

Holland Cooke Newsletter • March '10

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Welcome to Noo Yawk! This issue is being distributed at Talkers magazine's New Media Seminar. 'Stash it in your read-on-the-way-home bag. It could make you a hero with your Sales manager...not to mention listeners.

“It's a Solid Gold Weekend!”

At many non-music stations, only morning drive is a bigger money-maker than weekends, thanks to ask-the-experts shows.

In 2006, this newsletter recommended what-I-considered the best-of-breed weekend shows, and I outlined strategies and tactics for making your station's weekend fare “appointment listening” and premium Sales inventory. I still get asked for copies of that back issue. Lots has changed since then, as syndicated shows came-and-went, and Premiere Radio Networks subtracted from hours-otherwise-more-valuable by cramming-down Rush Limbaugh and Sean Hannity re-runs. So this month, an update.

How-to programming can be extremely advertiser-friendly, and needn't be audience tear gas.

Some of these shows are paid programming, brokered hours in-which the presenter doesn't even keep commercial inventory.

Some specialty shows are audience favorites, and that can only help weekday listening. On the other hand, I've seen stations with shoddy weekend programming do poorly on Mondays in day-by-day Arbitron numbers. Some weekend shows are well-produced, others sound horrendous. Many otherwise-respectable stations sound like hell on the weekend, as though they're on auto-pilot.

“On the weekend, it sounds like they think nobody is listening.”

Arbitron diary comment

To listeners' ears, it doesn't matter whether a show is syndicated, hosted-by-a-station-staffer, or hosted by a local retailer who's buying blocks of time. Listeners understand that radio programming is free because it's sponsored. They care less whether it's sponsored-by-the-minute or by-the-hour than whether it's interesting. They're either into it, or they're outta here.

Occasionally, a diplomatic general manager will ask me to referee a church-and-state dispute. Sales has, for instance, an attorney, who wants to buy a couple hours on the weekend. The PD is reluctant...and expecting my “no” vote...then horrified when my first question is “Can this lawyer talk? Can he/she translate Latin-to-English? Is he/she a good story-teller, with a comforting manner?”

At smart News/Talk/Sports stations, weekends are prime time, not fringe time.

Block-programmed non-music AM stations are more like TV stations than music FMs.

- Most music FMs pick a target audience, and deliver those particular listeners a consistent programming benefit every time they tune in (i.e., “Lite Rock, Less Talk”). Often, such audience is sold as demographic tonnage, based on cost-per-spot, and bid-down “to get on the buy.” At successful News/Talk stations, reps are selling advertiser-friendly “things,” not Arbitron numbers.
- And beyond its revenue value, solid News/Talk/Sports weekend programming has ratings value. Like a TV station's programming, radio's block-programmed weekend is a big tent. Different programs speak to different audiences. Call-in “how-to” shows and play-by-play invite listeners who wouldn't otherwise come your station. Offer them something else useful, like an on-hour news-and-weather package, and they'll set a button and come back...which PPM is telling us helps A LOT.

This month, an update: Shows-I-recommend, and strategies and tactics for making the-the-most-of weekends.

NEXT MONTH: My notes from Talkers' New Media Seminar.

Including...

Why just radio? Why only local?

If you can do a radio show (especially a Talk show), you can do lots more than a radio station can do.
And you can do-it-yourself. And it's a World-Wide Web.

You've heard of “the long tail?” Wag it.

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RECONCILING CONSISTENCY AND INCONSISTENCY

Do on the weekend what smart News/Talk stations do during the week:

- **Be consistent.** Sound relevant to the busy in-car listeners advertisers want to meet. Every time they stop the car, they take money out of their pockets. Accordingly, the station's format offers on-air information updates "THROUGHOUT YOUR BUSY DAY." If that's just a weekday thing, you're less habit-forming than you want to be.

"Your listeners expect the same type of content from their radio station no matter what time they tune in -- weekday or weekend, morning or evening. When you do not supply the expected information, you disappoint your listeners. When you disappoint them, your listeners will go elsewhere."

