

The recent NFL Super Bowl has again proven the value of viral videos. The expensive and usually creative and entertaining commercial spots in the Super Bowl were not only seen by a large audience on

TV, they've also been viewed by thousands of people online.

The obvious benefits to viral videos are that there are no limitations to creativity and it's an excellent way to market and create word of mouth advertising about your radio station or morning show. It's also important to create a video that is effective and represents your station or morning show in a way that is positively received. Otherwise, a poorly done viral video could actually harm your station's image.

Here's a link to the most viewed "Viral Videos" of 2007 as determined by a marketing group called "Go Viral". Enjoy!

<http://www.marketingcharts.com/television/top-5-viral-video-ads-of-2007-ranked-2722>

Or, you can simply Google "Top 5 Viral Videos of 2007 Marketing Charts".



Questions To Strengthen Existing Customer Relationships

Wait around for your customer to affirm your relationship status, and you'll probably hear about it after they've taken their business elsewhere. Instead, be proactive and uncover their true feelings by asking the following questions.

- What is it that you value most about doing business with us (me)?
- What do you feel we are (I am) doing to sustain our business relationship?
- In what ways are we (am I) helping you to achieve your goals?
- In what ways can we (I) improve?
- What changes do we (I) need to make to ensure greater success?
- If you could change one thing about our relationship, what would it be?
- What goals would you like to see us (me) accomplish with you in the next twelve months?
- How can we (I) make your job easier?
- Would you be willing to serve as a reference for my product or company? If so, can you elaborate on what you would say about us? If not, why not?
- What will it take on our (my) part to win the business you are giving to our competition?

Like a marriage, a business relationship is always two-sided, so don't be afraid to ask what you can do to enhance the relationship while asking for something in return. If you do, the answer to the age-old question "Can this business relationship be saved?" has a much better chance of being "Yes!".



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Subscription rates are \$120/year or \$65/6 months

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"The job of leadership today is not just to make money. It's to make meaning." – John Sealy Brown



Entering A New Frontier

Dan Vallie was invited to speak at the NAB Radio Executive Group Owner Fly In in Washington, DC in February to share thoughts on programming today and where we are going in the future. Dan talked about what we can do today to embrace what he sees as a very bright future for radio. These comments are edited in some places and embellished in others for the purpose of this newsletter...

Summary from Dan:

There is an old proverb that says "to a worm in a mustard jar, all the world is mustard". The worm can't see outside of the jar, if he could he would see all the great things beyond his jar. That is what we have to do, we have to look beyond this month, this quarter, this book, this year to see the future and how to get there. Let me touch on three subjects:

Programming today: Content is King, but there is a part two...that content needs to be delivered on a service where the audience is and where it's going to be.

Technology/Embracing the future. We are standing at the edge of a new frontier: I'm very excited about this, some have been on the bleeding edge, but we are still on the leading edge and can and will capture the moment.

Talent: We have plenty of research and data...we don't need to decrease it, but we should make some adjustments to measure the reality of the world we live in today. What we need more of is imagination, more vision, dreams and courage...

Programming:

Content is king, but there is a part two and that is the content needs to be delivered on a service where the audience is where it's going to be.

Millions of people are now listening to the radio via the Internet...it's only going to grow and eventually Internet listening may surpass listening in any other delivery system...easily more than satellite and eventually as much or more than terrestrial radio.

There is an element of science in programming...but mostly there is an art to programming.

In recent years there has been so much focus on technology, and on research, and even on talent...but there has been less emphasis on the art of what we do.

Let me just give you a few quick bullets:

1. In case you haven't thought about it lately...*the program director* can make you or break you or insure you wallow in mediocrity. It's a critical position in your station. Make sure the PD is good, is growing and learning and is not just getting his knowledge from the trades. The PDs that exclusively get their education from the trade publications and believe all they read will fall short of being great programmers. The trades have to cover a lot of people and various points of view, that is the nature of what they do, but in addition your program directors need to learn from the best in the business, from networking with the right people and by hiring people better than them. They need time to get away from the busyness of the day to be at learning seminars, work with a good consultant and always be hungry to know more.

The program director must be the right person to guide the ship(s) and he or she must be motivated and focused on the target, the strategy and on the product.

It's too common now for the program director to be too busy with all the other responsibilities to actually do what his/her title states and that is to be "the director of programming". Structure the

position so that he/she can excel in their area of expertise, and devote resources to the position. It's an investment in the product.

2. *There is more to music radio than picking the hits...* I have long concluded that picking the hits is one of the easiest things to be done...time consuming, but easy...the work of it, the art of it, is in how that music is put together. That is where the time should be spent, categorizing and coding the music, learning the music scheduling software to that it works its best. If your music software is set up correctly it will do a much better job in much less time. Even then, it's critical that the program director, and/or music director review the log and reconcile it to give it the touch, the feel that only a human can do, that only an artist can do. This is where the art of programming comes, in regard to the music. A station should make the listener "feel" something and great music flow can do that. The "right" songs back-to-back balanced to era, style, texture and tempo.

