way to hear.

TW Tip # 5011 and #4107

"Screen Test". (aka "Magical Movie Moments", "Screen Play"). Play a short soundbite from a hit movie ("slap, Snap out of it!"), first person to identify it (and maybe the lead stars, too) wins movie-passes, a video 6-pak from Blockbuster, and/or cash.

TW Tip #5012 and #4018

"The Battle Of The Sexes". Guys'n'gals must answer gender-skewed "pop-culture" trivia questions to win one for their "team".

Men answer questions most women would know (like, "How do you spell Versace?"); Women are asked "guy" questions (like "Which NFL team does John Elway play for?"). Usually done as a 5-minute feature where the first "team" to correctly answer three questions wins. Daily prizes reward participants, and the audience-at-large is rewarded with great mental participation. But an even more captivating overlay is maintaining a composite box score. Most stations keep a running tally – "the girls are now leading, 158 to 100". 2DAY-FM in Sydney (Australia) went so far as to build an effective sticker campaign around it. (The above sticker promoted morning teammate **Wendy Harmer**) Rick Dees puts an interactive version for websurfers to play on his Rick Dees Online website (www.rick.com).

TW Tip # 5013, #3040, and #4019

Wallace Wisdom: Too often Morning personalities (sometimes at the instruction of the PD) tend to move away from successful bits just because they've been done for several years (or maybe, the personality is "tired" of doing it). My question is: why get off a winning horse mid-race? I'm all for spice and variety and keeping things fresh, but there are some bits that have a timeless quality about them – and will arguably always work (now – and 20 years from now, if you leave it on long enough).

TW Tip # 5014

Next Week: Bedrock Bits, Part 2

REAL Positioning

Truth In Advertising: The Strength Of Intense LOCAL Focus

Four donut shops on the same block. Each with signs in their window . . .

Shop "A": "Best donuts in town!"

Shop "B": "Best donuts in America!"

Shop "C": "Best donuts in the world!"

Shop "D": "Best donuts on this block!"

(As heard on Paul Harvey News & Comment earlier this year)

TW Tip #3039

Websites With Attitude



90's Version Of "Spunk"

Australian Today Network night jock Ugly Phil presents the fickle finger of fate to websurfers who happen upon the Fox-FM site in Melbourne. Sets the tone. (www.fox.com.au)

Links That Don't Suck

KRZZ in Wichita, KS has an interesting hyper-link jump-station feature as part of their website called "Links That Don't Suck". It's

an eclectic collection of useful sites like "You Don't Know Jack", PollStar's concert information, "The Dallas Cowboys Suck", etc. (www.krzz.com).

Free Crap Triple M FM in Sydney (Australia) calls attention to their competitions, contests, and cool stuff with the heading "Free Crap". Works for me. (http://mrock.village.co.au).

Less lewd and crude, more subdued "attitude"

Houston Classic Rocker KLOL has a long lineage of heritage Rock roots – and one of the better websites in Radio (www.klol.com). Something for everyone. Besides the obligatory jock pages, city-links, chat-rooms, screensaver downloads, and promotional pitches, some of the more unusual features include:

- The KLOL "Rock Babes" Picture Page (the station's "mascots")
- Paraphernalia ("Rockwear" you can buy)
- Dozens of Netshow soundbites available for either listening

and/or downloading (every jock is featured)

- And a very complete "archive" service (spotlighting concert, event, billboard, and bumper-sticker archives tracing the history of KLOL)

FOX-FM

The DeeJay's
Virtual Radio
Moozak
Fox Charts
Nooz
Fox Foto's
Wolz 'appenin'
Free Stuff
Community Switch
Sound Monkeys
Tech Talk
Sales
Foxed Link

"Hip" Feature Titles Village Roadshow's FOX-FM in Melbourne (Australia) has a particularly cool site, full of features in the vernacular of their target audience. Moozak. Fox Charts. Fox Jox. Nooz. Fox Foto's. Wolz 'appenin'. Free stuff. Community Switch. Gig Guide. Sound Monkeys. Tech Talk. Foxed Link. Among others. (www.fox.com.au)