CBS News VP/Radio Harvey Nagler, previously longtime programmer at WCBS/NY

Successful News/Talk stations are consistently informative seven days a week. Longform programming may differ on Saturday and Sunday, but shortform information staples like news can't disappear. The Haiti earthquake and Rush Limbaugh's heart attack scare remind us that many big news stories break over a weekend or on holidays. It was the weekend when Ronald Reagan and Princess Di died, and Saddam Hussein got bagged, and that big tsunami hit. Stations that didn't interrupt the gardening show were as conspicuous as competitors who broke-into programming to own the story. As DC and the Mid-Atlantic states found out in consecutive-weekend-blizzards last month, severe weather never takes a day off. Ditto for traffic tangles that could foul an entire weekend day for motorists caught unaware.

Maintain the station's utility as an information appliance, and ensure that the station's brand permeates programming. Doing so will go a long way toward making various shows – some local/staff, some local/paid, some syndicated – all sound like part of one big on-air family; not like the station itself is taking the weekend off.

- At the same time, **be inconsistent**, deliberately! Carefully-chosen weekend how-to programming can be lots more relevant than yet-more political blah blah blah. "Best of" means "nobody's home." People driving to The Home Depot will find a Home Improvement call-in show darn relatable. Because weekends are "time for me," relate to listeners' weekend activities.

On-air, live church services are an audience-killer. Online they can be a money-maker.

Maybe I'll toast in hell for saying so, but this is the elephant in the room, a vestige of 1930s/1940s radio that is as-Arbitron-dysfunctional as-programming-can-get. When that organ music pipes-up, it sends a dangerous message about the station's "pulse" as a contemporary information appliance.

This programming airs for two reasons:

- It's already there, and has been for decades; and/or
- It pays to be there.

As a vendor, I'm all-for making money, so that-check-the-station-sends-me doesn't bounce. ☺ But if you're in a PPM market, I don't even have to make this speech. If you're not, you'll see the damage done in Monday morning drive tune-in.

Yes, airing an entire church service makes it available to (literally) a handful of elderly shut-ins, your entire audience that hour. The rest of the faithful are in church, thus unavailable to radio. Anyone else who tunes-in for more-useful programming is gone.

Goal: Migrate religious longform to the Internet, where it can be:

- available anytime, so more people can hear it than if it only airs live;
- heard more for another reason, because all-that's-there is the sermon, so it fits-into listeners' available listen time better;
- multi-media, and interactive (set up a blog, which sponsoring clergy can moderate); and thus...
- more-meaningful than the limitations of the real-time listen-only event now being broadcast.

Online, live streaming and/or podcast ("Godcast?") archived-until-next-week's sermon.

On-air, give the Reverend a weekday shortform Thought For The Day type vignette ("spot avail"), which drives traffic to online assets. Set up a PayPal collection plate.

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PLAYING THE HITS: PROVEN MONEY-MAKERS AND LISTENER FAVES

Lowest-hanging fruit: **Law.** This topic works better local than syndicated, since laws vary state-to-state; so national law shows have to hedge too much to be useful. Tell listeners that "THE LAWYER IS IN, THE METER IS OFF," and the phone will ring.

