

The Melody Lingers

An **EXCLUSIVE**

**Special
Report**

By **Bob Shannon**

He was only 19, maybe 20. He was a first-time PD who'd never bought jingles before, "I like the stuff you did for 'PLJ'", he said, "but the thing is (pause) my frequency isn't 95-5. Do I have to keep that?" I didn't laugh. I've heard others say things like it. "I can't use those jingles cause that's not my slogan" . . . and . . . "hell, we can't sing Louisville weather here in Utah!". No kidding!

The truth is that if you've never shopped for jingles, you really don't know what you're about to face. But, hold it! Why buy jingles in the first place?

I've always thought it was for the *showbiz*. That the very act of getting jingles to sing your station's name (or maybe *your* name) brought a *bigness* to your station's sound (not to mention the *memorability* of your calls being sung).

(Continued — see *Melody Lingers* on page 2)

Cleese *of the*
Encounters *Best Kind*

British humorist/actor **John Cleese** (of *Monty Python*, *Fawlty Towers*, *A Fish Called Wanda*, *Fierce Creatures*, and *Schweppervescence* fame) has been called by many the funniest man in the world.

But not many people outside of British Commonwealth countries know that this former Python head-writer (who studied to become a lawyer at Cambridge) has also written and starred in numerous

(Continued — see *Cleese* on Page 5)

Continuing Education For The Dedicated Radio Programmer

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Programmer's Digest Publisher/Editor **Todd Wallace** continues to maintain his Phoenix-based programming consultation firm, **Todd Wallace/Associates**. He has provided programming consultation services to over 100 radio stations in the U.S., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines. Believing that "*good logic, solid strategy, and cunning tactics know no boundaries*", his clients have included formats of all types in markets of all sizes. Reach TW at **(480) 443-3500** or e-mail: **TW3tw3@aol.com**

The Melody Lingers

(Continued — from page 1) So whether you plan to get the jingles that the radio station you most want to emulate uses, or the ones the station you grew up listening to used, or even if you're not sure, here are some things you should know.

① You have the right to ask for any vocal style you want.

Even if the package you choose is demonstrated with a 7-voice group or a 5-voice, or a solo, duet, or any combination, you can ask for any vocal style as long as the lyrics you choose will fit on the track.

② You have the right to attend the session. And if you can't be there, you have the right to attend via phone or ISDN. Remember — it's *your* package.

③ You have the right to expect that your jingles will sound as good as the demo — or better!

This means that you can ask for a re-do if you don't like the results. This doesn't mean, however, that you can change your mind about lyrics after the session, but it does mean that you can ask for another performance of the lyrics you approved — unless, of course, you were there at the session and signed-off on the way it was sung (then, you should expect to be charged for a re-sing).

④ You have the right to ask the jingle house for help, and if you've never cut jingles before, it'd be a great idea to. For example, you should expect to get advice on how your lyrics will work. If your lyrics are going to be a "train wreck", you should expect to be warned and to be given alternative possibilities. (If the lyric is "106 point 1, Kiss FM", don't try to sing "favorites of the 70's, 80's, and today, 102 point 3, WXXX" — it'll never work!!!) Any jingle company worth their salt would rather turn down business than do work that won't sound great on the air.

⑤ You have the right to ask that your jingles are delivered on time (according to the schedule agreed upon at the time of purchase).

⑥ By the same token, you should plan ahead. Give some thought as to what you want to accomplish before you even pick up the phone. And if you don't *know* exactly what you want, be prepared to articulate what you *don't* want.

Remember that recording jingles is both a creative process and one that is labor intensive. As with all things, good work should not be rushed.

TW Tip #9166

**"Tight is right . . .
as long as we
play the *right* tight."**

— Steve Rivers

VP/Chief Programming Officer
Chancellor Media

On the virtues of tight lists

TW Tip #2145

Bob Shannon has been with TM Century (and its predecessor TM Productions) since 1980. Prior to that, he held programming and on-air positions at KZEW/Dallas, WBCN/Boston, KUPD/Phoenix, KHYT/Tucson, XEROK-80 and KELP/EI Paso.

Bob wrote and produced Billboard Magazine's 1983 "Radio Special Of The Year" ("An American Christmas").

Reach Bob by phone in Dallas at (972) 406-6805 or by e-mail at bshannon@tmcentury.com.