"You've Got Spam". Jacor adds another familiar voice to their stable full of stars. Elwood Edwards. (Who?) He's the voice you hear on AOL saying "you've got mail", "file's done", and "goodbye". Most AOL users have never taken the time to replace any of these original wav-bites with the more personalized versions offered as part of the AOL "celebrity"

series. (My personal favorite is Mick Jagger, who reminds me in his pleasant British accent, "you've got some letters!"). Will liners like "you've got traffic" or "you've got headlines" soon be heard in many of Jacor's 54 markets? Stay tuned. TW Tip #3042, #15009, #15010, #16010, #16011

Related "PD" Articles Involving Websites —

- Rick Dees "Battle Of The Sexes" on page 4
- Ron Jacobs "KGB Recycle Documentary" on page 7
- Charles Warner "Broadcast & Cable Selling" on page 8

Lifestyle File™ Why You Shouldn't Hesitate To Fund Your IRA/401K Today

"Wait and see" and "I'll do it next year" excuses can cost you money – literally! If you think you're "too young" to have to start thinking about funding your retirement, think again. Look at this great case in point as we look at —

A Tale Of Two PD's —

PD "A": The Late-Blooming Party Animal Starts investing \$2,000 a year at age 24. Then stops investing at age 30 (preferring to spend the \$2,000 a year on parties for the rest of his/her working life.

PD "B": The "Better Late Than Never" Responsible Citizen

Waits til he/she's 30 to start investing, but then puts \$2,000 a year into IRA's or 401K's for 38 straight years!

Who'll have a more secure retirement? The results may surprise you.

At age 59: "Party Animal" will have \$540,292 available for retirement. While "Responsible Citizen" will only have \$515,600. But the plot thickens...

Wait ten more years before touching

the funds and at age 69 PD "A" has \$1,732,789, while PD "B" only has \$1,693,728.

Bottom-Line: Don't delay. If you haven't already done so, get your IRA or 401K funded and rolling today. (You'll thank me for this reminder in 30 or 40 years!) And don't forget — you'll come out even further ahead by combining the "start early" benefits in example "A" with the yearly discipline of example "B". TWTip #21004

(This example assumes a 12% annual rate of return based on an annual contribution made the first day of each year, compounded semiannually with dividends and capital gains reinvested with no sales charge.)

About Teamwork

"Lead, follow, or get out of the way".
(sign on the desk of CNN and TBS Chairman **Ted Turner**)

TW Tip #7016 and #6008

Surveillance Ingredients

News Using A "News Grid"

K-Lite NEWS GRID CHECK-LIST										
Date:		Anchor:								
		5:30	6:00	6:30	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	Comments
THE BIG EVENT	The story everyone wants to hear									
HEART	Stories that tug on the heartstrings. Emotion									
POCKETBOOK	Touch the purse-strings									
HEALTH	Latest facts, diets, health news for 30-44 target									
LOCAL	Big news of local interest. Valley and State									
NATIONAL	National and world news that matters									
ENTERTAINMENT	Showbiz and celebrities									
SPORTS	Local big teams scores and schedules									
WEATHER	Forecast, conditions, suburb temp.									
TRAFFIC	Conversational lead-in. Big tie-ups first									
BASICS	Timechecks, use of call-letters, formatics									
GRADE (1-10 Scale)										
MAGIC MOMENTS	Brilliance, originality									
Strengths:		Areas To Strengthen:								

Objective: Balance, Pacing, Review

For many years, I've recommended that my clients utilize a "tally grid" that helps them quantify and analyze the "classification" of news story content in each newscast (and the entire daypart, for that matter).

