



February 3, 2012

Are You Proud To Be Broadcaster?

If you happened to watch the recent Screen Actors Guild Awards, they opened with a series of anecdotal monologues from members of the audience that all ended with a confirmation of their name and an acclamation of their pride in being "an actor." Which got me to thinking: When was the last time you thought to yourself, let alone said out loud, 'I'm proud to be a broadcaster'? Is radio still a business you can feel proud to work in -- a business you'd be proud to recommend to a high school senior or a college freshman as a worthwhile career to pursue?



That's a question I was recently discussing with an old radio pal. We both came up in the business during the golden days of AM Top 40 radio, lived through the halcyon days of FM Rock radio (although we seemed to have forgotten some of those days), then appropriately evolved into Talk radio when we'd reached a certain level of 'maturity' in our respective careers. And we both have teenage kids who are moving into that 'what career do I want to pursue' phase of life. After trading some old radio 'war stories' and remembering what fun pursuing a career in radio had been, we wondered whether or not we'd recommend to either of our kids that they get into the radio business of today. "It's like telling your kid to get into the wagon-wheel business," said my friend. "There's no future in it anymore." It was at that moment I was struck by how little pride my friend had left for the business that he's worked in for nearly 30 years. And it made

me ask myself if I was still proud to be a part of the broadcast industry that I write about these days.

Our Demise Has Been Predicted Before

Pride in radio is tough to have when you read a fairly constant flow of negative coverage of the business from a consumer press that has been predicting the end of the radio business since movies and television were invented. Adding insult to injury are the numerous rounds of well publicized industry layoffs in recent years that have resulted in hundreds, if not thousands, of quality radio people being unemployed or under-employed. Ask yourself, 'If I was a college bound student, reading all that bad press and seeing all the layoffs, would a career in radio even be on my radar? Would I say today, as I did a few decades ago, that I would be proud to get a job and have a career in the radio business?'

These days you often read and hear a lot of bashing of radio as 'old' media. Not withstanding radio's somewhat deserved reputation for not always investing in its product and its people enough, too often it is characterized by other media as a medium that is past its prime. The rap on radio has always been that it has been, or soon will be, overtaken by the shiny new media darling of the moment. Whether it's fighting off the challenge from television in the 1950s, satellite radio in the 90s, or online and mobile streaming today, the pundits always seem to predict that radio will be the loser in the battle. Yet, time and time again the medium has shown how resilient it is against new challengers. And while the media pie has continued to be carved into smaller and smaller pieces, broadcast radio still reaches more Americans every single day than any other medium. It's a changing medium to be sure, but one with a reach that most of its competitors would give an arm and a leg to have even half of.

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NETWORK/SYNDICATION NOTES

Premiere Networks syndicated feature, *TMZ Radio*, marks the 75 affiliates milestone with the addition this week of **WNIC/Detroit** ... **Dial Global's** syndicated *Clark Howard Minutes* are added to the lineups at **Merlin Media** all-newsers **WEMP/New York** and **WIQI/Chicago** ... Props to **Genesis Communications Networks** syndicated talker **Rob Redding** as his new book, *Where's The Change*, enters the Top 50 on **Amazon's** list of the Top 100 top sellers ... **Dial Global** syndicated radio talker **Thom Hartmann** reports that his hour-long syndicated television show, *The Big Picture*, is now available on five continents and in over 100 nations worldwide via **RT International** and **Free Speech TV**. Also airing on some 200 community TV stations in the U.S., the show is now available to a reported 70 million homes in the United States and some 500 million homes worldwide ... Congrats to **Compass Media Networks** syndicated host **Norman Goldman** on the release of his first-ever book. *Journey To Justice: A Story of Fierce Independence In Politics and Life*, recounts the story of Goldman's life from an orphan in New York City to a career as a successful lawyer and radio talk show host.

GIG ALERTS

WOR/New York is on the hunt for an **Assistant Chief Engineer** at the **Buckley Broadcasting** News/Talker. Get a look at all the job requirements **HERE**, then email your resume to **Personnel@WOR710.com** ... The **Mutual Fund Store** is seeking a **Media and Radio Producer** for a fulltime opportunity in Overland Park, KS. Find out more about the company, the job and the radio show **HERE** ... **Got a gig open? Looking for a new challenge?** Just e-mail the details and contact info to use **HERE** and we'll post it here, free of charge, as a service to industry professionals.