**RJ
On
AM**

"AM Radio is like herpes. We forgot all about it when AIDS came along. Sorry, but that analogy reflects how FM, generally, has blown away AM radio in listener consciousness. My deepest congratulations to anyone doing well on AM in 1999. And the smaller the market you're doin' it in, the more impressive the accomplishment!"

— Ron Jacobs, Consultant to KCCN-AM, KCCN-FM, KINE/Honolulu

TW Tip #1093

Traditional Oldies (Continued from **PD** issue #36)

Quick review of key points from last week:

- ✓ Thanks to short record-lengths, the Traditional Oldies format is able to play more songs per hour than any other primary format (between 16-19 songs an hour). (We'll use 17 in our examples).
- ✓ The first filter a Traditional Oldies station should apply to any song being considered for airplay:
 - 1 Was it a Top 5 hit when it was out?
 - 2 Was it a TEEN hit when it was out?
 - 3 Does it still have 35-49 appeal today?
- ✓ In any given year, 50 "top five" hits will usually chart. This provides a pool of at least 500 proven chart-hits for a station targeting a 10-year demo-window (or as many as 1,000 if that window is expanded to 20 years).

Stacking The Categories

The beauty of being able to play so many songs an hour is that it enables you to be very *precise* in your categorization — and thus, your rotations. Most major markets tier their categories (based on the present popularity of the song), using as many as 8 basic categories:

Powers	(as many as 3 tiers)
Late 50's	(as many as 2 tiers)
Early 60's	(as many as 3 tiers)
Mid 60's	(as many as 3 tiers)
Late 60's	(as many as 3 tiers)
Early 70's	(as many as 3 tiers)
Beatles	(as many as 3 tiers)
Motown	(as many as 3 tiers)
Flavor	(as many as 3 tiers)

Powers

This is essentially an "essence" rotation of proven killers that really nail the core sound of the format with positive familiarity. Songs are placed according to their researched strength. **Super-Powers** usually turn over every "day minus a daypart", **Powers** rotate at "a day and a daypart", with **Almost-Powers** going every 2-plus days. Some stations go as tight as 13 hours on their hottest

Power rotation (one station even does 11 hours during certain strategic times of a ratings-period).

Year-Spans

The remainder of the hourly slots are then usually devoted to tiered-categories which are designed to maintain varietal-separation of year-spans and/or balance codes (like Motown, Beatles, British, Psychadelic, Woodstock, etc.). (I'm a big believer in several levels of Beatle rotations, because of their continued popularity with the P1 core and their ability to both cut-through and enhance variety).

The "Most Creative Use Of Year-Spans" Award goes to **Kipper McGee**, PD of K-Best95 in San Diego, who programs eras based on Presidential terms (which, coincidentally, you'll note, are often associated with *major* societal changes, which, in turn, are reflected in music). Various levels of "Ikes", "JFKs", "LBJs", and "Nixons" make sense.

Excuse Programming

In addition to several "flavor" tiers of "oh wow" stuff, most stations also like to invent good "reasons" to play non-stress material, to expand their perceived scope beyond just "the same old 350 songs, over and over and over". This can be done with regular features like "instant requests", all-request lunch-hours, theme weekends, and one-off artist birthday salutes. When you highlight them as such, most listeners tend to understand that you haven't lowered your selection standards.

Artist Separations

Generally 70 minutes on most artists, though some stations trim that to as little as 50 minutes on certain prolific artists. Very few stations "package" or "clip" similar-sounding songs by the same artist.

TW Tip #2146

Next Week:

- How To Use *Multiple Wheels* To "Notch" Your Clock Forward
- Is There A *Better Way* To Research Oldies Appeal?
- TW's "Eras Of Musical Influence" Chart (another "PD" StealableTemplate)
- And the CLOCKS!



PDQ&A

Q:

Mike Rogers, PD of Pacific Star's KAKQ/Fairbanks, AK asks:

"I have a midday talent who has the potential of becoming a very good air personality. I've done just about everything possible to get her to open up and connect emotionally with our listeners. Too often, she'll sound a little too much like a "jock" on-the-air, yet when in contact with people in "real" situations, she is a gem. When she does liners, she sounds like she's reading yet she can communicate a liner out of her head with no script and sound very natural. Any suggestions on how I can get this person to open up?"

