Holland Cooke Newsletter • December 2026

© 2026 Holland Cooke, all rights reserved. But PLEASE DO duplicate and share!



My Special Report begins on page 3…



"Spring" into action – and revenue – by planning NOW:

- Hop-on sponsorable engagement for Easter, March 28.
- April 1: Profitable prank that won't cost your license?
- National Pet Day April 11: Photos, Prizes, Sponsor.
- As 4/15 looms, sponsored tips: deadlines, extensions, scam alerts.
- Mother's Day is May 9. Make it special, and sponsored.
- 6/4 National Donut Day: surprise cops/firefighters/other heroes.

Download my FREE 2027 Events & Occasions Calendar from page 2.



I'll be there for you, next month.

Technology is changing everyday life – every day, in almost every way – for listeners, and local retailers who want them as customers. **Help yourself to my FREE daily reports from CES2027:** air Mon1/4-Fri1/8. No spot, no paperwork. Download 'em the night-before air from HollandCooke.com

Holland Cooke Monthly Newsletter

© 2026 Holland Cooke, PO Box 1323, Block Island RI 02807 USA
HollandCooke.com • Twitter @HollandCooke • 401-330-6868 • talkradio@hollandcooke.com

5 IDEAS IN 4 MINUTES

1. Download my 2027 Events & Occasions Calendar

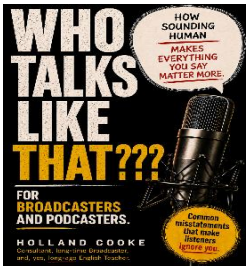
You get two versions:

- PDF, month-by-month pages: **https://getonthenet.com/2027.pdf**
- editable Excel, so you can add local items: **https://getonthenet.com/2027.xlsx**

2. Local news: Avoid "Process-speak."

- Yawner: "The Transit Board revised its fare structure."
- Instead: "Riding the bus will cost 50 cents more starting Monday."
- Why: Meetings are **process**. What changes for the listener is news.
- Yawner: "The district reallocated Title I funds."
- Instead: "Some after-school programs could be cut."
- Why: Translate the paperwork into **consequences**.

Why? To matter more.



Mispronounce or misuse a word, lapse into cliché or announcer-speak, and you've given them a reason to notice **how** you're talking, instead of **what** you're saying…or to just tune-out mentally.

I'm all about helping you communicate clearly enough to compete with a formidable number of audio choices, all chasing an increasingly scarce commodity: **attention.**

My new quick-read E-book skewers broadcast-ese, bloated wording, dated references, redundancies, and mispronunciations.

FREE instant download, here: https://getonthenet.com/OOPS.pdf

3. SEEN THIS? Gunhill Road's latest is zany!



https://youtu.be/7J45mIP04m4

To schedule an interview with Michael Harrison: michael@talkers.com

4. Looking for work?

Too often, for too many in radio, it has been a Blue Christmas in recent years. If you have been displaced – or if you are working, and, shall we say, "assessing your options' -- don't underestimate what you have to offer.

- The skill set you have accumulated doing-what-you-do can advantage you in other walks-of-life. Here are 18: **https://getonthenet.com/CareerAlternatives.html**
- Now try this: Paste that URL in ChatGPT or MS Copilot, and ask for "opportunities near [where you live]."

5. Over the holidays, lend a hand to fellow broadcasters in financial need?

Learn about The Broadcasters Foundation of America at **https://broadcastersfoundation.org/**

Holland Cooke Monthly Newsletter

© 2026 Holland Cooke, PO Box 1323, Block Island RI 02807 USA
HollandCooke.com • Twitter @HollandCooke • 401-330-6868 • talkradio@hollandcooke.com

In this month's E-X-P-A-N-D-E-D issue:

Extending Your Earned Trust to Connected Devices

Listeners may not carry a radio everywhere, but they sure do carry a phone. And they use smart speakers, watch YouTube, scroll social feeds, hear podcasts and increasingly hear audio through connected dashboards and televisions.

