Programming

Program Formats

"The devil is in the details," wrote famed French author Gustave Flaubert, and for our purposes in this chapter, we could say that the devil is in the *programming*. Indeed, designing a radio station's sound continues to be a bedeviling task, even as large radio companies cluster their outlets in the age of station consolidation. There is double the number of stations today competing for the audience's attention than existed in the 1960s, and more continue to enter the fray. Other media have proliferated as well, resulting in a further distraction of radio's customary audience. The government's laissez-faire, "let the marketplace dictate" philosophy, concerning commercial radio programming gives the station great freedom in deciding the nature of its air product, but determining what to offer the listener, who is often presented with dozens of audio alternatives, involves intricate planning. In the end, proffers Randy Michaels, "Programming is the key. Yes, I can hear my favorite songs on an iPod, but 'sometimes you like to drive, sometimes you like to ride.' A good programmer can create an experience that 'shuffle' cannot. The iPod won't bring play by play sports, breaking news, or introduce me to something new. It won't put events in context."

The bottom-line, of course, is to air the type of format that will attract a sizable enough piece of the audience demographic to satisfy the advertiser. Once a station decides on the format it will program, then it must know how to effectively execute it.

Ultimately, says Emmis programmer Jimmy Steal, "Great programming remains a constant regardless of amount/source of competition and the type of ratings methodology. The core of successful programming has always been unique content, passionate/knowledgeable/distinctive/engaging personalities, a consistent source of new music (format applicable, of course), and an overall presentation that eschews a sense of fun, a sense of energy, a sense of drama (positive drama – maybe suspense is a better word here), and an overall friend to, or oasis from, the daily challenges in the lives of our listening constituencies."

That said, programming in today's daunting marketplace is no easy task, observes consultant Ed Shane. "The staff reductions in postconsolidation radio cause national chains to fill the time with something – often syndication or repurposed content from another market. Ryan Seacrest is a perfect example. Seacrest does his morning show at KISS in Los Angeles, then portions of the program are edited and repackaged for other stations, mostly in the Clear Channel family (CC owns KISS), although the show is available to stations owned by companies other than Clear Channel. That reduces local radio to 'repeater,' not originator."

Brief descriptions of some of the most frequently employed formats in radio today follow. There are a host of other formats, or subformats – more than 100, in fact. Many are variations of those listed. The reader should keep in mind that formats morph as new trends in lifestyle and culture emerge. Radio formats are anything but static.

1

Adult Contemporary

In terms of the number of listeners, Adult Contemporary (AC; also referred to as The Mix, Hot AC, Triple A, Urban AC, Soft AC, Spectrum AC, and Lite AC) was the most popular format in the 1980s and continues to draw impressive audiences in the new millennium (number 3 most tuned format according to Arbitron), although some sub-categories have lost ground since the last edition of this book. Says consultant Ed Shane, "Because the AC target audience is so diverse, the format has been most prone to fragmentation and competition."

AC is very strong among the 25–49-year age group, which makes it particularly appealing to advertisers, since this demographic group has significant disposable income. Also, some advertisers spend money on AC stations simply because they like the format themselves. The AC format is also one of the most effective in attracting female listeners.

AC outlets emphasize current and not so current (all the way back to the 1970s at some AC stations) pop standards, sans raucous, or harsh beats – in other words, no hard rock. Some AC stations could be described as soft rockers. However, the majority mix-in enough ballads and easy listening sounds to justify their title. The main thrust of this format's programming is the music. More music is aired by deemphasizing chatter. Music is commonly presented in uninterrupted sweeps or blocks, perhaps 10–12 minutes in duration, followed by a brief recap of artists and song titles. High-profile morning talent or teams became popular at AC stations in the 1980s and remain so today. Commercials generally

FIGURE 3.1
Courtesy Arbitron.

National Radio Format Shares and Station Counts

Radio Format Rankings and Station Counts
Ranked by Mon-Sun 6AM-Mid,
Persons 12+, AQH Share

Format	AQH Share 12+	Stations	Format	AQH Share 12+	Stations
Country	12.7	1,683	Soft Adult Contemporary	0.9	142
News/Talk/Information	10.7	1,553	Spanish Adult Hits	0.9	46
Adult Contemporary	7.2	798	Adult Standards	0.8	294
Pop Contemporary Hit Radio	5.6	381	Classic Country	0.8	299
Classic Rock	4.5	514	Rhythmic AC	0.7	26
Rhythmic Contemporary Hit Radio	4.0	156	Spanish Tropical	0.7	46
Urban Adult Contemporary	3.7	170	Contemporary Inspirational	0.6	99
Urban Contemporary	3.7	154	Modern Adult Contemporary	0.6	31
Mexican Regional	3.4	302	Educational	0.4	126
Hot Adult Contemporary	3.2	451	Jazz	0.4	75
Classic Hits	2.8	288	New Country	0.4	102
Oldies	2.6	750	Spanish News/Talk	0.4	63
All Sports	2.3	560	Latino Urban	0.3	12
Contemporary Christian	2.2	724	Rhythmic Oldies	0.3	18
Album Oriented Rock	2.1	174	Spanish Variety	0.3	146
Alternative	2.1	315	Easy Listening	0.2	46
Adult Hits	2.0	172	Ethnic	0.2	97
Classical	2.0	275	Southern Gospel	0.2	194
Active Rock	1.9	149	Spanish Religious	0.2	82
New AC/Smooth Jazz	1.8	72	'80s Hits	0.1	19
Talk/Personality	1.8	202	Nostalgia	0.1	63
Religious	1.5	993	Spanish Oldies	0.1	26
Spanish Contemporary	1.5	126	Tejano	0.1	21
All News	1.4	31	Urban Oldies	0.1	20
Variety	1.0	750	Children's Radio	0.0	29
Album Adult Alternative	0.9	154	Family Hits	0.0	26
Gospel	0.9	304	Other	0.0	76

are clustered at predetermined times, and midday and evening deejay talk often is limited to brief informational announcements. News and sports are secondary to the music. In recent years, ACs have spawned a host of permutations, such as Adult Hits and Adult Standards, as well as the iPod wannabe formats, known as Jack and Mike, which typically distinguish themselves from their AC counterparts by featuring a broader playlist, sometimes venturing as far back as the 1960s for music selections. In the late 2000s, according to Arbitron, the AC subgenre showing the most growth was Urban AC.

Contemporary Hit Radio

Once known as Top 40, Contemporary Hit Radio (CHR) stations play only those records that currently are the fastest selling. CHR's narrow playlists are designed to draw teens and young adults. The heart of this format's demographic is the 12–18 year olds, although in the mid-1980s it enjoyed a broadening of its core audience. Like AC, it too has experienced erosion in its numbers in recent years. In the *Journal of Radio Studies* (1995–1996), Ed Shane observed that the format "was a statistical loser in the 1990s. What futurist Alvin Toffler called 'the demassification of media' affected CHR the most. There were too many types of music to play. No one radio station could create a format with elements as diverse as rapper Ice T, rockers like Nirvana, country artists like George Strait and Randy Travis, or jazz musicians like Kenny G or David Benoit. Each of those performers fits someone's definition of 'contemporary hit radio.' CHR lost its focus."

Consultant Jeff Pollack believed that CHR had lost ground because it was not in tune with what he called the "streets," and he predicted that the format would embrace a more dance-rap sound as well as develop more appreciation for alternative rock hits. The format is characterized by its swift and often unrelenting pace. Silence, known as "dead air," is the enemy. The idea is to keep the sound hot and tight to keep the kids from station hopping, which is no small task since many markets have at least two hit-oriented stations.

In the 1995 interview in *Radio Ink*, programmer Bill Richards predicted that the high-intensity jock approach would give way to a more laid-back, natural sound. "The days of the 'move over and let the big dog eat' sweepers are over. Top 40 will look for more jocks who sound like real people and shy away from the hyped deejay approach." CHR deejays have undergone several shifts in status since the inception of the chart music format in the 1950s. Initially, pop deejay personalities played an integral role in the air sound. However, in the mid-1960s, the format underwent a major change when deejay presence was significantly reduced. Programming innovator Bill Drake decided that the Top 40 sound needed to be refurbished and tightened. Thus, deejay talk and even the number of commercials scheduled each hour were cut back to improve the flow. Despite criticism that the new sound was too mechanical, Drake's technique succeeded at strengthening the format's hold on the listening audience.

In the mid- and late 1970s, the deejay's role on hit stations began to regain its former prominence, but in the 1980s, the format underwent a further renovation (initiated by legendary consultant Mike Joseph) that resulted in a narrowing of its playlist and a decrease in deejay presence. Super or Hot Hit stations, as they also are called, were among the most popular in the country and could be found either near or at the top of the rating charts in their markets.

At the moment, at least, CHR has a bit less of a frenetic quality to it and perhaps a more mature sound. Undergoing an image adjustment, the format is keying in on improving overall flow while pulling back on jumping aboard the fad bandwagon. The continued preening of the playlist will keep the format viable, say the experts.

News is of secondary importance on CHR stations. In fact, many program directors (PDs) consider news programming to be a tune-out factor. "Kids don't like news," they claim. However, despite deregulation, which has freed stations of nonentertainment program requirements, most retain at least a modicum of news out of a sense of obligation. CHR stations are very promotion minded and contest oriented.

FIGURE 3.2
In the mid-2000s, radio conceived a format emulating iPod diversity. Courtesy Jack FM 105.9.

Fewer than 500 stations (nearly all FM) call themselves CHR. Many of these stations prefer to be called Rhythm Hits (Churban fell out of favor in the late 1990s), which combines urban and rock hits, or Pop CHR/ Modern Hits, a narrower-based version of Top 40 that draws its playlist from MTV/ VH1 and college stations.

Country

FIGURE 3.3
Market format breakdown. Courtesy Mix 105.1.

Since the 1970s, the Country format has been adopted by more stations than any other. Although seldom a leader in the ratings race until recent years, its appeal is exceptionally broad. An indication of

country music's rising popularity is the fact that there are over 10 times as many full-time Country stations today than there were 25 years ago. Although the format is far more prevalent in the South and Midwest, most medium and large markets in the North have Country stations. Due to the diversity of approaches within the format – for example, traditional, middle-of-the road (MOR), contemporary hit, and so on – the Country format attracts a broad age group, appealing to young as well as older adults. "The Country format has scored very high among 25–54-year-olds," adds Burkhart.

Says Shane, "In spite of predictions, Country has not fragmented. There are ways to skew the format for older or younger demos, but each group demands essentially the same music. The difference is in presentation and content between the songs."
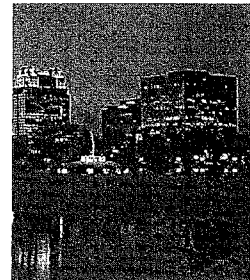
Country radio has always been particularly popular among blue-collar workers. According to the Country Music Association

PROGRAMMING PROFILES
Tuning around the Orlando Radio Dial

Picking You Up And Making You Feel Good

AM	540	580	740	990	1030	1140	1270	1440	1600
	WQTM	WDBO	WWNZ	WHOO	WONQ	WRMQ	WRLZ	WPRD	WOKB

FM	92.3	93.1	94.5	95.3	96.5	97.5	98.1	98.9	100.3	101.1	101.9	103.1	104.1	105.1	105.9	106.7	107.7
	WWKA	WKRO	WCFB	WTLN	WHTQ	WPCV	WGNE	WMMO	WSHE	WJRR	WJHM	WLOQ	WTKS	WOMX	WOCL	WXXL	WMGF

JAMMIN OLDIES	COUNTRY	ADULT CONTEMPORARY	SPANISH	CLASSIC ROCK
WOCL	WWKA WPCV WGNE	WOMX	WONQ WRMQ WRLZ	WHTQ
OLDIES			WOKB WPRD	**SOFT ROCK**
WSHE	**NEWS/TALK**	**URBAN**	**CHURBAN**	WMMO
ROCK	WWNZ	WJHM	WTLN	**LITE ROCK**
WJRR	WTKS WDBO	WCFB		WMGF
ADULT STANDARD	**CHR**	**JAZZ**	**SPORTS**	**ALTERNATIVE**
WHOO	WXXL	WLOQ	WQTM	WKRO

and the Organization of Country Radio Broadcasters, the Country music format is drawing a more upscale audience today than it did in the past. As many FM as AM stations are programming the Country sound in the 2000s, which was not the case just a few years ago. Until the 1980s, Country was predominantly an AM offering. Depending on the approach they employ, Country outlets may emphasize or deemphasize air personalities, include news and public affairs features, or confine their programming almost exclusively to music.

According to some programming experts, the Country format peaked in the mid-1990s, but Arbitron's "National Radio Format Share and Station Counts" in 2008 indicated otherwise, as the format led all others in terms of audience size (12.7 share) and station's claiming to be Country – 1683.

Soft Adult/Easy Listening/Smooth Jazz

The Beautiful Music station of the 1960s became the Easy Listening or Soft Adult station of the 2000s. Playlists in this format have been carefully updated in an attempt to attract a somewhat younger audience. The term *Beautiful Music* was exchanged for *Easy Listening* in an effort to dispel the geriatric image the former term seemed to convey. Easy Listening is the ultimate "wall-to-wall" music format. Talk of any type is kept minimal, although many stations in this format concentrate on news and information during morning drive time.

Instrumentals and soft vocals of established songs are a mainstay at Soft Adult/ Easy Listening stations, which also share a penchant for lush orchestrations featuring

FIGURE 3.4
Two top formats.
Courtesy Arbitron.

Country

No. 1 In Every Daypart

With 56.5 million listeners each week, Country had the biggest share of radio listeners in every daypart, and gained audience share both in mornings and evenings.

Country ranked seventh-highest among all formats in the percentage of in-car listening, which reached more than 38%—a six-year peak. And listening to an actual radio was indeed Country fans' preferred method, as they ranked second-lowest of all listeners for listening to streaming radio.

Country was by far the dominant format in the East South Central region (which includes Tennessee and Kentucky), and also was the nation's top format in five of the other eight geographic areas: the South Atlantic (all of the Eastern Seaboard states between Delaware and Florida), West South Central (including Texas), East North Central (including Illinois, Michigan and Ohio), West North Central (the Plains states) and Mountain territories.

AQH Share of Listening by Location
Persons 12+, Mon-Sun, 6AM-Mid

Other 2.6%
At Work 25.5%
At Home 33.5%
In Car 38.3%

AQH Share of Listening by Daypart
Persons 12+

| Mon-Fri 6AM-10AM | Mon-Fri 10AM-3PM | Mon-Fri 3PM-7PM | Mon-Fri 7PM-Mid |
| 12.6% | 13.3% | 12.7% | 10.3% |

12.7% Mon-Sun 6AM-Mid

Audience Share by Region
12.7% = National Average
Persons 12+, Mon-Sun, 6AM-Mid, AQH Share

Mountain 7.1%
West North Central 21.3%
East North Central 14.0%
New England 10.0%
Middle Atlantic 7.1%
Pacific (includes Alaska and Hawaii) 14.1%
West South Central 15.4%
East South Central 23.9%
South Atlantic 13.5%

Figures represent the share of listening that this format attracts within these census regions.

Radio Today 2008 Edition
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plenty of strings. These stations boast a devoted audience.

Station hopping is uncommon. Efforts to draw younger listeners into the Easy Listening fold have been moderately successful, but most of the format's primary adherents are over 50 years. Music syndicators provide prepackaged (canned) programming to approximately half of the nation's Easy Listening/Soft Adult/Smooth Jazz stations, and over three-quarters of the outlets within this format utilize computer-automated systems to varying degrees. Easy Listening has lost some ground in the 1990s and 2000s to AC and other adult-appeal formats such as Album Adult Alternative and something called New Age, which some media critics describe as Easy Listening for Yuppies.

Soft Adult, Lite and Easy, Smooth Jazz, Adult Standards, and Urban AC have become replacement nomenclatures for Easy Listening, which, like its predecessor, Beautiful Music, began to assume a geriatric connotation.

Rock and Alternative

The birth of the Album Oriented Rock (AOR) format in the late 1960s (also called Underground and Progressive) was the result of a basic disdain for the highly formulaic Top 40 sound that prevailed at the time. In the summer of 1966, WOR-FM, New York, introduced Progressive radio, the forerunner of AOR. As an alternative to the super-hyped, ultra-commercial sound of the hit song station, WOR-FM programmed an unorthodox combination of nonchart rock, blues, folk, and jazz. In the 1970s, the format concentrated its attention almost

FIGURE 3.4
Continued
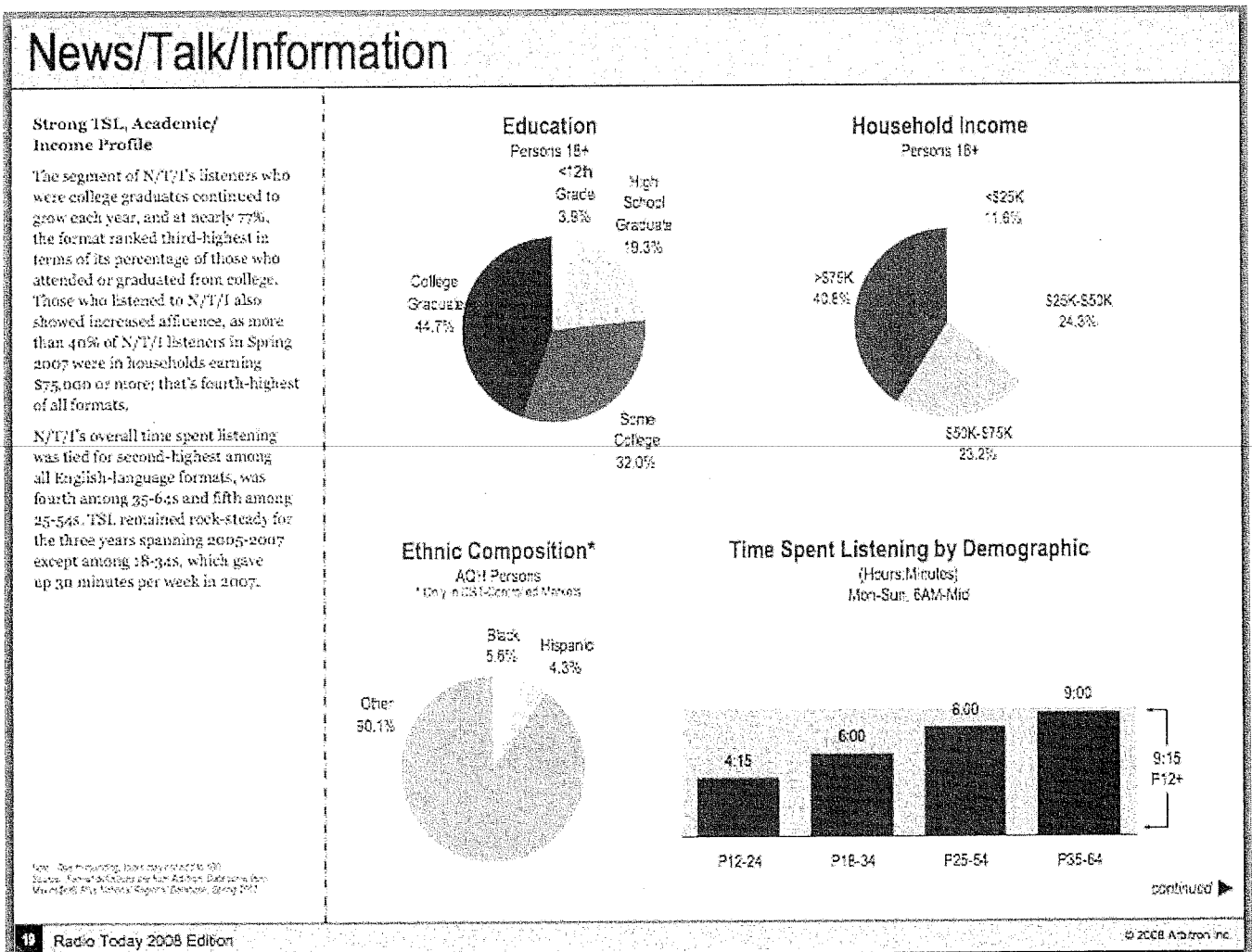
exclusively on album rock, while becoming less freeform and more formulaic and systematic in its programming approach.