- It's not unusual for attorneys to spend big in small markets, to field callers' legal questions, because radio is a superb referral generator. Hey, who understands billable hours better than a lawyer? Important: Charge them more-per-hour than they charge, or they won't perceive value.
- Another reason this programming is lucrative: The station keeps in-program spots. Lawyers don't need 'em, because the show-itself promotes the attorney.
- Another reason this programming is lucrative: The lawyer NEEDS out-of-program spots, so those two longform ask-the-attorney hours on Saturday morning aren't a-well-kept-secret.
- Another reason this programming is lucrative: Those out-of-program spots are most-valuable to the attorney when they run on the weekday when radio inventory is least-in-demand: Mondays...the-beginning-of-the-week, during-which the lawyer wants to book more-more-more no-cost/no-obligation free initial consultations ("sits"). Sales: Load 'em up on Monday verticals.
- Another reason this programming is lucrative: Lawyers are ultra-competitive. Just look in the Yellow Pages, where they waste money that'd be LOTS-better-spent on radio. I'm working with a what-the-Yellow Pages-don't-want-you-to-know consultant, and when we visit law firms and show managing partners what-they're-REALLY-paying for Yellow Pages (no, they don't know!) and what we can do with-just-some-of-that-money on-air and online...without taking them out of the Yellow Pages...they gasp. And about online...
- Another reason this programming is lucrative: Internet revenue. See-and-hear www.EastTexasLaw.TV, which we built at client KTBB/Tyler. We're selling subcategory-exclusive FAQ videos, YouTube-type vignettes which let listeners get-comfortable-with an attorney, at the listener's convenience, without even making contact. By doing so, we advantage that attorney vs. adjacent Yellow Pages advertisers. YES, a law firm could build such online assets without a radio station...BUT:
 1. They don't have time for the YouTube learning curve. They don't even want to interrupt billable hours to interview Internet producers.
 2. And even if they do, and build a swell web site without the radio station...

“Who will know it's there, unless we tell our listeners?”

What to ask any local advertiser who already has a great web site. Their nightmare is lousy server stats. Radio can fix that quickly.

Pets: This category is virtually recession-proof, which you know if you have a cat. You're a guest in its house. Cat owners will do-without before Fluffy has to. Each year in the USA, twice as much is spent on pet supplies than is spent on radio advertising.

Consider:

- Brokering hours to a local veterinarian. If he/she sounds kindly, this will be a superb lead generator for his/her practice. Bundle-in spots-disguised-as-informative-features, ROS, which promote the weekend show and online content. Because selling something-already-on-air is always easier than selling-an-idea, consider starting with a syndicated show...such as...
- WOR Radio Network's Warren Eckstein, whom you'll see occasionally on The Today Show (www.worradionet.com).

True story: Gardening, a weekend Talk radio staple, is seasonal in Michigan, which turns into Siberia each winter. So my client station WKZO/Kalamazoo put the gardening show on hiatus for six months; and sold those six months to "Two Vets Talking About Pets." The vets were such a hit that they asked the station to find them another time slot after the Spring thaw. Ka-CHING.

Automotive, traditionally a big radio category, particularly relevant to Talk radio listeners, who spend so much time in-car.

- Lately? As Sarah Palin would chirp, "You betcha!" Frugal listeners are trying to squeeze more "free miles" out of paid-for cars, new car sales are down and the aftermarket is booming. I like The Car Clinic with Bobby Likis (www.CarClinicNetwork.com). Bobby's not my client, but I've probably recommended his show to more stations as any show I do work for.
- GREAT copy point for repair shops who advertise in automotive shows: "BE CAREFUL WHERE YOU TAKE YOUR CAR."

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Home Improvement: I couldn't be prouder of a client than I am of The Money Pit Home Improvement Radio Show. When they-and-I first met – at a Talkers New Media Seminar, way-back-when, at The Empire Hotel – The Money Pit was on a-dozen-or-so stations, via the late TalkAmerica Radio Network. Now, The Money Pit is radio's biggest Home Improvement show.

- To see why, click "Affiliates" at the top of the page at www.MoneyPit.com. I crafted much of what you will see and hear there, assets this show offers to support affiliates. And I'll be honest, we ripped-off EVERY great idea EVER. Quoting Citadel VP/Programming Scott Shannon: "Any station that can't make money with this show should get out of the radio business."
- The part I will take less credit for is how The Money Pit will attract "appointment listening." Money Pit host Tom Kraeutler is AOL's Home Improvement Editor; and you know co-host Leslie Segrete from her work on TLC's "While You Were Out" and "Trading Spaces." They do a show you'll be lots prouder of than a Colon Blow infomercial. Take 1 or 2 hours.

Consider combo-selling The Money Pit with "Real Estate Today" (www.retradio.com), two hours each weekend hosted by Gil Gross.

