

Holland Cooke Newsletter • April '19

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“Play ball!”

The magic words fans have been waiting to hear after a long winter. MILK IT.

Mathematically, baseball may be affiliates' best friend for several months, during-which it invites new come, and tune-in to fringe hours; and is full of suspense and commercial inventory that sells without numbers.

Three tips on page 2.

“Russia, if you are listening: Can you get us a copy of the Mueller report?”

Quip on Social Media as cable news reporters were breathlessly sight-reading the Attorney General's summation. From it:

“The Special Counsel states that while this report does not conclude that the President committed a crime, it also does not exonerate him.”

U.S. Attorney General William Barr

“Release it all rather than let Congress leak it in dribs and drabs.”

Wall Street Journal editorial

Donald Trump was already THE – repeat, THE – best thing that every happened to Talk Radio and cable news, and it only gets better, as sixteen other Trump investigations continue, and no minds are changed. So Rush/Sean/Fox affiliates have a powerful Mon-Fri 6A-7P franchise. Those with baseball also have a 7-midnight franchise. And smart Talk stations' weekend programming is a third money tree IF IT DOESN'T STINK. Weekend shows CAN BE as-habit-forming as they are advertiser-friendly. This is a priority at my client stations.

WHAT NOW, if...

- **Radio listening on smart speakers has doubled. And...**
- **“Social Media usage appears to have stalled.” And...**
- **“Podcasting has reached a milestone, with the majority of Americans now saying they have ever listened to one.” And...**
- **“Online audio has reached a new high in weekly time spent listening.” And...**
- **YouTube = music?**

If you missed the Edison Research/Triton Digital “Infinite Dial 2019” webinar this past month, you can see the video and flip through the slides at HollandCooke.com.

My short version – and what-it-all-means to radio stations – begins on page 4...

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6 IDEAS IN 5 MINUTES

1. Tip for baseball stations: **OUTSIDE** of games...

...use your on-hour ID to plug team-and-time of next game.

Why:

- Doing so really signs-the-station's-name to the team. Play-by-play was more of a franchise before SiriusXM and streaming audio made them available elsewhere. So be known for having the games.
- In The Age of Trump, station imaging that invites tune-in to on-hour newscasts WILL produce more Occasions of Listening, so the on-hour ID is beachfront real estate. Too many stations squander this opportunity by saying that the news "STARTS RIGHT NOW." Like printing "banana" on the yellow peel.
- At client stations where – in locally hosted hours – the host reads it live over a station logo bed, talking-up the on-hour news, hosts are INTO it.
- Face it, we're not going to talk anyone-who-isn't-a-fan into listening to the game. So – other than Sales sponsorship commitments – longer promos don't accomplish much. What matters to FANS is who-we-play-and-when. It's a 10-second message.

2. Tip for baseball stations: **IN-GAME**...

...use your legal ID to plug morning drive.

Why:

- Fans may only come to the station for games. And because most baseball games are on at night, the next daypart most fans hear is morning drive, prime time. So give them a reason to come back "FIRST THING TOMORROW MORNING!" Ideally, your morning host does a daily topical promo (which begins with a question that includes "YOU" and/or "YOUR").
- Least-useful in-game ID promo I often hear: station imaging voice, or team players, telling me this is where-to-hear-the-games...DURING games. Like printing "banana" on the yellow peel.

3. Sales reps at baseball stations: **For your tickler file...**

After much of the USA shivered through a C-C-COLD winter, The Boys of Summer are a welcome sound to fans, and a great branding opportunity for local retailers. I don't know WHEN I'm going to buy a tire, but I already know WHERE, because that advertiser owns "tire" in my brain via Red Sox games.

- Set a June 1 reminder in your smartphone: "Update copy for baseball advertisers?"
- "Baseball is back!" might've been great to hear in April spot copy. But, to listeners, it's blah-blah-blah in July. And to your client, it screams neglect.