Today, AOR often is simply called Rock, or more specifically Modern Rock or Classic Rock, and although it continues to do well in garnering the 18–34-year-old male, this format has always done poorly in winning female listeners, especially when it emphasizes a heavy or hard-rock playlist. This has proven to be a sore spot with certain advertisers. In the 1980s, the format lost its prominence owing, in part, to the meteoric rebirth of hit radio. However, as the decade came to an end, AOR had regained a chunk of its numbers, and in the 1990s, it renamed itself Modern Rock.

Generally, Rock stations broadcast their music in sweeps or at least segue two or three songs. A large airplay library is typical, in which 300–700 cuts may be active. Depending on the outlet, the deejay may or may not have "personality" status. In fact, the more-music/less-talk approach particularly common at Easy Listening stations is emulated by many album rockers. Consequently, news plays a very minor part in the station's programming efforts.

Rock (also called Active Rock) stations are very lifestyle-oriented and invest great time and energy developing promotions relevant to the interests and attitudes of their listeners. Reflecting the considerable drift away from the AOR nomenclature and model, WBCN's longtime PD, Oedipus, declared to the world in 1995, "We're Modern Rock!"

The Alternative Rock format tries for distinctiveness. That is to say, it attempts to provide a choice that is in contrast to the other Rock radio approaches. Creating this alternative sound is a challenge, says Stephanie Hindley, PD of Buzz 99.9: "The Alternative format is a great challenge for programmers. Think of the music you liked and the things you did when you were 18. Now think of the music you liked (or will like) and the things you did (or will do) at age 34. Despite the vast differences in taste in the 18–34 demographic, we need to play music that will appeal to as many people as possible within this diverse group. It's a constant balancing act. We have to play a lot of new music without sounding too unfamiliar. We have to be cool and hip without sounding exclusive. We have to be edgy without being offensive. Be smart without sounding condescending. Young and upbeat without sounding immature. As long as those balances are maintained on a daily basis, we will continue to have success in this format."

News and Talk

There are News, News/Talk, News Sports, News Plus, and Talk formats, and each is distinct and unique unto itself. News stations differ from the others in that they devote their entire air schedule to the presentation of news and news-related stories and features. The All-News format was introduced by Gordon McLendon at XETRA (known as XTRA) in Tijuana, Mexico, in the early 1960s. Its success soon inspired the spread of the format in the United States. Because of the enormous expense involved in presentating a purely News format, requiring three to four times the staff and budget of most music operations, the format has been confined to larger markets able to support the endeavor.

The News/Talk format is a hybrid. It combines extensive news coverage with blocks of two-way telephone conversations. These stations commonly "daypart" or segmentalize their programming by presenting lengthened newscasts during morning and afternoon drive time hours and conversation in the midday and evening periods. The News/Talk combo was conceived by KGO in San Francisco in the 1960s and has gradually gained in popularity so that it now leads both the strictly News and the Talk formats. Talk radio began at KABC-AM, Los Angeles, in 1960. However, talk shows were familiar to listeners in the 1950s, since a number of adult music stations devoted a few hours during evenings or overnight to call-in programs. The motivation behind most early Talk programming stemmed from a desire to strengthen weak time slots while satisfying public affairs programming requirements. Like its nonmusic siblings, Talk became a viable format in the 1960s and does well today, although it too has suffered due to greater competition. In contrast to All-News, which attracts a slightly younger and more upscale audience, All-Talk amasses a large following among

blue-collar workers and retirees, and in 2008 was classified as the second most popular format in radio.

One of the recent news and information-oriented formats calls itself News Plus. Even though its emphasis is on news, it fills periods with music, often AC in flavor. News Plus stations also may carry a heavy schedule of sporting events. This combination did well for a while in several medium and large markets but began to fizzle in favor of newer permutations in the early 2000s.

News and/or Talk formats are primarily located on the AM band, where they have become increasingly prevalent since FM has captured all but a few of radio's music listeners. Meanwhile, the number of nonmusic formats is significantly increasing on FM, and this trend is predicted to continue as music listeners rely more and more on other audio sources.

In the late 1990s, over 1000 stations offered the information and/or news format. This was up nearly 300% since the late 1980s. In 2008, Arbitron claimed in excess of 1500 stations aired the talk format. Over 100 stations alone concentrated on sports exclusively, and dozens of others were beginning to splinter and compartmentalize into news/info niches, such as auto, health, computer, food, business, tourism, and entertainment.

National talk networks and syndicated talk shows, mostly of a conservative nature, continued to draw huge audiences in the new millennium, as more and more Baby Boomers became engaged in the political and social dialogues of the day. Despite the fact that a liberal talk radio network (Air America) debuted in the 2000s, its reception was anything but stellar as right-wing hosts (Rush Limbaugh being the king among them) continued to rule the genre.

An indication that the information format is achieving broader appeal among younger listeners is the recent emergence on the FM dial of a new hybrid called Talk 'n' Rock. This format variation to the mainstream Talk template has yet to find a viable audience niche.

All Sports

The trend in the last few years in the proliferation of the All-Sports format has boosted the popularity of nonmusic

radio and significantly contributed to the dominance of "chatter" radio in the ratings. Today, several hundred stations offer around-the-clock sports talk, among them WFAN and WEEI in the Northeast and KLAC and KJR on the West Coast. In addition, several sports networks now appear across the radio band. Since the mid-1990s, ESPN Radio Network, Fox Sports Radio, and Sporting News Radio have emerged and are now carried by stations throughout the country. If AM radio is able to claim a younger demographic at all, it is because men 18–29 are big fans of sports radio. Meanwhile, All Sports has begun to migrate to FM in significant numbers.

According to Arbitron, All Sports ranked 13th among formats at the start of 2009 with over 14 million weekly listeners. More men tune All Sports radio than women, and the audience is almost exclusively over 25 years old. It is a highly educated audience with an upper-income.

Consultant Ed Shane makes this observation regarding the success of the format. "The element of 'guy talk' is an important factor and one of the central ingredients that gives this format its special appeal."

FM Talk

Perhaps the most unique manifestation in nonmusic radio is the growing presence of talk on FM. Talent consultant Jason Insalaco gives his perspective on the rise of the *discourse* format on what has always been the dial for music: "While traditional AM talk has been profiled in recent years for its explosion onto the radio landscape, FM talk radio has become a popular format for an audience previously ignored by talk programmers. FM talk's primary audience is 25–44 years old. This demographic likely did not grow up listening to AM talk radio. In fact, the FM talk audience has very likely tuned AM very little during its lifetime. FM talk does not program itself like a traditional full-service AM talk outlet. There is not the emphasis on news and traffic, which is a staple of the AM talkers. Rather FM talk's focus is personality driven, aka Mancow, Tom Leykis, and Opie and Anthony. These FM talk stalwarts do incorporate some news into their programs, but the main

focus is entertainment. FM talk programs itself more like an FM music station than an AM talk station. It features shorter segments covering a variety of issues in contrast to the 1-hour AM talk sweep. Issues discussed typically come from sources like *Rolling Stone* and *People* magazine and the local sports and entertainment section of the newspaper. Topics are not necessarily caller intensive as with most AM talkers. Listener participation is a part of FM talk radio; however, there is not the typical topic-monologue-caller participation cycle of AM talkers. Moreover, the 'bumper music' played to intro segments of FM talk comes from the latest alternative and rock artists found on the competing music stations. This gives the station a youthful sound and grabs the potential talk listener who is scanning the dial. FM talk's competition comes from Alternative/Modern Rock/AOR and Classic Rock stations. The future of FM talk looks bright. Expect the format to become more widespread in the coming years."

Clearly, the number of FM talk outlets in major markets is on the increase. A good example is 96.9 FM in Boston, which has made serious inroads into the nonmusic radio arena. In recent surveys, it has challenged the city's long-standing talk-oriented stations on AM, a feat that is being duplicated in other markets around the country.

Classic/Oldies/Nostalgia

Although these formats are not identical, they derive the music they play from years gone by. Although the Nostalgia station, sometimes referred to as *Big Band*, constructs its playlist around tunes popular as far back as the 1940s and 1950s, the Oldies outlet focuses its attention on the pop tunes of the late 1950s and 1960s. A typical Oldies quarter-hour might consist of songs by Elvis Presley, the Everly Brothers, the Beatles, Brian Hyland, Three Dog Night, and the Ronettes. In contrast, a Nostalgia quarter-hour might consist of tunes from the prerock era performed by artists like Frankie Lane, Les Baxter, the Mills Brothers, Tommy Dorsey, and popular ballad singers of the last few decades.

Nostalgia radio caught on in the late 1970s, the concept of programmer Al Ham.

Nostalgia is a highly syndicated format, and most stations go out-of-house for programming material. Because much of the music predates stereo processing, AM outlets are most apt to carry the Nostalgia sound. Music is invariably presented in sweeps, and, for the most part, deejays maintain a low profile. Similar to Easy Listening, Nostalgia pushes its music to the forefront and keeps other program elements at an unobtrusive distance. In the 1980s, Easy Listening/Beautiful Music stations lost some listeners to this format, which claimed a viable share of the radio audience.

The Oldies format was first introduced in the 1960s by programmers Bill Drake and Chuck Blore. Although Nostalgia's audience tends to be over the age of 50, most Oldies listeners are somewhat younger. Unlike Nostalgia, most Oldies outlets originate their own programming, and very few are automated. In contrast with its vintage music cousin, the Oldies format allows greater deejay presence. At many Oldies stations, air personalities play a key role. Music is rarely broadcast in sweeps, and commercials, rather than being clustered, are inserted in a random fashion between songs.

Consultant Kent Burkhart noted that in the early 1990s, "Oldies stations are scoring very big in a nice broad demographic. These stations are doing quite well today, and this should hold for a while." That said, in 2008 Arbitron reported that the Oldies format experienced the sharpest decline in audience numbers of all the vintage-oriented stations—with 30 stations dropping the sound in just 1 year. At the same time, Nostalgia has not been shown as having much growth but remains fairly solid in some markets. In the 1990s, Oldies outlets lost audience ground. However, over 700 stations still call themselves Oldies or Nostalgia. Meanwhile, a more dance/contemporary approach, called "Jammin' Oldies," has attracted additional listeners.

Meanwhile Classic Rock and Classic Hit stations emerged as the biggest winners in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and of the vintage format genres, they can boast the biggest audience shares in last part of the 2000s. These yesteryear music stations draw their playlists from the chart toppers (primarily in the rock music area)

of the 1970s and 1980s (and early 1990s) and often appear in the top 10 ratings.

Classic Rock concentrates on tunes essentially featured by former AOR stations over the past two decades, whereas Classic Hit stations fill the gap between Oldies and CHR outlets with playlists that draw from 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s Top 40 charts.

Urban Contemporary

Considered the "melting pot" format, Urban Contemporary (UC), attracts large numbers of Hispanic and Black listeners, as well as white. As the term suggests, stations employ-

ing this format usually are located in metropolitan areas with large, heterogeneous populations. UC was born in the early 1980s, the offspring of the short-lived Disco format, which burst onto the scene in 1978. What characterizes UC the most is its upbeat, danceable sound and deejays who are hip, friendly, and energetic. Although UC outlets stress danceable tunes, their playlists generally are anything but narrow. However, a particular sound may be given preference over another, depending on the demographic composition of the population in the area that the station serves. For example, UC outlets may play greater amounts of music

FIGURE 3.5
Radio stations pay an annual fee to music licensing services such as BMI and ASCAP.

Essentials

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF COMPOSERS, AUTHORS AND PUBLISHERS

ASCAP is

a performing-rights organization whose function is to protect the rights of our members by licensing and collecting royalties for the public performance of their copyrighted musical works.

the only U.S. society created and controlled by songwriters and publishers.

the only U.S. society that gives writers and publishers a voice. ASCAP conducts open membership meetings, issues financial reports to its members, has writer and publisher member advisory committees.

the only U.S. society that gives writers and publishers a vote. ASCAP is governed by an experienced Board of Directors composed of knowledgeable songwriters, composers and music publishers, each of whom is elected by the membership.

the largest performing-rights society in the world in terms of license-fee collections and writer and publisher performance-royalty payments. 1995 income: more than $435 million.

the largest performing-rights society in the world in terms of constituency. ASCAP has more than 75,000 U.S. writer and publisher members. Additionally, it represents more than 200,000 foreign-society writers and publishers.

the industry leader since 1914 in negotiating license fees with the users of music.

one of the most effective protectors of the rights of creators and music publishers. ASCAP lobbies in Congress and litigates in the courts, if necessary, on behalf of its constituents.

the only society where writers and publishers sign identical contracts, with the right to resign every year of the contract.

the only U.S. society with specific written rules covering all types of performances on all types of media, with all royalties distributed solely on that basis.

the only U.S. society where payment changes have to be approved by the Board of Directors, the Department of Justice and in some cases by a U.S. Federal Court after an open court hearing. No changes are made without notice to the membership, and rates are not subject to arbitrary change at any time, as they are at other performing-rights organizations.

the only U.S. society where your royalties are determined objectively over their entire copyright life and not by discretionary voluntary payments, short-term special deals or management discretion.

with a Latin or rhythm-and-blues flavor, whereas others may air larger proportions of light jazz, reggae, new rock, or hip hop. Some AM stations around the country have adopted the UC format; however, it is more likely to be found on the FM side, where it has taken numerous stations to the forefront of their market's ratings.

UC has had an impact on Black stations, which have experienced erosion in their youth numbers. Many Black stations have countered by broadening their playlists to include artists who are not traditionally programmed. Because of their high-intensity, fast-paced sound, UC outlets can give a Top 40 impression, but in contrast, they commonly segue songs or present music in sweeps and give airplay to lengthy cuts, sometimes 6–8 minutes long. Although Top 40 or CHR stations seldom program cuts lasting more than 4 minutes, UC outlets find long cuts or remixes compatible with their programming approach. Remember, UCs are very dance oriented. Newscasts play a minor role in this format, which caters to a target audience aged 18–34. Contests and promotions are important program elements.

As noted earlier, several CHR stations have adopted urban artists to offer the hybrid Churban or Rhythm Hits sound. Likewise, many Urban outlets have drawn from the more mainstream CHR playlist in an attempt to expand their listener base.

Classical

Although there are fewer than three-dozen full-time commercial Classical radio stations in the country, no other format can claim a more loyal following. Despite small numbers and soft ratings, most Classical stations do manage to generate a modest to good income. Over the years, profits have remained relatively minute in comparison to other formats. However, member stations of the Concert Music Broadcasters Association reported ad revenue increases of up to 40% in the 1980s and 1990s with continued growth, albeit modest, in the 2000s. Owing to its upscale audience, blue-chip accounts find the format an effective buy. This is first and foremost an FM format, and it has broadcast over the megahertz band for almost as long as it has existed.

In many markets, commercial Classical stations have been affected by public radio outlets programming classical music. Since commercial Classical stations must break to air the sponsor messages that keep them operating, they must adjust their playlists accordingly. This may mean shorter cuts of music during particular dayparts – in other words, less music. The noncommercial Classical outlet is relatively free of such constraints and thus benefits as a result. A case in point is WCRB-FM in Boston, the city's only full-time Classical station. Although it attracts most of

FIGURE 3.6
Dozens of other formats (often variations on those listed) have emerged since the start of program specialization in the 1950s.

Some Format Debuts						
Prior to 1950	*1950s*	*1960s*	*1970s*	*1980s*	*1990s*	*2000s*
Classical	Middle-of-the-Road	News	Adult Contemporary	Arena Rock	Mix	Jammin' Oldies
Country	Top 40	Talk	Album Oriented Rock	Hot Adult Contemporary Hit/Radio	All-Children	Rhythm Hits
Hit Parade	Beautiful Music	News/Talk	Easy Listening	Urban Contemporary	Arrow	Active Rock
Religious		Progressive	Contemporary Country	New Age	Rap/Hip Hop	Adult Hits
Black		Acid/Psychedelic	Urban Country	Eclectic Oriented/Rock	Digital Hits	FM Talk
Hispanic		Jazz	Mellow Rock	All Sports	Gen X	Diversity
		All Request	Disco	All Motivation	Tourist Radio	Christian Contemporary
		Oldies	Nostalgia	All Comedy	Triple A	Rhythmic Oldies
		Diversified	British Rock	All Beatles	NAC	Acoustic
			New Wave	Classic Hits	Modern Rock	Spectrum AC
			Public Radio	Classic Rock	Churban	Americana
				Male Adult Contemporary	Boomer Rock	Rock AC
					Coupon Radio	Jack
						Mike
						Spanish Contemporary
						Urban Oldies
						Contemporary Inspirational
						New Country

the area's Classical listeners throughout the afternoon and evening hours, it loses many patrons to public radio WGBH's classical segments. At least in part, public radio's success consists of having fewer interruptions in programming.

Classical stations target the 25–49-year-old, higher income, college-educated listener. News is typically presented at 60–90-minute intervals and generally runs from 5–10 minutes. The format is characterized by a conservative, straightforward air sound. Sensationalism and hype are avoided, and on-air contests and promotions are as rare as announcer chatter.

Religious/Christian

Live broadcasts of religious programs began while the medium was still in its experimental stage. In 1919, the U.S. Army Signal Corps aired a service from a chapel in Washington, DC. Not long after that, KFSG in Los Angeles and WMBI in Chicago began to devote themselves to religious programming. Soon dozens of other radio outlets were broadcasting the message of God. In the 1980s, over 600 stations broadcast religious formats on a full-time basis, and another 1500 stations air at least 6 hours of religious features on a weekly basis. *M Street Journal* reports that over 900 stations air the Religious format today.

Religious broadcasters typically follow one of two programming approaches. One includes music as part of its presentation, and the other does not. The Religious station that features music often programs contemporary tunes containing a Christian or life-affirming perspective. Broadcast educator Janet McMullen finds that programming Contemporary Christian is a challenge for a number of reasons. "With the broad

FIGURE 3.7
Radio programming is tuned everywhere.
Courtesy Arbitron.

Listening Location

Most radio listening took place out-of-home except during evenings, and this chart shows how the distribution of radio listening logically moves around throughout the day: at home and in car led in mornings, at work dominated in middays, in car took over in afternoons and at home won again in the evenings.

For several years the story has been the consistently growing proportion of in-car tune-in. Between Spring 2002 and 2007, in-car listening share rose at a rate of 9% in mornings and middays, 6% in afternoons and weekends, and 7% in evenings. At work's segment fell at a rate of 4% in mornings, 9% in middays and evenings, 11% in afternoons and 8% on weekends. At-home was down 6% in mornings, up 4% in middays, unchanged in afternoons, down 2% in evenings and off 3% on weekends.

These figures reflect the reality of American workers' gradually longer commutes, increasing media options and more mobile lifestyles.

