

# Holland Cooke Newsletter • August '19

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***“It’s the only reason we got this president. That normal didn’t work.”***

South Bend Mayor and presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg in the recent debate.

Yes, it’s early, and we-who-talk-politics are more tuned-into the 2020 race than most listeners. But as their lives are back-to-normal post-Labor Day, and with a less-crowded stage on September debate, Dems’ sound bites – and Trump’s impulsive Tweets – will tee-up Talk Radio gold.

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***“Hearing those original Boss Radio jingles and commercials brought tears to my ears.”***

Alison Martino, Los Angeles Magazine:

“Before the digital age, there was AM radio and disc jockeys who broke the hits on stations like KHJ. In ‘Once Upon a Time in Hollywood,’ every character is listening to KHJ, likely because KHJ was the coolest in the land. The soundtrack doesn’t feel like classic rock regurgitation, but instead like we’re listening to these legendary songs for the first time. Hearing the Real Don Steele or Charlie Tuna introduce each tune makes it feel fresh, even though the airchecks are 50 years old.”

In the future, will movies evoke this era, today, with voicetracking in the background?

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## **Summertime, Summertime, Sum-Sum-Summertime**

It’s too easy to write-off this month as down time. Instead, listen-up:

- All stations, all formats: Seize opportunities to touch-and-feel! “Hot town, summer in the city:” Where can you surprise people by handing out ice cream cones? (And logo’d swag.)
- Baseball stations: With games now available so many other places, it’s important to be known-as your team’s affiliate. Regardless of where diarykeepers HEAR the games, let them THINK of you. And Sales: If spots running-since-April are still crowing “baseball is back!” your advertisers will notice.
- Listeners’ lives are atypical this month. Classic Rockers and 80s Hits FMs are well-exposed in backyard cookouts. And every station’s listeners are exposed to days and dayparts they might not habitually use. When they discover you, will they instantly “get it?” Is your elevator speech high-profile? When I programmed WTOP/Washington a competing PD told me he’d listened lots while on his boat for a week. When I asked “What did you hear?” he parroted our slogan “...where you get the top news, instantly!”
- Be sure that your vacation relief talent gets that. Often Talk stations use local celebs and politicians as fill-in hosts, and they don’t have our instinct for imaging maintenance. Give them cue cards.
- Are any of those fill-in hosts ready for prime time?
- Will you be installing new shows or local hosts in September? Prep now for imaging that introduces them. Maybe a retro-TV “New Fall Season” theme?

Lots to do? Sure, but MUST-do is YOUR time-off. A psychotherapist I recently interviewed on my TV show says not-taking vacation time is a big mistake. Recharge now so you can charge-into post-Labor Day, when listeners revert to habit, “after the boys of summer are gone.”

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**Also this month: Social Media Headlines That Drive Traffic:** As listeners’ attention – and advertisers’ do-re-mi – continue drifting-digital, clicks are currency. We earn those clicks, and invite occasions-of-listening, with well-constructed Social Media posts. Tips on page 3...

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## 6 IDEAS IN 5 MINUTES

### 1. **DON'T say "exclusive content."**

DO offer something listeners and advertisers can't get somewhere else.

Just don't describe it in such clinical terms.

Tell 'em whatcha got, how it'll help, and where to get it.

### 2. **DON'T say "for the 411 on..."**

...meaning "for more information on..."

Nobody under 60 ever "dialed Information."

### 3. **Sales: There are more people over 50 alive today than ever before.**

Sally Timebuyer may still be under strict orders to place 25-54, but isn't local-direct worth more to your station than transactional business?

For your next Sales meeting: Search YouTube for "Holland Cooke: Grey is Gold."

### 4. **Sales: Which local retailers sell online?**

Mom-N-Pop businesses are competing with Amazon and Wal-Mart.

Research:

- U.S. retail sales online have doubled in the last 5 years, averaging 14% growth.
- NO other medium drives Internet traffic better than radio.

So craft copy that marries the convenience of e-Commerce with the "shop local" message.

### 5. **Want more clicks to your show page?**

NOT a trick question.