4. Sales reps everywhere: **GREAT question to ask on Needs Analysis call: "What's the biggest mistake I make if I buy from your competition?"**

5. Talk hosts: **PLEASE stop thanking callers for waiting on Hold.**

Why send that message to listeners-you-WISH-would-call? The busy people advertisers want to meet don't have time to wait.

6. Want more podcast subscribers? **Get featured on others' podcasts.**

Their listeners are already listening to podcasts. Pitch 'em an angle on their topic, and invite them to appear on your podcast (or your show, if you're a broadcaster, which makes you "a get" for them).

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“Today’s Bonus Question...”

Smart Talk Radio hosts have always kept an evergreen file, undated call-in topics for use back when we had slow news days.

Back to the future: With willing media content to take dictation from President Donald Trump there are no slow news days. But there is evidence of Trump Fatigue. So I’m impressed with results of a technique hosts I work with use to stay fresh and pull calls:

Along with topic du jour, float a “Bonus Question.”

Something apolitical, undated, and (dare we?) fun.

Doing so gives listeners two reasons to call, and you may be surprised which topic the caller brings up first.

Examples I’ve heard light-up the lines:

- “Dating co-workers” (Every workplace has one poorly-kept secret.) *
- “Your biggest gripe about where you work?” *
- “Why do people cheat (on their spouse)?”
- “You get to meet God, and you get ONE question.”
- “The most embarrassing thing you’ve ever witnessed?”
- “What is the one thing about your spouse you would change?” *
- “What is the last ‘little white lie’ you told?” *
- “What happened the last time you said ‘There but for the grace of God...?’”
- “Talking your way out of traffic tickets”
- “Who are your kids’ heroes?”
- “Which of the Ten Commandments are outdated? Or, which 11th Commandment do we need?”
- “Your least favorite song?” (An alert producer can quickly search YouTube and play a portion.)

* For several of the above, offer callers “diplomatic immunity,” by suggesting they NOT use their real name. OR – if you can do so – and if you can, it’s a very cool effect – electronically disguise callers’ voices, a la “60 Minutes.”

“This idea that no one listens to radio anymore is simply not true.”

Rudy Parachoniak, National Marketing Director at End Of The Roll Discount Carpet & Flooring, 60+ stores across Canada

He’s constantly pitched for his advertising business, and frequently appalled by HOW he’s pitched, as you will read:

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/end-radio-rudy-parachoniak/>

Two things jumped-off-the-page at me:

- “It’s funny how stations will tell a business that they need to advertise, yet many stations don’t follow that same advice. Radio needs to continually look to recruit new listeners and clients.”
- And regarding programming content: “Make sure that the things you are saying and doing are hyper focused. We live in a content hungry society that is bombarded with fresh content constantly. How will you stand out? How will you relate and engage them? What people don’t listen to is content that doesn’t relate to them, entertain them, inform them, etc. If you give people what they truly want, they WILL listen. Use the experience of others and share it everywhere.”

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Infinite Dial 2019

Launched by Edison Research in 1998, "The Infinite Dial" is the longest-running survey of digital media consumer behavior in the USA, tracking Internet audio, podcasting, and audio consumption via smartphones and smart speakers. 1500 Americans were polled, and the data was weighted to emulate the USA population. Highlights:

"Social Media usage appears to have stalled."

79% of us, some 223 million, participate, but Facebook and Twitter have declined, especially with younger users.

Facebook is still #1 in usage, estimated 172M, but...

- That 61-percent-of-us is down from 62% in 2018, 67% in 2017. "There are an estimated 15 million fewer Facebook users in the USA today than in 2017."
- It's older-than-younger: 82 million 12-34s Facebooked in 2017, 65M today.

#2 Instagram is the comer: 34% in 2017, 36% in 2018, now 39%. Next, virtual tie: Pinterest and Twitter, both steady lately around 30%

- LinkedIn: 22% - 22% - 22%
- Twitter: 23% - 21% - 19%
- WhatsApp debuts at 18%

Smartphones:

84% -- 237 million of us 12+ -- own one. This product has never a down year since it was introduced. More on smartphones in a minute.

