

Which is the dog? Which is the tail?

On-Air, Online



Holland Cooke

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'Read it and weep, or read it and reap. The data suggests specific opportunities for radio stations, of any format. Clearly, the worst thing radio can do right now is the same old, same old.'

—Holland Cooke

The lines are crossing. Right now, we are witnessing media history. Consider the following: ■ This year, for the first time, more money will be spent on Internet advertising than on radio advertising. ■ Paul McCartney recently released an album—at Starbucks. And he sang and danced in an iPod commercial. ■ Presidential candidates met to debate without any reporters, instead fielding questions “real people” sent via YouTube. ■ Grown-ups lined up for iPhones like kids lining up for a Harry Potter book. iPhone does everything but AM/FM. ■ Rush Limbaugh gave away iPhones. To enter the drawing, Dittoheads merely had to sign up for his daily e-letter. Genius. ■ Why is the iPhone flying off the shelves? As Edison Media Research learned from Arbitron diary keepers, the Internet has surpassed radio and is closing in on TV as the “most essential” medium in American life. ■ Since 1998, Edison and Arbitron have been studying the Internet, new-media devices and their impact on other media. Fifteen studies have been released. Beginning in 2002, the survey included the question, “Among the Internet, newspapers, radio and TV, which one is most essential to your life?” ■ A couple of other headlines emerged in that study: Newspapers have a real problem. And TV is already perceived as “stale and boring.”

This is a real whack on the side of the head to radio, because Arbitron is still using diaries in all but two markets. So if you're anywhere but in the Portable People Meter markets of Houston or Philadelphia, your ratings are a memory test. And listeners now think that the Internet is more a part of their lives than AM/FM radio.

This development would be more startling if we didn't see it coming on stilts.

Your choice: Read it and weep, or read it and reap. The data suggests specific opportunities for radio stations, of any format.

Clearly, the worst thing radio can do right now is the same old, same old. And if promo copy on your station includes the phrase “check out our Web site” or “log on,” it's time to call a meeting and announce that it's no longer 1995.

Remind your team that no other medium partners better with the Internet than radio. Many readers no longer purchase newspapers because they're reading them online. An hour spent online is an hour subtracted from TV viewing. You'll also find plenty of supporting data about that on the Edison and Arbitron Web sites.

The Internet is fundamentally more compatible with, and opportune to, radio than other old media, because:

■ The Internet takes us where AM/FM otherwise won't go. One reason AM radio won't come in at work? Computers. So it's downright poetic that we use computers to break radio silence there.

■ Radio's strength is also a weakness: We're live. Programming is gone in an instant. Archiving, podcasting and streaming make us one of the on-demand, pick-and-choose options that listeners now favor. For talk stations, this is demographically opportune. Too often talk stations skew old. Retirees have time to wait on hold and are thrilled to have someone to talk with. It's not unusual to hear rambling callers who sound like the grandfather on “The Simpsons.” This new platform not

only gets us Homer and Marge on the go, but it's where Lisa and Bart are and where Maggie will be.

■ We're not strangers. Yes, that line at the Apple store made someone in line feel lucky to get one. One. But he or she already owns a half-dozen radios. New tech is proliferating, but AM/FM receivers are already installed. And unlike competing new-media choices, you have an established brand—your call letters. Listeners know and trust you, although post-consolidation cutbacks in local programming have given radio less opportunity to continue earning listeners' trust.

■ The Internet does things audio-only transmitters can't do. Some stations are making money with video.

■ There is an opportunity to tap into non-radio budgets. Sales managers, here is one plan you can put on the street tomorrow. Hit youtube.com/hollandcooke, then

click "see all videos" and watch "Revenue . . . Right Under Your Nose" for an excerpt from my session at the RAB convention in Dallas in February and NAB 2007 in April in Las Vegas.

Bottom line: The genie is out of the bottle. In 2007, Sprint Nextel starts rolling out its \$3 billion WiMax network. ("Worldwide interoperability for microwave access.")

The Wi-Fi you use at home and at Starbucks and other hot spots has a 300-foot range. WiMax will blanket entire cities, at faster speeds than DSL and third-generation data networks. Sprint Nextel will light up Baltimore/Washington, D.C., and Chicago by the end of the year. Americans get coverage from Clearwire, another network.

WiMax makes anyone with a computer a virtual radio or TV station. But they're experimenting. You're a pro. And while podcasters are now deriving a business model, radio has been selling time for 85 years.

And you have a head start—your cume. If you're a

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news/talk station, you're already interactive. Talk radio is the original chat room. Your audience is already coming to you for information and to interact. Unlike music radio, listeners don't use you for audio wallpaper. So the new platform offers you an opportunity more in character with what you're doing on-air than what music stations are doing.

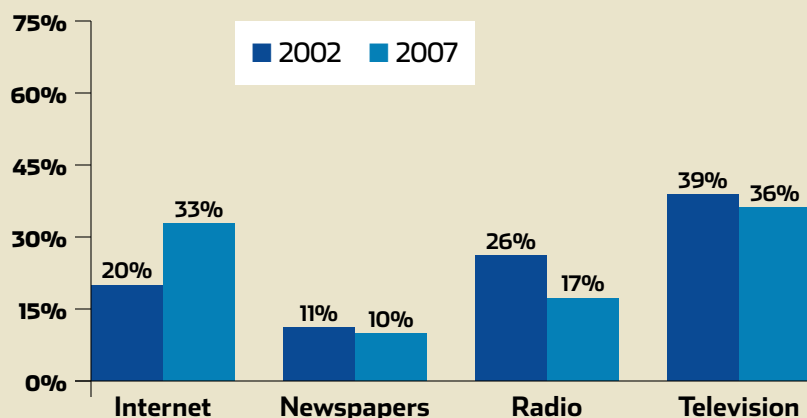
Be there or be square.

R&R

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Internet Trails Only Television As 'Most Essential' Medium

"Among Internet, Newspapers, Radio and Television, which one is most essential to your life?"

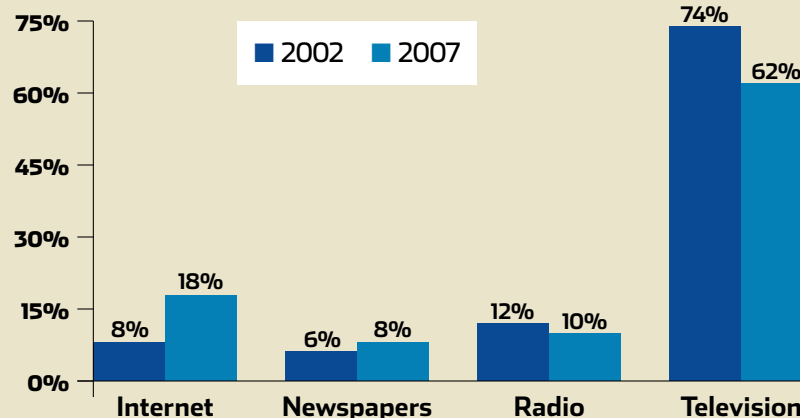


BASE: Total Population 12+

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Television Dominant First Source For Major News Story; Internet Doubles

"Among Internet, Newspapers, Radio and Television, which one would you turn to first in the event of a major news story?"



BASE: Total Population 12+

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