Benefits -

- Helps you keep track of story-count (using a "picket-fence" count)
- Helps you spot any "gaps" ("types" of stories you haven't done in a daypart)
- Better balances each newscast - and the stories in each daypart
- Useful check-list and "report-card" during air-check critique sessions
- An effective self-grading process for news talent *between* critiques

The most important factors which should be included:

The Big Event. This is the story that your entire target audience wants to hear more about - and you have an obligation to provide. The story "leading the news", as it were. Make sure it goes *first*.

Local. The biggest news of local interest and importance (key words: interest and importance, which means this could still be a state, national, or international story, if it tweaks the interest of *enough* locals).

Heart. Stories that tug the heartstrings with emotion.

Pocketbook. Touching the purse-strings.

Health. The latest diets and health news that your target audience will find useful.

National/International. National and world news of *local* importance.

Entertainment. Showbiz and celebrities. Remember, these days, more people are interested in who Madonna is sleeping with than care about the budget deficit. Classic observation from a few years ago: more people watched "Who Shot J.R.?" than voted in the 1980 Presidential Election.

Sports. Local big teams scores and schedules. And useful background thumbnail sketches. Always keep in mind that a

key extra word or two can add tons of perspective. (e.g., "Suns lost to the Spurs last night, 98-95, despite KJ's 42 points").

Traffic. Conversational lead-in after your traffic bed establishes. Big tie-ups first along with detours that save time.

Weather. Forecasts, variance from normal, current conditions, and suburb temp or two.

Basics. Proper use of timechecks, call-letters, and formatics enhances the package.

Magic Moments. Brilliance, originality, and creativity. I've found that this "box" on the news-grid form encourages news anchors to *go out of their way* to prepare "gems". They can be genuinely "proud" (sometimes secretly so) of even the smallest clever turn of phrase (or unique angle on a story that manages to convey it to the target audience in an extraordinary manner). (It's the same effect as the proud production wiz who stops people in the hall to play them his/her latest promo).

Grade. I encourage each news anchor to grade themselves after each newscast (using the Bo Derek 10-scale). They know when they've had a "10" - and why. And encourages them to strive for personal bests.

TW Tip # 10012, #6007, #9033

Wallace Wisdom: The ideal perfectly-balanced newscast would have one story from each category. But, of course, news doesn't happen like that. However, over the course of an entire morning (or daypart), the grid-system enables you to easily see what "types" of stories haven't aired (alerting the anchor to be on the lookout for such a story). Maybe it won't get used today, but perhaps tomorrow. In the long haul, listeners will notice how *well-balanced* your newscasts are.

Story-Count: Even on a music station, each newscast should have a story-count of at least 6 actual news stories (not including sports and weather). I prefer 9 (as long as they are sharply written - sentence-and-a-half - stories).

Listeners really come away from such a solid newscast feeling "topped up" on *everything* they need to know (meaning they don't feel to need to go to another station to get "more").

TW Tip #9034, #10013, and #5015

Next Week

News-Writing Styles Of The Rich And Famous

Forgotten Basics: "Gettin' Jiggy With" Music Radio

A few basic reminders worth bringing up from time to time — about the music you play.

- ☑ "Hit" Policy — the most basic of all basics is: any song we play *is*, *was*, or *will be* a hit with our target audience.
- ☑ A "hit" to any station in a hit-axis format driven by "items" rather than image (Top 40, Country, Mainstream AC, etc.), normally means a song that is, was, or will be a Top 5 song (in terms of popularity). No mid-chart mercy-bookings to appease the record companies. Remember, you rarely get hurt by the song(s) you don't play. Sins of "o-mission" aren't as noticeable as sins of "co-mission" (especially if the sinning song tunes listeners out in droves).
- ☑ The flip-side of that: you also don't get *helped* by songs you don't play. In some formats, being perceived as "the new music leader" is an important part of "who you are" (or strive to be).
- ☑ If a song hasn't achieved Top 5 (hot rotation) status, it should never become a *recurrent* (much less an oldie). Nothing sounds worse than an old song that never made it.
- ☑ Every 15 minutes should represent a *microcosm* of your station's musical essence — *especially* the first 15-20 minutes of the hour (usually the most listened-to quarter-hour of each hour).
- ☑ Manually massaging a music log is extremely important. Scott Shannon once said that "no music-scheduling system is a match for *one switched-on music programmer* who spends 8-hours-a-day perfecting the selections and