Smart Speakers:

- 23% -- 65 million -- own at least one, triple the 2017 number.
- #1 is Alexa, now in 16% of USA homes. Google Home: 7%, Sonos One with Alexa: 3%, Apple HomePod 2%
- "The average smart speaker user possesses two." And 28% of us have 3 or more. We'll come back to that too.

"Online audio has reached a new high in weekly time spent listening, potentially driven by podcasting and smart speakers."

- Listening to AM/FM stations online and/or streamed audio content available only on the Internet us up, monthly and weekly, for the 9th year in a row.
- The younger the consumer the more online audio consumed.
- Weekly TSL: 16 hours 43 minutes (13:40 in 2018)

When I say audiobook DON'T think audiocassette.

Heck, Don Draper might've worked the old "Books on Tape" account. Back to the future: See that data above? All the ways we now consume audio have us consuming all kinds of audio: "Along with the increases in podcast listening, audiobook consumption also surged, indicating a trend toward increased spoken word audio consumption." Audible is big on smartphones, and...

In-car:

- AM/FM still used most there, though barely now; and it's trending down.
- "Used Most Often" slides from 57% in 2017 to 56% in 2018 to 52% now.
- One reason why: As we replace our cars, new infotainment systems offer more options. Among them, teaser subscriptions to SiriusXM which is up 2% since last year.

- Unsurprisingly, as listening via new in-dash arrays has ticked-up steadily since 2013, in-car listening via cell phone has leveled-off.

Audio Brands Used Most Often

Music FMs: In addition to owned music, these are your competitors:

- Pandora 30%
- Spotify 25% -- #1 12-34s
- Apple Music 11%
- iHeartRadio 8%
- Amazon Music 9% -- 16% among smart speaker owners
- Google Play 4%
- Other 13%

And YouTube Music, steady growth since 2014. 50 million 12+ listen weekly, heaviest users are 12-34s.

“Podcasting has reached a milestone, with the majority of Americans now saying they have ever listened to one.”

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Monthly	12%	15%	17%	21%	24%	26%	32% = 90M
Weekly	7%	8%	10%	13%	15%	17%	22% = 62M

Weekly podcast listeners average 7 podcasts per week.

What I think this means to radio stations?

- The station smartphone app is now table stakes. iHeart or iTunes exposure is nice, but asks an extra step.
- The 2-smart speakers-per-home average brings station streams back into two rooms where, once upon a time, there were AM/FM receivers. Smart stations are making money selling smart speaker pre-roll sponsorships; and airing promos that train listeners to enable the Skill. And, of course, offering programming that compels choice, which will also help stations machete-through the in-dash audio jungle.
- This audiobook and podcasting data make it crystal clear that if you’re only feeding a transmitter, you could starve. Tell advertisers’ stories longer-form online, and lift bites for spots that invite consumption.

“Fox is not just taking the temperature of the base -- it’s raising the temperature.”

Nicole Hemmer, professor of Presidential studies at the University of Virginia and the author of “Messengers of the Right,” quoted in The New Yorker opinion piece “The Making of the Fox News White House.”

Hemmer writes that “Fear is a business strategy -- it keeps people watching.” AND LISTENING, I figure. If Fox News Radio is your on-hour newscast, you have Trump supporters by-the-ears.

The Washington Post reports that Sean Hannity claims to speak to the President almost every night after his TV show. I’m urging affiliated client stations to tout that in imaging and Sales material.

As that New Yorker piece was buzzing, I discussed the Fox News/White House connection with a couple university Journalism professors on my TV show. Here’s the video:

<https://youtu.be/Og-wUCGKSPI>

RIP 25-54

Sales Managers: Bring in coffee and bagels. OK, and for your no-carb sellers, some fruit. Oops....sugar carb. But reps will burn it off shouting-out prospects that sell to the REAL “money demo,” when you hit YouTube.com and search “Holland Cooke Grey is Gold.”

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SOUND BITES

"I'm so sad, I don't know what to say."

Brian Wilson of the Beach Boys, upon learning that Hal Blaine had died.

