

**"Resolving" To Be a Better Programmer:
60 (60!) New Year's Resolutions for PDs and OMs**

By Michael O'Malley

December, 2007 Update

Mike's Notes: Eight years ago I wrote "25 New Year's Resolutions for PDs and OMs." It generated a lot of positive feedback and many said they referred to it throughout the year.

Each December since then, I've made it a tradition to add five new resolutions to the original list. This year's additions bring the total to 60.

Last year's resolutions had "relevance and differentiation" as a common theme. This year, with the many challenges and opportunities lie ahead, I've used "think differently" to tie these 2008 resolves together.

So while your listeners will be resolving to lose weight, improve personal growth and better their personal financial situation (the year's top three resolutions according to www.myGoals.com), you can set some new station and career goals of your own.

The complete list follows with the five newest resolutions first. Scan the whole list and pick a few that you think will have the biggest, most positive impact on your station and on your personal and professional life.

One last thought before you begin: being realistic is one of the keys to keeping resolutions. The reasons why fewer than 10% of the population keeps annual resolutions range from impractical to unattainable. So before you commit, review your list. Perhaps some of the items that have been on your past lists are simply are not realistically achievable and should be eliminated. Perhaps others need to be redefined.

Letting go of those things that are unrealistic and redefining success for other goals can help you concentrate your efforts on the most significant improvements you can make.

Have a wonderful and safe New Years, and a personally and professionally rewarding 2008! And as always during the upcoming year, I'd love to hear how the resolutions you selected worked out.

1. Use A Wide Angle Lens

I love to take pictures, particularly with different lenses. Using a wide angle lens lets you see things that a standard or zoom lens wouldn't catch.



Consider applying a wide angle lens analogy to your thinking. Widening your perspective will give you new ideas and viewpoints.

This year for example, thanks to the political races, there will be lots to read about the strategies and tactics of leaders and followers (Want a political eye-opener on strategies? Read [“The Way To Win”](#) by Mark Halperin and John F Harris). Consider any political applications might be right for your situation.

Read material from trend forecasters, marketers, and business leaders outside of our industry for different perspectives on handling competition and disruptive technologies.

Consider how On Demand, Cell Phones, iPods, wireless Broadband, Social Networks and the new definitions of ‘Radio’ are impacting our industry and where the opportunities they present lie.

For media consumption you can find everything from trend reports to analytics to future radio presentations like the Arbitron/Jacobs Media [“Bedroom Project”](#) and the report from Arbitron/Edison Research [“Infinite Dial.”](#) And be sure to follow information released on PPM listening behavior.

Lock some “study time” into your week just as you would a promotions meeting. Do it with other managers and share your collective insights and ideas. Make it more than a mental exercise by listing one or two potential actions at the end of each meeting. Some may be actionable immediately; others may need time to incubate.

A wide angle lens perspective will help you be proactive instead of reactive.

2. Have a “To NOT Do List”

In [“What Got You Here Won’t Get You There,”](#) Marshall Goldsmith recalls Peter Drucker saying, “We spend a lot of time teaching leaders what to do. We don’t spend enough time teaching leaders what to stop. Half the leaders I have met don’t need to learn what to do. They need to learn what to stop.”

Goldsmith goes on to say that in business, stopping behavior may be as crucial as everything we *do* combined - yet stopping rarely gets celebrated in the same way as the things we accomplish.

I took the challenge and created a “To Stop” list. For me, most of the items I listed were time-related. As I’m able to check off items on this list, I intend to celebrate them in the same way I would when I check off something I’ve completed on my “To Do” list.

What will be on your “To Stop” list?



3. Spend Time with Your Strategies and Tactics

Each is necessary for success. Strategic efforts may be slower to spot but ultimately yield a longer-lasting result. Tactics tend to deliver a more immediate, if fleeting, impact.

Examine your strategy first; then apply appropriate tactics.

Seth Godin posted this in his [blog](#):

The right strategy makes any tactic work better. The right strategy puts less pressure on executing your tactics perfectly...

If you are tired of hammering your head against the wall, if it feels like you never are good enough, or that you're working way too hard, it doesn't mean you're a loser. It means you've got the wrong strategy.

It takes real guts to abandon a strategy, especially if you've gotten super good at the tactics. That's precisely the reason that switching strategies is often such a good idea. Because your competition is afraid to.

Determine what percent of your assets (including your time) that you will devote to each. While it's tempting to spend an ever-increasing amount of resources on tactics, too much tactical focus can put your core strategy at risk. Additionally, failure to make tactics a coordinated part of your overall strategy can result in tactical under-performance.