Strategic goal: Put the station's most useful content wherever listeners can use it –without requiring them to consume the entire broadcast. Live radio remains the mothership. Connected devices create additional occasions of use, and Sales inventory.

Make your live programming easy to find.

A station stream is only useful if listeners can reach it before frustration sends them somewhere else.

Audit and understand the entire experience:

- Does the app open quickly?
- Does listening begin with one tap? Or automatically?
- Is the play button unmistakable?
- Does the stream recover after a phone call?
- Can listeners continue listening while using another app?
- Does the player display the station name clearly?
- Is the station easy to save as a favorite?
- Are instructions written for ordinary users rather than engineers?

Many station apps make listeners choose among several streams, menus or content tiles before anything plays. Every additional decision risks an exit point. If promos say "We've turned your phone into a radio," make listening to the phone as easy as turning on a radio.

Teach listeners the smart speaker command.

Don't assume they know what to say. Use repetition to teach them, i.e., "Alexa, play WXXX."

Common problems include:

- The assistant plays a similarly named station.
- Call letters are difficult to understand.
- The device selects a national service instead.
- The stream is listed under an outdated brand.
- Listeners are told several different commands.

So promote the tested command everywhere:

- On-air imaging,
- Website,
- App,
- Email signatures,
- Social profiles,
- Promotional graphics,
- Refrigerator magnets,
- Contest materials,
- Advertiser handouts.

Revenue opportunity: Sell the pre-roll announcement.

3. Claim a preset in the connected dashboard.

AM/FM remains familiar and hands-free, but the dashboard now presents an audio jungle of streaming services, podcasts and apps. So the station needs to earn -- and teach -- the preset habit across both broadcast and digital interfaces.

On-air: "Save WXXX as a favorite now, so local news is one tap away when you need it."
On the website, demonstrate:

- How to save the frequency,
- How to favorite the station in its app,
- How to connect by Bluetooth,
- How to use Apple CarPlay or Android Auto,
- How to resume the stream after leaving the vehicle.

Emphasize the listener outcome, not the technology: "One tap for local weather, traffic and what happens next" or "…for your Christmas music station." Give listeners a specific reason to reserve one position for you.

4. Turn newscasts into short, on-demand updates.

Most users do not want yesterday morning's entire four-hour show. They may want the 2-minute update that tells them:

- What happened,
- What changed,
- What happens next,
- How it affects them.

Create consistently branded time-stamped updates:

- "WXXX News Now"
- "Your Morning Local Update"
- "Three Things to Know"
- "What Happens Next"

Post them to the station app, website and podcast platforms.

Include a spoken time reference: "Here's what we know as of 3:30 Tuesday afternoon." Without a timestamp, a useful update can become misinformation after conditions change.

On-demand news must be brief enough to use immediately and labeled clearly enough to trust.

5. Clip the payoff, not the segment.

"Clips" should not mean random excerpts. Review each interview, call, or host segment and ask:

- What was the "Aha!" moment?
- What answer was most useful?
- What surprised us?
- What will people quote?
- What question did the guest answer especially well?
- What would make someone send this to a friend?

A 90-second clip titled: "The three medications you should never leave in a hot car" will earn more use than:
"Dr. Smith Interview, Hour 2, Part 3."

Give each clip enough setup to stand alone. Someone encountering it on Facebook may not know the host, guest, station or original topic. So begin with context: "Local pharmacist Dr. Jane Smith explains why your glove compartment may be the worst place to store medication."

Every clip should deliver one complete, useful idea.

6. Package podcasts around specific needs.

A station podcast should not automatically be a recording of something that already aired. Think narrower:

- "What First-Time Homebuyers Get Wrong"
- "This Week at City Hall"
- "Tri-County Business Brief"

High-affinity topics create deliberate use. Segment longer podcasts at logical stopping points so mobile listeners can pause and return easily.

A broad title such as "The Morning Show Podcast" means something to existing fans. A problem-solving title can attract someone searching for the subject. Name the benefit, not merely the program.

A local expert can sponsor -- or become the expert voice of -- a well-coached podcast that provides "free samples" of useful counsel.