Distribution of AQH Radio Listeners by Listening Location
Persons 12+

	Home	Car	Work	Other
Mon-Sun. 6AM-Mid	38.9%	35.5%	23.0%	2.6%
Mon-Fri. 6AM-10AM	38.1%	37.6%	23.0%	1.3%
Mon-Fri. 10AM-3PM	29.0%	30.2%	38.6%	2.2%
Mon-Fri. 3PM-7PM	30.8%	45.1%	21.7%	2.4%
Mon-Fri. 7PM-Mid	58.3%	28.0%	10.1%	3.6%
Weekend, 10AM-7PM	48.0%	37.9%	9.6%	4.4%

Fast Fact:
It's well known that radio is the only mass medium that easily adapts to all key listening locations. But exactly what is "other" as a listening location? If you're listening to the radio at a friend's house, while at the beach or park, while working out at the gym or in a doctor's waiting room, you're in an "other" location. The new Portable People Meter™ measurement tool will also credit listening to radio stations that people hear in restaurants, stores and businesses even if their attention is not directly focused on the station. It should be noted that "at-work" listening, while frequently thought of as "office" listening, can encompass many other work locations, such as a vehicle (if you happen to drive for a living), a retail outlet, a factory or a construction site.

Source: Arbitron Radio Today National Regional Database, Spring 2007

Radio Today 2008 Edition   © 2008 Arbitron inc.

scope of denominations possessing varying beliefs, it is sometimes very hard to keep the listening public happy. It is a very fine line to walk. You have to be careful not to offend or alienate listeners, even in our format. This requires careful and thoughtful programming." The religious format approach also includes the scheduling of blocks of religious features and programs. Nonmusic Religious outlets concentrate on inspirational features and complementary talk and informational shows.

Religious broadcasters claim that their spiritual messages reach nearly half of the nation's radio audience, and the American Research Corporation in Irvine, California, contends that over 25% of those tuned to Religious stations attend church more frequently. Two-thirds of the country's Religious radio stations broadcast over AM frequencies.

An indication of the continued popularity of Religious radio in the latter part of the 1990s was the launch of ChristianNet, a network that offers talk shows from some of the biggest names in conservative chatter.

Black/African American

African Americans constitute the largest minority in the nation, thus making Black one of the most prominent ethnic formats. Over 300 radio stations gear themselves to the needs and desires of Black listeners. WDIA-AM in Memphis claims to be the first station to program exclusively to a nonwhite audience. It introduced the format in 1947. Initially, the growth of this format was gradual, but in the 1960s, as the Motown sound took hold of the hit charts and the Black Pride movement got under way, more Black stations entered the airways.

At its inception, the Disco craze in the 1970s brought new listeners to the Black stations, which shortly saw their fortunes change when All-Disco stations began to surface. Many Black outlets witnessed an exodus of their younger listeners to the Disco stations. This prompted a number of Black stations to abandon their more traditional playlists, which consisted of rhythm and blues, gospel, and soul tunes, for exclusively Disco music. When Disco perished in the early 1980s, the UC format took its

place. Today, Progressive Black stations, such as WBLS-FM, New York, combine dance music with soulful rock and contemporary jazz, and many have transcended the color barrier by including certain white artists on their playlists. In fact, many Black stations employ white air personnel in efforts to broaden their demographic base. WILD-AM in Boston, long considered the city's Black station, is an example of this trend. "We have become more of a general appeal station than a purely ethnic one. We've had to in order to prosper. We strive for a distinct, yet neuter or deethnicized, sound on the air. The Black format has changed considerably over the years," notes longtime PD Elroy Smith. The old-line R&B and gospel stations still exist and can be found mostly in the South.

Hispanic

Hispanic or Spanish-language stations constitute another large ethnic format. KCOR-AM, San Antonio, became the first All-Spanish station in 1947, just a matter of months after WDIA-AM in Memphis put the Black format on the air. Cities with large Latin populations are able to support the format, and in some metropolitan areas with vast numbers of Spanish-speaking residents, such as New York, Los Angeles, and Miami, several radio outlets are devoted exclusively to Hispanic programming. Reported Arbitron in 2008, "As their population continued to surge in the United States, Hispanics increased the percentage of their representation in 15 of the 20 non-Spanish-language formats in our report, averaging 1.1% more in audience composition than in Spring 2006. The only formats where Hispanics made up a smaller proportion of a format's listenership were UC, Oldies, Alternative and Active Rock."

Programming approaches within the format are not unlike those prevalent at Anglo stations. That is to say, Spanish-language radio stations also modify their sound to draw a specific demographic. For example, many offer contemporary music for younger listeners and more traditional music for older listeners.

Ed Shane views Hispanic radio as very diverse and vibrant. "An impressive multiplicity of programming styles and approaches are found in this format. Here in Houston, for

example, we have two brands of Tejano, one of Exitos (hits), a lot of Ranchera, and a couple of Talk stations. In the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, there's a lush, instrumental-and-vocal 'Easy Listening' station in Spanish. The L.A. dial is full of Hispanic nuance. Miami, likewise, and it has a totally different slant."

Many Hispanic women are drawn to an approach called The Groove, which mixes Motown and Latin pop artists. The format is marketed by Interstar Programming.

Spanish media experts predicted that there would be a significant increase in the number of Hispanic stations through the 2000s, and they were right. Much of this growth occurred on the AM band but later spread rapidly on FM.

Ethnic

Hundreds of other radio stations countrywide apportion a significant piece of their air schedules (over 20 hours weekly), if not all, to foreign-language programs in Portuguese, German, Polish, Greek, Japanese, and so on.

Around 30 stations broadcast exclusively to American Indians and Eskimos and are licensed to Native Americans. Today, these stations are being fed programming from American Indian Radio on Satellite (AIROS), and other indigenous media groups predict dozens more Indian-operated stations by the end of the next decade. Meanwhile, the number of stations broadcasting to Asians and other nationalities is rising.

Full Service

The Full Service (FS) format (also called Variety, General Appeal, Diversified, etc.) attempts to provide its mostly middle-age listeners a mix of all programming genres – music, news, sports, and information features. Known for years as MOR, the format has attempted to strengthen its public service aspect through increased information programming. It is really one-stop shopping for listeners who would like a little bit of everything. Today, this type of station exists mostly in small markets where stations attempt to be good-citizen radio for everyone. It has been called the *bridge* format because of its "all things to all people" programming approach. However,

its large-market audience has decreased over the years, particularly since 1980, due to the rise in popularity of more specialized formats. According to radio program specialist Dick Ellis, FS now has a predominantly over-40 age demographic, several years older than just a decade ago. In some major markets, the format continues to do well in the ratings mainly because of strong on-air personalities. But this is not the format that it once was. Since its inception in the 1950s, up through the 1970s, stations working the MOR sound often dominated their markets. Yet the Soft Rock and Oldies formats in the 1970s, the updating of Easy Listening (Smooth Jazz), and particularly the ascendancy of AC and Talk formats have conspired to significantly erode MOR (now FS) numbers. For instance, *M Street Journal* cites fewer than 100 of these stations today.

FS is the home of the on-air personality. Perhaps no other format gives its air people as much latitude and freedom. This is not to suggest that FS announcers may do as they please. They, like any other announcer, must abide by format and programming policy, but FS personalities often serve as the cornerstone of their station's air product. Some of the best-known deejays in the country have come from the FS (MOR) milieu. It would then follow that the music is rarely, if ever, presented in sweeps or even segued. Deejay patter occurs between each cut of music, and announcements are inserted in the same way. News and sports play another vital function at these stations. During drive periods, FS often presents lengthened blocks of news, replete with frequent traffic reports, weather updates, and the latest sports information. Many FS outlets are affiliated with major-league teams. With few exceptions, FS is an AM format. Although it has noted slippage in recent years, it will likely continue to bridge whatever gaps may exist in a highly specialized radio marketplace.

Niche and HD² Formats

Experts say that the Alternative formats, with their narrower focus on specific demographic segments, will enjoy greater success in the coming years. In an interview in *Broadcasting and Cable*, Jeff Pollack predicted formats offering more nontra-

ditional approaches to mainstream music (e.g., Modern Rock and Rhythmic Oldies) would be the ratings winners of the next few years. The intense fragmentation of the listening pool means that the big umbrella formats are going to lose out to the ultra-specific ones.

Alternative Rock, which has never fully enjoyed star status, was expected to move up toward the front of the pack in the new millennium. Of course, when it comes to format prognostication, the term *unpredictable* takes on a whole new meaning. Indeed, there will be a rash of successful niche formats in the coming years, due to the ever-increasing fragmentation of the radio audience, but exactly what they will be is anyone's guess.

A few years back, no one thought that All-Children's Radio (Radio Disney, Radio Aahs) would draw an economically attractive segment of the listening public, but today it is one of the most successful niches on the dial (mostly on AM at this writing), and there are many other wannabes entering the cluttered airwaves. New niche or splinter formats emerge frequently – Active Rock and Christian Talk are good examples – in an industry always on the lookout for the next best thing and competing with a myriad of other listening options. In an MP3 and iPhone world, staying fresh and current gives radio an edge – one that is more and more necessary as the audio landscape changes.

In terms of future format innovations, the rollout of HD2 side-channels may accelerate the rollout of new niche formats. Says Lynn Christian, "Unique programming ideas or concepts best suited to an audio presentation with great potential in all-size markets, while utilizing the new HD/HD² channels, has the greatest potential." However, some programmers, such as WIZN/WBTZ's Matt Grasso, don't expect much to change in the foreseeable future. "I don't think the formats will change much. I think the change will be within each format. Stations will focus on being more local. It's our biggest strength against satellite. We're here. Let's entrench ourselves into the community and become an important and integral part of their lives. The only format I can see changing is the so-called 'Jack' format. This knee-jerky response to iPods doesn't seem to fit the American
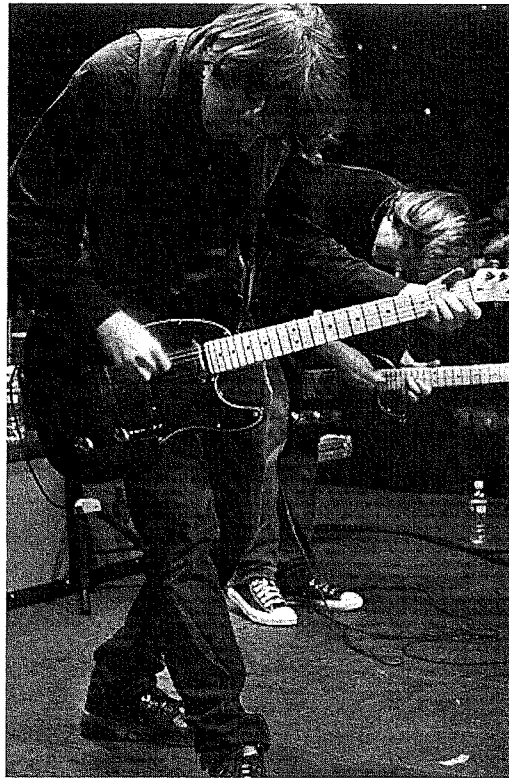
culture. We want specific things, not a little bit of everything. We're picky, selfish, brand loyal people. Have buffets taken over the Italian, Indian, French, Chinese, and Thai restaurants? Of course not! Jack is the radio buffet – stale, lukewarm, and boring."

At best, the preceding is an incomplete list of myriad radio formats that serve the listening public. The program formats mentioned constitute the majority of the basic format categories prevalent today. Tomorrow? Who knows? Radio is hardly a static industry, but one subject to the whims of popular taste. When something new captures the imagination of the American public, radio responds, and often a new format is conceived.

Public Radio

Like college stations, most Public radio outlets program in a block fashion. That is to say, few employ a primary (single) format, but instead offer a mix of program ingredients, such as news and information and entertainment features. National Public Radio and Public Radio International, along with state Public radio systems, provide a myriad of features for the hundreds of

Mike Janssen

On Public Radio

FIGURE 3.9
Mike Jansen.

I think the Public radio stations and networks will have to work together to figure out how they can best play a more meaningful and relevant role in the lives of listeners, given that stations, in particular, will find it more difficult to compete as new media continue to advance. Broadcast radio has long enjoyed an edge because it has few rivals in the car, to name one space for listening. But the advent of widespread broadband Internet will shatter that advantage, as listeners tune in radio stations and other audio sources from around the world. And Public radio in particular has historically claimed the franchise for thoughtful, in-depth radio news, but that, too, will fall away as competitors use the Internet to reach listeners and other media sources continue to fragment the market.

Public radio can no longer depend on the technology of radio to serve as its salvation. Instead, stations and networks will have to assess and reassess what exactly it is that they are able to provide that no one else can, given the talent in the system and their geographic reach and presence. And stations will have to learn how to survive without depending on their (until now) unchallenged claim on carrying NPR programming. Listeners will continue to bypass stations to access content from national networks. So how can stations serve local communities using their own resources in ways that make a difference and attract listener, corporate, and foundation support?

I think there's a lot of opportunity, but the system is poorly positioned to take advantage of it. Turf battles stand in the way of cooperation, and stations are too dependent on NPR. Fundraising from listeners isn't sophisticated enough to bring in the money needed to innovate on a broader level. Fortunately, the tools are out there as Web 2.0 continues to evolve. But the system needs some real visionaries and a new desire to work together to get things going.

Public radio facilities around the country. Topping the list of prominent music genres are classical and jazz. Public radio news broadcasts, among them "Morning Edition," "All Things Considered," and "The Takeaway," lead all radio in audience popularity for information focused on national and world events.

Radio Theater

Poet Stephen Vincent Benet called radio the "theater of the mind." His description was coined during the medium's heyday in the 1930s and 1940s when a myriad of original prose and verse plays were being produced and aired by the networks. The foremost radiowright of the time was Norman Corwin, whose works soared to literary heights and were tuned into and admired by millions. He was joined by many writers whose efforts were traditionally geared to the print media. These writers saw in the audio medium a chance to reach larger audiences with their works, and so they generated a significant amount of original material for it. Among the most famous print authors to ply their craft to the ethereal page were W.H. Auden, Arthur Miller, Pearl S. Buck, Archibald MacLeish, Irwin Shaw, and Edna St. Vincent Millay. The medium itself engendered other great writers besides Corwin. A close rival was Arch Oboler, whose popular thrillers brought chills and thrills to the listening audience. Perhaps the most famous of all radio dramas was Orson Welles's adaptation of H.G. Wells's *War of the Worlds*. It was so brilliantly evocative in its performances, writing, and production values that it quite literally sent its audience into a panic.

Following the arrival of television, radio dramas all but vanished from the airwaves. The networks were gone, and local stations

could ill-afford their manufacture. Over the decades since, attempts have been made to revive the art form (CBS and Mutual radio networks offered short-lived series), but the radio drama was and continues to be of only passing interest to an audience with a rapidly diminishing attention span and visual orientation. In recent years, Public radio has become engaged in Radio Theater, and it is there that the medium's greatest artistic rendering makes occasional appearances.

Fortunately, dozens of Web sites on the Internet now preserve these valuable pieces of radio art and Americana. A search for "radio dramas" will result in a listing of everything from pop favorite "The Lone Ranger" to Corwin's historic "On a Note of Triumph."

The Programmer

PDs are radiophiles. They live the medium. Most admit to having been smitten by radio at an early age. "It's something that is in your blood and grows to consuming proportions," admits programmer Peter Falconi. Longtime PD Brian Mitchell recalls an interest in the medium as a small child and for good reason. "I was born into a broadcasting family. My father is a station owner and builder. During my childhood, radio was the primary topic at the dinner table. It fed the flame that I believe was already ignited anyway. Radio fascinated me from the start."

The customary route to the programmer's job involves deejaying and participation in other on-air-related areas, such as copywriting, production, music, and news. It would be difficult to state exactly how long it takes to become a PD. It largely depends on the individual and where he or she happens to be. In some instances, newcomers have gone into programming within their first year in the business. When this happens, it is most likely to occur in a small market where turnover may be high. On the other hand, it is far more common to spend years working toward this goal, even in the best of situations. "Although my father owned the station, I spent a long time in a series of jobs before my appointment to programmer. Along the way, I worked as

station janitor, and then got into announcing, production, and eventually programming," recounts Mitchell.

One of the nation's foremost air personalities and hall of famer, Dick Fatherly, whom *Billboard Magazine* has described as a "longtime legend," spent years as a deejay before making the transition. "In the 25 years that I've been in this business, I have worked as a jock, newsman, production director, and even sales rep. Eventually I ended up in program management. During my career I have worked at WABC, WICC, WFUN, WHB, to mention a few. Plenty of experience, you might say," comments Fatherly.

Experience contributes most toward the making of the station's programmer. However, individuals entering the field with hopes of becoming a PD do well to acquire as much formal training as possible. The programmer's job has become an increasingly demanding one as a result of expanding competition. "A good knowledge of research methodology, analysis, and application is crucial. Programming is both an art and a science today," observes general manager Jim Murphy. Programmer Andy Bloom concurs with Murphy, adding, "A would-be PD needs to school himor herself in marketing research particularly. Little is done anymore that is not based on careful analysis."

Publisher B. Eric Rhoads echoes this stance. "The role has changed. The PD used to be a glorified music director with some background in talent development. Today the PD must be a marketing expert. Radio marketing has become very complex, what with telemarketing, database marketing,

FIGURE 3.10
Sports radio continues to grow. Courtesy KKAM-AM.

FIGURE 3.11
Almost endless
options on satellite
radio. Courtesy
Sirius XM.

direct mail, interactive communication (fax, computer bulletin boards), and so forth. Radio is changing, and the PD must adapt. No longer will records and deejays make the big difference. Stations are at parity in music, so better ways must be found to set stations apart."

Says Shane, "The ultimate analogy for the PD is 'brand manager,' overseeing not only the product, but also the image and perception of the product. Since programmers now must work hand in hand with sellers to maximize station revenues, there's a new awareness of the marketing dimension."

Cognizant of this change, schools with programs in radio broadcasting have begun to emphasize courses in audience and marketing research, as well as other programming-related areas. An important fact for the aspiring PD to keep in mind is that more people entering broadcasting today have college backgrounds than ever before. Even though a college degree is not necessarily a prerequisite for the position of PD, it is clearly regarded as an asset by upper management. "It used to be that a college degree didn't mean so much. A PD came up through the ranks of programming, proved his ability, and was hired. Not that that doesn't still happen. It does. But more and more the new PD has a degree or, at the very least, several years of college," contends Joe Cortese, syndicated air personality. "I majored in Communication Arts at a junior college and then transferred to a four-year school. There are many colleges offering communications courses here in the Boston area, so I'll probably take some more as a way of further preparing for the day when I'll be programming or managing a station. That's what I eventually want to do," says Cortese, adding that experience in the trenches is also vital to success.

His point is well taken. Work experience does head the list on which a station manager bases his or her selection for PD. Meanwhile, college training, at the very least, has become a criterion to the extent that if an applicant does not have any, the prospective employer takes notice.

Beyond formal training and experience, Chuck Ducoty, major-market station manager, says a PD must possess certain innate qualities. "Common sense and a good sense of humor are necessary attributes and are in rather short supply, I think." Dick Fatherly adds sensitivity, patience, compassion, and drive to the list.