A:

Attaining the right level of "human communication" can be difficult and elusive, even for professional communicators.

But a few key methods and philosophical approaches have been known to aid the process.

Consistency. It's encouraging to know that your potential superstar performer is already able to hit the high mark occasionally. My take on that has always been: if you can do it right once, you can do it right *every time*, every set, every show (if you just put your mind to it). This will require some self-discipline on her part, but it will pay off. And after awhile, striving for perfection every break becomes second nature — and ultimately a regular "habit".

Preparation, Concentration, Moderation. **Ron Jacobs'** words to his Boss Jocks at KHJ still ring true today, in every format. You can usually tell when a jock isn't prepared for a break (and in my mind, there is no excuse for it). And it's also usually obvious when a personality isn't focusing **100% concentration** on his/her show. (They don't convey the liners like they mean what they're saying, they slur the call-letters, positioning statements, and branding elements, and they often rush through a set with no "feeling", etc.). Usually the biggest reason for lack of focused attention: Control Room visitors!

Inflection. The one piece of advice that seems to cure the most ills (when it comes to sounding "human" on-the-air) is — **making sure that**

inflectional peaks and valleys are appropriately placed in every sentence. I can't say enough about the importance of inflection *highs*, in particular. For some reason, many jocks (particularly guys, who apparently want their voice-tone to be "low") tend to "hold back" from hitting a "high note" on the appropriate key word. But you'll note that many of the most effective communicators even go to the "extreme" of *over-inflecting* on key words, to make sure the point cuts through. (Study Paul Harvey, he does this better than anyone).

Here's why it works: In real life, we all use hand-gestures to emphasize our key words and points. But on the radio, people can't "see" you talking. So you must let them "hear" your finger stabs. A slight over-inflection accomplishes that. Actor **William Shatner** once said that the ethereal distance between film and the human eye similarly requires an over-emphasis to communicate key lines (which sometimes requires the appropriate amount of over-acting). So encourage all of your personalities to over-inflect (especially with inflectional highs on trigger words and key points). You'll notice an immediate difference.

How the PD can help: Whenever I write promos and liners (and newsletters, for that matter), I go out of my way to make **SURE** that the *right key words* are in some way accentuated. Sometimes DOUBLE under-lined (or TRIPLE-underscoring).

In this way, if the personality inflectionally-punches the wrong word, you know *you've* done everything possible to put a handle on it for them — it's probably because they're just not paying attention (which can be dealt with in other ways).

Another way to help: It's difficult to legislate the "perfect" one-size-fits-all format for liners and promos. Some hosts like liners to be word perfect, so they can bob-and-weave around the prepared text with their special brand of extra comments. While others prefer to have a simple fact sheet outline of only the key points which they can spin into a "fresh" liner every time. So — why not supply *both* styles in the Control Room? That way, your jocks can choose which style fits them (or the moment) best. Finally, encourage your air-staff to rewrite your liners into their own words (or their own Cliff's Notes cheat-sheet). As long as the main thrust of the message is properly related, who cares what it takes to get it done. TW Tip #6203, #7213, #9171

Next Week

Effortlessness, Linkers, Props, Ricochet Points, and 1-To-1

Ocean Toons®

Check out the official Bobby Ocean creative web-site at www.bobbyocean.com. Full of interesting ideas, links, quotes, production samples, and voiceover demos. E-Mail Osh at oceanvox@pacbell.net

Jeff Young's Radio 411 (www.radio411.com) is the cyber-home of Ocean Toons and the Bobby Ocean Cartoon Gallery.

DELIA SPINS ANOTHER ROOKIE PD AROUND...



LISTEN, I SHOULD GET AN EXTRA SICK DAY A MONTH FOR WHAT YOUR STUPID MEMOS DO TO MY OVARIES...

Cleese Encounters

- the patience not to force the issues
- the readiness to mull things over and
- the humility to allow our unconscious mind to do the thinking

The tortoise cannot fail to win when it has intuition and inspiration on its side. Claxton also pushes for a reevaluation of society's obsession with results-oriented thinking and problem-solving under pressure.