- Yep, THAT Gil Gross, now doing afternoons on KGO/San Francisco, and whom we miss from his years as Los Angeles-based evening anchor on ABC News Radio. What station wouldn't want HIM doing a couple weekend hours? Like all of the shows I am recommending in this issue, Real Estate Today is free, a straight barter clearance.
- I, personally, made over a million after-tax dollars investing in real estate, because I bought in three down markets. And new fortunes will be made by people who buy, carefully, right now, with inventory so plentiful and prices depressed, and mortgage rates as low as they've been since LBJ was president. Real Estate Today is about buying, owning, and selling a home, and is produced by the National Association of Realtors, member Realtors® in your area will know that you're taking this show.

"Imagine losing your cell phone?"

I get a queasy, gut-wrenching feeling just THINKING about it.

Consumer Electronics – a \$172 billion business last year, in the USA alone, in a recession -- is NOT just a guy thing. The only way you'll pry that Blackberry or iPhone out of soccer mom's hand is at gunpoint.

- If you're a radio person attending the massive, mind-boggling Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, you feel humbled by everything that competes with radio for listeners' attention. At the same time, you feel proud for how important radio is to this leading edge industry. There, in the middle of a 30+ football-field size Exhibit Hall, sits the raised, Plexiglas-enclosed broadcast booth for "Into Tomorrow with Dave Graveline." Squint as the CEO of Ford Motor Company and other industry big shots line-up to be interviewed, and they look like they're lining up at the holy altar to kiss the ring.
- Dave celebrated Into Tomorrow's 15th anniversary at CES this year, and has lasted so long because his gloriously geeky cast-O-characters knows that the show can't just talk to geeks...or just talk about computers. Into Tomorrow is 1, 2, or 3 hours that are available for download on Friday afternoons, and can air any time on Saturday or Sunday (www.graveline.com).

Tip: Take BOTH shows.

For the same reasons I recommend clearing both "The Money Pit Home Improvement Radio Show" AND "Real Estate Today with Gil Gross," I've advised stations to take "Into Tomorrow with Dave Graveline" AND "The Kim Komando Show" (www.komando.com). Grab both shows, and you'll cover the digital waterfront, have twice-as-much to sell, and deny your competition both shows.

Another possible Sales combo: Automotive and Consumer Electronics shows, because early-adopters embrace in-car electronics.

"Do NOT allow infomercials in your line-up. It is the crack cocaine of talk radio GSMs."

Jack Swanson, PD of the USA's most-consistently-successful radio station, KGO/San Francisco

Your station is a distribution system; but not just a distribution system. You come with a pre-existing audience, and a respected brand. Listeners know you, and they trust you, and you spent years earning that. Don't flush that away with an hour about colon cleansing, or something else demeaning or strange. You sign your good name to everything you put on your air.

OTHER BUFF STUFF TO MAKE WEEKENDS SPECIAL...

Gardening: Also from WOR Network: "The Garden Hotline with Ralph Snodsmith" (Sundays 8-10A ET, www.worradionet.com). Nature being local, some stations prefer a local host. A good show WILL move advertisers' product.

Personal Finance: Talk radio superstar Dave Ramsey doesn't just do a show about money. I liken Dave's show to Dr. Laura Schlessinger and WOR's seductive Dr. Joy Browne: All three are the "You did WHAT to mess-up-your-life???" shows. Callers' stories are compelling, sometimes-horrifying/sometimes-relatable, and the hosts' tough-love advice is useful.