Bottom line: time spent thinking about your strategy can help you create more effective tactics, ultimately benefiting both.

4. Start with the End

Work backwards from where you want to be. The more specific you can be about your goal and what it will take to get you there, the easier it will be to create an effective strategic and tactical plan to meet your objectives.

Want 20% more TSL? Then ask things like, how many more listening occasions will be needed and from what percent of my cume? What daypart do I target? What content will need to happen on that daypart to drive TSL? What specific strategies need to be in place? What tactics need to be launched?

Want 20% more cume? Ask, how many diaries/households will be required? Who are these people and where will they come from? Why should they come? What specifically will attract them? How will the potential new cume hear about these specifics?



5. Kill Some Sacred Cows

Michael Lewis' [Moneyball](#) is about baseball of course but, in more global sense, it contains big lessons about the different perspectives held by insiders vs. outsiders, the transformative potential of 'new thinking' (to which some will point to with scorn), using non-traditional yardsticks to predict future achievements, and the necessity of staying ahead of competitors who ultimately embrace and execute your ideas upon seeing your successes.

This year, re-examine some of your own sacred cows. Which ones are still relevant? Is new information available that could change your way of thinking and thus give you a new competitive edge? Has a former competitive advantage been diluted or usurped and, if so, what must you do to do to regain an edge?

Can your working environment be even more conducive to new thinking and new designs? Are there processes that could be more efficient if things were done differently? How would you answer the question, "If we could do (fill in the blank) anyway we wanted, how would we?"

Practice 3-D thinking, looking at ideas from three or more different perspectives. See if any suggest improvements.

Draw on your own past experiences. What did you learn from one of these experiences that would be applicable to solving/improving a present challenge? Look for "connectiveness" that may lead to new approaches.

Don't be overly distraught by ambiguity but instead determine to thrive in change and see humor in everyday life.

The Original "Resolving to Be A Better Programmer: 25 New Year's Resolutions for PDs and OMs" Article from December, 2000

I'm not one for making a big deal out of "resolutions," but I am always up for trying something new...especially if it will result in me becoming a better person or programmer.

In that spirit, here's a list of New Years Resolutions you can scan. Find some things you're not presently doing, and resolve to give them a try. Be sure to pick some tough ones that will help you and your station grow to new levels this year. And don't restrict your resolution-making to January; keep this list and try new ideas throughout the year. *Resolutions for 2001...*

1. Resolve not to manage by crisis. Create and adhere to a personal, daily schedule that insures each day's most important tasks -- the ones that will truly move the station forward -- will be completed.



2. Attend at least one remote per month just to talk to listeners.
3. Make your Sales Manager your ally.
4. Spend a day out of the building with an AE to get clients' perspectives on your station and the competition.
5. Spend more time with your consultant.
6. Mentor one person.
7. Get into the habit of publicly praising significant contributions.
8. Create a fixed and firm schedule for air checking all talent (including newsmen and part-timers). Depending on the maturity of your staff, you may need to air check as often as weekly (every Wednesday for example) or as minimally as monthly (first Wednesday of the month). Give each talent a standing appointment time and stick to it. Make your sessions something both you and your talent look forward to, not dread.
9. Spend some time everyday with your morning show.
10. Get out of the station one day per month and do a full-blown competitive monitor (p.s.: don't monitor at home). Critically compare targeting, uniqueness, imaging, morning shows, overall talent, music mix, and other key listener benefits and opportunities. Develop plans to attack your competitors' weaknesses and for shoring up your own vulnerabilities.
11. Help your talent develop show-planning skills.
12. Regularly analyze your newscast formatics and content to be sure the stories are centered on your listeners.
13. Write five topical, short-shelf life sweepers and one fresh promo every Monday. Work at least one week ahead to allow time for voicing and production.
14. Write an article and get it published in a trade magazine.
15. Become Arbitron-smart, or help another PD in your cluster to be. Do a full-blown analysis each time your quarterly report is issued.
16. Make at least one visit to Arbitron each year to look at your diaries.
17. If you don't have a weekly promotion meeting, institute one and give it a high priority. Come with ideas to boost cume or increase listening occasions, and think creatively on how to make every sales promotion do the same.