- Blaine's work has possibly had more radio airtime than anyone else's ever. As a member of the legendary "Wrecking Crew" of studio session musicians, Blaine was the drummer on countless hits by the Beach Boys, Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley, Count Basie, Simon & Garfunkel, Neil Diamond, the Byrds and many others. That's his "thump, thump-thump, crack!" at the beginning of the Ronettes' "Be My Baby."
- Among the first studio instrumentalists elected to The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, he played on 40 number one singles and 150 that made the Top 10. Hal Blaine was 90.

"Before I go out, I always do my hair at home and put on blush and lipstick so I look like Ronnie. People who spot me want to take selfies."

Veronica Spector, now 75, and still performing as The Ronettes

"Talking about sex won't make you pregnant, and talking about funerals won't make you dead."

Witty end-of-life and funeral-planning expert -- The Doyenne of Death ® -- Gail Rubin, a GREAT guest I interviewed on my TV show: https://youtu.be/Yqsj_YpiVY0

Her web site is agoodgoodbye.com; and Gail is good for two topics, both VERY quotable:

- Her consumer angle on funeral planning;
- And her "Kicking The Bucket List: 100 Downsizing and Organizing Things to Do Before You Die."

"Unlike most of my media competitors here in East Texas, I am a small, independent business owner and I think like one. At the top of my thinking are these two simple beliefs. One: I can't afford to spend money of anything that isn't working in some way to help my business grow. And two: The only way to grow my business is to help my clients grow theirs."

My longtime client Paul Gleiser, owner, KTBB and The Team, Tyler TX, in the monthly newsletter he sends to advertisers and prospects.

"Philosophically, we determined that we were running too many commercials."

My first client, Connoisseur Media CEO Jeff Warshaw, interviewed by Inside Radio.

- Reckoning that "Listeners would appreciate fewer interruptions of shorter duration and advertisers would stand out better if they weren't lost in as many commercials," he's had his most in-demand stations trim loads by as much as 25%.
- Asking "If we value our inventory, why are we giving so much of it away at a fraction of what it's worth?" he's cut-back on remnant inventory sold by third parties, direct response spots that pay only for leads, and barter. "There's this over-arching feeling in the industry that if we can pay with spots then it doesn't cost anything."

"Exaggeration is a billion times worse than understatement."

From Facebook post "How To Write Good."

The post also warned:

- "Avoid clichés like the plague. They're old hat."
- "Comparisons are as bad as clichés."

"We strongly condemn Jeanine Pirro's comments about Rep. Ilhan Omar. They do not reflect those of the network and we have addressed the matter with her directly."

Fox News statement, as Pirro disappeared from its lineup.

"Media Matters caught me saying something naughty on a radio show more than a decade ago."

Tweet by Fox News host Tucker Carlson regarding comments made on shock jock "Bubba the Love Sponge" radio program between 2006 and 2011, about Hillary Clinton, Oprah Winfrey, Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan, Martha Stewart's daughter, Arianna Huffington, Sarah Palin, Paris Hilton, and Britney Spears, among others.

"We laugh when social norms are exceeded...but it's not permanently harmful – it's benign."

Wall Street Journal op-ed "The Speech Police Come For Tucker Carlson," by Bubba Clem.

"FOX News will not serve as a media partner for the 2020 Democratic primary debates."

DNC Chairman Tom Perez: "Recent reporting in the New Yorker on the inappropriate relationship between President Trump, his administration and FOX News has led me to conclude that the network is not in a position to host a fair and neutral debate for our candidates." We discuss that report in the video described on page 5.

"Fair and Balanced"

Former Fox News slogan, now discontinued

"just an ordinary White man"

New Zealand mass shooter, as self-described in a manifesto "to show the invaders that our lands will never be their lands, our homelands are our own and that, as long as a white man still lives, they will NEVER conquer our lands."

"Mexican immigrants, as with all immigrants, have much lower crime rates than native born."

Immigrant Rupert Murdoch, on Twitter, 2016

"It seems clear that in America today, we're facing problems that feel too big for us, so we're lashing out at each other, often over less important matters. Many of us are using politics as a way to distract ourselves from the nagging sense that something bigger is wrong."

