

# Holland Cooke Newsletter • July 2025

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## SPECIAL ISSUE: Artificial Intelligence Tips, Traps

Robots write commercial copy: Time-saver! Buzzword Bubble Wrap?

'Seems quaint now. Stations had a Creative person on staff. She or he would collaborate with reps, often going on calls, to understand the prospect's message.

Back to the future: Reps spend what should be prospecting time writing spots. And various vendors are offering -- and, increasingly, radio stations are using -- Artificial Intelligence apps to script, and even voice, commercials. Are they getting results? Renewals?

*Hearing is believing. Page 2...*

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# BUSTED!

Australian Radio Network [fesses-up](#). She's AI.



## How You Can Flip-the-Script.

Make Artificial Intelligence your intern, not your replacement.

*Download a step-by-step template, to sound local and super-relevant. Page 4...*

# Holland Cooke Monthly Newsletter

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## AI Commercial Copy: Convenience vs. Blah-Blah-Blah

Beware The Hamster Wheel Effect:



Too often, copy fails...either because the station HAS a Creative department, or because it DOESN'T have one.

If you do have a writer, he or she can get overwhelmed, because the multi-station cluster conveyor belt is moving too fast.

Many stations now have no in-house copy person. Reps write their own spots, even in big markets. They close new business, bang-out a script, then go close more new business...to keep-up with churn, because, in some cases, **copy is ineffective**.

See the problem?

Instead, consider the method that has consistently produced results for client stations and in my own freelance work.

**Some things are easier-demonstrated-than-described**...the rationale for using spec spots. So hear how we salvaged several accounts that canceled, in my video describing the process: "Radio Advertising, In Their Own Words:"

[https://youtu.be/\\_IRjnw8y8](https://youtu.be/_IRjnw8y8)

Some of these AI copy apps use a fill-in-the-blanks form. Others crawl the prospect's web site for copy points.

Whenever I'm given a demonstration, I suggest one particular business I'm familiar with. But the scripts never seem to capture what makes the business special.



This is a restaurant we frequent often. The copy that comes back is clichéd, painfully generic ("a relaxing atmosphere").

My take: Hear how the chef himself becomes a story, an opportunity the AI robot wouldn't spot:

<http://getonthenet.com/TheBarn-BrianHebert-1.mp3>

**Everything we do is story-telling.**

More work than simply plugging-into an AI app? You bet. The interview from which I excerpted the sound bites you will hear took all of 5 minutes, and I voiced and assembled the spot in a half-hour.

And here's The Free Prize Inside: People tell advertisers we feature this way "I heard you on the radio!"

### Don't get me wrong!

NOT saying don't exploit AI. I do, every day. Heck, I used ChatGPT to write an entire E-book about selling radio advertising. It's a free PDF download:

<http://getonthenet.com/EvenARobotKnowsRadioSales.PDF>

**Use AI as a tool**, the cure for writer's block. Think: first draft. What makes your work special is YOUR personal touch.

If the spot does not incorporate the client's voice or other production effects – or if it is a live read – ChatGPT may be all the writer you need. But don't settle for the first version. Converse with the app, and tweak it as many times as necessary. This process will benefit from how well you understand the advertiser's products/services/needs/wants...

## Sure, A-B-C, "Always Be Closing."

If you smell money, do not take the pen out of your prospect's hand. But the successful sellers I work with think C-N-A, "Client Needs Analysis," and they **make that first call 20 questions.**



In my experience, these have produced useful copy points:

- "Profile the customer you want." (You will hear clues that can help you phrase benefit statements.)
- "What is the biggest mistake people make when..." [purchasing whatever else the prospect sells]?
- "What is the biggest misconception about [what you sell]?"
- "How has what you do changed in the last several years?" (Technology or "green" advances? Or how it's quicker and/or less-expensive now?)
- "Why should I purchase from you, instead of your competition?"

Smart reps I work with **use the smartphone voice recorder, to take notes**, and so we can lift sound bites for spec spots.

## *"Based on what you told me last time..."*

The first 6 words on the second call, as you play the spec spot you developed, based on CNA during the first call.

Two tips:

- **Sales 101: Eliminate risk.** Make the point that you will develop spec spots at no obligation and "at our expense." Doesn't seem like a big deal to us. We work in a building with studios and announcers. That's show biz to prospects.
- **Can you bring TWO spec spots?** Ideally two approaches, culled from your CNA notes. That makes the ask "this-or-that" rather than "yes or no;" making your prospect a collaborator. Offer to "tweak it until it tells your story just right."

## **And, because I couldn't resist, I asked ChatGPT:**

"Vendors are now offering radio stations a service that delivers advertising commercial copy generated by AI. Because AI draws from what has already been done, this risks sound-alike scripts. Is there a list of commercial clichés users should instruct AI to exclude?"