18. Have a weekly, one-on-one meeting with your Promotion Director to discuss ways to market and differentiate your station.
19. Review your strategic action plan on the first of every month; make sure you're on target.
20. Do a thorough analysis of your music scheduling system each month.
21. Spend an hour each week listening to new music. And look forward to it.
22. Expand your personal network to include PDs from a successful CHR, AC and News-Talk stations; these are formats we are sharing a lot of audience with.
23. Read one business book a quarter; try reading one each on time management, new marketing ideas, thinking out of the box and improving your negotiation skills. Then apply what you've learned.
24. Master a piece of presentation software and use it at a staff meeting.
25. Arrange one social gathering each quarter just for the air staff to improve their knowledge of and respect for each other, with the end goal of building community that will come through on the air to listeners.

Additions for 2002...

26. Maintain a positive, edifying, "can-do" attitude in the halls. Be person that staffers feeling pressure, frustration or discouragement seek out for encouragement.
27. Ask your sales manager how clients want to buy (in-store registration, banner sponsorships, remotes, etc.) and use that knowledge when building promotions for sales and programming. Always look for a sales angle in your promotions.
28. Make "Listening by Appointment" your mantra. Be time and day-specific in all your promos and allow sufficient promotional lead-time for your events so listeners can make an appointment to listen.
29. Resolve to be "immediate." Maintain a mindset of, "How can I get this on the air *right now?*"
30. Once a month, give the gift of time to your spouse/family/loved ones.

Additions for 2003...

31. Milk everything. Pre- and post-sell all station events with frequency and passion. Get an extra week out of hit currents. Re-work great ideas to extend their life cycles.



Keep moving forward, absolutely, but be careful not to discard dynamic elements until you've "milked them for all they're worth."

32. Become a great listener. Sometimes what's really important lies just underneath what is being said. Listening can help you treat the real issues not just the symptoms.
33. Don't stop at the first right answer; that's what most people do or expect. To stand out, keep thinking until you come up with at least three more ways to make things bigger, better, more unique, memorable, and fun.
34. Help others manage their time. Everyone is multi-tasking, everyone is time-stressed. Minimize their stress by being organized yourself, assigning tasks as soon as possible, granting authority and maintaining a realistic view of the workplace/workload from an employee's perspective. Share your own time management secrets (see Resolution 1).
35. Everyday, make a conscious decision to enjoy your job, to have fun at work and to create a positive environment for those around you. The attitude you choose each day will be reflected back to you from your co-workers. If you would really rather do something other than radio, you should do it. But if you're going to continue in our industry, don't live in the past, dwell on what you don't have, or get dragged into the depressing lair and unproductive lamentations of malcontents. If you do, you'll be unable to see the opportunities that lie ahead. Even worse, you'll miss the magic, joys and triumphs that happen around you everyday.

Additions for 2004...

36. Direct your best efforts towards your biggest assets. This is another application of the 80/20 principle. List those resources that consistently deliver the biggest return (a particular talent/show, a station in your cluster, a hot zip code, a client, etc.), then commit to spending the lion's share of time, effort and money nurturing these.

I thought about this while watching Yankees' owner George Steinbrenner fritter away one of his team's greatest assets – free-agent, 20+ game winner Andy Pettitte. It appeared George devoted more time to the "20 percent" – chasing after players who wouldn't have nearly as much impact – than to one of the team's key producers. Andy's now gone – signed to a team who understands the 80/20 rule – and the Yankees are scrambling to fill a hole they dug for themselves. Avoid the "George Trap." Caring for your most valuable assets will help you reap big benefits and avoid bemoaning squandered resources.

37. Regularly take walks down the road not taken. Before you commit to the same promotion, the same marketing, the same liners, spend time thinking about a completely different approach. Brainstorm with creative people. Think back on something you've read or seen another business do and twist it around to see if it has possibilities for you. Check every element on the station for continued viability;



drop or re-invent as necessary. You won't rise above the crowd thinking and acting like everyone else.

38. Build a team, not a group of players. A team is more than the sum of its parts when 1) there's respect for and appreciation of the many one-of-a-kind roles that make essential contributions to a team's overall success; 2) each person recognizes that their individual performance impacts everyone else and accepts responsibility to always perform at their best; and 3) that everyone else realizes they are better as a group because of each other, not because of any one player including (and especially) themselves.
39. Prove your promises. Listeners' skepticism is on the rise, so make sure you do what you say and prove what you're doing. If you say you play the best music or the most music or have the best traffic and weather, prove it with hooks, testimonials, usage statements and live jock support.
40. Increase your positive, creative stimuli. The more time you spend in this environment, the more positive and creative you will become. Seek out people, places, adventures, and media that will elevate and encourage rather than deflate and damage. Excuse yourself from negative discussions and individuals and avoid downbeat situations whenever possible.