The PD's Duties and Responsibilities

Where to begin this discussion poses no simple problem because the PD's responsibilities and duties are so numerous and wide-ranging. Second in responsibility to the general manager, the PD (in station clusters, the individual station programmer reports to the director of operations, who oversees all programming for the various stations) is the person responsible for everything that goes over the air. This involves working with the station manager or director of operations in establishing programming and format policy and overseeing their effective execution. In addition, he or she hires and supervises on-air music and production personnel, plans various schedules, handles the programming budget, develops promotions, monitors the station and its competition, assesses research, and may even pull a daily air-shift. The PD also is accountable for the presentation of news, public affairs, and sports features, although a news director often is appointed to help oversee these areas.

The PD alone does not determine a station's format. This is an upper management decision. The PD may be involved in the selection process, but, more often than not, the format has been chosen before the programmer has been hired. For example, WYYY decides it must switch from MOR to CHR to attract a more marketable demographic. After an in-depth examination of its own market, research on the effectiveness of CHR nationally, and advice from a program consultant and rep company, the format change is deemed appropriate. Reluctantly, the station manager concludes that he must bring in a CHR specialist, which means that he must terminate the services of his present programmer, whose experience is limited to MOR. The station manager places an ad in an industry trade magazine, interviews several candidates, and hires the person he feels will take the station to the top of the ratings. When the new PD arrives, he or she is charged with the task of preparing the CHR format for its debut. Among other things, this may involve hiring new air people, the acquisition of a new music library or the updating of the existing one, preparing promos and purchasing jingles, and working in league with the sales, traffic, and engineering departments for maximum results.

On these points, Corinne Baldasano, vice president of SW programming, observes, "First of all, of course, you must be sure

that the station you are programming fills a market void, i.e., that there is an opportunity for you to succeed in your geographic area with the format you are programming. For example, a young adult alternative Rock station may not have much chance for success in an area that is mostly populated by retirees. Once you have determined that the format fills an audience need, you need to focus on building your station. The basic ingredients are making sure your music mix is correct (if you are programming a music station) and that you've hired the on-air talent that conveys the attitude and image of the station you wish to build. At this stage, it is far more important to focus inward than outward. Many stations have failed because they've paid more attention to the competition's product than they have their own."

Once the format is implemented, the PD must work at refining and maintaining the sound. After a short time, the programmer may feel compelled to modify air schedules either by shifting deejays around or by replacing those who do not enhance the format. Metro Networks president David Saperstein says, "You've got to continually fine-tune the station's sound. You must remove any and all negatives, like excessive talk, annoying commercials, technical weaknesses, and so forth. The most critical rule of thumb is that stations should always concentrate on bringing listeners to the station, keeping them tuned in, and providing the right balance of music, personalities, talk, information, and commercials so listeners do not have any reason to tune elsewhere."

The PD prepares weekend and holiday schedules as well, and this generally requires the hiring of part-time announcers. A station may employ as few as one or two part-timers or fill-in people or as many as eight to ten. This largely depends on whether deejays are on a 5- or 6-day schedule. At most stations, air people are hired to work a 6-day week. The objective of scheduling is not merely to fill slots but to maintain continuity and consistency of sound. A PD prefers to tamper with shifts as little as possible and fervently hopes that he has filled weekend slots with people who are reliable. "The importance of dependable, trustworthy air people

cannot be overemphasized. It's great to have talented deejays, but if they don't show up when they are supposed to because of one reason or another, they don't do you a lot of good. You need people who are cooperative. I have no patience with individuals who try to deceive me or fail to live up to their responsibilities," says Brian Mitchell. A station that is constantly introducing new air personnel has a difficult time establishing listener habit. The PD knows that to succeed he or she must present a stable and dependable sound, and this is a significant programming challenge.

Production schedules also are prepared by the programmer. Deejays are usually tapped for production duties before or after their airshifts. For example, the morning person who is on the air from 6:00–10:00 A.M. may be assigned production and copy chores from 10:00 A.M. until noon. Meanwhile, the midday deejay who is on the air from 10:00 A.M. until 3:00 P.M. is given production assignments from 3:00–5:00 P.M., and so on. Large radio stations frequently employ a full-time production person. If so, this individual handles all production responsibilities and is supervised by the PD.

A PD traditionally handles the department's budget, which generally constitutes 30–40% of the station's operating budget. Working with the station manager, the PD ascertains the financial needs of the programming area. The size and scope of the budget vary from station to station. Most programming budgets include funds for the acquisition of program materials, such as albums, features, and contest paraphernalia. A separate promotional budget usually exists, and it too may be managed by the PD. The programmer's budgetary responsibilities range from monumental at some outlets to minuscule at others. Personnel salaries and even equipment purchases may fall within the province of the program department's budget. Brian Mitchell believes that "an understanding of the total financial structure of the company or corporation and how programming fits into the scheme of things is a real asset to a programmer."

Devising station promotions and contests also places demands on the PD's time. Large

stations often appoint a promotion director. When this is the case, the PD and promotion director work together in the planning, development, and execution of the promotional campaign. The PD, however, retains final veto power should he or she feel that the promotion or contest fails to complement the station's format. When the PD alone handles promotions and contests, he or she may involve other members of the programming or sales department in brainstorming sessions designed to come up with original and interesting concepts. The programmer is aware that the right promotion or contest can have a major impact on ratings. Thus, he or she is constantly on the lookout for an appropriate vehicle. In the quest to find the promotion that will launch the station on the path to a larger audience, the PD may seek assistance from one of dozens of companies that offer promotional services.

The PD's major objective is to program for results. If the station's programming fails to attract a sufficient following, the ratings will reflect that unhappy fact. All medium and larger markets are surveyed by ratings companies, primarily Arbitron. Very few small rural markets, with perhaps one or two stations, are surveyed. If a small-market station is poorly programmed, the results will be apparent in the negative reactions of the local retailers. Simply put, the station will not be bought by enough advertisers to make the operation a profitable venture. In the bigger markets, where several stations compete for advertising dollars, the ratings are used to determine which is the most effective or cost-efficient station to buy. "In order to make it to the top of the ratings in your particular market, you have to be doing the best job around. It's the PD who is going to get the station the numbers it needs to make a buck. If he doesn't turn the trick, he's back in the job market," observes Dick Fatherly.

PDs constantly monitor the competition by analyzing the ratings and by listening. A radio station's programming is often constructed in reaction to a direct competitor's. For example, Rock stations in the same market often counterprogram newscasts by airing them at different times to grab up their competitor's tune-outs. However,

(Just a few days into the New Year, many resolutions have been broken already; but, hopefully, not the ones you made about your station. These "resolutions" first appeared in TACTICS a few years ago and are reprinted here by popular demand.)

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS FOR PDs

- Every week, I will read at least one of the magazines my target audience reads to get more in line with their tastes and interests.

- I will aircheck the morning show at least once a week.

- I will aircheck the rest of the airstaff every two weeks.

- I will schedule a meeting with the entire programming staff at least once a month.

- Every two weeks I will review liners and imaging to keep it fresh and to make sure it communicates the positioning message clearly.

- I will establish listener panels to get feedback from our core users every quarter.

- I will leave the station one day a month to listen carefully to us and the competition.

- Every three months, I will drive to small towns in my area to listen for potential air talent.

- I'll set up a promotional checklist so everybody knows what to do at live broadcasts and station events.

- I will join a sales meeting once a month to bring the account reps up to date on programming department activities.

- I will do a deep analysis of the music scheduling program each month (or ask Shane Media to do it for me).

rather than contrast with each other, pop stations tend to reflect one another. This, in fact, has been the basis of arguments by critics who object to the so-called mirroring effect. What happens is easily understood. If a station does well by presenting a particular format, other stations are going to exploit the sound in the hopes of doing well also. WYYY promotes commercial-free sweeps of music and captures big ratings, and soon its competitor programs likewise. "Program directors use what has proven to be effective. It is more a matter of survival than anything. I think most of us try to be original to the degree that we can be, but there is very little new under the sun. Programming moves cyclically. Today we're all doing this. Tomorrow we'll all be doing that. The medium reacts to trends or fads. It's the nature of the beast," notes programmer Mitchell. Keeping in step with, or rather one step ahead of, the competition requires that the PD knows what is happening around him or her at all times.

FIGURE 3.12
Advice to programmers. Courtesy Shane Media.

Probably 60% of the nation's PDs pull an airshift (go on the air themselves) on either a full-time or part-time basis. A difference of opinion exists among programmers concerning their on-air participation. Many feel that being on the air gives them a true sense of the station's sound, which aids them in their programming efforts. Others contend that the 3 or 4 hours that they spend on the air take them away from important programming duties. Major-market PDs are less likely to be heard on the air than their peers in smaller markets because of additional duties created by the size and status of the station. Meanwhile, small- and medium-market stations often expect their PDs to be seasoned air people capable of filling a key shift. "It has been my experience when applying for programming jobs that managers are looking for PDs with excellent announcing skills. It is pretty rare to find a small-market PD who does not have a daily airshift. It comes with the territory," says consultant Gary Begin.

Whether or not PDs are involved in actual airshifts, almost all participate in the production of commercials, public service announcements (PSA), and promos. In lieu of an airshift, a PD may spend several hours each day in the station's production facilities. The programmer may, in fact, serve as the primary copywriter and spot producer. This is especially true at nonmajor-market outlets that do not employ a full-time production person.

The PD must possess an imposing list of skills to perform effectively the countless tasks confronting him or her daily. There is no one person, other than the general manager, whose responsibilities outweigh the programmer's. The PD can either make or break the radio station. Summing things up, chief programmer Jimmy Steal states, "A programmer must possess balance and understanding of both the science and art of show business. A station needs someone who understands that strategies and tactics are for the conference room, and fun, engagement, buzz, innovation, and exceeding listener's expectations are for over the air and on-line. At Emmis we look for someone who understands the job description and all of the job's duties. It is incumbent upon us to give a detailed definition of what success looks like to a prospective programmer, so an inspirational leader can positively motivate their team of talent."

Programming a Cluster Operation

The widespread consolidation of the radio industry since the late 1990s has resulted in a paradigm shift in programming responsibilities. Radio clusters may consist of as many as eight stations. In this situation, one individual is usually assigned to perform the function of general supervisor of all cluster

FIGURE 3.13
A model of a station's competitive environment as conceived by Arbitron. Courtesy Arbitron.
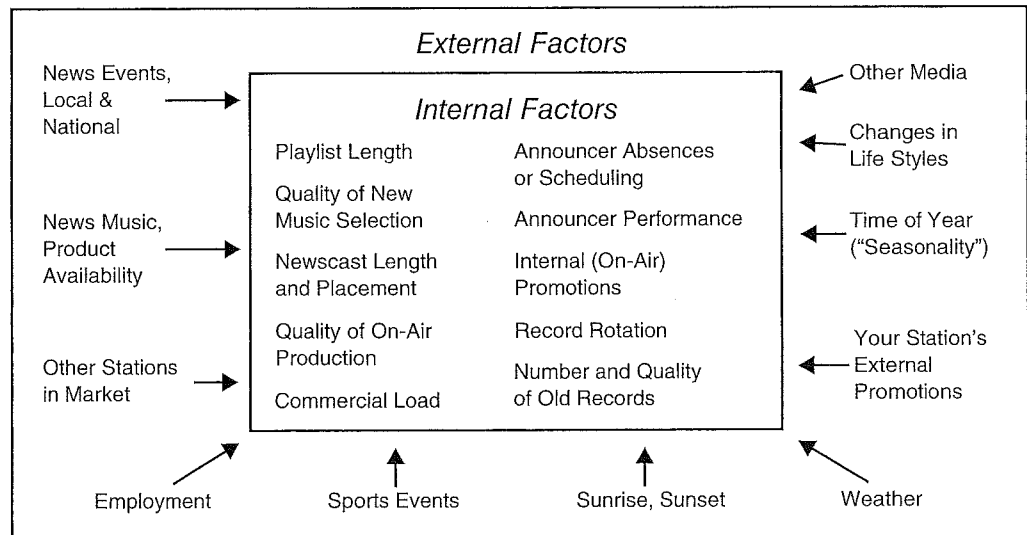
programming, and each of the stations within the cluster has a designated PD, who reports to this person – typically referred to as the director of operations. Radio corporations see it as a macrocosm/microcosm overseer design and arrangement.

As might be imagined, the challenges of programming a cluster are compounded by the very number of the stations involved. As KIMN PD Gregg Cassidy observes, "Programming a single station is very simple versus programming a cluster. In programming a single station you have all the time necessary to evaluate all areas of your station daily. You can check your air talent each week, reevaluate your music and music rotations and be very creative with your on-air promotions and take the necessary time to create clever and compelling production. Programming a cluster is like being a father of many children rather than one or two. Time becomes very valuable. In the simplest form, I would devote all my energy to one station per week."

According to WIZN/WBTZ's Matt Grasso, consolidation has created other problems for programmers: "Ironically, if not para-

doxically, many quality radio pros making top dollars were cut out in the downsizing and consolidation frenzy. This often left lesser talent in markets with clusters. Worse yet with many passionate, quality pros out of work, no one has been minding the store and developing new talent. This has become today's major challenge – finding and developing new talent. There used to be a line out the door of people wanting to be on the radio, but the perception that consolidation and downsizing have killed the job market has dramatically changed that."

Satellite Radio Programming Department

What follows is a brief sketch of the programming department's organizational structure of satellite radio, according to XM Satellite's one-time chief creative officer, Lee Abrams: "Here's how we set up the programming area. I was the head overseer of programming. For original content, we had a senior vice president of music. We

FIGURE 3.14
Music testing companies provide stations with outside expertise. Courtesy Music – Tec.

had a vice president of Talk, who handled the day-to-day operations of the nonmusic channels. Original Talk programming, such as Take 5 and XM Traffic, had a PD along with a staff of talent and producers. The vice president of Talk also spearheaded the relations with third party providers. Every cluster had a senior PD, and each channel had a PD. Channels often had music directors and deejays. A vice president also oversaw the pure operational aspects, like computer systems and production. There was a staff of senior production directors who supervised a group of producers, aka audio animators. Supporting the animators were production assistants, who often came from the internship ranks at XM. The programming department also had a music librarian and staff that oversaw the ingestion of music into the system. Keep in mind things changed as they were tweaked to enhance the efficiency of the department. As they say, it was a work in progress" (see Figure 2.7).

Elements of Programming

Few programmers entrust the selection and scheduling of music and other sound elements to deejays and announcers. There is too much at stake and too many variables, both internal and external, that must be considered to achieve maximum results within a chosen format.

It has become a very complex undertaking, observes Andy Bloom. "For instance, all of our music is tested via callout. At least one or two perceptual studies are done every year, depending on what questions we need answered. Usually a couple of sets of focus groups per year, too. Everything is researched, and nothing is left to chance." In most cases, the PD determines how much music is programmed hourly and in what rotation and when news, public affairs features, and commercials are slotted. Program wheels, also variously known as sound hours, hot clocks, and format disks, are carefully designed by the PD to ensure the effective presentation of on-air ingredients. Program wheels are posted in the control studio to inform and guide air

people as to what is to be broadcast and at what point in the hour. Although not every station provides deejays with such specific programming schemata, today very few stations leave things up to chance since the inappropriate scheduling and sequencing of sound elements may drive listeners to a competitor. Radio programming has become that much of an exacting science. With few exceptions, stations use some kind of formula in conveying their programming material.

At one time, Top 40 stations were the unrivaled leaders of formula programming. Today, however, even FS and Classic Rock outlets, which once were the least formulaic, have become more sensitive to form. The age of freeform commercial radio has long since passed, and it is doubtful, given the state of the marketplace, that it will return. Of course, stranger things have happened in radio. Depending on the extent to which a PD prescribes the content of a sound hour, programming clocks may be elaborate in their detail or quite rudimentary. Music clocks are used to plot out elements. Clocks reflect the minutes of the standard hour, and the PD places elements where they actually are to occur during the hour. Many programmers use a set of clocks, or clocks that change with each hour (see Figure 3.15).

"When I speak at college classes," Ed Shane observes, "there's always a question about why format clock hours are structured the way they are, so let me call what follows 'Clock Construction 101.' Arbitron entries show that the first quarter hour (00:00–00:15) gets the largest number of new entries, that is, when the radio is turned on for the first time or switched to a new station. The third quarter hour (00:00–30:45) gets the second largest number. The second quarter hour (00:00–15:30) gets the third largest number, and the fourth quarter hour (00:00–45:00) gets the fewest new tune-ins. That pattern is why many stations load their commercial content in the final or fourth quarter hour – trying to prevent a new listener from hearing a commercial as the first thing when tuning. Since the first quarter hour is so valuable in terms of new tune-ins, the most valuable programming elements should be placed in that segment.

A music station is advised to load the first quarter hour with Power Current or Power Gold songs, songs that test the best or are the biggest hits."

Indeed, program clocks are set up with the competition and market factors in mind. For example, programmers will devise a clock that reflects morning and afternoon drive periods in their market. Not all markets have identical commuter hours. In some cities morning drive may start as early as 5:30 A.M.; in others it may begin at 7:00 A.M. The programmer sets up clocks accordingly. A clock parallels the activities of the community in which the station operates.

Music stations are not the only ones that use program wheels; News and Talk stations do so as well. News stations, like music outlets, use key format elements to maintain ratings through the hour. Many News stations work their clocks in 20-minute cycles. During this segment, news is arranged according to its degree of importance and geographic relevance, such as local, regional, national, and international. Most News stations lead with their top local stories. News stories of particular interest are repeated during the segment. Sports, weather, and other news-related information, such as traffic and stock market reports, constitute a part of the segment. Elements may be juggled around or different ones inserted during successive 20-minute blocks to keep things from sounding repetitious.

In the Talk format, two-way conversation and interviews fill the space generally allotted to songs in the music format. Therefore, Talk wheels often resemble music wheels in their structure. For example, news is offered at the top of the hour, followed by a talk sweep that precedes a spot set. This is done in a fashion that is reminiscent of Easy Listening.

Of course, not all stations arrange their sound hours as depicted in these pages. Many variations exist, most inspired and driven by computers, but these examples are fairly representative of some of the program schematics used in today's radio marketplace.

Program wheels keep a station on a preordained path and prevent wandering. As stated, each programming element – commercial, news, promo, weather, and so
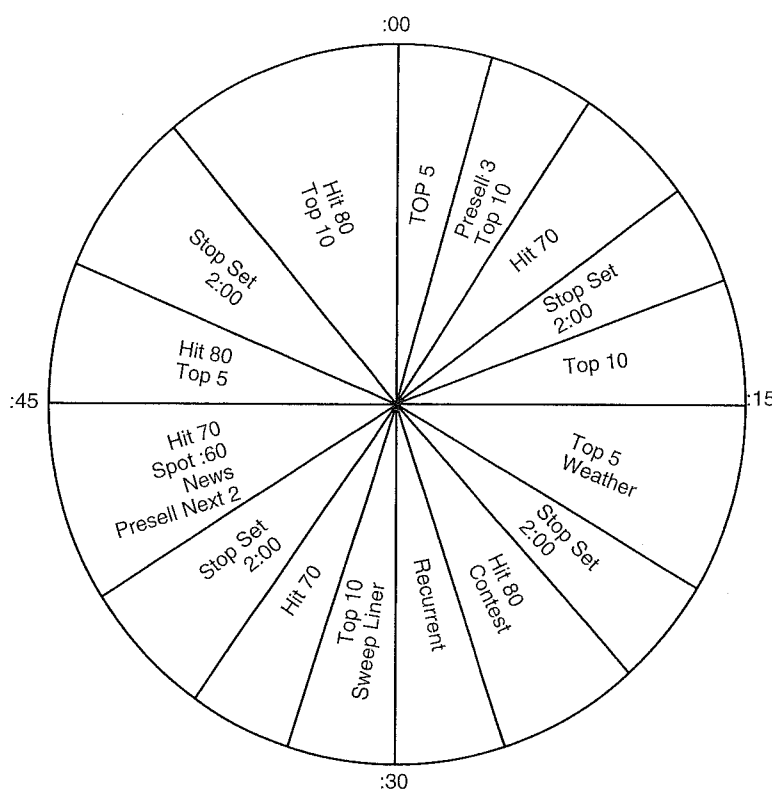
on – is strategically located in the sound hour to enhance flow and optimize impact. Balance is imperative: too much deejay patter on a station promoting more music and less talk, listeners become disenchanted; too little news and information on a station targeting the over-30 male commuter, the competition benefits. "When constructing or arranging the program clock, you have to work forward and backward to make sure that everything fits and is positioned correctly. One element out of place can become that proverbial hole in the dam. Spots, jock breaks, music – it all must be weighed before clocking. A lot of experimentation, not to mention research, goes into this," observes radio executive Lorna Ozman.