U.S. Senator Ben Sasse (R-NE), in his best seller "Them: Why We Hate Each Other – And How To Heal"

"People are more hostile to others in the abstract than when they meet them in person."

Arthur C. Brooks, President of American Enterprise Institute; and author, "Love Your Enemies: How Decent People Can Save America From The Culture of Contempt."

From The Wall Street Journal review: "American political debates have mostly been nationalized and thus crowded with faraway personalities whom the ordinary citizen doesn't know and to whom he has no access: officials in Congress and the White House, talking heads on cable television, bloviators on talk radio, commentators on political websites, Twitter's innumerable opinionators, and on and on."

"When Donald Trump walked through the door, he burst off the jambs and made the opening bigger, more jagged, forever."

Former Reagan speechwriter Peggy Noonan in a Wall Street Journal op-ed: "Congress's Mean Girls Are Trump's Offspring." Referencing controversial comments by Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-MN) and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY):

"We all know where this started, the political brutishness, the ignoring of traditions and norms...The mean girls of Congress learned at his knee. They have taken their tactics from him."

"The truth is worth it."

Tag line on TV ads for The New York Times, where subscriptions are up since Donald Trump became president.

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The Story of Our Lifetime gets better every...single...day.

Take that to the bank if you're a Limbaugh/Hannity/Fox News Radio affiliate. THIS is your time.

"I'm in love, and you're in love. We're all in love together."

President Trump, ad-libbing for 2+ hours at last month's Conservative Political Action Committee event.

"I now bring you back in time to the summer of 2015. I see Donald Trump coming down an escalator and announcing he is running for president. For me it was a divine and miraculous moment - I felt something miraculous was about to unfold."

My Pillow guy Mike Lindell, speaking at CPAC

"Two full years into his term, the president talked obsessively about the crowds at his inauguration."

Pulitzer Prize winning Washington Post columnist Eugene Robinson, reviewing Trump's CPAC speech.

"An inflated sense of [one's] own importance, a deep need for admiration and a lack of empathy for others. But behind this mask of ultra-confidence lies a fragile self-esteem that's vulnerable to the slightest criticism."

Narcissistic Personality Disorder, as defined by Mayo Clinic

"I honestly think this president loves his family."

U.S. Senator Mike Rounds (R-SD), telling CNN why Trump paid-off Stormy Daniels.

"To be clear: Mr. Trump knew of and directed the Trump Moscow negotiations throughout the campaign and lied about it. He lied about it because he never expected to win the election. He also lied about it because he stood to make hundreds of millions of dollars on the Moscow real estate project."

Michael Cohen, testifying to Congress.

"Smarmy, slimy, smiling Jared Kushner of 666 Fifth Avenue is the beating heart of this unprecedentedly corrupt and deeply evil administration. He'll eventually be exposed as an insatiably greedy Benedict Arnold."

Harvard professor and Constitutional Law expert Lawrence Tribe

"You'll soon be hearing a lot more from President Trump about the magnificent performance of the U.S. economy. That's because the long expansion that started in June 2009 is approaching, and will likely break, the all-time longevity record. It's all thanks to him, of course."

Wall Street Journal op-ed by Princeton professor Alan Blinder, who points out that this 116 month expansion is "closing in on the all-time record of 120 months, held by the Clinton boom of 1991-2001."