Additions for 2005

41. Turn new technology from a threat to an ally. Create your own Pod-Casts, re-visit streaming, deliver IM's via cell phone when contests are about to occur, and upgrade your processing to make cutting edge. Think "market-breakthrough technology" that will give you a competitive advantage by differentiating yourself from your competitors to their exasperation and to your listeners' surprise and delight.
42. Invest in talent training in a similar way you'd invest in sales training. Set a new bar for talent and replace those that can't achieve what you need them to. Increasing the DJ entertainment value on your station will pre-empt satellite radio's new talent focus and offer a non-duplicatable alternative to IPOD-like devices – not to mention other terrestrial competitors. Begin this in earnest now while we still have the critical mass of listeners and personality association.
43. Commit to making values a significant part of your programming and ratings strategies. Know that "Value Shifting" is escalating and that what listeners are valuing now and will value in the future is/will be different than the values held by Boomers and older generations. Here are some examples of these new values:
 - "Cause Values." Embrace a cause that your listeners embrace/support. Some stations embraced the Salvation Army and filled a need created when SA volunteers were booted from their collection points this year. Station personalities that became bell-ringers to help the SA bridge the financial shortfall scored with listeners.



- “Individual Values.” Demonstrate that you care about and understand your listeners (and advertisers) as individuals. Real life example: When pouring your coffee of the day, Starbucks asks if you want to save room for cream. As a black coffee drinker that means I’ll get a full cup of coffee instead of a ¾ full cup and says to me, “You’re special, not like everyone else, and we really want your personal coffee experience to be perfect.”
- “Anti-Prestige Values.” Prestige is increasingly less important as a motivating factor. Upwardly mobile is less important than socially responsible. This is especially true among “Emergents” – those post-Boomers and younger.
- “Full Disclosure Values.” Be straightforward. Shun vagaries and ambiguities. Make this the year that you replace gratuitous hype with facts and truth.

This doesn’t mean abandoning features like long music sweeps and insured contests nor does it imply that creativity should be reduced. To the contrary – both listener-desired elements and creativity are more important than ever. So focus on what’s really important to listeners and channel our enthusiasm to the consequential rather than the inconsequential.

This may be the most pervasive and far-reaching value of the moment. Even start-up businesses are now giving their companies a name that stand for what the product is or does, and conveys purity and clarity.

44. Become a mad scientist. Review all aspects of your station and see what you can re-invent. Here are five non-traditional ideas to get you started:

- Positioning. Add a new dimension to your positioning/imaging with a comic book-type “superhero” who fights clutter, stands for variety, seeks out the best new music, etc.
- Premiums. Break out of the mug and T-Shirt rut. Instead of buying a 12-month supply of the same things you and everyone else has given away for years, buy/give away different “momentarily hot” items over the course of the year. You’ll give away a lot fewer items, but these will have far greater impact and increase both your talk-about and your memorability
- Guerilla Marketing: Commit to being more of a guerilla marketer. Guerilla marketing doesn’t replace traditional marketing nor is it a substitute for a relationship with a listener. But it can be a low-cost, supplemental strategy that can reinforce your brand image/stationality and increase your overall impact by reaching increasingly hard-to-reach consumers.

Buy several “Adopt A Highway” signs on key commute routes, put up restroom signs where your target eats, gas station pump-tents, logo’d-napkins for bars and fast food businesses, doorknob-hangar marketing, logo’d coffee sleeves, diaper changing room supplies gratis with poster, nail



salon tent tops, static stickers that can be sniped on ads for other product/items you give away, wash-away-graffiti (place a stencil on the sidewalk and scrub with detergent, leaving a “clean” logo), send your mascot out to unexpected places to do everyday things like shoveling snow or raking leaves.

- Remotes. Add listener-friendly reasons to show up at remotes; try a listening-booth where listeners can hear select cuts form a big new CD with station “commercials” mixed in, a video stack where listeners can view hot videos and your commercials, and special drawings for “high-want” items that may not have anything to do with the client’s business.
- Web site. Insert new reasons to visit: blogs, “rate our music” modules (several excellent barter-based programs exist), and the inclusion of non-radio content that marries with listeners’ lifestyles (hints/reviews on video games, hot products, seasonal items, etc – all of which you also give away on the air).