It was previously pointed out that a station with a more-music slant limits announcer discourse to schedule additional tunes. Some formats, in particular Easy Listening/Smooth Jazz, have reduced the role of the announcer to not much more than occasional live promos and IDs, which are written on liner or flip cards. Nothing is left to chance. This also is true of stations airing the super-tight hit music

FIGURE 3.15
A typical morning drive time CHR clock. It reflects a 9-minute commercial load maximum per hour. Notice the way the stop sets occur away from the quarter-hour. A Top 5 record is often aired on the quarter-hour to give the station the best ratings advantage. This is called "quarter-hour maintenance."

FIGURE 3.16
The use of podcasts
continued to grow
into the late 2000s.
Courtesy NPR.

format. Deejays say what is written and move the music. At stations where deejays are given more control, wheels play a less crucial function. Outlets where a particular personality has ruled the ratings for years often let that person have more input as to what music is aired. However, even in these cases, playlists generally are provided and followed.

The radio personality has enjoyed varying degrees of popularity since the 1950s. Over the years, Top 40, more than any other format, has toyed with the extent of deejay involvement on the air. The pendulum has swung from heavy personality presence in the 1950s and early 1960s to a drastically reduced role in the mid- and later 1960s. This dramatic shift came as the result of programmer Bill Drake's attempt to streamline Top 40. In the 1970s, the air personality regained some of his or her status, but in the 1980s, the narrowing of hit station playlists brought about a new leanness and austerity that again diminished the jock's presence. In the mid-1980s, some pop music stations began to give the deejay more to do. "There's sort of a pattern to it all. For a while, deejays are the gems in the crown,

and then they're just the metal holding the precious stones in place for another period of time. What went on in the mid-1970s with personality began to recur in the latter part of the 1980s. Of course, there are a few new twists in the tiara, but what it comes down to is the temporary restoration of the hit radio personality. It's a back and forth movement, kind of like a tide. It comes in, then retreats, but each time something new washes up. Deejays screamed at the teens in the 1950s, mellowed out some in the 1960s and 1970s, went hyper again in the 1980s, and conservatism regained favor in the 1990s," observes Brian Mitchell. In the first decade of the 2000s, with the pressure from so many competing audio options, high foreground personalities are beginning to look attractive once again as an antidote to the music-intensive services.

On the subject of on-air talent, Lynn Christian observes, "Requirements have changed in the past few years. Stations are not just looking for a 'pretty voice.' Today's radio management looks for talent with facile minds who are great observers – people who can listen as well as speak, plus possess the ability to demonstrate a warm

FIGURE 3.17
Putting the program together in the 1930s. Courtesy Library of Congress.

FIGURE 3.18
Many stations
have replaced local
deejays with national
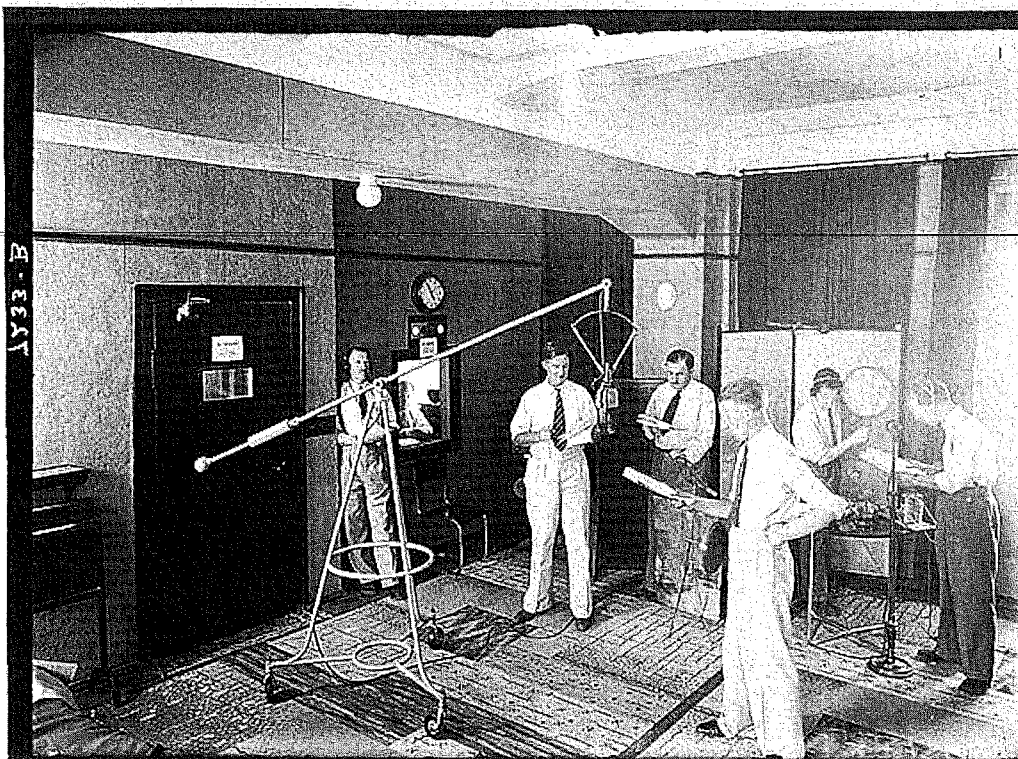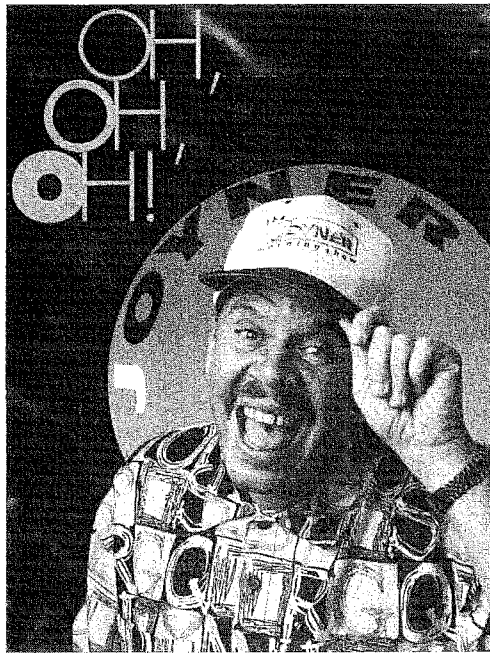personalities. Tom
Joyner is among
the most popular.
Courtesy ABC.

and always interesting personality." On the other side of the coin, talent wants their managers to operate in a manner that makes for a positive atmosphere and experience, says Jimmy Steal. "The keys to managing talent are (1) Honesty, (2) Inspiration, (3) Creativity, and (4) Empathy."

In addition to concentrating on the role deejays play in the sound hour, the PD pays careful attention to the general nature and quality of other ingredients. Music is, of course, of paramount importance. Songs must fit the format to begin with, but beyond the obvious, the quality of the artistry and the audio mix must meet certain criteria. A substandard musical arrangement or a disc with poor fidelity detracts from the station's sound. Jingles and promos must effectively establish the tone and tenor of the format, or they have the reverse effect of their intended purpose, which is to attract and hold listeners. Commercials, too, must be compatible with the program elements that surround them.

In all, the PD scrutinizes every component of the program wheel to keep the station true to form. The wheel helps maintain consistency, without which a station cannot hope to cultivate a following. Erratic programming in today's highly competitive marketplace is tantamount to directing listeners to other stations.

Station Web Sites, Podcasts, and Blogs

In this day and age, nearly every radio station maintains a Web site. Most do so as an additional marketing tool, but many provide listeners with Web sites as a cyber-extension of their on-air signals, since so many people sit in front of their computers at work and at home for countless hours. Indeed, a station Web site is not only for listening, but it's a visual component of a radio station, a means of giving more sight to a once sightless medium. Says Ressen Design's Darryl Pomicter, "Web sites compliment all terrestrial broadcast systems, supplementing and expanding content. They give stations reach they never had before – locally, nationally, and globally."

Station Web sites hold great value for PDs for three vastly different reasons, contends Matt Grasso, WIZN.WBTZ operations manager. "First off, Pl's [dedicated listeners] spend a lot of time with your radio station, and the Web site is a way to keep things fresh and exciting for them. Games, exclusive Web-only promotions, staff blogs and bios all provide an exclusive, behind the scenes look at the product. Next, Time Spent Listening (TSL) drives the ratings bus and your online broadcast boosts it. There are a lot of people who are procrastinating at work. Plug them into your station. Give them lifestyle news and information and watch your TSL rise. And finally, the Web site constitutes new inventory. You can clutter your airwaves with so much stuff. Your Web site is a new place to do business."

Station Web sites (cyberspace display windows, if you will) literally come in all sizes, and shapes. That is to say, they can be simple offering a limited number of links, and they can be highly interactive and multitiered with dozens of links. Not all Web sites are constructed as income streams, but more and more radio stations are viewing Web sites as another good source of nontraditional revenue. Recently, stations have begun adding the iTunes Music Store link to their sites to allow their listeners to purchase the tunes they air. Emmis was the first station group to do so on its stations in Chicago, Indianapolis, Austin, and St. Louis.

Larger stations and cluster operations typically hire an individual (frequently called manager of information services – MIS) to maintain a station's Web presence. It falls to this person to maintain the appearance and relevance of the Web site. The growing role of station Web sites has made it another potential career option for those interested in entering the radio field. Clearly, computer skills would rank high on the list of attributes an applicant for this position should possess. In addition, an overall knowledge of radio programming and marketing would be of special value.

Although podcasts were originally designed for downloading to iPods and MP3s, radio stations have found them to be a value-added programming feature. Thousands of podcasts are available on the Internet, and most radio stations now offer podcasts of their on-air features on their Web sites. Some stations have created exclusive, podcast-only programs. Says consultant Jason Insalaco, "Podcasting 'exclusives' can drive Web traffic and increase the time listeners spend on the Web site. For example, Web site exclusive interviews with newsmakers, musical artists, entire unedited press conferences, or even the local high school football game can provide supplemental content for station podcasts. It's a good community service, too." Matt Grasso adds, "Podcasts are useful to station programming because it's a way to take the station with you. At first radio programmers were afraid of iPods; now they realize that they are just another way to get even closer to the listener."

A blog is a Web page of entries from a single source/author pertaining to a particular subject or topic. Many station personalities and talk show hosts maintain blogs, which are sometimes referred to as online journals or diaries. Observes Insalaco, "Blogging has become a national phenomenon. Talk show host blogs are a popular component of a station's Web site. Consumers are processing news at a meteoric pace via the Web, cell phones, and Blackberries, so station blogs fit into this scheme. While Americans are no longer at the mercy of the network news broadcasts or the newspaper for daily information, the trend of processing news through opinion (whether a good thing or a bad thing) has developed. Radio hosts can blog about issues related to the topics discussed and the guests they have on their programs. Blogs can billboard upcoming topics and provide listeners an opportunity to interact. Also, show blogs provide additional information and links to stories discussed on the air. Radio station blogs can feature show rundowns of the day's topics

Ed Shane | Programming in a New Age
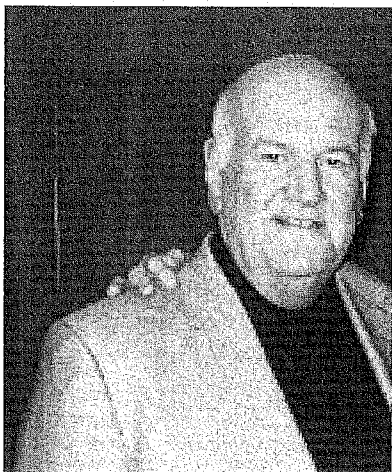
FIGURE 3.19
Ed Shane.

Radio needs to think of itself in a new way. We are content creators, content developers, and content providers. Transmission and distribution are irrelevant. That's why Internet-only radio stations show so much promise. Traditional radio is a one-way medium. For much of its reign, it seemed interactive when it engaged the imagination or stimulated phone calls for talk show feedback or contesting. The new "radio" will use a variety of means to distribute content to its constituents.

A radio station client of mine recently began streaming its audio via the Internet. The PD was very excited, because he anticipated hearing from new listeners all over the world who could discover how good his station sounded. The president of the company who owned the station took him to the window and pointed to a house in the neighborhood nearby. "We're not streaming to be heard around the world," he told his PD. "We're streaming so the 12-year-old girl in that house will listen to our station. She doesn't listen to radio, but if she likes what you do, she'll listen on her computer."

FIGURE 3.20
Keeping track of a song's performance is a vital element in retaining the edge in music programming. Courtesy Mediabase.

and guests so that listeners remain connected to their favorite radio personality. Blogs are easy to execute and maintain. In sum, stations that embrace blogs and podcasts will gain an upper hand in the competitive radio marketplace."

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 Page No.       1              C1TISTAT - Chicago
                                   WKQX-FM/AC
 91.01.18
                   TUNED IN-ALPHABETICAL LIST BY ARTIST

 Artist                 Song Title                     Time
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 ** 1
   10CC                 The Things We Do For Love       12m

 ** A
   ADAMS, OLETA         Get Here                        02a
   ADAMS, OLETA         Get Here                        06a
   ADAMS, OLETA         Get Here                        10a
   ADAMS, OLETA         Get Here                        02p
   ADAMS, OLETA         Get Here                        07p
   ADAMS, OLETA         Get Here                        11p
   ALIAS                More Than Words Can Say         01a
   ALIAS                More Than Words Can Say         12n
   ALIAS                More Than Words Can Say         10p
   ASTLEY, RICK         It Would Take A Strong Strong   01p
   AUSTIN/INGRAM        Baby, Come To Me                02a

 ** B
   BAD ENGLISH          When I See You Smile            01a
   BANGLES              Eternal Flame                   01a
   BANGLES              Manic Monday                    04p
   BEACH BOYS           Kokomo                          07p
   BERLIN               Take My Breath Away             01a
   BERLIN               Take My Breath Away             08p
   BOLTON, MICHAEL      (Sittin' On) The Dock Of The..  08p
   BRANIGAN, LAURA      Self Control                    01a
   BROWNE, JACKSON      Doctor My Eyes                  01p
   BROWNE, JACKSON      Running On Empty                09p
   BROWNE, JACKSON      Somebody's Baby                 09a

 ** C
   CAFFERTY, JOHN & BBB On The Dark Side                06a
   CARA, IRENE          Flashdance (What A Feeling)     01p
   CAREY, MARIAH        Love Takes Time                 01a
   CAREY, MARIAH        Love Takes Time                 05a
   CAREY, MARIAH        Love Takes Time                 11a
   CAREY, MARIAH        Love Takes Time                 04p
   CAREY, MARIAH        Love Takes Time                 10p
   CAREY, MARIAH        Vision Of Love                  10p
   CARLISLE, BELINDA    Heaven Is A Place On Earth      02a
   CARLISLE, BELINDA    Heaven Is A Place On Earth      11p
   CARLISLE, BELINDA    I Get Weak                      06p
   CARMEN, ERIC         Hungry Eyes                     09p
   CHER                 If I Could Turn Back Time       12m
   CHER                 The Sh
   CHER                 The Sh ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
   CHER                 The Sh │ Music is broken out alphabetically by artists with the │
   CHICAGO              Feelir │ exact hour of air noted          │
   CHICAGO              Hard 1 └─────────────────────────────────┘
   CHICAGO              Look Away                       11p
   CHICAGO              Old Days                        08p
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The PD and the Audience

The programmer, regardless of whether he or she works for a broadcast, satellite, or Internet radio station, must possess a clear perception of the type of listener the station management wants to attract. Initially, a station decides on a given format because it is convinced that it will make money with the new-found audience, meaning that the people who tune in to the station will

look good to prospective advertisers. The purpose of any format is to win a desirable segment of the radio audience. Just who these people are and what makes them tick are questions that the PD must constantly address to achieve reach and retention. An informed programmer is aware that different types of music appeal to different types of people. For example, surveys have long concluded that heavy rock appeals more to men than it does to women, and that rock music, in general, is more popular among teens and young adults than it is with individuals over 40. This is no guarded secret, and certainly the programmer who is out to gain the over-40 crowd is doing himself or herself and his or her station a disservice by programming even an occasional hard rock tune. This should be obvious.

A station's demographics refer to the characteristics of those who tune in: sex, age, income, and so forth. Within its demographics, a station may exhibit particular strength in specific areas or *cells* as they have come to be termed. For example, an AC station targeting the 24–39-year-old group may have a prominent cell in women over 30. The general information provided by the major ratings surveys indicate to the station the age and sex of those listening, but little beyond that. To find out more, the PD may conduct an in-house survey or employ the services of a research firm.

Since radio accompanies listeners practically everywhere, broadcasters pay particular attention to the lifestyle activities of their target audience. A station's geographic locale often dictates its program offerings. For example, hoping to capture the attention of the 35-year-old men, a radio outlet located in a small coastal city along the Gulf of Mexico might decide to air a series of 1-minute informational tips on outdoor activities, such as tennis, golf, and deep-sea fishing, which are exceptionally popular in the area. Stations have always catered to the interests of their listeners, but in the 1970s, audience research became much more oriented to lifestyle (Figure 3.21).

In the 1990s, broadcasters delved further into audience behavior through psychographic research, which, by examining motivational factors, provides programmers with information beyond the purely quantitative.

Perhaps one of the best examples of a station's efforts to conform to its listeners' lifestyle is *day-parting*, a topic briefly touched on in the discussion of program wheels. For the sake of illustration, let us discuss how an AC station may daypart (segmentalize) its broadcast day. To begin with, the station is targeting an over-40 audience, somewhat skewed toward men. The PD concludes that the station's biggest listening hours are mornings between 7:00 and 9:00 A.M. and afternoons between 4:00 and 6:00 P.M., and that most of those tuned in during these periods are in their cars commuting to or from work. It is evident to the programmer that the station's programming approach must be modified during drive-time to reflect the needs of the audience. Obviously, traffic reports, news and sports updates, weather forecasts, and frequent time checks are suitable fare for the station's morning audience. The interests of homebound commuters contrast slightly with those of work-bound commuters. Weather and time are less important, and most sports information from the previous night is old hat by the time the listener heads for home. Stock market reports and information about upcoming games and activities pick up the slack. Midday hours call for further modification, since the lifestyle of the station's audience is different. Aware that the majority of those listening are homemakers (in a less enlightened age this daypart was referred to as "housewife" time), the PD reduces the amount of news and information, replacing them with music and deejay conversation designed specifically to complement the activities of those tuned. In the evening, the station redirects its programming and schedules sports and talk features, going exclusively talk after midnight. All these adjustments are made to attract and retain audience interest.