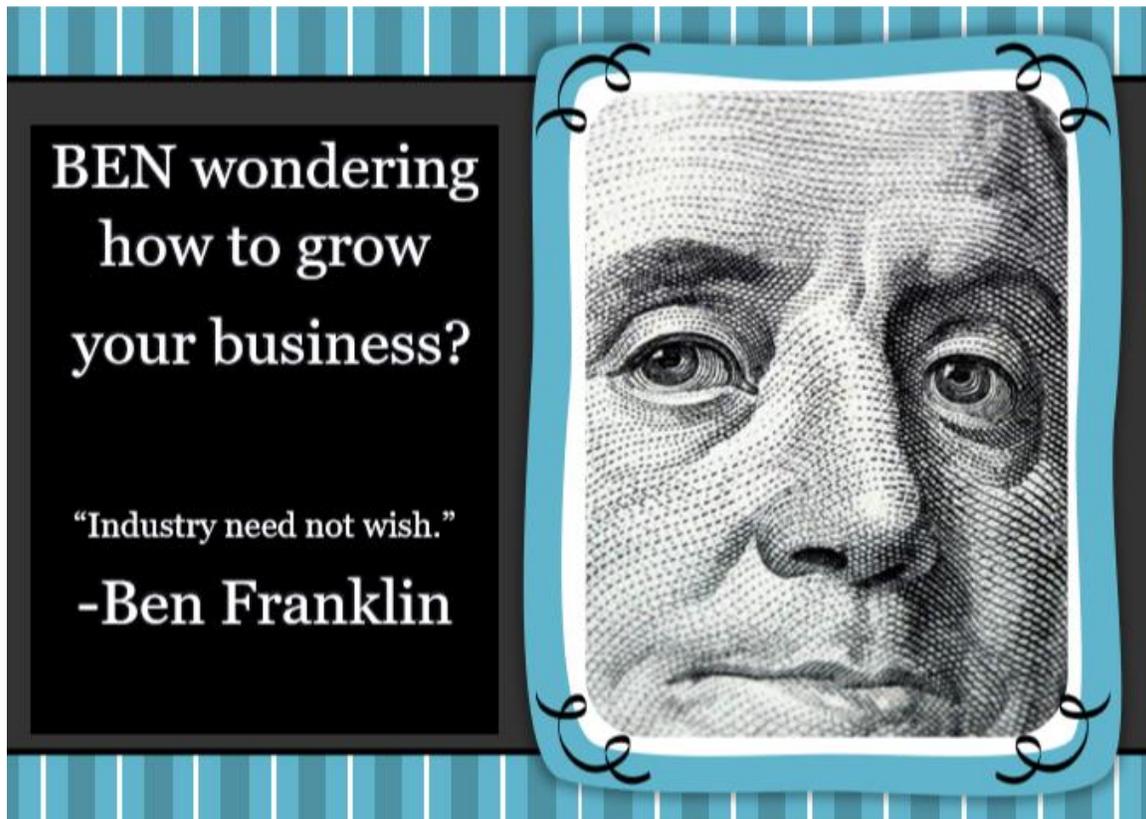
"The American people deserve better than an administration that appears to be for sale to businesses eager to line the President's pockets."

Joint statement by U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and Rep. Pramila Jayapil (D-WA), reacting to a Washington Post report that "T-Mobile's patronage of President Trump's Washington hotel increased sharply after the announcement of its merger with Sprint last April, with executives spending about \$195,000 at the property since."

THANK YOU for asking!

Last month here, I showed you the image below. It's the front of a greeting card-type invitation one of my client stations sent to the existing advertisers and prospects and local agency people we invited for lunch and a witty PowerPoint by respected media consultant Holland Cooke, "who will outline specific tactics that are driving success in media markets across the USA." The presentation includes actual copy points and other techniques that produced results for radio advertisers.

EVERY SINGLE TIME we've done this, the station wrote new business.



Several readers asked...

“How much do you charge to come to our market and do this?”

The answer is NOTHING, for client stations I work with on an ongoing basis. We simply build-this-into a periodic station visit...during which I follow-up with reps to respond to particularly responsive attendees.

If you're not a client – and I'm not already in the market – we make this event the centerpiece of a full day visit, during-which I meet before-and-after the luncheon with sellers.

One reader who inquired is in a small market, three time zones away. So my presenting in-person would be cost-prohibitive for the station, and time-and-travel would be impractical for me. So he asked, "Could you deliver remotely?" And the answer is YES, for hundreds, rather than thousands of dollars.

RSVP if this option strikes you as opportune: 401-330-6868

PS: In last month's newsletter, on the back page, I detailed 2 ways to fill the room with the most-qualified prospects. If you missed my March newsletter, you can download it free + instantly at HollandCooke.com