

Holland Cooke Newsletter • July '19

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DIGITAL TECHNIQUES FROM THE EXPERTS

With radio broadcasters scrambling to populate all the platforms with which we share listeners' attention (and advertisers' do-re-mi), I've gathered tips from the pros. Page 2...

“Where can I find Sales people?”

Question I'm asked by EVERY owner and station manager I work with.

When I visit client stations – and in between visits -- I spend as much – sometimes more – time with Sales as Programming. And while retailers' mindset is still so positive, the most common challenge is HR. Everyone I work for “would hire two more reps RIGHT NOW, if I could find 'em!” That's a mouthful, considering that we won't even know if a new hire will work out for 6 months. 4 ideas on page 4...

“He has tapped a dark unconscious, in which it is easier to vilify the other than to see what you share in common. It's easier to be afraid than to welcome change.”

Donald Trump, in the estimation of film maker Ken Burns, interviewed in Variety

“It's always been there,” Burns reckons, referencing one of his acclaimed works: “We had a Civil War. We killed 750,000 of ourselves over this issue. He's appealing to that in the most venal and vulgar ways.”

And Burns draws another parallel from his most recent documentary, “Defying the Nazis: The Sharps' War,” saying Trump has “set himself up to continue to roil that dark unconscious that he has tapped into for his base. The fact that he could say the things he said about women, and that his adoring masses are not even flinching at that, is Hitler-esque.”

What this means to Talk Radio:

- If you're a Rush Limbaugh and/or Sean Hannity and/or Fox News affiliate, stay on-message. Trump walks on water; anyone who says different is fake news. The grievance and resentment that Trump has harnessed may only resonate with his 30-something percent-of-us base, but they're rock-solid. Name another format that's religion to 30%+ of listeners.
- As with any format, adding Occasions of Listening is ratings gold. Duration of Listening is out of our control. But if you identify the station as safe space for the like-minded, they'll tune-in to hear:
 - a) WHAT NEXT? There's something every...single...day, often multiple bloopers/blunders/stunts intra-day. And when Trump steps-in-it, he'll simply step-in something else, to change the subject, and everyone takes the bait. Those-appalled? They too get PPMs and diaries. They revel in the buffoonery. So station imaging should assure that the on-hour update is “Fox News in the car.”
 - b) And what Conservative talkers serve-up for the next 55 minutes will offer a rationalization for Trump misstep du jour. Surviving the Billy Bush tape proves that Trump is The Teflon Don.

YES I SURE DO horrify some clients with this playbook-for-pandering. Leave your conscience at home. Programming political Talk Radio is like running a gas station. YOU don't have to smoke, but you'll make money selling cigarettes. “These are,” as Carly Simon sang, “the good old days.”

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Camera Technique for Radio

As listener attention and advertiser dollars drift digital, radio broadcasters' tool box gets bigger.

From National Geographic photographer Joel Sartore, in Southwest Airlines' Spirit Magazine:

- Watch your background. "I start by carefully looking at a scene. If the background is terrible, I move."
- Work in the right light. Try to "shoot at the beginning or the end of the day."
- Find the heart. "Leading lines, like a road or a railing, draw the viewer in because they point to the emotional center of the photograph."
- Look all around. Think about your perspective "from a bird's-eye view, a worm's-eye, and from 360 degrees."
- Be prepared. "Know the settings on your camera. When something happens – those dramatic moments take place in an instant – you'll be able to get it."

"But WAIT...there's MORE..."

...from Dan's Camera City (www.danscamera.com):

- Fill the frame. Step closer or zoom to your subject, to eliminate distracting clutter.
- Put heads at the top. When taking photos of people, put their heads toward the top of the image, not in the middle.
- Turn the camera. For pictures of one or two people, the vertical format works best.
- Up, Down and All Around: Instead of taking pictures of kids and pets while standing over them, get down to their level. You'll capture a more flattering image. And try walking-around your subject, for different backgrounds and lighting.
- Use your flash outside. Sunshine often creates undesirable shadows. Using a flash outdoors fills the shadows with light.

Tips for shooting better YouTube videos...

...from Glen Mulcahey, who publishes Mobile and Video Journalism Technology Blog:

- "Look for the most interesting parts of the action and then capture those as the detail/close up shots."
- "Get 1 wide shot, 2 mids, and then 3 close ups."
- "The general rule is either a minimum of 10 seconds or as long as the action requires, particularly if something is entering or leaving the scene."