- Times-being-as-they-are, frugality is hip, and people are re-thinking/repositioning investments, and Ramsey's undated content plays lots better on weekends than Rush Limbaugh and Sean Hannity re-runs. If you compete, Ramsey – and Dr. Laura and Dr. Joy Browne – will counterprogram Limbaugh/Hannity re-runs even better on the weekend as they do weekdays, because content isn't pegged-to the day's news. Applause to Team Ramsey for feeding the satellite 24/7, sparing stations the need to timeshift it, and the potential for human or machine error in the process.
- Nerdy cheapskate Clark Howard is gem (click "Talk," on the homepage at www.dial-global.com). Every single time I've heard Clark's show, I came away with a useable idea. Candidly, Howard and Ramsey are lots more compelling than Bob Brinker or The Mutual Fund Store infomercial.
- Regular readers of this newsletter know me to be a big fan of Wall Street Journal Radio Network's "The Wall Street Journal This Morning" whose host Gordon Deal REALLY gets that he's talking to regular folks, not Thurston Howell. WSJ Radio also offers "The Wall Street Journal This Weekend," an hour hosted by Gordon, about what-the-heck-happened this week, and what to brace-yourself-for in-the-week-to-come. And there's lots of weekend-appropriate lifestyle stuff, i.e., movies/DVDs, books, travel, real estate, health, etc. So this show will bundle well with other weekend fare. www.wsjradio.com

A countdown show! Affable Doug Stephan is "the Casey Kasem of Talk radio," and his Talk Radio Countdown explores the week's top stories, with newsmaker interviews, and Talk radio hosts and callers from across the USA (www.DougStephan.com).

Countdown feeds a total of three hours, each-of-which counts-down all 10 stories, and goes in-depth on several. Because each hour is self-standing, listeners will never hear the gaffe we young radio weekenders committed at least once, by accidentally airing AT40 hours in the wrong order. ☺ The satellite feed is Saturdays 6-9AM ET, unless you choose the FTP download Fridays @ 4P.

Unapologetic Guy Stuff: "The Cigar Dave Show" is not just about cigars. "Cigars, Spirits, Diversions, Dice, Dames. The Good Life," his web site explains. And knowing Dave, I can vouch that it's not an act. The last 5 words in his online biography are "...being serviced by his harem." This show sells well to several local direct retail categories, and WILL be appointment listening. Feeds 2 hours Saturday at noon, www.TalkShowsUSA.com

Tip: Have a weekend emcee.

Like that dapper chap who strolls toward the camera as he's introducing Turner Classic Movies. "Eye contact" matters on radio too.

At too many Talk stations, weekends sound automated. BEING automated is fine (if it works). SOUNDING automated sends the dangerous message you see in that Arbitron diary comment in the middle of page one. To avoid self-fulfilling that prophecy, and to sound better than a-stack-of-shows-from-various-sources, HOST your stack-of-shows-from-various-sources. Three templates:

1. The "Weekend Warrior" model: Saturday/Sunday 6A-noon are tended live by a station employee, whose voice will pervade all other weekend hours, via voicetracks in automation: "BEFORE YOU LINE-UP AT THE APPLE STORE FOR THAT NEW I-PAD, HEAR WHY YOU MIGHT WANT TO WAIT FOR THE NEXT VERSION, WHEN DAVE GRAVELINE TAKES YOU 'INTO TOMORROW,' NEXT HOUR HERE ON WXXX. BUT NOW, BACK TO 'REAL ESTATE TODAY,' WITH GIL GROSS."

- Best-case: A single part-timer takes "ownership" of this duty, rather than two full-timers each sentenced to work a weekend morning. This character's third workday might be Friday, when he/she buttons-down the automation, and preps as per the example above. I've even heard this person voice local weekend newscasts (what a concept). That strikes me as lots-to-do; but this person can roust weekday news people into duty as warranted by any big local story that breaks over the weekend.
- During brokered weekend hours, this person is the Ed McMahon character to attorneys or other paying how-to hosts whose shows would otherwise drag without someone more loquacious to move things along and run a tight board.

2: What I call "**The Doug Stephan Model.**" At several client stations where Doug's syndicated "Good Day" show is the station's morning show, we've had him cut a pile of such voicetracks, so that – in addition to hosting weekday mornings – Doug becomes station's 24/7 emcee.

3. Might **your morning host** emcee weekends, voicetracking? Doing so not only enhances stationality, it serves to promote the morning show, by making its host a familiar voice and name to the station's entire cume.

What all three have in common: a departure from the imaging Voice-of-God baritone talking-down-to-me that's become too typical.

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“Best of (name of host)”

THE most dangerous thing you can call a weekend re-run.