For a dang CLINIC, listen to how WOR/New York 10-noon host Mark Simone describes YouTube videos he posts on his page, easy-to-remember "WOR SEVEN TEN DOT COM SLASH MARK."

### 6. **Podcasts: Shorter beats longer.**

Megaphone reviewed data from 549 podcasts Apple's Podcasts Top 200 list March 6th-May 11<sup>th</sup>:

- Notable: Jump in the share of programs running less than half an hour.
- And splitting 2 hours of content into multiple episodes usually results in more downloads.

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## LAST MONTH:

- SPECIAL REPORT: Digital Techniques from the Experts
- And "WHERE do I find Sales people?"
- Miss that issue? Email me at newsletter@hollandcooke.com
- Not receiving this FREE newsletter each month? Just ask! Same address.

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## Social Media Headlines That Drive Traffic

Tips, from SocialMediaExaminer.com:

Headlines containing numbers typically perform better than other types of headlines. A list-type post promises to be quick and easy to read, and that's important in today's busy world.

- Use a **low** number to illustrate how concise your article is, or a **high** number to illustrate how comprehensive it is. But don't use too high a number or you'll lose the benefit of the content appearing easy to consume.
- Inviting: "7 Ways to Put Adventure Back in Your Business Travel"
- Forbidding: "48 Significant Social Media Facts, Figures and Statistics Plus 7 Infographics"

Highlight value. Why should people read your post? What's in it for them? The benefit should be clear, simple and direct in the headline. "How-to..." headlines work well. The reader can see instantly the benefit of reading the post.

Pique Curiosity. Headlines with questions arouse curiosity; but never ask a question your reader can answer "no" to.

Stay away from positive superlatives.

- A study by Outbrain found that the average click-through rate on headlines containing negative superlatives (i.e., "never" or "worst") performed 63% better than those containing positives (like "always" or "best").
- Headlines containing positive superlatives performed 29% worse than those without any superlatives. "Best," "fastest," "cheapest" are so over-used that they're often ignored or disbelieved.
- Negative terms are more likely to be viewed as authentic and genuine.

Add Adjectives and Power Words.

- Unlike superlatives, which can turn readers off, adjectives (if used correctly) can create interest.
- Adjectives like "beautiful," "brilliant," "effortless," "essential," "fun," "horrifying," "incredible," "strange," "useful" and "valuable" grab readers' attention.

### Doing weekend Talk Radio? Need better results?

NOT a trick question.

Hit SolidGoldWeekend.com.

Viewer Warning: The video you will find there may make station management nervous...and make your show lots more successful.

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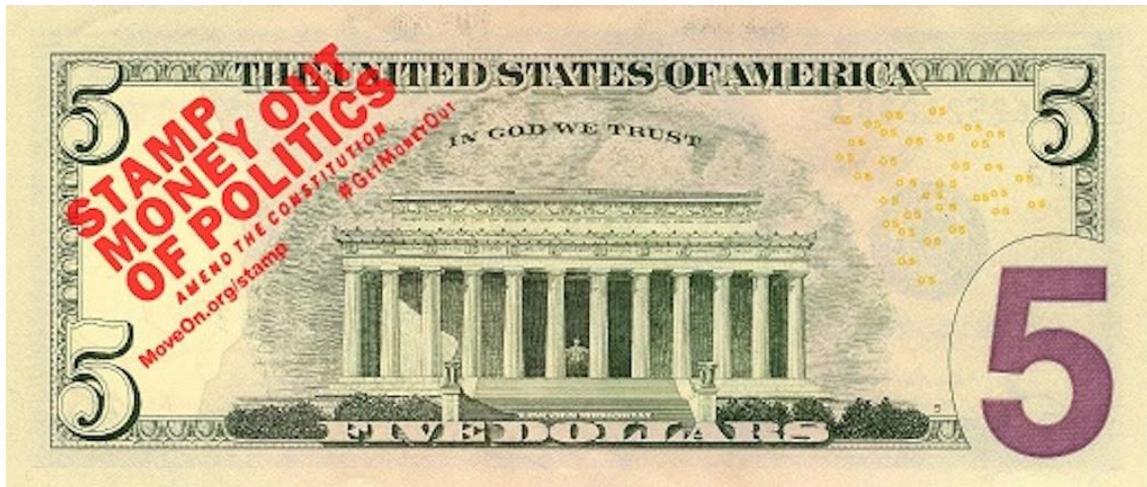
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***“Temperatures over the past few weeks have been breaking all-time records, and as much as we would like to joke about the heat boosting ice cream sales, this is no laughing matter. It is another sign of the future we will face if we do not take bold action now to stop climate change.”***