The PD relies on survey information and research data to better gauge and understand the station's audience. However, as a member of the community that the station serves, the programmer knows that not everything is contained in formal documentation. He or she gains unique insight into the mood and mentality of the area within the station's signal simply by taking part in the activities of day-to-day life. A
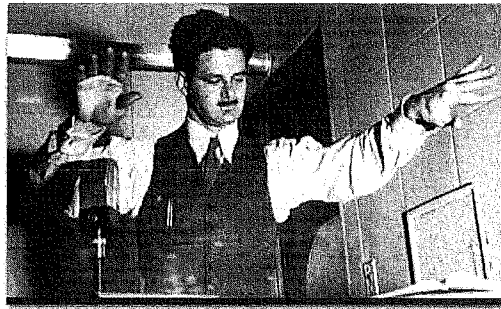
programmer with a real feel for the area in which the station is located, as well as a fundamental grasp of research methodology and its application, is in the best possible position to direct the on-air efforts of a radio station. Concerning the role of audience research, Peter Falconi says, "You can't run a station on research alone. Yes, research helps to an extent, but it can't replace your own observations and instincts." Brian Mitchell agrees with Falconi. "I feel research is important, but how you react to research is more important. A PD also has to heed his gut feelings. Gaps exist in research, too. If I can't figure out what to do without data to point the way every time I make a move, I should get out of radio. Success comes from taking chances once in a while, too. Sometimes it's wiser to turn your back on the tried and tested. Of course, you had better know who's out there before you try anything. A PD who doesn't study his audience and community is like a racecar driver who doesn't familiarize himself with the track. Both can end up off the road and out of the race."

The PD and the Music

Not all radio stations have a music director. The larger the station, the more likely it is to have such a person. In any case, it is the PD who is ultimately responsible for the music that goes over the air, even when the position of music director exists. The duties of the music director vary from station to station. Although the title suggests that the individual performing this function would supervise the station's music programming from the selection and acquisition of records to the preparation of playlists, this

is not always the case. At some stations, the position is primarily administrative or clerical in nature, leaving the PD to make the major decisions concerning airplay. In this instance, one of the primary duties of the music director might be to improve service from record distributors to keep the station well supplied with the latest releases. A radio station with poor record service may actually be forced to purchase music. This can be prevented to a great extent by maintaining close ties with the various record distributor reps.

Over the years the music industry and the radio medium have formed a mutually beneficial alliance. Without the product provided by the recording companies, radio would find itself with little in the way of programming material, since 90% of the country's stations feature recorded music. At the same time, radio serves as the principal means by which the recording industry gets word of its new releases to the general public. Succinctly put, radio sells records.

Although radio stations seldom pay for their music (CDs) – recording companies send demos of their new product to most stations – it must pay annual licensing fees to American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP), Broadcast Music Incorporated (BMI), or SESAC (Society of European Stage Authors and Composers) for the privilege of airing recorded music. ASCAP provides a "blanket" license for music stations. Fees are a percentage of a station's annual income, usually 1–1½% of gross income. According to ASCAP, noncommercial radio stations "pay an annual fee determined by the U.S. Copyright Office."

These fees range from a few hundred dollars at small, noncommercial, educational stations to tens of thousands of dollars at large, commercial, metro market stations. The music licensing fees paid by stations are distributed to the artists and composers of the songs broadcast.

When music arrives at the station, the music director (sometimes more appropriately called the music librarian or music assistant) processes them through the system. This may take place after the PD has screened them. Records are categorized, indexed, and eventually added to the library if they suit the station's format.

Programmer Jon Lutes designates music categories in the following manner: New Music, Medium Current, Hot Current, Hot Recurrent, Medium Recurrent, Bulk Recurrent, Power Gold, Secondary Gold, Tertiary Gold, and so forth. Each station approaches cataloging in its own fashion. Here is a simple example. An AC outlet receives an album by a popular female vocalist whose last name begins with an L. The PD auditions the album and decides to place three cuts into regular on-air rotation. The music director then assigns the cuts the following catalog numbers: L106/U/F, L106/D/F, and L106/M/F. L106 indicates where the album may be located in the library. In this case, the library is set up alphabetically and then numerically within the given letter that represents the artist's last name. In other words, this would be the 106th album found in the section reserved for female vocalists whose names begin with an L. The next symbol indicates the tempo of the cut: U(p) tempo, D(own) tempo, and M(edium) tempo. The F that follows the tempo symbol indicates the artist's gender: Female.

When a station is computerized (and in this day and age, few are not), this information, including the frequency or rotation of airplay as determined by the PD, will be entered accordingly.

Playlists are then assembled and printed by the computer. The music director sees that these lists are placed in the control room for use by the deejays. This last step is eliminated when the on-air studio is equipped with a computer terminal. Deejays then simply punch up the playlists designed for their particular airshifts. Ed Shane offers, "To hone the music mix for proper balance and rotation, stations use music rotation software from a variety of suppliers. The most used software program is Selector from Radio Computing Services (which also supplies music test analysis software, traffic software, and a digital studio operation system). Other popular music rotation software is Power-Gold and Music Master" (see Figure 3.22).

Without a doubt, the use of computers in music programming has become standard, especially in larger markets where the cost of computerization is absorbed more easily. The number of computer companies selling both hardware and software designed for use
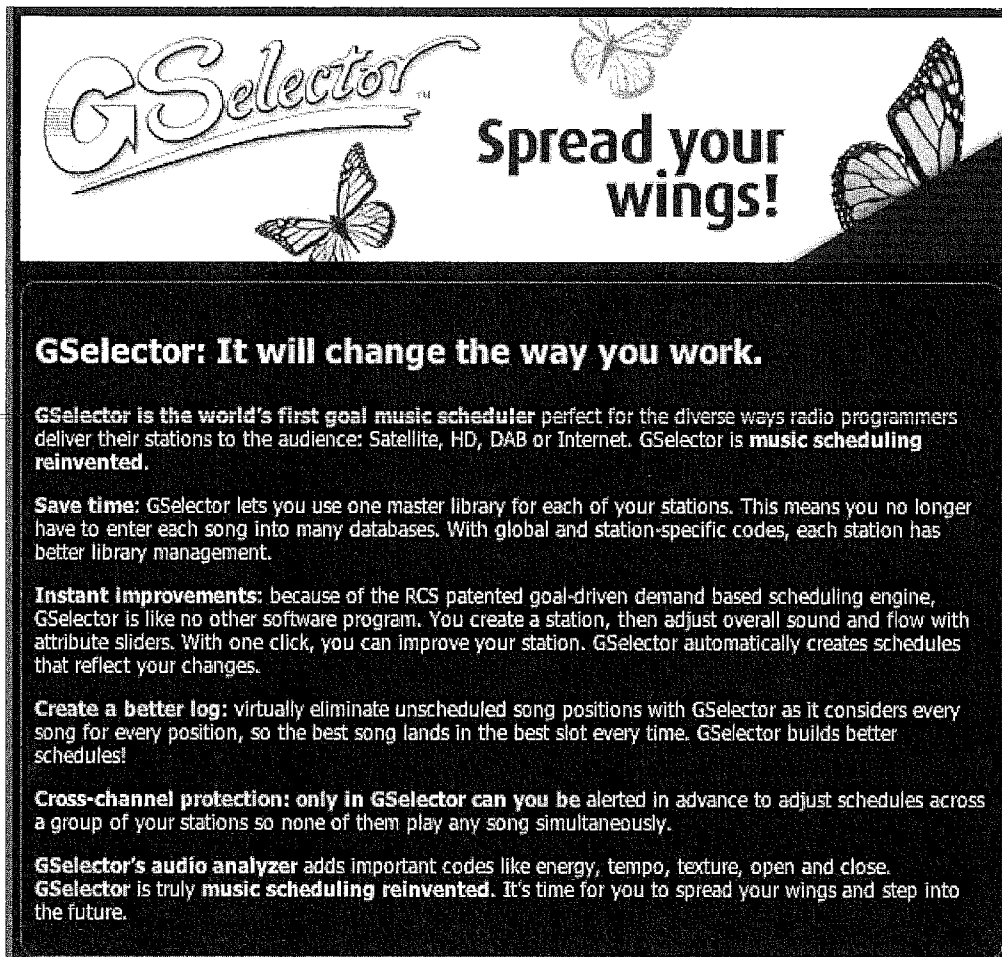
by programmers has soared. Among others providing computerized music systems are Halper and Associates, Jefferson Pilot Data Systems, and Columbine Systems. Also, some journals, such as *Billboard* and *Radio and Records*, provide up-to-date computerized music research on new singles and albums to assist station programmers.

In light of the extensive reliance on computers, Jon Lutes and Shane Media caution that "Music scheduling involves more than punching a few buttons on your computer keyboard. It helps to have a basic understanding of how the computer actually operates and what the particular software you are using will and will not do."

At those radio stations where the music director's job is less administrative and more directorial, this individual will actually audition and select what songs are to be designated for airplay. However, the music director makes decisions based on criteria established by the station's programmer.

Obviously, a music director must work within the station's prescribed format. If the PD feels that a particular song does not fit the station's sound, he will direct the music director to remove the cut from rotation. Since the PD and music director work closely together, this seldom occurs.

A song's rotation usually is relative to its position on national and local record sales charts. For instance, songs that enjoy top ranking, say those in the Top 10, will get the most airplay on hit-oriented stations. When songs descend the charts, their rotation decreases proportionately. Former chart toppers are then assigned another rotation configuration that initially may result in one-tenth of their former airplay, and eventually even less. PDs and music directors derive information pertaining to a record's popularity from various trade journals, such as *Billboard*, *Radio and Records*, and *Monday Morning Replay*, as well as listener surveys, area record store sales, and numerous other

FIGURE 3.22
A host of computerized music programming services is used by the stations.
Courtesy RCS.

FIGURE 3.23
Computerized
logging has made
station programming
even more exacting
a science. Courtesy
WIZN-FM.

```
**REMEMBER: FORWARD MOMENTUM!! WHY SHOULD THE LISTENER KEEP LISTENING?**

                         *********************************
                         *              WIZN-FM          *
                         * 10 AM  Wednesday  10-23-02   *
                         *********************************
     A R T I S T/A L B U M             TITLE                    RUNTIME  YR   CAT
     ===============================================================================

     ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
     00:00   LEGAL I.D.                                    5025   :08
     ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
     STEVE MILLER BAND              TAKE THE MONEY AND RUN                 E/ 2:51
     FLY LIKE AN EAGLE
     ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
     02:59   SHOTGUN                                       5050   :05
     ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
     TOM PETTY                      RUNNING DOWN A DREAM                   F/ 4:23
     FULL MOON FEVER                      54.00
     ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
     07:27   SPEED BREAK                                   5605   :08
     ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
     J. GEILS BAND                  MUST OF GOT LOST                       D/ 6:34
     LIVE BLOW YOUR FACE OUT (ON CD)      50.00
     ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
     14:09   POSITIONER                                    5035   :08
     ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
     PRETENDERS                     BRASS IN POCKET(I'M SPECI              E/ 3:01
     THE PRETENDERS                       50.00
     ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
     17:18   SHOTGUN                                       5050   :05
     ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
     HEART                          CRAZY ON YOU                           D/ 4:54
     DREAMBOAT ANNIE                      69.00
     ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
     22:17   BOTTOM HOUR                                   5016   :08
     ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
     CLASH                          TRAIN IN VAIN                          E/ 3:13
     LONDON CALLING                       43.00
     ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
     25:38   BREAK ONE/BACKSELL/LIVE PROMO                 5606  1:00
     ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
     ERIC CLAPTON                   FOREVER MAN                            F/ 3:12
     BEHIND THE SUN
     ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
     29:50   BOTTOM HOUR                                   5016   :08
     ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
     MANFRED MANN'S EARTH BAND      BLINDED BY THE LIGHT                   E/ 7:07
     HIGHS OF 70'S CD                     80.00
     ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
     37:05   BREAK TWO/PRE-SELL 10-IN-A-ROW                5607  1:00
     ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
     DEEP PURPLE                    HUSH                                   D/ 4:26
     WHEN WE ROCK WE ROCK, WHEN WE ROLL   49.00
     ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
     42:31   SHOTGUN                                       5050   :05
     ----------------------------------------------------------------------------
```

sources. Stations that do not program from the current charts compose their playlists of songs that were popular in years gone by. In addition, these stations often remix current hit songs to make them adaptable to their more conservative sound. While Easy Listening stations do not air popular rock songs, they do air softened versions by other artists, usually large orchestras. Critics of this technique accuse the producers of lobotomizing songs to bring them into the fold. In nonhit formats, there are no "power-rotation" categories or hit positioning schemata; a song's rotation tends to be more random, although program wheels are used.

On the CHR front, Shane notes that "There's a major change in the way charts are constructed. The original *Billboard* Hot 100 chart was based substantially on record sales. *The Gavin Report* and other "tipsheets" used reports from radio station music directors who fed information on the positions on their own local charts, some validated by record sales and requests – some not."

"When *R&R* was launched in 1974, its charts were also compiled from reports from radio station programmers. *R&R*, however, mixed industry news and commentary to create a niche for itself as the most important of the music trade publications in the eyes of the music (record)

industry. Because the charts were based on verbal reports from local stations, the system was too easily manipulated by a station programmer who might report play but not actually play the song. This practice was known as a "paper add" because the record was added to the playlist only on paper and did not receive airplay. In 1989, *Billboard* became the first trade publication to track radio airplay as it happened and to count "spins," or plays, in compiling charts. *Billboard* and its companion publication, *Airplay Monitor*, used Broadcast Data Systems (BDS) to electronically detect airplay by matching segments of songs called "footprints" to actual play on stations monitored over the air. The practice of paper adds decreased because a song reported to *R&R* could be tracked in BDS detections. In mid-1999 both *R&R* and *The Gavin Report* (now defunct) began using charts based on airplay detection with information compiled by MediaBase, a monitoring service owned by Premiere Radio Networks."

Constructing a station playlist is the single most important duty of the music programmer. What to play, when to play it, and how often are some of the key questions confronting this individual. The music director relies on a number of sources, both internal and external, to provide the answers but also must cultivate an ear for the kind of sound the station is after. Some people are blessed with an almost innate capacity to detect a hit, but most must develop this skill over a period of time.

With the advent of station Web site streaming, the relationship between the
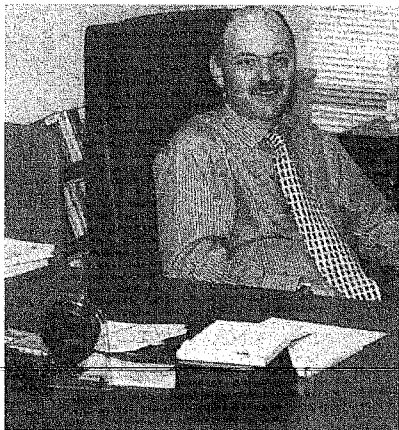
Frank Bell

Advice to Programmers

FIGURE 3.24
Frank Bell.

Rule 1: *Follow the listeners, not the format.* So many people in radio get caught up in terms like *CHR, New AC, Alternative,* and *AAA* that they lose track of their goal: finding listeners.

Consumers of radio think in terms of "what I like" and "what I don't like." By researching your listeners' tastes and giving them what they want (as opposed to what fits the industry's definition of what they should have), you'll maximize your chances for success.

Rule 2: *Think outside in, not inside out.* The fact that one company may now own several stations in a market and is capable, for example, of skewing one FM toward younger females and the other toward older females does not mean that you will automatically "dominate females."

The only reality that counts is that of the listener. If listeners feel your station serves a meaningful purpose for them, they will happily cast their Arbitron vote in your favor. If they believe you are simply duplicating what is already available elsewhere on the dial, you will be doomed to ratings obscurity.

Rule 3: *Early to bed, early to rise, Advertise, Advertise, Advertise.* In the Arbitron game of unaided recall, the dominant issue is Top-of-Mindness.

The best way to get that is through advertising your name and your station's benefits on your own air and on any other medium you can afford. Just for fun, here's a diagram I sometimes use to show first-time PDs the various factors that influence their station's ratings:

$$\frac{X - Y}{A} \times B = \text{Your Ratings}$$

X is what your station does.
Y is what your direct competitors do.
A represents "environmental" factors in the market, such as what's on TV during the survey, riots, floods, earthquakes, and (in some cases) the OJ trial.
B is what the rating service does. In the case of Arbitron, this would include the response rate, editing procedures, and distribution of diaries by race, age, and sex.

The most important thing to understand is that as PD, the only part of the equation you can control is X. Do the best you can to keep your station sounding compelling, entertaining, and focused on its target audience, and don't get an ulcer over those elements you can't control.

medium and the recording industry got more contentious in the 2000s. The recording industry insisted on greater compensation for its licensed music when a station offered songs via cyberspace, while broadcasters argued that their Web site music streaming was simply an extension of their on-air signal, which was already under a fee schedule. The recording industry feared Web site users would burn or download music free of charge from the station sites, and it anticipated this to be a major issue as the medium transitioned to digital. As of this writing, progress had been made in resolving this issue.

The PD and the FCC

The government is especially interested in the way a station conducts itself on the air. For instance, the PD makes certain that his or her station is properly identified once an hour, as close to the top of the hour as possible. The ID must include the station's call letters and the town in which it has been authorized to broadcast. Failure to properly identify the station is a violation of FCC rules.

Other on-air rules that the PD must address have to do with program content and certain types of features. For example, profane language, obscenity, sex- and drug-related statements, and even innuendos in announcements, conversations, or music lyrics jeopardize the station's license. The FCC prohibits indecent and profane broadcasts, and the cost for violating this rule can cost the station dearly. For example, in 2006, the Commission raised the maximum charge for offenses in this category from $32,500–$325,000 per violation. Fines have been on a dramatic rise for infractions surrounding on-air indecency since the early 2000s as the result of some highly publicized incidents perpetrated by radio personalities like Bubba the Love Sponge, Opie & Anthony, and Howard Stern (now beyond the reach of these rules on satellite radio).

Political messages and station editorials are carefully scrutinized by the programmer. On-air contests and promotions must not resemble lotteries in which the audience must invest to win. A station that gets something in return for awarding prizes is subject to punitive actions. Neither the deejays, PD, music director, nor anyone associated with the station may receive payment for plugging a song or album on the air. This constitutes "payola" or "plugola" and was the cause of great industry upheaval in the late 1950s. Today, PDs and station managers continue to be particularly careful to guard against any recurrence, although there have been charges that such practices still exist.

In fact, in the mid-2000s, the FCC began a formal investigation into payola allegations against four major radio groups: CBS Radio, Clear Channel, Entercom, and Citadel. It was the largest federal inquiry since the payola scandals prompted congressional hearings in 1960. Indeed, PDs must be vigilant of this illegal practice, which seems impervious to eradication.

The PD must monitor both commercial and noncommercial messages to ensure that no false, misleading, or deceptive statements are aired, something the FCC staunchly opposes. This includes any distortion of the station's ratings survey results. A station that is not number one and claims to be is lying to the public as far as the FCC is concerned, and such behavior is not condoned.

