



## **“The Future of Radio in the Car?” It already happened.**

*CE Week 2013 coverage by consultant [Holland Cooke](#) • reprinted from Talkers magazine*

[New York] Because radio depends SO much on in-car use, you’re probably intrigued by various reports from the Consumer Electronics Association’s Connected Car Conference. Maybe you’re even feeling info-overload about the techy mobile future.

Here’s the bottom line, from four-and-a-half-hours of thoughtful discussion, research, and prognostication by automotive, electronics, and media thinkers...



*Whatever the dashboard is about to morph-into matters less to AM/FM radio than what’s already happened.*

It happened several years ago, when I bought that cord at the Apple Store. Plug one end into what we used to call “the cigarette lighter,” plug the other end into iPhone, and whatever’s on the phone comes out the speakers. Still-to-come hardware and software evolution will merely help drivers sift.

It’ll continue to be a scramble for automakers to keep up with listeners, whose aftermarket media gadgets run a couple years ahead of OEM lead time, “an age-old problem” admits General Motors’ Tim Nixon. Fellow panelist Tom Malone from Audiovox: “Let the consumer bring-in any device they want,” via Aux/USB/Bluetooth, whatever. “We cannot keep up with the devices. We want to enable devices to connect in-car.” So, for broadcasters, the future IS now.

TuneIn Radio’s Carl Rohling claims 2 million in-car users. Fellow panelist Geoff Snyder says his Pandora has 2.5 million.

- How’s a music station to compete? Don’t get sidetracked by well-intentioned buzz about “curation.” Yes, the playlist has to be right...not-to-be-confused-with “safe,” as radio re-discovers new music discovery. But what’s-between-the-songs will distinguish you from someone else’s songs.
- How can local News/Talk/Sports stations continue to be chosen, from among other Rush Limbaugh affiliates on TuneIn? By what’s before, and after, and embedded-in YOUR Rush Limbaugh feed.

Common thread? Say it with me: “Local, local, local.”

Obviously, local-done-right...not merely re-staffing with Les Nessman-style newscasters who drone-on about City Council. If you can deliver – at-the-speed-of-life – what matters to busy in-car listeners RIGHT NOW, your future will be bright.

See also:

- **Where Radio Fits: Radio’s Strengths In The Media Landscape**  
<http://www.radio-info.com/2012/09/26/where-radio-fits-radios-strengths-in-the-media-landscape/>
- **NOT “The Future:” Radio & TV Have Already Been Re-Defined**  
<http://www.talkers.com/2013/02/13/radio-house-of-cards/>