7. Treat social media as distribution, not promotion.

Posting "Tune in tomorrow morning" asks social users to change platforms and remember something later. Instead, give them value where they already are:

- A 30-second answer,
- A local-news headline,
- A weather explanation,
- A strong caller comment,
- A quote from a local official,
- A short video,
- A poll that feeds the next broadcast conversation.

Then invite the next action:

- "Hear the complete answer in the WXXX app."
- "We'll update this story at 4:00."
- "What should we ask the mayor next?"

Engagement should flow both ways. Social comments can reveal questions, rumors and concerns the station should address on-air. Don't merely use social media to promote radio. Use social media to do radio's work.

8. Expose local personalities with video.

The emotional bond listeners have with familiar voices becomes stronger when they can see the people behind them. Useful video need not resemble television. It can be:

- A host explaining one issue,
- A guest answering one question,
- A "3 Things to Know" update,
- A reporter on-scene,
- A studio moment,
- A tour backstage at a local event,
- A quick demonstration,
- A live community interview.

Frame video for the platform:

- Vertical for Reels, Shorts and TikTok,
- Horizontal for YouTube and connected televisions,
- Captioned for people watching without sound,
- Tightly edited for people scrolling quickly.

Don't just point a camera at a one-hour radio show and assume the result is compelling video. Select the moments that reward being seen. Video should add expression, access, or visual evidence -- not merely give viewers a peek.

9. Make every "orphaned" clip identify its parent.

Content shared online becomes separated from its original context. A listener may receive it from a friend without ever seeing the station's page. So every clip should organically communicate:

- Who is speaking, where the story is happening, when it was recorded,
- Where to get the latest information,
- What station produced it, and what the station helps the listener accomplish.

Use a brief spoken or visual identifier: "From KXXX 94.7FM, Your Only Local News Radio." Keep logos visible but unobtrusive. Do not bury the branding in a long introduction that delays the payoff. When someone else shares the clip, the station should still receive the credit…and the user should know where to return.

10. Sell the whole useful ecosystem.

Connected-device content creates inventory beyond traditional commercials:

- Sponsored local-news updates,
- Weather videos,
- Podcast introductions,
- Branded community calendars,
- Social video sponsorships,
- Email newsletter placement,
- Website topic pages,
- App-stream pre-rolls
- Consumer features,
- "Ask the Expert" clips,
- Connected-TV video,
- Push-alert sponsorships, used carefully.

Sell a coordinated solution: "Your message will surround the useful local information our audience seeks…in the car, on the phone and on demand."

One interview with a local expert might yield:

- Several 60-second tips,
- A podcast,
- Social clips,
- An Email feature,
- A website FAQ,
- Short features on cluster-mate music stations.

The advertiser gains repeated exposure. The audience receives useful information. The station earns more from work it is already doing, and can pitch for the digital dollars many prospects are already allocating. Rather than selling disconnected digital add-ons, you're offering one trusted relationship delivered across several devices.

Key: Don't squander the trust you're extending.

Content does not retain the station's credibility merely because the logo is attached. Connected-device content must uphold the same standards as the live broadcast:

- Verify facts.
- Correct errors.
- Display timestamps.
- Remove outdated urgent information.
- Identify edited excerpts honestly.
- Do not use misleading headlines.
- Do not manufacture listener comments.
- Do not let AI imitate local personalities.
- Do not disguise commercials as independent reporting.
- Do not overwhelm users with push alerts.

Every platform should feel like the same station: same usefulness, same humanity and same editorial judgment. The transmitter creates reach. The station's work creates trust. That trust can travel anywhere if the content remains:

- Real-time when immediacy matters,
- Short when the listener is busy,
- On-demand when the listener chooses,
- Visual when seeing adds value,
- Local on every platform,
- Helpful every time.