transitions". He's right. We've all heard music mistakes on "WRCS". And that's not to pick on RCS — it's an excellent system — but it often boils down to "garbage in, garbage out". What's required is *knowledge* by the operator on how to get the *most* out of the system — and make it "pun" — or even give milk.

- ☑ Callout research enables you to reflect the musical wants and needs of your target audience. Because every song you play has its own "product life-cycle", music programming is a *moving target*, which requires regular "mid-course corrections". The more regularly you research, the more *accurate* your modifications will be. Some stations make the mistake of thinking they're "covered" as long as they do one auditorium test a year. A country station that adopts that simplistic policy will be "guessing" about *70%* of the songs they play the rest of the year. (Some PD's think that's fun — others think it's folly.) That's why *ongoing* research (at least bi-weekly) is so important for stations in hotly competitive markets. *Weekly*, of course, is *best* (two-week old burnout information can *kill* your TSL for a week — a week, I might remind you, which contains 1/12th of all of this book's diaries).

TW Tip # 2007

Next Week:

What Constitutes "Hit" Status On Oldies Radio?

And In Issue #6:

Rotations: How "Hot" Is Hot (The Audience Speaks)

Snap4! Circus Radio!

The "PD" Snap! series continues with a salute to one of Radio's most colorful characters — and major contributors — the gregarious Hawaiian, **Ron Jacobs**.

You could always tell an "early" Ron Jacobs station by its outrageous, larger-than-life, zany image. "Circus Radio". From "Drum-a-thons" to "The Big Kahuna". Suspended cars to escalating jackpots. "Hidden Keys" to "Scavenger Hunts". Jacobs played to win — and to *dazzle* listeners — by turning Radio into *big-time local showbiz*. His penchant for brilliance, however, was always bridled with *discipline*, as he encouraged his jocks to apply "preparation, concentration, and moderation" to every show.

It was during one of America's all-time great Top 40 wars that Jacobs met **Bill Drake** (they competed against each other during "the battle of Fresno", circa '63, where Jacobs discovered the genius of **Robert W. Morgan**.) Two years later, they were all collaborating on the birth of legendary "**Boss Radio**" at KHJ in Los Angeles. (Drake as consultant, Jacobs as PD, Morgan in Morning Drive).

Then in the 70's, Jacobs helped break Radio free from the boundaries of frenetic, over-formulated formatting when he "recycled" Top 40 KGB into a freer form of Rock (the forerunner of the Album Rock format). The 30-minute *KGB Recycle Documentary*® still stands as one of the great programming classics of broadcasting history (You can hear it right now on the internet at www.reelradio.com/rj/kgbdoc.html). But Jacobs' contributions went far beyond the mere "recycling" launch. KGB, under his command, trailblazed such creative originals as the first "Homegrown" album, the KGB Charity Ball (where 50,000 listeners filled San Diego Stadium), "The KGB Chicken", (now known as The San Diego Chicken), and in-depth perceptual research.

Nowadays, you can hear Ron doing his latest labor of love — his morning show, "Hawaii's Radio Magazine" on KCCN-AM/Honolulu.

TW Tip # 7015, #9033, #3041, and #4020

The "PD" Bookshelf

Broadcast & Cable Selling (3rd Edition) by Charles Warner



As a dedicated PD, you should always be on the lookout for continuing education that helps you become a *more well-rounded broadcaster* (not just programmer). It helps you better understand where your job fits in the total picture

— and — how you can better serve the listener in the grand scheme of things.