And that is just as it relates to music, the art, that heart, is also required in all other aspects of the station and particularly the imaging. But we will save that aspect of it for a separate article.

3. *Voice tracking* comes up as a sore point with a lot of people. Not with me. I think voice tracking is a great innovation. But like any other technology, we can let the technology run us, or we can make the technology do what we want it to do. Too often now in voice tracking, the talent goes in and knocks out the voice track in a hurry and moves on. The result of that is the job gets done...it doesn't get done as well as it could be done not because it was voice tracked, but because the talent was in a hurry and/or didn't take pride in the voice tracking...not realizing this is a show just like a live show, just as important and to just as many people listening to the station as if it's live.

In voice tracking, the talent has to prepare just like for a live show...to be just as relevant, just as topical, just as engaged as he or she should be when live. I would even propose to you that when doing voice tracking the way it should be done, it would be even better than live because you get a chance to do it over and over until you

get it as good as that break can be. That show or that break should be as close to perfect as you have the talent to make it, *because* it's pre-recorded.

We should approach it just like a TV sitcom or movie...rehearse and rehearse until it's as good as it can be and then sound spontaneous and live. If you were doing a TV sitcom you would rehearse until you looked natural and live and spontaneous, the radio show should and could be the same way. This technology should make us better...not just be a cost cutter.

Embracing technology/we are standing at the edge of a new frontier:

While some have been on the bleeding edge we are still on the leading edge and can capture the moment. I have been in this business and working with many of you for 38 years. There are some great minds in this industry and great talent. It's a great business. It's also a changing business.

Our presidential candidates are talking about bringing change to America...but it's not a matter of bringing change, it's a matter of recognizing change and embracing it. Change is already happening and we have to embrace it or end up being like the classic example of the railroad and missing the opportunity.

The good news is that we have the infrastructure to accomplish everything we want to do to insure the future is even brighter than the past...the future looks great to me...just different. We have to look at it from the perspective of the consumer, not from our inside the boardroom or conference room perspective.

One of the first things we have to do is embrace two facts:

- 1) Radio is not a thing of the past...it's of the today and of the future. IF we grasp the vision and embrace it and do the hard work that it takes to make it happen. Radio is NOT outdated. It's a great business. Over 90% of Americans listen every week. We get response for our advertisers. We can all agree with that.

- 2) But the second thing is this; Radio is radio. Whether it comes from the Internet, from a terrestrial radio antenna, whether it's HD...and yes, even if it comes from satellite.

One of the things I have said in one-on-one conversations, but not yet in print is...we have *already* won the discussion of whether radio will be successful on into the 21st century. We only have to realize and embrace it and be excited about it.

Let me explain; the naysayers point to satellite radio and to Internet radio...but what did the satellite guys call it...they could have called it anything...but they called it Satellite RADIO...and what do we call the Internet...yes, we refer to streams, but generally it's called Internet RADIO.

Some of the most aggressive Internet streaming sites, that combine for what is now millions of listeners cumulatively, are called Internet Radio.

It's all called radio by our listeners and by our clients. The opportunity has passed to call it something else. Radio is charging fast into the 21st century, it's just being delivered in various ways, FM, AM, HD, Internet, satellite.

need to not only simulcast our current HD1 signals and programming on our website, we need to simulcast HD2 and HD3 on the Internet. We need to be where many of the people are and where the rest are going.

Part of our HD strategy should be to simultaneously debut a website and stream for the HD station when it debuts. Remember a lot of Internet listening is 8am to 8pm. We want to be there, and we already have the product. And putting up an Internet radio station can be done quickly and at almost no cost. We need to continue to be on the shelf the listener is shopping from. It's not unlike those days when we moved music stations from AM to FM because that was where the audience was going, and many of you are old enough to remember doing that.

And the people that can best make that happen are the group owners. General managers, program directors, sales managers, air talent, etc., all can buy in and support the effort, but the people that have to make it happen is the ownership and leadership of our industry.

And you know what...I think you will.

*In March, Dan will continue the subject of **Entering A New Frontier** discussing among other things, talent.*



"Success is a lousy teacher. It seduces smart people into thinking they can't lose."

- Bill Gates

What we have to do now is take advantage of that. We have to build a business model around what we know is the future and that is the Internet. The world is revolving around the Internet and wireless and iPods, and iPhones, and being networked...it's an extension of the Internet right to your pocket or right to your hand your eyes and ears...your web browser, your camera, your email...everything is mobile...On this handheld device you will be able to get everything you want. This is where people are and it's where we must be. And the great news is we can do it easily and cost effectively.

And the consumer doesn't care if radio originates from a terrestrial tower, the Internet or satellite. We

Viral Videos

A few years ago Vallie•Richards•Donovan consulting sent out an animated short video ad for our consulting firm to the industry demonstrating how radio could use viral videos to market their products. Viral videos have since become the rave on sites like "You-Tube" and "Flicker". The challenge is to create videos that are compelling enough so the actual videos or the link to the videos is emailed as a topic of discussion and entertainment from one person to another.