The Big Idea

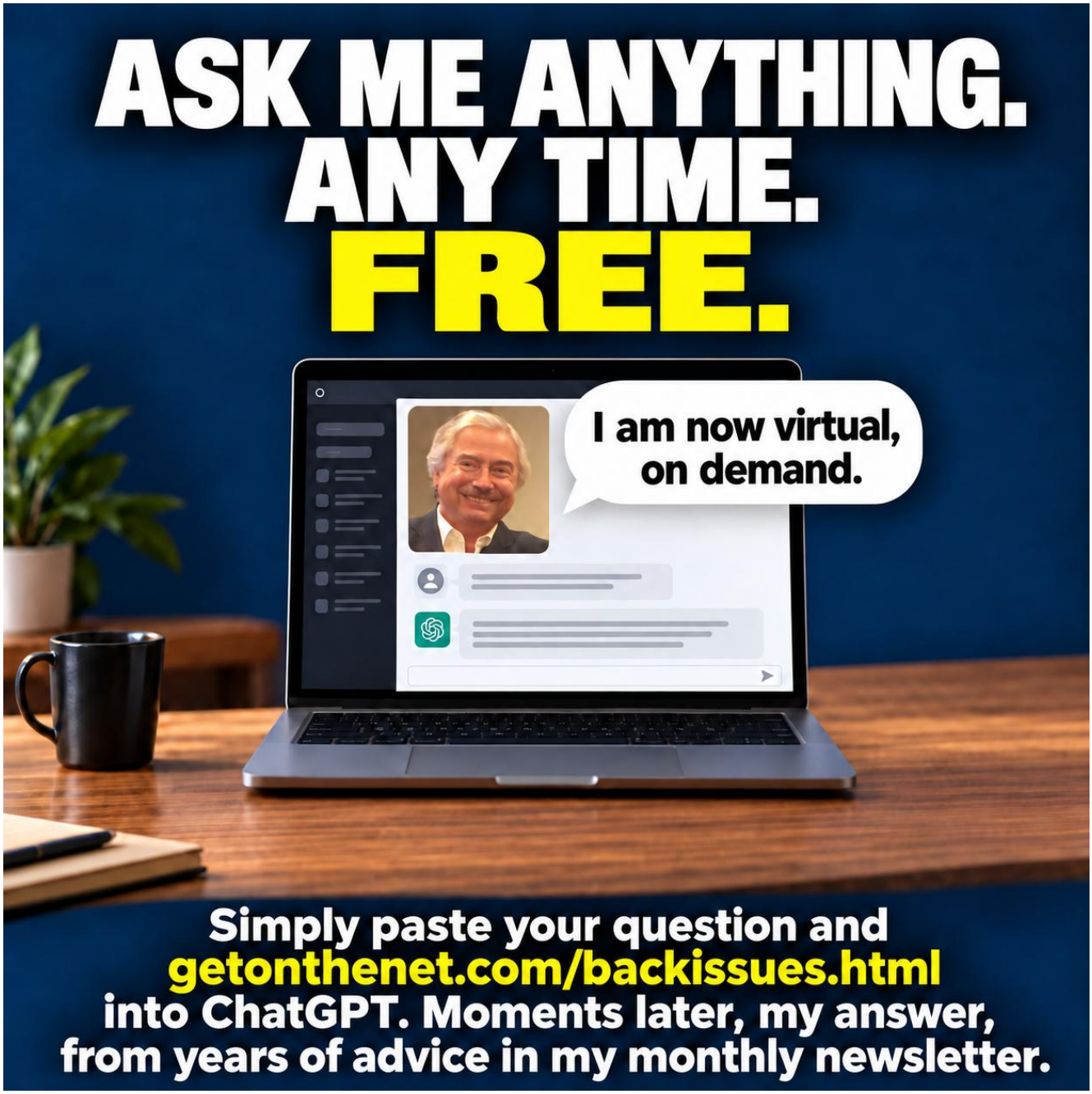
Stop thinking: "How do we put our radio show online?"
Start asking: **"**Which useful moment does this listener need on this device right now?"

That's how a radio station becomes more than a button in the dashboard. It becomes a trusted local information service, available "on any connected device."