People aren't stupid. But some are lazy-enough to embarrass the biggest Talk stations on radio.

- As if the weary “I’m right, you’re wrong, I talk, you listen, Democrats bad, Republicans good Show” wasn’t beaten-to-death all week, many Rush Limbaugh and Sean Hannity also re-run weekday hours on the weekend.
- Lately, Premiere Radio Networks sounds like they’re doing a better job culling three aggregate hours of the least-perishable material from 15 weekday hours, packaged as “The Rush Limbaugh Weekend Update.” Still, Rush is announcing a call-in number that will go unanswered.
- After the announcer growls “NOW BACK TO ‘THE BEST OF SEAN HANNITY,’” Sean’s heard plugging that night’s TV guests. Ouch.
- Why not instead call it “The Sean Hannity Weekend Show?” Why merely fib when you can lie outright? Play-the-percentages. Mathematically, many weekend listeners will be hearing an hour for the first time.

Sales tip: Use syndicated how-to shows to up-sell local retailers who broker time.

Example:

- At a client station which airs Real Estate Today, we already had a local Realtor® buying a weekend hour, to field questions and tout her listings. We offered her right-of-first-refusal (catnip, because brokers are so competitive) to re-sell the station’s in-program inventory. Her prospects: landscapers/plumbers/painters/other punch-list vendors she has on speed dial.
- The station wholesales 10 spots (5/hour X 2 hours) to the Realtor® for \$X. If she re-sells ‘em for more, she can keep the change. In the process, the station exposes new advertisers without the cost-of-sale. In the process, all those new advertisers’ competitors awaken to the power of radio advertising.
- And the agent gets a 3-minute local content window in-program, to tout listings.

Admittedly, this model might not scale-up to major markets, where a single agent can’t afford to eat-the-whole-thing.

Back to my “Take BOTH Shows” tip on page 4. Because this particular station also airs The Money Pit Home Improvement Radio Show, other value assets include:

- Sponsorship of The Money Pit Minute, a daily shortform feature which contains a local avail, and no national spot or sponsor. Because both shows are about home ownership, they’re both warm environments for pitches to homeowners.
- Sometimes, the best Sales message isn’t a pitch, but rather a chance to hear the advertiser simply talk shop. And this is one reason I like working with Sales in small and medium markets. The advertisers we work with aren’t cubicle-bound Sally Timebuyer agency drones...they’re CHARACTERS, dogged entrepreneurs working 14 hour workdays on Main Street USA. These are the small business people the president referred to in his State of the Union speech. They fuel our retail economy; and they’re lots more important to stations since the transactional business Sally doles out tanked.
- Also back on page 4, I told you how we built EastTexasLaw.TV to give those advertisers a-face-and-voice, and to let THEM tell their own story, by answering, **online** and at the listener’s convenience, in a conversational and unscripted manner, the questions most-frequently-asked by potential customers. Let them also tell their story on-air, in-program, in the 3:00 window @ 26:50 in “Real Estate Today,” and by using the entire 3:00 local avail @ :51 in The Money Pit. To hear an example of this advertiser interview technique – a spec that I personally produced for an advertiser on client WPTF/Raleigh – click “Sales” at www.HollandCooke.com. You’ll hear each show’s host inter-cut with a local retailer’s voice.

*Are you getting this by snailmail? Switch to electronic delivery and get this newsletter the day I send it to the printer. We’ll save a tree. And because I save a buck on printing and postage, I’ll bonus you three months. To convert your existing hard copy subscription to electronic delivery, **E-mail me at newsletter@hollandcooke.com.***

Why some shows are better NOT-live.

I felt bad for Kim Komando. Late one Saturday night, as I was driving in the Boston area, I heard her show on mighty WBZ. Without going-as-far-as-to-say she sounded like she was begging for callers, I did feel antsy hearing her vamp between callers.