Hare Brain, Tortoise Mind is in its first hardback printing (released in Feb 99). 272 pages, Ecco Press. The Amazon.com price is \$18.17. TW Tip #7211

Important Update

Here's a heads-up on an article that appeared about year ago in **Programmer's Digest** (see "PD" issue #2, page 3) about *Programming To (And Through) The Filter System Of The Listener's Mind*.

In that article we noted, "(programming to the filter-system) is the reason a growing number of stations today are using sweepers that say 'Magic 88.8 is an Arbitron-rated station'". That was a year ago.

Since then, Arbitron has ruled! Dave Willinski at Arbitron states

that such a liner would be in **violation** of their ratings bias and distortion policies. When in doubt about a liner or a slogan, of course, a station should always run it by Arbitron first to be sure. (They'll tell you very quickly what's allowed — and what's not). Please note that we did not recommend that stations should run this liner (we merely reported that some stations were doing it). Just wanted to make sure that "PD" readers know that we'd never knowingly mislead them by encouraging formatic contraband.

TW Tip #1094, #3201, #7212, #9170, and #20029

The "PD" Radio Quiz

How many GMs does it take to change a light bulb?

"It's not in the budget, work in the dark."

How many PDs does it take to change a light bulb?

"How bad /S the light bulb?"

How many Production Directors does it take?

"We had had a light bulb in here?"

How many Engineers does it take?

"I've had it on order should be here next week"

How many part-timers does it take?

"F*ck this place, who gives a sh*t, anyway?"

How many promotions people does it take?

We don't know, but you'd better tell them to change it now, before it burns out.

Thanks to Jim Davis, new Market Manager for Jacor's Sarasota cluster, for passing this along.

**Dr. Don Rose
Is Coming To
"PD"
SOON!**

Programmer's Digest

Sweepers/Liners/Splitters/Bumpers

Oldies B97. If you're enjoying the great Oldies from the '50s and '60s in your car right now, be sure to set a button. Then you'll always have great oldies at your fingertips. Oldies B97!

Kate Patin keeps you up to date with all the goss in Fox FM's Dirt Alert. And — you might just be the recipient of a Snack Attack at your workplace. So nominate your workplace now.

(image voice): Say it, say it and win.

What's the phrase? What do you say when we call?

(listeners): "Hi Star, now give me my money." Star 100.7!

107.5 WGCI. We play the hits, and we're giving you a chance to win \$10,000.

KSON, San Diego, where it's lunchtime!

(bell sfx) Time to order up your requests and dedications at Nick's Diner! FM 97.3 KSON!

Chicago's *Oldies* station, Oldies 104.3.

(male) The-the-the new (female) Q102!

(jingle): "Philadelphia!"

(male) Now, now, all the hits on *one* radio station!

(female) The new, the new —

(male) Q102, Philly's number one Hit music station!

The new — (jingle) "Q" (female) Q! (jingle): "102!"

Another 30 minutes of continuous music, made possible by (sponsor) — next on B101.

Elements of Stationality

Broadcasting live from a tall antenna with flashing lights so airplanes won't hit it! The best variety of the '80s and '90s, Y92.5!

Talking less leaves time for MORE music, on 96.1, Mix 96.

And now, here's the first of at least 10 great Oldies in-a-row, on the station you sing along to.

(jingle): "98.1, WOGL-FM Philadelphia"

Oldies 98, J-J-Jammin' the Oldies into your radio!"

Columbus' *longest* music sweep with another 12 in-a-row. Right here on the station that tells you all the names of the songs and the singers! Buckeye Country!

(jingle) "WCOL-FM, Columbus"

K-Frog 95.1 KFRG, where we're terrified at the thought of playing less than 12 in-a-row for you every hour. K-Frog 95.1 KFRG.

(jingle): "Sunny shines!"

Short on talk, *long* on great music! 25 minute long sets of the best variety of the '70s, '80s, and '90s is on Sunny!

(jingle): "Sunny 95!"

And now, San Diego's *Godfather* of Old School, Chio the Hit Man, on the new Magic 92.5..

Oldies B-97 with a Double Dose of Motown (played between two Motown songs)

TW Tip #9167, #4108, and #3199

Coming Next Week In The World's **Fastest Growing** Programming Newsletter

Now in 20 countries!

Classic Drew

How **PAUL DREW**

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April Fool!