FIGURE 3.25
A station's music library in a box.
Courtesy WIZN-FM.
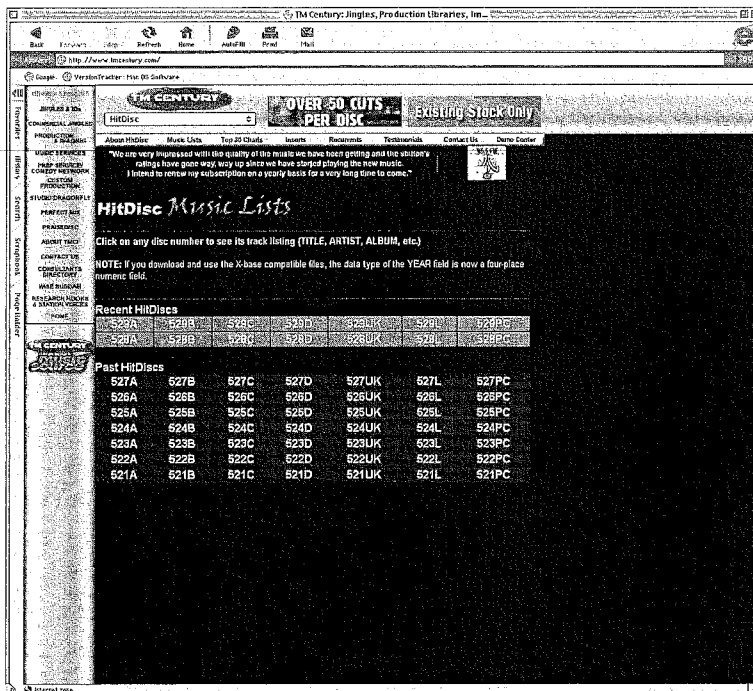
License renewal programming promises must be addressed by the PD. The proportion of nonentertainment programming, such as news and public affairs features, pledged in the station's renewal application must be adhered to, even though such requirements have been all but eliminated. A promise is a promise. If a station claims that it will do something, it must abide by its word.

The PD helps maintain the station's Emergency Alert System (EAS), making certain that proper announcements are made on the air and that the EAS checklist containing an authenticator card is placed in the control room area. PDs also instruct personnel in the proper procedures used when conducting on-air telephone conversations to guarantee that the rights of callers are not violated.

The station log (which ultimately is the chief engineer's responsibility) and program log (no longer required by the FCC but maintained by most stations anyway) are examined by the PD for accuracy, and he or she also must see to it that operators have permits and that they are posted in the on-air studio. In addition, the station manager may assign the PD the responsibility for maintaining the station's Public File. If so, the PD must be fully aware of what the file is required to contain. The FCC and many broadcast associations will provide station operators with a Public File checklist upon request. This information is available in the *Code of Federal Regulations* (73.3526) as well.

Additional programming areas of interest to the FCC include procedures governing rebroadcasts, simulcasts, and subcarrier activities. The PD also must be aware that the government is keenly interested in employment practices. The programmer, station manager, and other department heads are under obligation to familiarize themselves with equal employment opportunity (EEO) and affirmative action rules. An annual employment report must be sent to the FCC.

The preceding is only a partial listing of the concerns set forth by the government relative to the PD's position. For a more comprehensive assessment, refer to the CFR appendix at the end of Chapter 2.

The PD and Upper Management

The pressures of the PD's position should be apparent by now. The station or cluster programmer knows well that his or her job entails satisfying the desires of many – the audience, government, air staff, and, of course, management. The relationship between the PD and the station or corporation's upper echelon is not always serene or without incident. Although their alliance is usually mutually fulfilling and productive, difficulties can and do occur when philosophies or practices clash. "Most inhibiting and detrimental to the PD is the GM who lacks a broad base of experience but imposes his opinions on you anyway. The guy who has come up through sales and has never spent a minute in the studio can be a real thorn in the side. Without a thorough knowledge of programming, management should rely on the expertise of that person hired who does. I don't mean, 'Hey, GM, get out of the way!' what I'm saying is, don't impose programming ideas and policies without at least conferring with that individual who ends up taking the heat if the air product fails to bring in the listeners," says Dick Fatherly.

Station manager Chuck Ducoty contends that managers can enhance as well as inhibit the programmer's style. "I've worked for some managers who give their PDs a great deal of space and others who attempt to control every aspect of programming. From the station manager's perspective, I think the key to a good experience with those who work for you is to find excellent people from the start and then have enough confidence in your judgment to let them do their job with minimal interference. Breathing down the neck of the PD is just going to create tension and resentment."

Programmer Peter Falconi believes that both the PD and the manager should make a sincere effort to get to know and understand one another. "You have to be on the same wavelength, and there has to be an

excellent line of communication. When a manager has confidence and trust in his PD, he'll generally let him run with the ball. It's a two-way street. Most problems can be resolved when there is honesty and openness."

Programmer Andy Bloom offers this observation: "Great upper management hires the best players, gives them the tools to do their job, and then leaves them alone. A winning formula."

An adversarial situation between the station's PD and upper management does not have to exist. The station that cultivates an atmosphere of cooperation and mutual respect seldom becomes embroiled in skirmishes that deplete energy – energy better spent raising revenues and ratings.

FIGURE 3.27
Many stations ultraniche (position) their programming. Courtesy WPAT.

WPAT 930 AM Metro NY	
****ALL JEWISH ALL THURSDAY NIGHT****	
10:00–10:30 PM	**INNER MEANING WITH KIM CHEROVSKY.** Interviews on Judaism and spirituality with special guest Rabbi Jacob Jungreis
10:30–11:00 PM	**THE TOP TEN JEWISH MUSIC COUNTDOWN.** FAVORITE Jewish music of the week.
11:00–12:00 AM	**TALKLINE WITH ZEV BRENNER.** *AMERICA'S LEADING JEWISH PROGRAM. LIVE CALL IN WITH NEWSMAKER GUESTS AND CELEBRITIES MAKING HEADLINES IN THE JEWISH WORLD.*
12:00–12:30 PM	**BETWEEN THE LINES: THE TORAH CODES.** With Dr. Robert Wolf and Joel Gallis.
12:30–2:00 AM	**THE VOICE OF JERUSALEM WITH AVI. THE LATEST NEWS, SHMOOZ, AND CONTESTS LIVE FROM ISRAEL.**
2:00–3:00 AM	**THE TED SMITH SHOW.** Interview show on health and social issues.
3:00–4:30 AM	**THE TOP TEN JEWISH MUSIC COUNTDOWN.**
4:30–5:00 AM	**LIVE FROM ISRAEL.** The latest up to date news from Israel with Dov Shurin.

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

1. The AC format features recent (since the 1970s) and current pop standards. It appeals to the 25–49-year age group, which attracts advertisers. It often utilizes music sweeps and clustered commercials. AC has spawned a variety of subgenres, including Adult Hits, Adult Standards, and iPod imitators Jack and Mike.

2. CHR features current, fast-selling hits from the Top 40. It targets teens, broadcasts minimal news, and is very promotion/contest oriented. Some CHRs have redirected their playlists to create a Modern Hit or Churban sound.

3. Country is the fastest growing format since the 1970s. More prevalent in the South and Midwest, it attracts a broad age group and offers a variety of subformats.

4. Easy Listening/Smooth Jazz stations evolved from the Beautiful Music stations of the 1960s and 1970s. Featuring mostly instrumentals and minimal talk, many stations have become automated and use prepackaged programming from syndicators. The primary audience is over age 50. Its following has dwindled in recent years owing to myriad softer AC formats.

CAPITAL CITIES/ABC, INC.
STATEMENT
With Respect To Payola

During the term of my employment, neither I nor my spouse, child or other member of my household has accepted, solicited or agreed to accept any money, service, gift, or favor or other thing of value whatsoever from any person which I knew or had any reason to believe was intended to influence any decision by me as to matters to be broadcast. Furthermore, neither I nor my spouse, child or other member of my household has received any social courtesy or gift in a single year having a value exceeding $50.00 from any person, firm or institution involved in any of the following activities:

television or motion picture production, syndication, or distribution;

record manufacturing or distributing;

music publishing;

the creation, production, performance, distribution, manufacture or exploitation of music, films, tapes, recordings, electrical transcriptions, or any live or recorded programming;

the ownership or exploitation of any musical, dramatic, literary or related copyright or performance right;

radio or television broadcasting (including closed circuit, theatre or pay television, cable, SMATV, MMDS and DBS);

book, newspaper or periodical publishing;

advertising and advertising services

concerts and nightclubs;

performers, performing groups, professional sports teams, or any other potential supplier of radio or television program material;

public relations firms, consulting firms, or other firms or individuals that deal in, represent or promote any of the above.

Furthermore, I have not participated in considering, selecting or preparing for broadcast any program material which had as its subject, or which could in any way materially affect, any business concern in which I, or my spouse, child or other member of my household, held a business or financial interest (including any position as officer, director or employee), except those reported to my department head and also listed below.

I have read and understand the provisions of Sections 317 and 507 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, copies of which are attached to this statement, and the memorandum on Payola and Conflicts of Interest circulated by Capital Cities/ABC, Inc. and agree to abide by them.

Name *Michael Napolitano*   Position *Disc - Jockey*

Business Address _____

Signature *Michael Napolitano*   Date *10-19-89*

FIGURE 3.28
Payola statement signed by a station employee. Courtesy Michael Napolitano and Capital Cities/ABC, Inc.

5. Rock or AOR stations began in the mid-1960s to counter Top 40 stations. They featured music sweeps with a large airplay library, and they played rock album cuts. News was minimal. The format attracted a predominantly male audience aged 18–34. Today, these stations are usually referred to simply as Rock stations.

6. All-News stations rotate time blocks of local, regional, and national news and features to avoid repetition. The format requires three to four times the staff and budget of most music operations.

7. All-Talk combines discussion and call-in shows. It is primarily a medium- and major-market format. Like All-News, All-Talk is mostly found on AM (and is the domain of conservative talkers) but is now finding a home on the FM band. All-Sports has boosted the nonmusic format's numbers and now is offered by several networks.

8. The Nostalgia playlist emphasizes popular tunes from the 1940s and prerock 1950s, presenting its music in sweeps with a relatively low deejay profile.

9. The Oldies playlist includes hits between the 1950s and 1960s, relying on fine air personalities. Commercials are placed randomly and songs are spaced to allow deejay patter.

10. Classic Rock concentrates on tunes once primarily featured by AOR stations. Meanwhile, Classic Hit stations fill the gap between Oldies and CHR outlets with playlists that draw from 1970s' and 1980s' Top 40 charts.

11. UC is the "melting pot" format, attracting a heterogeneous audience. Its upbeat, danceable sound, and hip, friendly deejays attract the 18–34-year age group. Contests and promotions are important.

12. Classical commercial outlets are few, but they have a loyal audience. Primarily an FM format appealing to a higher income, college-educated (upscale, 25–49 years old) audience, Classical features a conservative, straightforward air sound.

13. Religious stations are most prevalent on the AM band. Religious broadcasters usually approach programming in one of two ways.

FIGURE 3.29
Rules for success.
Courtesy Shane
Media.

One includes music as a primary part of its presentation, whereas the other does not.

14. Ethnic stations serve the listening needs of minority groups. Black and Hispanic listeners constitute the largest ethnic audiences.

15. FS stations (formerly MOR) rely on the strength of air personalities and features. Mostly an AM format, FS attempts to be all things to all people, attracting an over-40 audience.

16. Niche formats, like All-Children, Business, and Tourist Radio, are popping up all over the dial as the listening audience becomes more diffused and interest grows in HD^2 stations.

17. Public and noncommercial stations typically employ a block format promoting diversity rather than a single form of programming.

18. PDs are hired to fit whatever format the station management has selected. They are chosen primarily for their experience, although education level is important.

19. The PD is responsible for everything that is aired. Second in responsibility to the general manager (except in a cluster arrangement with a director of operations), the PD establishes programming and format policy; hires and supervises on-air, music, and production personnel; handles the programming budget; develops promotions; monitors the station and its competitors and assesses research; is accountable for news, public affairs, and sports features; and may even pull an airshift.

20. The PD's effectiveness is measured by ratings in large markets and by sales in smaller markets.

21. The PD determines the content of each sound hour, utilizing program clocks to ensure that each element – commercial, news, promo, weather, music, and so on – is strategically located to enhance flow and optimize impact. Even News/Talk stations need program clocks.

22. PDs must adjust programming to the lifestyle activities of the target audience. They must develop a feel for the area in which the station is located, as well as an understanding of survey information and research data.

▣ tactics:programming

Programming Report from Shane Media Services

PROGRAM DIRECTOR - TEN TACTICS FOR SUCCESS

There are no schools to attend to become a Program Director. Many people fall into the job without a clue as to what the job really entails. Here are 10 basic points for PD success:

1. Show up. Not just for work. Show up at 2AM and visit with the overnight jock. Get to know that person in their time zone. Show up at remotes. Know how your airstaff and promotions people put on a show. Be visible both in and out of the station.

2. Listen up. You can't listen 24 hours a day, but you can tape when you must sleep. Tape the competition when you're monitoring your own shop. Don't listen as a programmer all the time. Try to slip into the attitude of your average listener to determine how well your station is delivering the format and serving your town.

3. Clean up. If you notice something wrong, why wait to make an adjustment? Eliminate small problems before they become large ones.

4. Take notes. Who's doing what in your town? Be aware of the "big picture" in your market, like an air traffic controller. If you need to make an instant adjustment, you'll be prepared.

5. Make notes. How many times have you had a brilliant idea in the middle of the night, and forgotten it by morning? Keep a note pad and pencil or mini recorder by your bed, in your car, wherever you go. A simple phrase or word jotted down quickly can bring back that concept when you've got time to develop the idea.

6. Leave notes. We are in the business of communicating, yet often do a poor job of getting a message from one end of the station to the other. Leave notes on the music log, a discrepancy sheet, a slip of paper in the phone message slot. Get in the habit of noting your thoughts to others, and watch your effectiveness as a manager improve.

23. Finally, the PD must ensure that the station adheres to all FCC regulations pertaining to programming practices, anticipating problems before they occur. Indecent programming has resulted in huge fines, so PDs must be especially vigilant in this area.

24. Payola (plugola) has plagued the medium since the 1950s and continues to this day. The illegal pay-for-play practice requires careful monitoring by the station's PD and manager to ensure it does not occur. Large fines have been dealt to those stations violating the FCC laws governing this practice.

25. Web sites, podcasts, and blogs represent a way to strengthen a station's ties to its audience.

FIGURE 3.30
Many services are available to radio programmers. Courtesy McVay Media.

FIGURE 3.31
News release. In the global world, there is a need for global radio news. Courtesy Sky News.

PRESS RELEASE
DATE:25th March 2002 (Embargo)

Global Radio News Ltd. Announces Distribution Deal With Sky News Radio

Sky News Radio audio programme content will be available for distribution to radio stations outside the UK and South Africa via the Global Radio News network from Monday 25th March 2002.

Stations will be able to browse correspondent reports and a wide variety of material from Sky News Radio through the website (www.globalradionews.com) on a story-by-story basis. There is no subscription obligation and editors can use material that will suit their listener demographic. Stations just pay for what they use.

Henry Peirse, Director of Global Radio News Ltd. says 'this is an exciting development; stations now have the option to pick from Global Radio News correspondent reports and Sky News stories. The two complement each other well providing a comprehensive and detailed list of stories for our affiliates'.

Andy Ivy, Editor of Sky News Radio says 'the quality of our service is proving a big hit with radio newsrooms in the UK and Global Radio News allows us to make our audio available to stations worldwide.'

Global Radio News is a web-based audio content agency and distribution service with a network of more than 400 correspondents worldwide.

Sky News Radio is a division of Sky News. A dedicated team of radio journalists provides a news service to around 30 UK radio stations including talkSPORT, the Wireless Group and Chrysalis Radio, making it the second biggest supplier of national and international news to commercial radio stations in the UK.
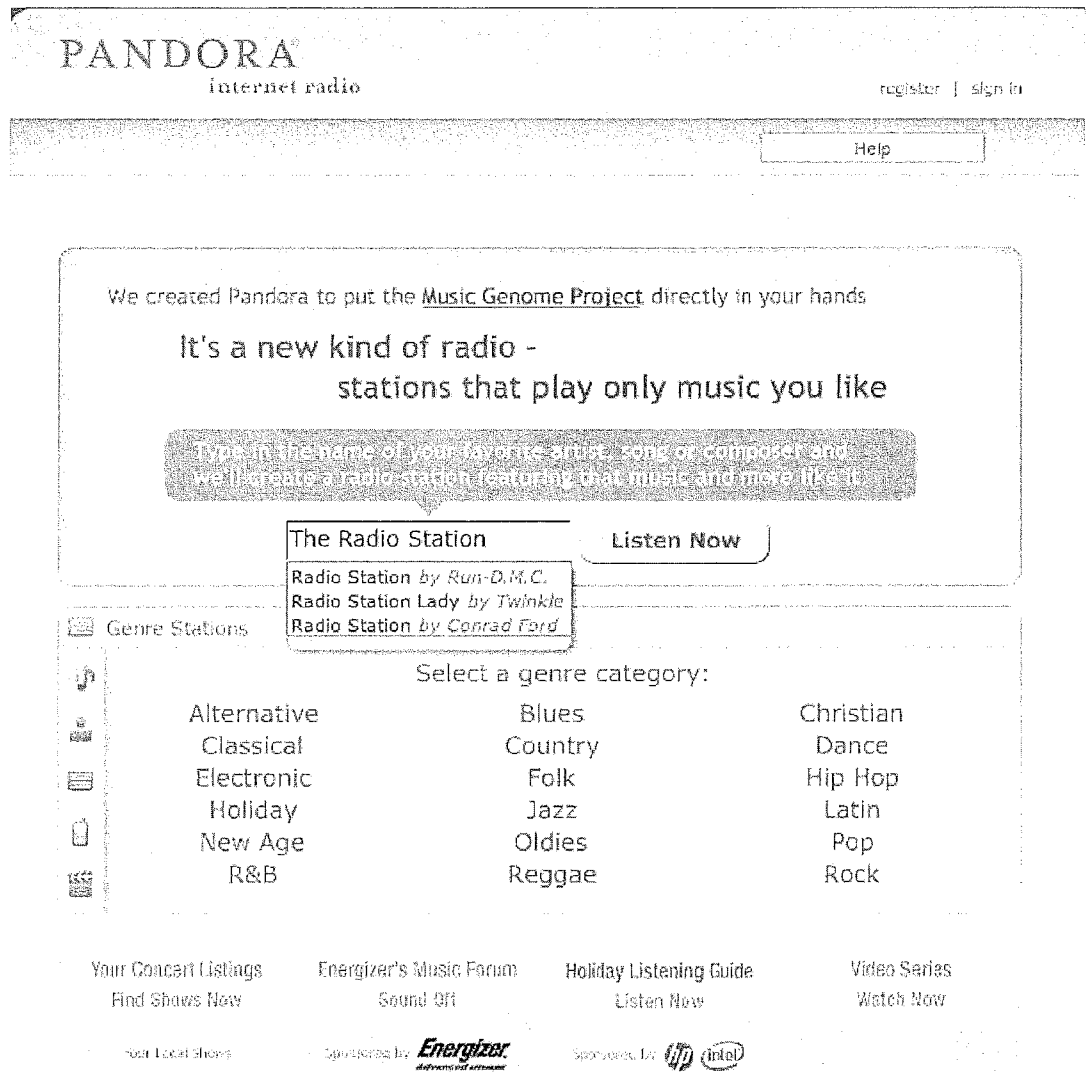
Please contact: Henry Peirse at Global Radio News Ltd. – 020 7242 9192 or henry@globalradionews.com or Andy Ivy at Sky News Radio – 020 7705 3000 or andy.ivy@bskyb.com.