Writing for digital is different than writing for print.

As the voluminous and useful Yahoo! Style Guide warns -- "Anyone can publish on the Web, but not everyone is publishing material that's ideal for online reading."

"Text that works best on the Web is text that gets right to the point fast and that makes it easy for readers to pick out information." Tips:

- Because "most online readers scan first," favor "concise sentences that convey their point quickly." Online content has "a few seconds – three or less! – to encourage people to read more, to take action, or to navigate to another of your pages."

- So use short words, short sentences, short paragraphs, bulleted lists, and short pages.
- Front-load your content. "Put the most important content in the upper-left area of the screen. Put the most important information at the beginning of headlines, paragraphs, and sentences. Don't spend time leading up to your point." (Consultant sidebar: Ditto to radio hosts on-air!)
- You'll pop-up better when readers Search what-you're-writing-about if you "place the most important words at the beginning of page titles, headlines, subheadings, and links. The most important words are typically your keywords," the words you figure people would type-into Yahoo! or Google or another Search box.

Keep it simple.

- "Include only one or two ideas per short paragraph."
- Help the reader by "breaking up text into digestible, interesting chunks." Short paragraphs keep the eye moving.
- Bold text catches the reader's attention, "but be careful not to overuse this effect: Too much bold text is hard to read and obscures the essential information."

Your Email "Envelope"

THE most important words in Emails you send your tribe.

You DO regularly communicate with an opt-in Email list...right?

Few opportunities to engage are more powerful than the ongoing conversation you have with listeners. It's a relationship that Pandora can't emulate. Smart syndicated hosts exploit Email well, and if you're local you can be even more relatable.

Any Email you send is worthless if it doesn't get read.

And you yourself demonstrate why, every time you open your In box. True or false: You delete some (lots) of messages unread, simply based on the Subject line?

Something else you do: Open your snailmail over the wastebasket. I say "open" even though you don't. Based on a glance at each envelope, you decide whether to bother. So...

Fuss over the Subject line.

Tips, from Entrepreneur.com E-Mail Marketing Coach and Constant Contact CEO Gail F. Goodman:

- **Keep it short and sweet.** Keep Subject lines under 50 characters, including spaces. A recent study showed that subject lines with 49 or fewer characters had open rates 12.5 percent higher than those with 50 or more characters.
- **Be specific.** "The Green Thumb Newsletter: September 2007" doesn't convey a benefit. Better: "The Green Thumb: When to Bring Outdoor Plants Inside for the Winter."
- **Write it last.** When you're done with the body of your E-mail, read it over and pick the nugget that'll entice your readers to learn more by opening your message.
- **Take some time.** Write several -- at least three or four -- before choosing which to use. Run them by a friend or colleague and see which they think is most compelling.
- **Test it.** Got two strong Subject lines? Split your list in half. After a few such tests, you'll get a sense of what works for your list. And the better you know your audience, the more effectively you can communicate with them.

Doing weekend Talk Radio? Need better results? 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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“Where can I find Sales people?”

Question I'm asked by EVERY owner and station manager I work with.

4 ideas:

1. **Use your own air.** After all, listeners already dig your act. So have the boss voice this:

COULD YOU MAKE MONEY IN THE NEXT SIXTY SECONDS?
RIGHT NOW, YOU, AND THOUSANDS OF OTHER PEOPLE ARE LISTENING TO WXXX. THOUSANDS.
AND JUST LIKE YOU, THEY'RE ALL CONSUMERS...THE PEOPLE LOCAL RETAILERS WANT TO MEET.
IN THESE SIXTY SECONDS, YOU COULD HELP AN ADVERTISER TELL A STORY.
AND YOU MAKE MONEY IF YOU'RE THE WXXX ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE WHO MADE IT HAPPEN.
HOW MUCH MONEY YOU MAKE IS UP TO YOU.
ARE YOU "A PEOPLE PERSON?" ARE YOU "AN IDEA PERSON?" GRAB A PEN.
THE PHONE NUMBER YOU'RE ABOUT TO HEAR WILL PUT YOU INTO A SPECIAL VOICEMAIL.
SFX: telephone ring, from the caller's perspective
EQ voice to sound like voicemail greeting, and continue read:
IN THIRTY SECONDS OR LESS, TELL ME, GARY JOHNSON, YOUR PERSONAL GOALS.
AND HOW YOUR ASSETS AND SKILLS, AND OUR FRANCHISE, CAN MAKE YOUR GOALS A REALITY.
SFX: voicemail end-of-message beep
Read continues, no EQ: HERE'S THAT NUMBER: [number, slowly]. THAT'S [number, slowly].
WXXX IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER.