Instantly, the robot replied:

"While there isn't a definitive list of commercial clichés, as they can vary depending on industry, audience, and cultural context, here are some common examples to consider instructing AI to avoid:

- |                             |                              |                                     |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Don't miss out!          | 6. Unbeatable prices!        | 11. Change your life today!         |
| 2. Limited time offer!      | 7. Revolutionary product!    | 12. Once in a lifetime opportunity! |
| 3. One-of-a-kind deal!      | 8. Best in class!            | 13. Hurry, while supplies last!     |
| 4. Act now!                 | 9. Cutting-edge technology!  | 14. Get yours today!                |
| 5. For a limited time only! | 10. Guaranteed satisfaction! | 15. New and improved!               |

These are just a few examples, and there are many more clichés that could be included in such a list. It's also important to consider the specific audience and context when identifying and excluding clichés from AI-generated advertising commercial copy."

Yes, Skynet has become self-aware.

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## Make AI Your Intern, Not Your Replacement.

[Last month's newsletter](#) reported how Australian Radio Network was forced to [acknowledge](#) that Artificial Intelligence supplies the voice of "[Workdays with Thy](#)" on one of its stations (CADA, available on the iHeartRadio app).

"Exploring how new technology can support great content," the network statement rationalized.

If you are a (human) music DJ, this is chilling. If you're a Talk host, are you next? Hey, IBM's Deep Blue defeated world chess champion Garry Kasparov in 1997, back when we were still dialing-up Internet access. So don't think souped-up AI couldn't someday interact with human callers. Or the fake callers vendors now offer.

### Flip-the-script, to put the robot to work for you and sound local and super-relevant.

Here's how, step-by-step:

#### 1. Use Google Trends, filtered to your metro area.

- Go to [Google Trends](#).
- Set the location to your city, state, or region.
- Look at:
  - Trending Searches (daily hot topics)
  - Related Queries (people often search "near me" + other urgent needs)

#### 2. Focus on "Near Me" signals that reflect tension, urgency, or curiosity.

"Near me" searches usually spike when:

- People have a problem (e.g., "urgent care near me", "cheap gas near me").
- There's a trend or event (e.g., "earthquake near me", "protest near me").
- There's fear, confusion, or excitement (e.g., "layoffs near me", "concerts near me").

These are rich veins for call-in topics because:

- They touch emotions (fear, anger, hope).
- They're localized — content your new-tech audio competitors won't have.
- They're now — you can spin them for immediate reaction.

#### 3. Translate "Near Me" searches into talkable angles

Example:

Search Trend	Possible Call-In Topic
"Layoffs near me"	"Are you worried about job security? Have you or someone you know been laid off recently?"
"Protests near me"	"What's your take on the demonstrations downtown? Are they making a difference or making things worse?"
"Gas prices near me"	"Have high gas prices changed your driving habits? Are you cutting back or just absorbing it?"

#### 4. Bonus Tip: Cross-Reference "Near Me" with social media buzz.

Use X (Twitter) trends and Facebook community groups to see if local chatter matches what Google is showing.

## 5. Create a simple daily habit

- Spend 5 minutes a day on Google Trends.
- Pull one or two local "near me" topics.
- Frame them into emotionally loaded questions for on-air teasing:
  - "Do you feel less-safe after [recent incident? [phone number]."
  - "Have YOU or someone you know been affected by the [local layoffs]?"

Example of making-AI-your assistant (and not your replacement): I asked ChatGPT to outline the instructions above; and generate this fill-in-the-blanks PDF "[Topic Mining Sheet](#)" you can use daily to systematically turn Google "near me" trends into great call-in topics.

Oh, and from the web site for that Australian station: "We are an inclusive workplace embracing diversity in all its forms." You do the punchline.

### Along with topic du jour, float a "Bonus Question."

Something apolitical, undated, and (dare we?) fun.

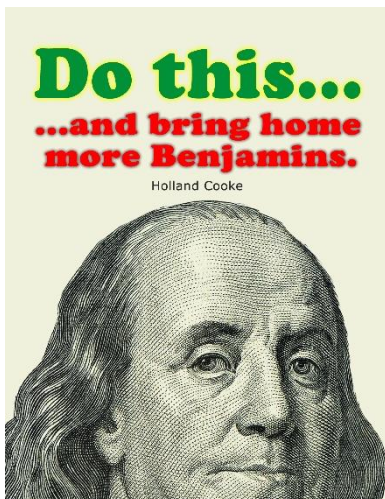
Doing so gives listeners two reasons to call, and you may be surprised which topic the caller brings up first.

EXAMPLE: [Hear a talker I have coached for years](#), someone you often hear guest-hosting for Jimmy Failla.

Evergreen Bonus Questions I've heard light-up the lines:

- "Dating co-workers" (Every workplace has one poorly-kept secret.) \*
- "Your biggest gripe about where you work?" \*
- "Why do people cheat (on their spouse)?"
- "You get to meet God, and you get ONE question."
- "The most embarrassing thing you've ever witnessed?"
- "What is the one thing about your spouse you would change?" \*
- "What is the last 'little white lie' you told?" \*
- "What happened the last time you said 'There but for the grace of God...?'"
- "Talking your way out of traffic tickets"
- "Who are your kids' heroes?"
- "Which of the Ten Commandments are outdated? Or, which 11th Commandment do we need?"
- "Your least favorite song?" (An alert producer can quickly search YouTube and play a portion.)

\* Invite anonymous responses. 😊



## New this month: FREE E-book

*7 strategies for Programming, Promotion, and Sales that can make your station more money.*

**Instant download, no login required:**

**<https://getonthenet.com/BringBenjamins.pdf>**