EMERGING TALK MEDIA

International streaming and hosted services provider **SecureNet Systems** inks with **United Stations Radio Networks** in a deal that will offer a bundled package of online and mobile streaming solutions and advertising features to USRN's network of radio stations ... Get **BREAKING NEWS** alerts by following us on **TWITTER**, or "friend" us on **FACEBOOK**. Find one-click links to both at www.NTSMediaOnline.com.

PERSON-TO-PERSON

Kudos to the **KNX/Los Angeles** sports team -- **Randy Kerdoon, Steve Grad, Joe Cala, Joe McDonnell** and **Chris Madsen** -- on receiving the 2011 *Radio Anchor Staff Award* from the **Southern California Sports Broadcasters Association** for the second year in a row ... **Greater Media** Philly Sports/Talker 97.5 **The Fanatic** has inked a deal with former Philadelphia Eagles running back **Brian Westbrook** to add to the station's on air, year-round football coverage ... **KRMG/Tulsa** shifts its daytime lineup up by an hour, allowing syndicated talkers **Neal Boortz, Rush Limbaugh** and **Sean Hannity** to all air "live" on the **Cox Media Group** News/Talker beginning February 6th. Concurrently, the station will launch *The KRMG Afternoon News*, a daily one-hour look at the day's news anchored by **Dan Potter** from 5-6pm daily ... The **RAB's** 21st annual **Radio Mercury Awards** is now accepting entries for the 2012 trophies. Serving as Chief Judge for this year's awards will be **Campbell Ewald** Chairman/CEO **Bill Ludwig**.

NEWS QUARTET



This past week's Florida GOP Primary Election meant "all hands on deck" for most news operations across the Sunshine State, including this quartet of journalists from **WOKV-AM & FM/Jacksonville** that includes (l-r) **Andrew Greenstein, Alyssa Spirato, Jeremy Ratliff** and **Matt Augustine**.

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The Need For New Blood

But back to that teenage son beginning to think about college and careers -- could I really advise him to seek a career in the radio biz as I did when I was but a few years older than he is now? Is it still a good business where you can build a career, or is it -- as I am frequently reminded -- a job where the pay stinks, the hours are bad and job security is all but non-existent (gee, hasn't the business always been like that?). Yet in thinking about it, I decided that, warts and all, the answer is 'yes' -- I would encourage him to pursue a career in radio if he wants to. Not a career in the 'old' radio business, but in the 'new' one that is finding its place in the digital media world. A business where new platforms and new products are joining traditional radio fare on the menu of entertainment choices. And while it's true that some radio jobs have faded away, there are also opportunities for new jobs that have evolved -- positions that were unheard of when many of us started out in the business (i.e., web editor, digital program director, video editor) that require new skills and the energy of a new generation to lead radio into the decades ahead. But how can we attract those young people that radio has always needed to survive the next challenge when we so often bash our own industry and allow other media to characterize radio as a dying business?

I was a little surprised awhile ago when I read somewhere an opinion that radio would not change "until all the current PD's and GM's retire or die." While the statement is perhaps a bit harsh, it is not without some grain of truth to it. The fact is radio is in serious need of young visionaries to lead it into the next decade and beyond. People to whom the growing and changing world of new technologies is second nature and who see radio as the broadcast platform that feeds content to the many new platforms created by technologies that a decade ago were unheard of. We need a combination of rookies to whom today's technology is second nature and veteran's who are willing to look forward and not rest on radio's past laurels.

So, let me make a suggestion. Let's stop talking to the next generation about the radio business and start talking about careers in the 'audio entertainment and content production industry' -- because isn't that really what the radio business is today? Whether it's coming out of a box on the kitchen table, your mobile device, the dashboard of your car, or your laptop -- it's all radio broadcasting. And while radio isn't dead as some pundits would like you to think, it is turning the page on a whole new chapter in its evolution -- a chapter that for the most part probably won't be written by the medium's veterans, but by a new generation who will need us 'seasoned' professionals to instill within them a pride for an industry that is unquestionably an 'old dog' but one that has shown over and over again how it's always ready to learn new tricks. I'm Al Peterson ... and I'm proud to be a broadcaster. How about you?

Your comments are welcome anytime **HERE**

YOUR PHOTO HERE!

Yep, your station's or company's photos could be right here in NTS MediaOnline Weekly-- but only if you send 'em to us. So, go ahead and take your best shot -- then email your photos to al@ntsmediaonline.com

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