2. **Your air staff.** With local air talent now an endangered species, smart DJs and talkers are Sales-friendly. And they're "names" in your market. WHY AREN'T they selling?
3. **Real estate agents.** They're as motivated and organized and presentable and upbeat as we want station reps to be. One of my clients is the National Association of Realtors®, whose weekend show "Real Estate Today" (RETradio.com) CAN make you money...but I digress. When I've attended NAR's annual convention, surrounded by 19,000 of the Annette Benning character in "American Beauty," I wonder "Why can't radio reps be as-together?" Agents LIVE ON commission, feast-or-famine. So WHY NOT have one rep the station, if only as what Uber drivers call "a side hustle?"
4. **At least tap-into their Rolodex.** One way affiliates can sell Real Estate Today is to sell all the in-show local avails – and some ROS spots across the cluster – to a Realtor®, who re-sells the spots to all the services that depend on her: banks, title companies, painters, plumbers, landscapers, etc.

LAST MONTH:

- SPECIAL REPORT: Promotion: On-Air, Off-Air, On-Message
- Miss that issue? Email me at newsletter@hollandcooke.com
- Not receiving this FREE newsletter each month? Just ask! Same address.

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SOUND BITES

"We are starting to see more pragmatic usage of these devices. The longer people have these devices, the less experimentation they do with them — but the more ingrained into everyday life these devices become."

Edison Research Senior VP Tom Webster, talking about smart speakers, presenting the Spring 2019 Smart Audio Report.

Co-presenting, Joel Sucherman, VP/New Platform Partnerships at co-sponsor National Public Radio:

"From the very beginning smart speakers -- these new beautiful radios showed up in people's homes in the millions, almost overnight -- were existential for NPR."

"The New York Times presents a new television series."

It's "The Weekly," on FX and Hulu.

The New York Times Company reported first-quarter results that were better than expected, as gains in digital advertising and subscriptions outpaced the inexorable decline of its once-mighty print business.

- The Times reports that "the total number of paid subscriptions, including digital and print, topped 4.5 million, a high. More than 3.5 million people pay for the publisher's online products, with the company adding 223,000 customers for its news, crossword and cooking apps during the quarter, a 29 percent increase over last year."
- Revenue generated by online advertising was a bright spot. It rose 19 percent, to \$55 million, helped by the company's podcast business, notably "The Daily."

"For anyone who is still listening to rumors out there, I will say again that there is absolutely no grand plan to exit our big markets."

Cumulus CEO Mary Berner, as she sold once-proud WABC for \$12.5 million (NOT a misprint).

"By already subscribing to Mad, you've shown the world that you have poor judgment. But it's only by re-subscribing that you can prove that you've failed to learn from your mistake."

Renewal notice

"outrageous and idiotic"

Iranian president Hassan Rouhani, calling the White House White House "afflicted by mental disability [as] you sanction the foreign minister simultaneously with a request for talks."

"I never met this person in my life."

The President, responding to the allegation that he raped author E. Jean Carroll in a dressing room of New York's Bergdorf Goodman department store in the mid-1990s; despite the New York magazine article featuring a photo of Trump and Carroll together in 1987.

"[Supporters might] demand that I stay longer [than two terms]."

Trump

"She suffers from 'lie-abetes.'"

Former presidential Press Secretary Sarah Sanders, in the estimation of American Urban Radio Network White House Bureau Chief April Ryan

"Use a lot of radio, meet a lot of people."

MSNBC "Hardball" host Chris Matthews' advice to the crowded 2020 Democratic presidential field.

"My time is up."

Joe Biden, speaking the words NO politician has ever spoken during a debate, bailing on his reply when challenged on his Civil Rights record by fellow candidate Senator Kamala Harris.