Continued —
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by jumping onto a trampoline from a hovering helicopter. (He never said he'd do it on April 1st, he said he'd do it "this Thursday"). Listeners and other news media were invited to come see the big event. Jock took off in the chopper, which went up 100 feet. Before "jumping", he waved to the cheering crowd. Then a dummy, dressed in the same colored jumpsuit, jumped for the trampoline — and missed. As everyone in the crowd gasped, a huge banner was deployed from the chopper declaring "April Fool from X-109FM". Made national TV news that night. **If you do this:** it's very important that the "April Fool" banner be unfurled exactly one second after the dummy hits the ground.

□ **April Fuels Day.** Q92/Sudbury, Ont. teased the week before 4/1 they'd be "talking over another station" causing listeners to speculate all kinds of crazy format scenarios. On April 1st, they spent the day broadcasting live from their new station — a gas station where everyone who came by got \$9.27 (frequency link) worth of free gas.

□ **Changing Stations.** Similar one courtesy of **Joel Raab**: Morning show says they're changing stations on Thursday. Listeners call all week, begging them not to leave. Thursday, morning show is live at Texaco giving away free gas for 109 (frequency) minutes.

□ **Free Beers.** Good one to tie-in to a local pub. We'll have "free beers" for an hour tonight at 5. A sizeable crowd comes by to see what turns out to be Goldilocks and the "three bears". (Everyone gets a free beer, too).

Here's one that involves your entire personality line-up, which **Ron Jacobs** did when he was PD of KPOI in Honolulu.

□ **Jocks On Strike.** All the jocks went "on strike", frolicking in electric boats in the Ala Wai Canal (directly across from the studios), while the owners, GM, sales and office staff pulled airshifts until about Noon.

Another great Jacobs classic which he did on his morning show on KPOI in the early 60's:

□ **One Set Ahead.** Intro and back-announce each song using the artist/title of the *next* record you play, with nothing else changed. (Maybe not a good idea if your station is VR'd and this actually happens from time to time). Do it with a straight face, tell anyone who calls-in that something must be wrong with their radio. It can seriously damage the brain just thinking about it. Requires 110% concentration from the jock.

Involve A Celebrity (Or Two)

Anytime you involve a well-known luminary, your stunt suddenly takes on more credibility and makes it easier to fool listeners. Like when the Tampa TV reporter got in cahoots with **Sam Weich**, then-Head Coach of the Tampa Bay Bucs.

□ **The Coach Is Fired Rumor.** Weich stormed out of the team headquarters, speeding off in his car, with the reporter chasing after him yelling, "Is it true? Is it true?". Of course, other reporters picked up on it, fanning the flames, and soon all Tampa TV and radio stations were airing reports that "according to reliable sources" Weich had been fired. Of course, Weich came back a few hours later, with a big silly grin on his face as he high-fived his TV reporter accomplice. Sssssucked in! Made national news.

One of my prouder April Fool accomplishments occurred I was OM/PD of KTAR/Phoenix.

□ **Phoenix Suns Pay-Per-Listen.** Deep background: KTAR is the flagship station of the Phoenix Suns Radio Network. That year, the Suns were placing several games on Pay-Per-View Cable TV (which many viewers were very upset about, because the Suns were red hot that year). Our topical April Fool's project centered around a "new technology" that would enable KTAR to provide "pay-per-listen" broadcasts of Suns games on the radio. A series of promos explained that listeners could get the entire game for \$6.20 (the station's frequency) or pay 25 cents to hear the last 5 minutes. Pay-per-listen would require that all listeners buy new "pay radios" which have a slot in which you deposit your money to hear the games. 3 things converged to make this absurd story believable:

- Suns CEO **Jerry Colangelo** had a great sense of humor and played right along with it, giving us preposterous soundbites, with a straight poker-face, like "Well, we just figured it was another good way to milk more money out of the market."
- Suns play-by-play announcer **Al McCoy** (who is one of the most loved, highest q-score personalities in town) gave us a soundbite about "how excited he was to be a part of this great broadcasting first".
- Promos featured a backwards-recording to show what the Suns play-by-play would sound like if you don't pay for the broadcast.

Listeners who called the special "Pay-Per-Listen Hotline" to find out more were greeted with "April Fool!!!!", and they were encouraged to tell a friend to listen to KTAR and play the prank on them. By early afternoon, we came clean with an announcement that it was all a joke (using soundbites of reactions from listeners who took it good-naturedly), which we put into a follow-up promo.