Note to editors:

Pictures of the Sky News Radio newsroom are available on Image Net or from the Sky Stills department on 020 7800 4271. Please contact Global Radio News Ltd. on 020 7242 9192 for pictures.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ON OR AFTER 25th MARCH 2002

FIGURE 3.32
A source for music
radio on the Internet.
Courtesy Pandora.

PANDORA
internet radio

register | sign in

Help

We created Pandora to put the Music Genome Project directly in your hands

It's a new kind of radio -
stations that play only music you like

Type in the name of your favorite artist, song or composer and
we'll create a radio station featuring that music and more like it.

| The Radio Station | Listen Now |

Radio Station *by Run-D.M.C.*
Radio Station Lady *by Twinkle*
Radio Station *by Conrad Ford*

Genre Stations

Select a genre category:

Alternative	Blues	Christian
Classical	Country	Dance
Electronic	Folk	Hip Hop
Holiday	Jazz	Latin
New Age	Oldies	Pop
R&B	Reggae	Rock

| Your Concert Listings | Energizer's Music Forum | Holiday Listening Guide | Video Series |
| Find Shows Now | Sound Off | Listen Now | Watch Now |

Your Local Shows   Sponsored by *Energizer*   Sponsored by (hp) (intel)

26. Stations must pay an annual music-licensing fee to ASCAP, BMI, or SESAC.

27. In the 2000s, the recording industry required that radio stations streaming music on their Web sites had to compensate it for such use.
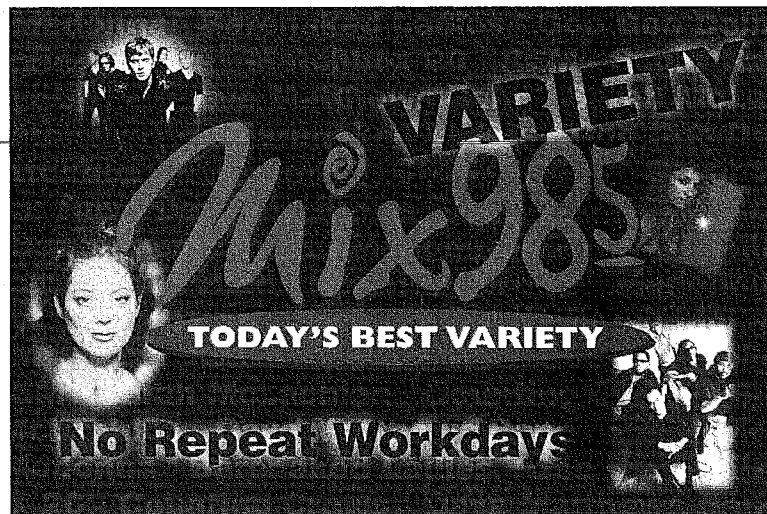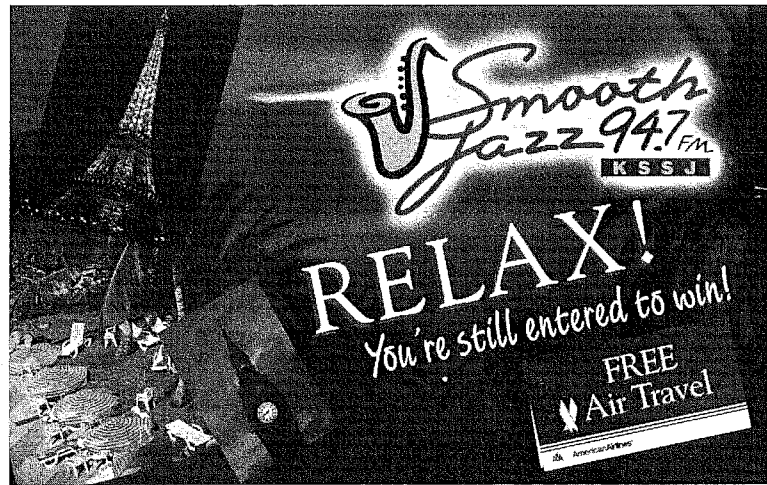

FIGURE 3.33
Radio illustrates its music format variety.
Courtesy Mix 98.5, WDEZ-FM, and KSSJ-FM.

Donald Fishman

Copyright and the Broadcast Industry

FIGURE 3.34
Donald Fishman.

One of the least discussed aspects of the broadcast industry is the role of copyright in broadcast decision making. Copyright is the area of law that protects the owner of artistic, creative, and intellectual works from unauthorized use by a second party absent the payment of a fee.

There are many examples of the type of payment required for the use of a creative work. For instance, if a radio station wants to play a song by Aerosmith, that station must pay a royalty to the owner of the musical copyright. Meanwhile, if a UHF television station wants to schedule 26 episodes of *Will and Grace*, it must pay a royalty to the syndication company that controls the right to distribute copies of the popular television comedy.

Music is a very popular area for copyright fees. Most musicians do not handle the paperwork and fee collection activities for their music. Instead, they assign the rights to a copyright clearinghouse. For broadcasters, there are three important music clearinghouses. The oldest of the clearinghouses is the ASCAP. ASCAP has satellite offices near most major cities, and it monitors radio and television station logs, visits night clubs and universities, and sells site licenses to businesses that want to play music,

such as fitness gyms and restaurants. The second most prominent music clearinghouse is BMI. BMI started in the late 1940s when ASCAP substantially raised the royalty rates for music played at radio stations. Many of the radio stations refused to pay the higher rates, and they began to sign up independent recording artists who would get exclusive play on their stations. Several of the early legends of Rock 'n' Roll, such as Elvis, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Little Richard, received extensive airtime on BMI-affiliated stations due to the feud between BMI and ASCAP. The third music clearinghouse is the SESAC. A few years ago, Bob Dylan signed an agreement with SESAC for an advance of several million dollars. SESAC will handle the authorized use of Dylan's music in European and enumerated other markets. SESAC is betting that future revenues from Dylan's music will be sufficient to offset the huge advance paid to Dylan in current dollars.

Paul Goldstein is correct: Copyright is primarily about money, and it frequently involves decision making and speculation about what creative works will provide the optimal return on an investment. The Beatles sold the rights to their most well-known music from the 1960s, seriously misjudging how popular that music would be 45 years after its release. Neil Sedaka, a prominent 1950s rock musician, sold the copyrights to his music shortly after the British musical invasion during the mid-1960s. Once Sedaka discovered that there was a lucrative market for music nostalgia and oldies concerts, the first thing he did was to repurchase the copyrights to his own songs.

Apart from money, there is a very sound philosophical rationale for maintaining a system of copyrights. Copyright laws are designed to create an incentive for authors and innovators to produce artistic, creative, and intellectual works. There is a benefit in this system for the individual as well as for society at large. For instance, if you

took a year off to produce and write a radio documentary, you would forgo a year's income and incur expenses to complete the desired project. If someone else could simply copy your work and sell it at a cheaper price because he or she had no major costs associated with creating the work, it is unlikely that any individual would write a second screenplay, book, or album. And society would be worse off because it would no longer be the beneficiary of these creative works from talented individuals.

In a word, copyright laws are designed to create incentives for individuals to produce creative works and to protect these innovators against unauthorized use of their work. The high prices that creators are able to charge is the bargain society strikes to obtain a second, third, and fourth work from creative individuals. A copyright has limitations: it lasts the life of an author plus 70 years, or in the case of a work-for-hire (something assigned to an independent contractor), 95 years. The work then goes into the public domain to be used by anyone without a fee, such as the plays of Shakespeare or the music of Beethoven.

Until recently, copyright issues did not generate interest among the general public. These questions involve a relationship between producers of creative works and the users of these materials. Moreover, the distribution of information is an expensive process undertaken primarily by large organizations that anticipate profiting from the material. In fact, it is fair to characterize the traditional copyright relationship as one between owners of copyright materials and users who typically are big media companies or major distributors.

However, this owner-user relationship has been undermined by modern technology. The development of the Internet and the digitization of intellectual property make it easier for the average person to make copies of creative works with relative ease. No special expertise is needed, and the works are verbatim copies reproduced at relatively low costs.

The development of the Internet is likely to have major implications for traditional broadcast stations and broadcasting activities. Among these developments are as follows:

- **Music File Sharing**: The use of MP3 files to exchange music has become one of the most popular activities of the millennial decade. It has been troublesome to record companies, and it will likely affect the number of listeners of traditional radio stations that continue to program music. If the record industry develops a pay-per-song satellite technology that allows anyone to listen to uninterrupted music via a radio receiver or even a cell phone, traditional radio stations are likely to see a decline of listenership. In addition, traditional radio stations have been exempted from a special performance royalty that goes directly to the performer; but web stations must still pay the fee. Understandably, there is substantial controversy over whether Internet webcasters, as they emerge, should be permitted to have a similar exemption like terrestrial stations from performance royalties.
- **Webcasting**: It is one of the growing areas of technological innovation. Radio maverick Howard Stern recently complained that traditional broadcast stations were using parts of his satellite program without paying any royalties. Stern, whose career has been associated with rebellion, not following the rules, and creative expression, wants to be compensated fairly for the work he creates. Moreover, it is likely that webcasters will want to receive royalties for the distribution of their work similar to terrestrial stations.
- **Digital Sampling**: One of the recurrent copyright issues over the past decade has been digital sampling. Sampling is taking sounds from a previous recording and placing them in a new musical work. For instance, the first note in the Beatles' well-known song, "A Hard Days Night," is so distinctive that it can be recognized as a standalone work. There are now several commercial digital samplers on the market. One of the most popular is the Fairlight CMI, or Computer Musical Instrument. It cost around $30,000 to purchase. Sampling has been especially popular within Hip-Hop music, and several Hip-Hop artists claim that sampling is a culturally expressive activity worthy of legal protection because of its rearrangements, remixes, and otherwise altered sequence and quality. However, in *Bridgeport Music v. Dimension Film* (2005), the Sixth Circuit ruled against sampling. The court stated: "Get a license or do not sample." Thus far, this is the most important ruling on sampling, but another case will surely confront the innovative applications of digital sampling. It is very unlikely that we have heard the last word on this issue.
- **Copyright Arbitration Royalty Tribune**: Although Congress is empowered to regulate the development of copyright, it has established a Royalty Tribune to set reasonable rates and to monitor emerging issues. At the same time, what rates to establish and how to handle webcasting remain unclear. Even setting reasonable rates for subscription services has proven to be difficult. In 1995, Congress passed the Digital Performance Rights in Sound Recording Act (DPRA). This act governs subscription digital audio transmissions or what we today recognize as XM Satellite Radio and Sirius. The Radio Industry Association of America (RIAA) and the organizations representing small webcasters have vigorously lobbied the Royalty Tribune for favorable rates. Interestingly, the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) has refused to provide support for the fledgling webcasters and the new digital media providers. Instead, the NAB has focused on maintaining the rights and interests of traditional, terrestrial broadcasters. One of the emerging problems in broadcasting is the need to incorporate all relevant parties in the decision-making process with respect to copyright issues so that small, digital webcasters and the large terrestrial broadcasters can address common issues that affect their organizations.
- **Convergence**: One of the most vexing issues facing broadcasters at the end of the millennial decade is the question of convergence. Convergence refers to the ability to use information and content from one medium to another medium. Among the by-products of convergence is the ability to watch your favorite television programs on the Internet, download current movies directly to your computer, and use a wireless telephone with a GPS tracking system capable of pinpointing the exact location of a caller. In a word, convergence is the blurring of the lines between and among the existing forms of media. Convergence will provide innovative services and the "new ways of interacting with society." Existing owners of copyrights are understandably troubled. In what will be a landmark case, Viacom has sued YouTube and Google for $1 billion dollars for infringement of its copyrights. Like earlier copyright suits dealing with *Napster* and *Grokster, Viacom v. YouTube and Google* is a landmark case about the payment of royalties when information is distributed on the Internet. Broadcasters are attempting to be proactive with the new digital technologies by asking for the insertion of a software code (or a broadcast flag system) that regulates digital television and digital audio receivers on what programs an end user will be able to download. This is a blocking procedure that will prevent an individual without authorization from downloading the information, including the downloading of content (such as music from a radio feed) directly to a cell phone. So far, Congress has not adopted this form of technological protection, but broadcasters are rightly concerned about the long-term impact of convergence on digital rights management (DRM) and what the effect of convergence will be on their revenues.

Donald Fishman teaches at Boston College and publishes in a host of areas, including copyright.

FIGURE 3.35
Promoting the arts
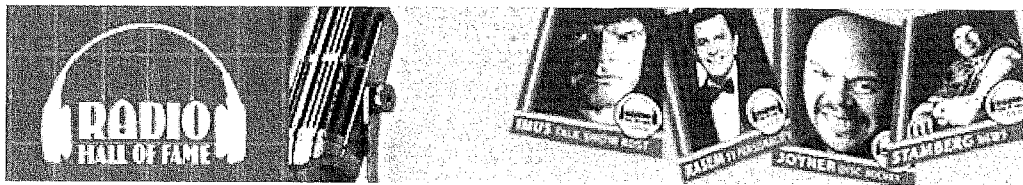on 1930s radio.
Courtesy Library of
Congress.
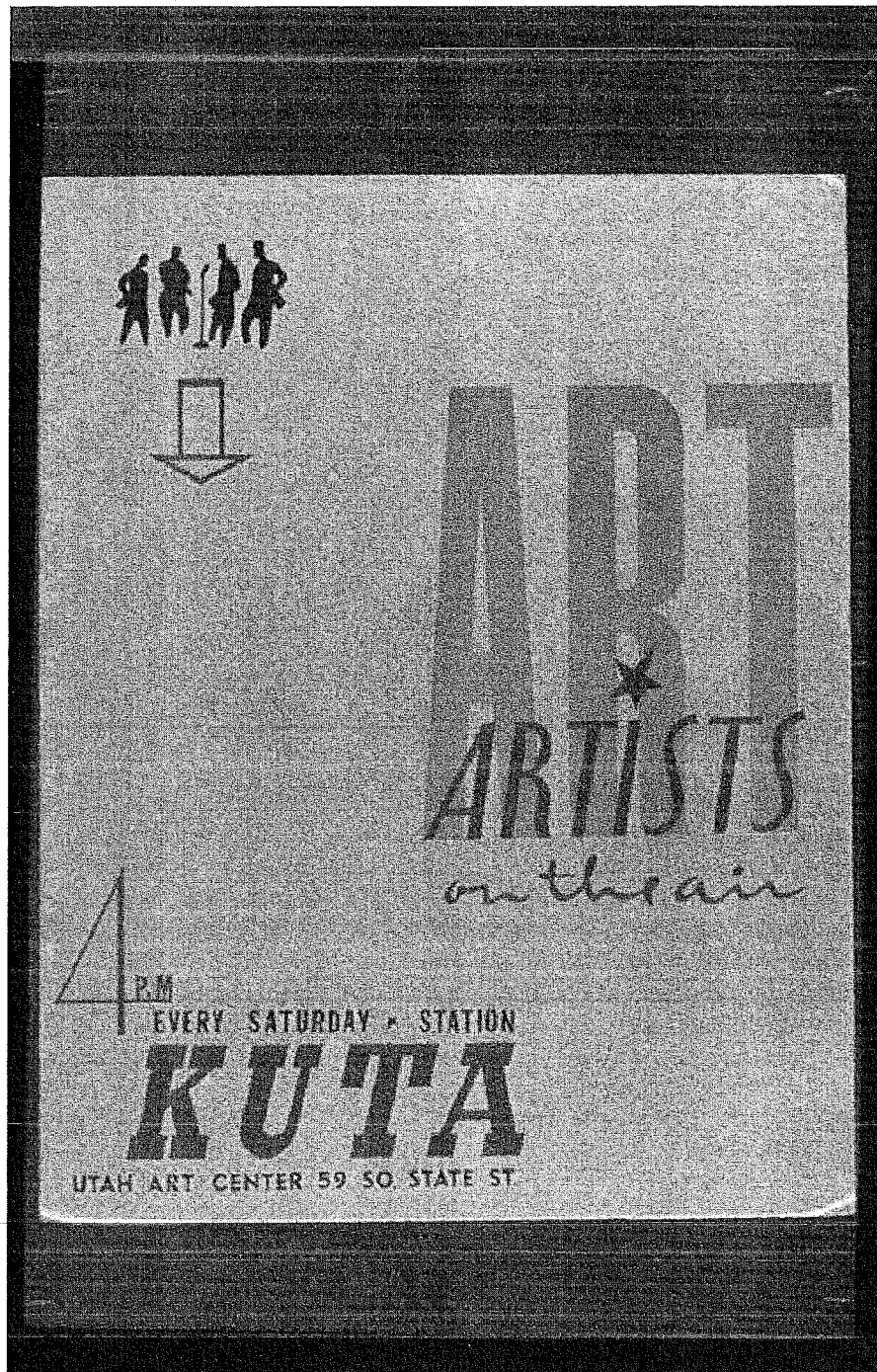
FIGURE 3.36
Radio honors
its legends.
Courtesy Museum
of Broadcast
Communications.

FIGURE 3.37
Protecting artists'
income and rights.
Courtesy Sound
Exchange.

soundexchange

SoundExchange is an independent, nonprofit performance rights
organization that is designated by the U.S. Copyright Office to collect and
distribute digital performance royalties for featured recording artists and
read more

I AM A :

Recording Artist or
Artist Representative

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SOUNDEXCHANGE

Copyright Owner

April 15, 2008
featured the award-winning "sustainable" offices of
SoundExchange in its April issue.

Producer

Service Provider

Latest News

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To: Steve
Fr: Jay
Re: WLKZ Programming

In listening over the past few days, but only to an hour or two total, it appears that much of the "big picture" programming philosophy has been lost. Perhaps Joe hasn't reviewed the old operation's manual. But some mechanical changes could dramatically help the sound of the station until the philosophy is recreated or changed.

1. One part-timer's mike was way too hot compared to the music. Music should always be dominant; personalities should never overwhelm it. The voice should be "in" the music.

2. Song titles were often announced. Oldies listeners know the song titles, and a lot more than our own people do about every record. There is also the danger that our mostly young talent will say something that reveals their age/lack of knowledge when talking about music. This is unnecessary talk and should be eliminated.

3. Conversely, there is almost no local content. This does not mean PSAs about bean suppers; this means the progress on the new building in downtown Wolfeboro, or the time the town Christmas lights will be turned on, for example. It takes more work than announcing a song title, but it's a much better reason to listen.

4. After the weather was given, the personality commented, "At least that's what it says here."

Weather is one of the principal reasons people choose a radio station. The forecast (or the Radar Weather franchise) is only as credible as we make it (the information all comes from the same place).

5. Talk between records. The music should never stop unless it has to (commercials). Stopping it down to talk, even for a liner that can be delivered over an intro, kills the momentum.

6. There are literally no prepromotes going into stop sets. The listener is not given any reasons to stick around (and forward momentum again stops).

7. There are recorded PSAs (a corporate no-no). The one I heard tells us to wear seat belts. Every media, every politician, every do-gooder is trying to tell other people what to do. Let's just be the medium that informs and entertains. Let's be an escape from all the other pointed fingers.

8. Joe signs off his show and also refers to his listener as "everybody." We should talk to only one listener at a time. And we should never end anything – keep it going, part of forward momentum. Talk about the guy coming up next.

9. Could you send Joe a memo or talk with him on a visit soon? I want to keep that station tight and happening; it's important.

10. Also, what do you think about adding some Beatles songs (over and above what we have) for the next month or so? And trading/giving away some anthology CDs? Thanks.

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