Next month:

- **Your Q1 Revenue Jump-Start.** 6 Ideas: Quick to package, easy to explain, ready to sell.
- **Special Report: Avoid these 10 Tune-Out Triggers.** Attention is currency. The longer listeners listen, the more they'll hear about your advertisers.

Meantime…



Holland Cooke Monthly Newsletter

© 2026 Holland Cooke, PO Box 1323, Block Island RI 02807 USA
HollandCooke.com • Twitter @HollandCooke • 401-330-6868 • talkradio@hollandcooke.com

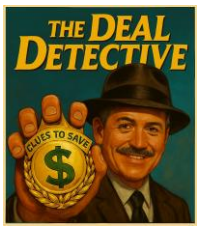
SOUND BITES

"Plenty of time to plan for this one: the Super Bowl is going to fall on Valentine's Day in 2027. Get a 'Ladies Only (Men Optional)' Valentine's party for forgotten girlfriends going at a local watering hole."
Subscriber Alan P. Darsen, suggesting tie-ins with lingerie shops, candy makers, florists etc.

"W(xxx) hasn't forgotten you. While HE is glued to TV, celebrate Valentine's Day with us."

"The most-trusted fake news in America"
Comedy Central

"Inflation is a tax on cash."
Peter Schiff, Euro Pacific Capital



Costs are criminal…and you're on-the-case.

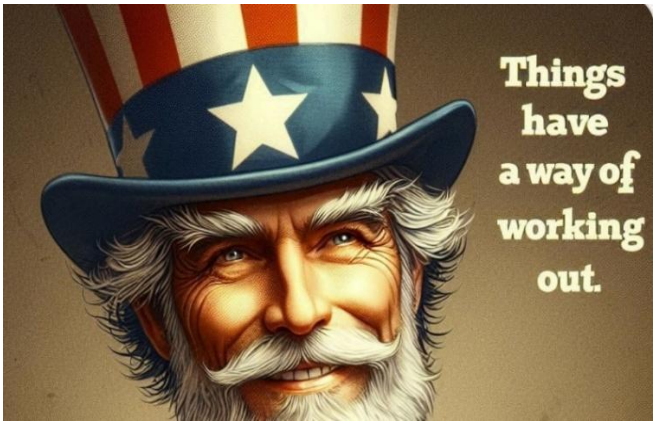
Listeners – and advertisers – are coping.

Help them, by helping yourself to my free 60-second features, "money-saving clues," from The Deal Detective. No national spot, no paperwork, no foolin.' Sell a local sponsorship and keep the money.

Download at **https://getonthenet.com/DealDetective.html**

"Looking back on my career, I made some pretty good decisions along the way. And I was also very lucky. Sometimes, it was a seemingly innocuous event or even a silent nod that gave me the green light to go out and try something new and different. I've fulfilled many the goals and aspirations I cobbled together while a student at Michigan State. Mine has been a dream career where I've had ample opportunity to make an impact in a profession that I love to this day. It doesn't get better than that."
Fellow consultant, "data whisperer," Classic Rock format pioneer Fred Jacobs, **announcing his retirement**. Mazel tov!

Out with the old, in with…the News.



As the USA turned 250, its people began dying from Measles. We invaded Venezuela and now covet Cuba; and the Iran war accelerated inflation, triggering a midterm blue tsunami. Cascading major tech outages interrupted our lives.

The World Cup came to America, came-off without terrorist party-poopers, and made Ranch dressing a worldwide hit. Milwaukee's Brewers won their first-ever World Series, the Knicks won their first NBA Championship since 1973, and we New Englanders are still smarting from a Super Bowl rout.

We lost Dolly Parton, Ted Turner, Neil Sedaka, Bob Weir, Clive Davis, Robert Duvall, Catherine O'Hara, Eva Marie Saint, Patrick Stewart, Gloria Steinem, and others we'll miss.

Down here, we weathered another year of record heat and extreme weather – while, up there, the Artemis II crew saw the dark side of the moon. Closer to home, there were fires and crashes and arrests and tax increases and budget cuts and snowstorms and celebrations and fairs and high school sports. And listeners heard about all of this on radio.