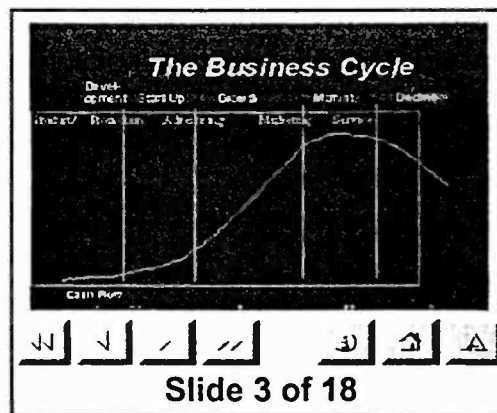
One of the most prolific and useful bodies of work to help you do just that is available to you **FREE** via the internet, thanks to one of the all-time great *givers* of our industry, Charles Warner. His writings and presentations appear courtesy of the Goldenson Program at the University Of Missouri School Of Journalism (www.missouri.edu/~jourcw).

Warner invites you to **STEAL** his new book (by downloading and printing it).

Among the many things you'll learn about are...

- The various perspectives and basic function of selling
- The SKOAPP System (involving Skills, Knowledge, Opportunities, Attitude, Preparation, & Persistence)
- The concept of marketing and positioning
- The consultative selling philosophy
- Prospecting, needs-analysis, researching and targeting ("the first steps")
- Presenting and servicing (what Warner calls "the last steps")
- Understanding and using ratings (including *plain-English* explanations of HUTs, and PUTs, and such)

Adding even more to the benefits you can gain online, you're given access to several of Warner's excellent slide presentations (like the one pictured above), featuring useful topics like "The New Paradigm of Selling", "What Business Are We In?", "Retail Presentation", "Managing With Power", "Management Style", "What Is



Leadership", "Creating Value", "Performance Coaching For Broadcast Salespeople". All presentations with practical applications to a Radio business approaching the new millennium.

Wallace Wisdom: This is the equivalent of getting a college education in Radio management — **FREE**. (There indeed is such a thing as free lunch, thanks to folks like Charlie Warner).

Suggestion: Once you've availed yourself of Mr. Warner's teachings, don't forget to e-mail a "thank-you-gram" to him for contributing to your education. (jourcw@aol.com).

TW Tip # 22005, #17003, #7014

Relating To Your Audience — Via TV

One of the best ways for an Air Talent to "connect" with a target listener is to make succinct references to that listener's favorite TV show(s). Which begs the question: **Do you know the Top Ten TV Shows with your station's (or format's) audience?** Quite often, it can be *way different* from the national Nielsen's you see published in the paper.

For example, TV shows known to grab 35-54's but not 18-34's include: *60 Minutes*, *Touched By An Angel*, *20/20*, *Dateline*, *Law & Order*, *Walker/Texas Ranger*, and *Chicago Hope* (not necessarily in that order). In reverse, *The Simpsons*, *Melrose*, *90210*, *Newsradio*, *Suddenly Susan*, *Naked Truth*, and *Party Of Five* are shows that register well with 18-34's but not 35-54's.

Quick-and-dirty do-it-yourself research that works: To get a good thumbnail sketch of your audience's TV habits, have request-line operators (or your jocks or board-ops) ask callers this open-end question:

"Can you tell me 3 or 4 of your favorite TV shows?"
"And what are some of the shows you avoid watching?"

Keep a running tally for about 500 calls. Repeat the process every 3-6 months (to note trends). It ain't scientific, but it'll be *real close* to the actual truth. (If you have a perceptual research project in the field, double-check it in a side-by-side study. You'll come away a believer!) Might also be worth doing a quick cable-poll (the demographic appeal of CNN or MSNBC is far different than MTV or VH1). TW Tip # 19011

Side Benefit: Better Buys. In addition to helping your air-staff know which TV shows are hot (and not), your TV Show Impact Study will also help you identify shows that could (or should) be included in your next TV buy. If you target an older demo, you may find some major cost-efficiencies here (since CPM's for older-skewing shows are often lower than buying young-demo-appeal programs).