Ice cream icons Ben & Jerry, with an offer Emailed to MoveOn.org's list:

“We are facing a generational crisis—and a younger generation is rising up with inspiring grassroots activism to bring international attention and action to this issue—but corporations and Big Money interests are doing everything they can to stop the United States from lifting a finger to solve it...That is why we're partnering with MoveOn and asking you to join the movement protesting Big Money's death grip on our future by rubber-stamping our cash with the message 'Stamp Money Out of Politics.' And to sweeten the deal, when you order a stamp, we'll enter you to win a year's supply of ice cream!”

Here's the bit: [“Click here to donate \\$16 or more to support MoveOn's work to fight back against the climate crisis and we'll send you your very own stamp. One lucky stamper will also win free ice cream for a full year!”](#)



NOTE: Your printer might not permit you to print this page, because software recognizes U.S. currency. But Ben & Jerry's message assures: "Don't worry, it's totally legal to stamp your bills, and the impact of a single stamped bill is enormous. Each stamped bill remains in circulation for years and is viewed on average 875 times. That means if you stamp just 20 \$1 bills, 17,500 people will see our message!"

## What this means to radio?

- Human nature: People don't buy what-you-make, they buy YOU...who you are, what you stand for.
- That's fundamental to the way we offer our stations' programming and our advertisers' wares. People are numb to pitches, but they hear commitment.

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## SOUND BITES

**"In his speeches he rarely tries to persuade the uncertain, he only tells the certain that they're right."**

Reagan speechwriter turned Wall Street Journal columnist Peggy Noonan, describing the Trump strategy I recommend to Limbaugh/Hannity/Fox News Radio affiliates.

WHAT THIS MEANS TO RADIO? Google: "Talkers.com Advice to Rush Limbaugh Stations: PANDER"

**"He has turned American politics into the Donald Trump Show, with the country fixated on his every move, speculating feverishly about what will come next."**

Wall Street Journal editorial

**"The key for re-election is to push supporters to the polls, not to boost his approval ratings or persuade skeptics."**

Page one WSJ story on the president's 2020 strategy.

The radio parallel is fundamental to my work with client stations: Get people who listen to your station most to listen more times per week ("Occasions of Listening" in Nielsen-speak).

**"In my two decades as a public servant and now more than a decade as a broadcaster, I have witnessed the growing influence of social media and wonder if it's no coincidence that we have also seen the rise of divisive politics. In my last Senate campaign, in 2008, the glue of civility seemed to come apart in our civic discourse and a decade later, it has only gotten worse."**

National Association of Broadcasters President/CEO – and former United States Senator (R-OR) -- Gordon Smith

**"Only in theaters."**

Preview for new Downton Abbey film.

THAT'S a better way to say "Exclusive Content."

(See Idea #1 on page 2.)

**"When I'm out, it's the phone. When I'm home, it's Alexa."**

Verbatim comment from interview done for the recently-released Edison Research/National Public Radio Smart Audio Report

**"There's no better time to join."**

Letter I got from Amazon Music, in advance of last month's Amazon Prime Days:

"As a valued Amazon Prime member," I was offered "4 months of Amazon Music Unlimited for 99 cents...sign up today, cancel anytime."

As an Amazon Prime member, I can already ask Alexa to play some 14 thousand titles. The "Benefits of [upgrading to] Amazon Music Unlimited:"

- Unlimited access to 50 million songs
- Always ad free
- Offline listening
- Unlimited skips
- Hands-free listening with Alexa.

Meanwhile, robotic FM stations think they're impressing listeners with a "2 Minute Guarantee" (translation: You're about to hear two minutes of commercials).