- Here's the problem: When a weekend show is produced live, earlier-in-the-weekend (Komando feeds Saturday mornings), it settles for the callers who were available at that time. Those callers are a sub-set of the show's entire audience, since so many stations timeshift weekend shows. So, hours later, or the next day, when timeshifting affiliates' callers call, who answers?
- Be clear: I'm not singling-out Kim, whom I respect and whose show I recommended back on page 4. This is just an example of how welcoming-only-some-of-the-show's-potential-callers can limit the show's ultimate appeal. Wisely, Kim uses Email liberally, to balance the show topically, and to acknowledge listeners in markets unrepresented by the hour's callers.

TRUE STORY: My photo is the bulls-eye of a dartboard in the control room at Kim's competitor show, "Into Tomorrow with Dave Graveline." I rocked Dave's world when I suggested that he discontinue producing the show in real-time...utterly disrupting his staff's weekly production routine. Listen, and you'll hear that it was worth the darts. You can call 24/7 to "Ask Dave," whose voice guides you through a playfully-interactive voicemail system, from-which on-air callers are culled. So each "Into Tomorrow" hour plays-the-hits, by featuring Q+A about digital photography, music and other portable media, smart phones, in-car electronics, etc.

TRUE STORY: In the depths of the recession, I heard Dave's competitor Leo Laporte begin his show gushing enthusiastically that "ALL THREE HOURS" would be about home theater. In a recession. Click.

The only commodity scarcer than listeners' money is their attention.

SEE IT ON THE RADIO

Many News/Talk stations exploit respected television and print assets by airing shows such as the following. Many other stations might not even realize that these shows are available, since some are not even included among program listings on respective networks' web sites. I had to Email various network executives to confirm some of this information:

- The King Kong of the Sunday morning news jungle is NBC News' "Meet the Press with David Gregory," the radio feed of which is syndicated by Westwood One. Sales tip: Which local advertisers sponsor the show on your local NBC-TV affiliate? For CBS Radio affiliates, there's a half-hour version of "Face The Nation with Bob Schieffer." Same Sales tip. ABC Radio offers affiliates its TV network's "This Week." Same Sales tip.
- On page 5, I recommended "The Wall Street Journal This Weekend;" and I know station reps who schmooze advertisers by buying 'em a WSJ subscription.
- As I rush this meaty issue to the printer in time for Team Talkers to stuff it into New Media Seminar registration bags, "Newsweek On-Air" is relocating, after distributor Air America bellied-up. When I programmed WTOP/Washington in the mid-80s, I was an early adopter of this great show, then distributed by AP Radio, and a-labor-of-love for longtime Newsweek editor David Alpern. GET THIS: Between networks, the show hasn't missed a beat. Dave soldiered-on, delivering it to affiliates via FTP. By the time this ink dries, he will likely have found a new home. For more information: david.alpern@newsweek.com

EVERYBODY'S WORKING FOR THE WEEKEND

Busy as we are these days – listeners' discretionary time is VERY precious. So at various stations I have programmed or consulted, we have produced, and sold, a shortform feature called "Weekend Funformation." It's a rundown of interesting and fun things to do in the area this weekend. Which new movies open at the multiplex, where's the best farmer's market, PSA stuff like the Boy Scout troop carwash to raise money for their annual trip to camp...the kind of charming local information that's too rare on radio post-consolidation. This might be an appropriate assignment for an enthused entry level person or office staffer who wants on-air.

THE BOTTOM LINE? THE BOTTOM LINE!

Two success fundamentals I have observed at stations that make big bucks with weekend programming:

- Even though some of these shows become listener favorites, it's not about ratings, although interesting how-to shows will protect your ratings better than church services or The Colon Blow Show. Specialty programming delivers advertisers an audience specifically-interested-in related products. These shows also offer lots of value-added and promotional opportunities.
- Don't sell how-to shows as stand-alone weekend programming on a single station, even though they only air as such. Package these shows right, and you can get all your cluster's stations on the buy. Fashioning such packages is a big part of my work with client stations. RSVP if you'd like to learn more. My contact info is at the top of the previous page.

WANT TO SYNDICATE? I CAN HELP! (But first...can I talk you out of it?)

See <http://GetOnTheNet.com/syndication.html>