Goals Analysis: The long-term hidden benefits of this promotion stressed several selling points:

- ✓ that KTAR was the Suns station,
- ✓ that the station was tight with Colangelo,
- ✓ most importantly, it reinforced that during the pay-per-view controversy you could hear every game free on KTAR.
- ✓ Best of all, every local TV station covered it, as did both daily newspapers (with positive stories).
- ✓ And KTAR generated word-of-mouth curiosity-cume from the "tell a friend" ploy.

Killed a lot of birds with just one stone. (Continued — page 10)

Nothin' But 'Net

KTU Work Perk Patrol

W W W E B

W W W I S E™

WKTU/New York invites web-surfers to win prizes from the KTU "Work Perk Patrol" by e-mailing their name, their **work address**, and phone number to KTU. Chosen workplaces get showered with gifts, prizes, and other perks.

TW Tip #3187, #4103, #15055, and #16064



April Fool!

Continued —
from page 3

Another good personality reinforcer . . .

❑ Suspended. Pull your breakfast/morning jock off-the-air before his/her shift would normally end on 3/31. Run promos saying, "As of tomorrow, Jock Name will be suspended". Then he/she broadcasts live on 4/1 from a car suspended by a crane at a high-volume location. (To add a contest twist: guess when he/she comes down to win the car).

Bill Pasha, VP/Programming at CBS/Baltimore tells of one he once used.

❑ The Gold Rush. Morning jock announced that gold had been discovered aboard the USS Constellation. Because public money was fixing the ship, after it's fixed the rest of the gold was will be distributed before Noon at the Inner Harbor, first come, first served. The place was mobbed. Make sure everyone who shows up gets a free prize of some kind (with the occasional \$20, \$50, and \$100 bills to take the sting out of any inconvenience).

Perhaps the objective is to reinforce your outdoor or transit campaign . . .

❑ Upside Down. Arrange an upside-down billboard or bus-back for the day. Makes people notice it more (and maybe tune in the station to see what the heck you're up to).

Don't feel you have to get too complicated in identifying an objective. Remember, if you try to accomplish *too* much, your high concept "plan" may get in the way of the spontaneity and sound "too pre-fab"/calculating.

A valid purpose might be to simply **generate positive word-of-mouth** — especially if you know you can get TV or newspaper coverage of your 4/1 event.

The all-time town-talk classic that comes to my

mind occurred in Sydney, done by **Ian McRae**, then-Breakfast jock on 2SM (back when it was the reigning Top 40 station 25 years ago).

❑ Jumbo Under The Harbour Bridge. It occurred about the time that Qantas Airways had just purchased several new 747 jumbo-jets for their fleet. Throughout his brekky show, McRae talked about how he had just made arrangements with Qantas to celebrate their expanded fleet by "putting" a jumbo under the Sydney Harbour Bridge, a dominant landmark. Several small planes and helicopters flown by daredevil pilots had flown under the bridge before, but the mental picture of a jumbo flying under the bridge was mindboggling. (They implied it would be "flown" under the bridge without actually using the f-word.) McRae interviewed a Qantas pilot who said he was confident he could do it and invited listeners to show up at 10am to see this *once in a lifetime event* in Sydney Harbour. As the clock struck 10, a barge hauling a giant (jumbo) elephant, with the 2SM call-letters plastered on its side, and the pilot, dressed in his uniform, passed under the bridge to the cheers of several thousand people who showed up to see it. Everybody knew they'd been had, but it was harmless fun you had to chuckle about — and tell a friend about. Front page headlines! Extensive coverage on TV! And something that was talked about for years after!

❑ World's Record Trampoline Jump. Another one of my favorites occurred in New Zealand in the mid-80's (wish I could remember which market/station so I could give them full credit). The breakfast jock promoted for the week prior that he was going to try to break the Guinness world record for the highest trampoline jump,

(Continued — see April Fool on page 9)

Programmer's Digest

The Insert

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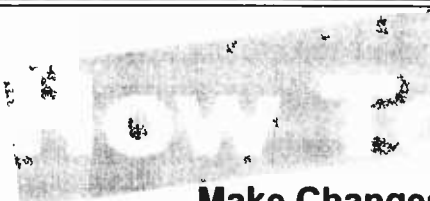
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