TW Tip #19010, #6006, and #1020

In Defense Of Clichés —

Some PD's shy away from the use of clichés when writing promo copy, but clichés often represent some of the most *effective* methods of conveying a message by applying an economy of

words to the art of painting mental pictures listeners can quickly "get".

Wallace Wisdom: The Shortest Distance Between Two Minds Is The Cliché

The key — is staying away from clichés that are "icky sweet", hackneyed, corny,

Clichés: "Good As Gold"

or *way overused* (to the point where they lose their effectiveness or impact). But good one's sure as Hell... are clear as a bell. Aren't they? TW Tip #9031 and #3038

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

The Failure Avoidance Formula: $\uparrow F + \downarrow S = 1$

(Continued from Page 3)

The key: Certainly *concentrate* your efforts on the *primary objectives* (your short-list) but don't stop at just a short-list. Construct a *long-list*. And *sub-lists* underneath your short-list, which can help you "chunk it down" into more bite-size, achievable and manageable goals. The culmination of achieving lots of *sub-goals* can have a *synergistic effect* on the main-goal (you may actually end up achieving *more* than you set out to!) Always remember: Small improvements can make a *big difference*.

Wallace Wisdom: If I've had any success over the years as a consultant, it's probably because I've learned to become a "programming psychologist" for my clients. Sometimes just talking about problems "out loud" gets things on the table for all to see, where they can be more readily dealt with and solved (or improved).

So when I visit a client to conduct a "White Paper Report" monitor, my first step as a "programming doctor" is to ask the management team, "Where does it hurt?". And — "Is it costing us rating-points?" "How many?". ("You want a second opinion? — okay, you're ugly, too!") ("Now cough!")

**"Always remember:
Small improvements
can make a BIG
difference"**

You don't need *me* to do that for you — you can do it yourself. If you're a practicing disciple of "Participative Management" style, maybe you could do it at your next department head or programming staff meeting.

(Short plug: in coming weeks, we'll talk more about the virtues of PM — and how it can help you achieve *more* in a *shorter* time-frame).

Meantime, try putting the Failure Avoidance Formula to work for you — in every facet of your life. It really *does* move mountains. $\uparrow F + \downarrow S = 1$

TW Tip # 7013 and #21003

Coming Next Week —

In The World's *Fastest-Growing* Programming Newsletter

The
**O.K.O.P.
Factor**

A HIRING "Secret" You Should Know!

And

And

Also

Winning Positions Phase 2

- ✓ "Format Face-Offs"
- ✓ "Positioning Mosaics"
- ✓ and Benchmarking

Unobtrusive

Sponsorable Sales Features
PD's will **LOVE**

Word Of Mouth —

The **Best** Advertising
Money **Can't** Buy
How To **Start** The Ball Rolling

Cut-Through Campaigns: The "Sexy 7" Of Outdoor

Consumer research* reveals that the color combinations that cut-through best on billboards are:

- 1) Black on Yellow 2) Black On White 3) Yellow On Black 4) White On Black 5) Blue On White
6) White On Blue 7) Blue On Yellow * Source: The Institute Of Outdoor Advertising TW Tip #3036 & #19009

Stick-Out Stickers: From personal experience, for radio station car-stickers, I've found that the color combinations of Red and Blue on White or Red, Blue, and Black on White seem to test best**. Translation: "test best" means "catch the eye" and appeal to the most target-age listeners. Caveat: great *design* (or an original or unique concept) outpulls any and all color schemes. (X-109's chartreuse-on-pink Million Dollar Sticker will bring listeners out of the woodwork!) ** Source: Radio Index Research.

TW Tip #3037 and #19010

Programmer's Digest

Food For Thought

Paying Attention To Paradigms

Judging by e-mail posts and feedback in the various Radio chat rooms, message boards, and electronic roundtables, it seems that "Virtual Radio" (computerized digital automation of pre-recorded voice-tracks) has really struck a nerve. On both sides of the fence.