45. Be a “Hijacker.” Find ways to put yourself in the middle of what everyone is talking about in order to steal the limelight. Example: the new Harry Potter book will be this summer. What will you do to hijack the event so no one can talk about the book without talking about you?

Additions for 2006

46. Develop your own programming ROI analysis. ROI – Return On Investment – is a current hot topic often meaning an “accounting of the relationship between the amount of time and money invested and the degree of changed behavior because of that investment.” A ROI for programmers could compare the time and money invested in the marketing and development of our product or brand and the degree of increased ratings.

Here are four quick steps to help you begin a programming ROI analysis:

- Clearly state your strategic goals and objectives. Be specific and realistic. It’s not enough to say “higher ratings.” Instead make your goal, “Increasing one share 25-54 by extending P1 TSL 1:00 and growing total cume 5%.”
- Next, create a set of tactics that will help you achieve your results. In the above example, these could include product enhancements, marketing efforts specifically created to stimulate new cume, programming tactics to increase tune-ins, special events and promotions to introduce the station to potential cumers or reward heavy users, plus a specific timetable for each of these tactics. Note who will be responsible and accountable for insuring completion of each of the tactics.



- Determine a budget. This not only includes money, but time invested as well. Be sure you've allocated enough of each to do the job. After you've made your estimates, double the time projection.
- Stay on top of your plan through its life, and do a post-evaluation of how your performance did against the investment you made. Note what was successful as well as what improvements that could be made in the future. While the effectiveness of some tactics may have to be inferred, some can be measured with follow-up tools like a before-and-after count of database membership (if that was a tactic) or an email survey of participants to an event.

The more you can make specific plans for success, the greater the likelihood is that you'll achieve it.

47. Spend more time in the "design process." Too often, in the excitement of "doing," insufficient time is spent in the "blueprint" phase. This can lead to too many instances of "this would have been bigger if we" or "we should planned for," etc.

- When creating events, always favor "experience" over "function." Creating deep feelings has far more impact than creating a high degree of usefulness. Maximize "personal experience" in choice of content, delivery, the inclusion of personal stories where "I feel what you feel," etc.
- Be particular about what you name things. A great name can mean the difference between success and disappointment. Go for standout-ability, fun, memorable, and high interest.
- The design process isn't necessarily about more entertainment *options* but more *entertainment*. Usually the more of an entertainment experience you provide, the more memorable/enjoyable/impactful your event will be. Often it's the little things – a name, a small execution difference, a 'creature comfort' – that can transform an event from blasé to awesome.

48. Get more comfortable with self promotion. This applies to your station, your talent and YOU!

49. Try again to successfully complete something that you failed at previously. Just because what seemed like a good idea didn't work as you envisioned the first time around, doesn't mean you shouldn't give it a second try.

- Identify the barriers you faced and the reasons why things didn't work out as you originally planned. Coming up with new ways of working through these problems can increase your chances of success this time around. As Walt Disney said, "If you can DREAM it, you can DO it."

50. Be a book reviewer. You write your own life story everyday; be sure to stop and review it from time to time. Do interesting things happen on a regular basis? Are you



excited about turning the page? Are there small victories that get noticed and celebrated? Is it going to have the ending you want? If the characters or plot needs adjusting, don't wait till the last chapter. Do it now.

Additions for 2007

51. Be the advocate for getting your product on as many platforms and in front of as many people as possible.

If your listeners are there, you need to be there too. From streaming audio to pod and vodcasts, to being on the streets, to mobile communications to TV or print, build a strong presence in as many places and platforms as possible, embracing the same new technologies they are embracing.

Additional platforms provide more ways to enhance your brand with unique content as well as new ways to monetize your product. Plus the more ubiquitous you are, the greater your potential to encounter new listeners and prospects and the greater your opportunity to turn non- and occasional samplers into weekly cumers and weekly cumers into fans.

Does this build audience? CBS-TV used YouTube vodcasts to boost ratings for Letterman and other shows. Bridge Ratings reported that stations that podcast have 5% better recall and 10% increased listening. In just three years (2010), the podcast audience is expected to be between 45 and 75-million.

Does this build loyalty? A study by MediaSpan Network says using your website to make local programming more accessible can help stations compete for mindshare – even among their biggest competitors. "Clearly, broadcasters who offer integrated online programming via innovative features such as podcasting and streaming will meet audience demands and strengthen their relationship with their audiences," says MediaSpan CMO Mark Zagorski.