It's either the greatest thing since One Day Cricket (management's position) – or – the worst thing to hit Radio since Kato Kaelin's "hard-hitting" talkshow in LA (the opinion of most soon-to-be out-of-work jocks).

Most personalities don't want to hear the point many well-reasoned leaders put forward that 90% of small market personalities are just whiny, sniveling wannabe's who "take up space" – so why not let a better, more talented (pre-recorded) voice do their job without all the hassle. The argument continues, "Why should I pay someone a full-time salary to do 'show-and-go' (consisting of only 3 or 4 actual live-breaks an hour and a whole lotta' time on the request-lines)?"

Paraphrasing Randy Michaels cogent comments on this issue, "if all you can do is read liners and weather reports, you better be able to do it very well, and you'd better be *prepared* to do it for 75 stations".

Conversely, most management-types seem to turn a deaf ear toward the legitimate points raised by the truly *dedicated* small and medium market air talents make that "live and local" is often Radio at its *compelling best* (and still can and should be).

Coming up in "PD" Issue # 6, we'll feature an in-depth, *all-angles* examination of the plusses and minuses of VR – including a "how-to" check-list of ways to make "apparently live" programming sound "live and local".

But my purpose in bringing it up right now, aside from the shameless plug (hey, that's my version of "quarter-hour maintenance", okay? – cut me some slack!), is to point out the obvious – that we're smack in the middle of a major shifting-paradigm that is going to separate the wheat from the chaff.

Just as buggy-whips, train travel, and vinyl records are no longer part of our everyday lives, the Radio environment of old will not continue. That's progress. "Survivors" need to be thinking of ways to demonstrate their true

value and worth

to their employers. In the past few years, thousands of GM's and PD's have lost their jobs (many of them truly *great* Radio people who've been forced to abandon the industry they love!). Now many thousands of jocks need to prepare themselves for the present (and coming) reality of VR. Put another way, with all the out-of-work jocks out there, this wouldn't exactly be the best time to open up a Radio School featuring free job placement.

The "reality" of VR is: It's *not* going to just "go away". Yes, it will have its hiccups along the way (presenting subsequent opportunities for "live and local" operators to exploit these temporary vulnerabilities). But long term, VR stations will learn how to better "camouflage" (if not completely eliminate) these problems (especially as both hardware and software becomes even more sophisticated, enabling still greater capabilities and flexibility).

My message to any medium/small market air talents (many of whom are also PD's) who want their livelihood to continue is:

- **Learn new ways to make yourself more useful.** The remaining "live personalities" of the new millennium will feel right "at home" in cross-utilization programs (doubling as the Production Director, music-scheduling wizard, promotions guru, and maybe even the janitor.) As an on-air PD, you're half way to being home-and-hosed.
- **And, if necessary, do some serious work on adjusting your attitude.** Some of us really do have "can-do", "what can I do to help?" attitudes all the time! 24/7! There's no reason you can't, too (if you just apply yourself and work at it). Mark my words it's going to be *expected* of you!
- **The upside is:** doing your part to contribute to the collective energy of a staff-full of positive-thinkers is *infectious* – and *exciting* – and *fun!* (Who says the fun's gone out of Radio? *I'm still havin' fun!*) When you *always* see the glass as "half-full" and take charge of situations to *make sure* that "things always happen for the better", *good things just "naturally" seem to follow.*

TW Tip # 7012 and # 6005

The silver lining:

There may indeed be fewer jobs in the Radio of the future – but they'll probably be better paying, more fulfilling gigs. And because only the strong will survive, it means your co-workers will be "the very *best* of the best". This is important, since one of the great benefits of synergistic teamwork is that *you tend to become* as good as the people you work with.

All The Best,



P.S.

Next week: I'll have a major announcement!

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