Can it generate revenue? IndyStar.com reports Emmis is projecting their interactive division will deliver \$10-million this physical year. Mediaweek reports agencies like Zenith Media are placing advertising on station podcasts. Premier Radio is selling paid subscriptions to podcasts from Rush Limbaugh, Jim Rome and others. ABC and ESPN are also selling podcasts.

52. Be the quality control policeman that insures a consistent message and experience are delivered across platforms.

No matter how the public encounters you, your message must be consistent and the consumer experience A+. Business trades are full of stories about companies that have made great cross-platform efforts yet still lost sales because of an inconsistent message or a poor customer experience at one of its many touch points.



Whatever your brand essence is, communicate it consistently. If you're a new country station for example, you could communicate your essence in your streams by playing segments of songs from new CDs by your core artists where you pre-empt commercials. If you don't pre-empt, offer those same segments with a link. Give away those CDs at remotes. Invite listeners to contribute to a new music blog on your site. Post web-only podcasts featuring bios of up-and-comers and extended new music news. Create contesting around this music. Offer to text listeners when one of their favorite songs is coming up.

Each new platform is a new opportunity to either enrich or erode your brand.

53. Adopt new strategies to make your station more audience-centric

Research from the American Marketing Association (AMA) shows consumers believe companies that use customer-created advertising are more creative, customer-friendly and innovative. That sounds like a perception we'd like to own, right? So think about all the ways you can give leverage your audience loyalty by giving listeners a louder voice in what you do. Here are a few ideas to get you going:

- Include feedback opportunities like blogs and music testing through your web site.
- Establish listener panels and convene them at least quarterly.
- Find new ways to reward listener loyalty including recognition and not just premiums.
- Let listeners be advocates for you. Here's a current initiative from a different entertainment business.

Nintendo has enlisted "Alpha Moms" to pitch their Wii gaming system to friends. It's an appeal-broadening strategy that combines a personal recommendation with an in-person, interactive, hands-on demonstration.

"One of the things we were concerned about was if we started advertising on television to this audience, they wouldn't pay attention. We felt like we had to open up the audience's willingness to hear from us before we started the TV advertising," said George Harrison, Nintendo of America's senior vice president of marketing and corporate communications.

Peter Sealy, a former chief marketing officer for the Coca-Cola Company says word of mouth, like this is on the rise, "especially in those categories where word of mouth is a powerful motivator... You've got to get a buzz going."

Here are some ideas:



- Show your audience having fun with the station. Record video of listeners at events and promotions, and remotes, and post online, making it easy for them to share these clips with their friends. By 2010, 30-million Americans are expected to subscribe to vidcasts/vodcasts on their cell phones. Sponsorable
- Let listeners create content for you. In 2005, 35 percent of all Americans had posted to a blog, created a Web page, shared online photos, or otherwise generated content. This year, more than 100,000 clips PER DAY are being uploaded. And, according to a new report by the Pew Internet & American Life Project, such content creation is no longer the sole province of under-30s. 36 percent of those between 30 and 49 have created content as well. So extend the invitation and expect participation.
- Make listeners as big a part of your on air entertainment as you can. Audience participation is what is driving many new media successes and of course has been and continues to be a staple of strong broadcast brands and programs. Think, “engage.”

54. Add a “WOW!” initiative.

In “A New Mind,” Daniel Pink asks, “Is what I’m offering in demand in an age of abundance?” Now THAT’S a critical question!

Experiences that make people go “Wow!” will always be coveted – and they’ll help you stand out from everyone else. Conversely ordinary performances – even though they may be “good” – will do nothing to help you stand out or break out from the pack. To use a grocery store analogy, you’re simply one of a dozen cans of corn on the shelf and your selection will either be a matter of luck or price.

Challenge every element on the station and every new idea by asking, “What can we do with this to make listeners say or feel ‘WOW!’?” It may well be the determining factor in why you are the station of choice instead of a competitor.

55. Think “Radically Local”

“Most involved in the doing things for the community” is a key station image.

Use your website not just to repurpose material you’ve already had on the air, but to create new, exclusive content that elevates your local involvement by celebrating the good but small things that make up peoples’ lives: vodcasts of high school football games, podcasts and streams hosted by local high school students, a charity of the week, a monthly segment on someone in the listening area who makes a positive difference, free on-line classifieds.



There are time constraints on air, but on-line it's virtually impossible to overflow the local content container. On-line, there's no such thing as "too much coverage."

Got some you'd like to add? Feel free to feedback your ideas and experiences!

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