

# The Future Of Ad Writing

Ad writer: Give a copy of this column to every advertiser you care about.

America has been flattered by advertising: "...because you deserve it"; misled by ads: "Lowest prices anywhere"; hyped by ads: "While supplies last"; and lied to repeatedly: "Guaranteed!" The result of all this misinformation is a growing numbness to ad-speak. We're becoming deaf and blind to it.

Why are advertisers happy when their ads sound like ads?

Once-effective phrases become clichés when overused. Remember the '70s? Guys with long-pointed collars and blow-dried hair asked, "Do you come here often?" They did it because it worked. They quit only when the ladies began laughing at them.

But advertising still wears that ridiculous collar and blow-dried hair because its rejection was never face-to-face. We don't laugh at ads. We quietly ignore them.

When demand is high and supply is low, ads need only tell the world "We've got it!" But how often do you get to live that fantasy? Advertising, most of the time, is merely a relationship deepener. Its job is to cause the public to like you and trust you. Accomplish this and they'll remember you when they, or any of their circle, need what you sell.

**Good news:** A seductive new voice in advertising is softening the hearts and winning the wallets of our nation at a record pace. My strong suggestion is that you adopt it sooner rather than later. Stay with me.

You're seated in 12-B, reading an in-flight magazine. The following words appear in white letters against a medium olive background, no photograph or graphic:

Isn't it amazing how people will read anything at 36,000 feet? You, for instance, are reading this. And even though it's quite obviously an ad, and you're skeptical of advertising, you'll continue reading it. See, here you are, still reading. C'mon, don't try to deny it. And why are you still reading? Not because you find it particularly captivating, but because it's here. And you're here. And you've already exhausted your mandatory, meaningless airplane chit-chat time with your neighbor. So right about now you're probably asking yourself, Why am I still reading this? Perhaps you're even pretending you're not reading it anymore. You're going to close this magazine up right now and slip it back into that pocket up there. But wait, you're still reading it, aren't you? You can't help yourself. It's here. You're here. And you still can't use your cell phone until you reach the tarmac. By the way, we know a really good bookstore around here.

At the bottom of the page is the logo for Verizon and in large letters, "superpages.com We know around here."

Here's your chance. Get out now while you can. Quick, look for a window. Or the ventilation shaft. Okay, remove your clothes. Skivvies, too. Lube your entire body with that hand soap your wife likes. Take a penny and unscrew the cover of the duct. Now get in, ready for conviction. Conviction is important at this point. You DO NOT want to get stuck. Imagine your bride-to-be coming in and seeing your nude lower torso poking out of the wall like some sort of modern art installation. That's an image for the mantel, isn't it? So squirm like the wind. Once free, secure some clothing and start a new life somewhere with complicated extradition laws. And then back to bachelorhood. Yes, the singularly most forlorn, emotionally vacant time of your life. Come on, is there anything more overrated than bachelorhood? If you're like most bachelors, you go to bed every night wishing you weren't one. Let's look at the sacred, time-tested bachelor traditions you'll be missing out on. Well, of course, there's being a slob. As well as extended periods of not bathing and otherwise lapsed personal hygiene. And hanging out with your unattached friends. A group of guys who with each passing year are starting to get, frankly, a little creepy. Your future is out there. Your best friend is out there. Besides, that liquid soap itches like crazy.

Like you and trust you. That's the goal.

Walk into the men's room at Robbins Bros., The World's Biggest Engagement Ring Store, and here's what you'll see covering the wall of the toilet stall:

Here's your chance. Get out now while you can. Quick, look for a window. Or the ventilation shaft. Okay, remove your clothes. Skivvies, too. Lube your entire body with that hand soap over there. Now take a penny and unscrew the corner of the duct. Now get to struggling. Conviction is important at this point. You DO NOT want to get stuck. Imagine your bride-to-be coming in and seeing your nude lower torso

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Vision and audacity allowed Steve Robbins to build The World's Biggest Engagement Ring Store. And the same characteristics caused him to be among the first in America to adopt the intimate and irreverent voice of "non-ads" as the advertising voice of the future. By the time the rest of the nation has caught on to what Steve is doing, he'll likely have moved on to something else.

How about you? Will you change with the times? Or do you still believe Disco is coming back? ☎



## QUICKREAD

- Why are advertisers happy when their ads sound like ads?
- Advertising, most of the time, is merely a relationship deepener. Its job is to cause the public to like you and trust you.
- A seductive new voice in advertising is softening the hearts and winning the wallets of our nation at a record pace. My strong suggestion is that you adopt it sooner rather than later.
- Will you change with the times?



# Getting The Most From Signage

Why am I teaching you about business signage in a magazine dedicated to selling radio? Because if you can't deliver insightful advice about more than just radio, you're not an advertising consultant, you're a dancing peddler.

Keep in mind that upgrading store signage is a one-time, capitalized expense, not a recurrent monthly one that would compete with your proposal for a 52-week schedule.

Here's what every consultant needs to know:

Most businesses have signs that are well proportioned, carefully balanced, tastefully drawn, and perfectly color coordinated. In other words, they're utterly predictable and effectively invisible.

The five most common mistakes in business signage are:

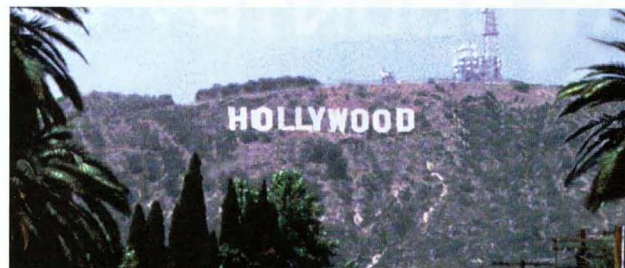
1. **Understated elegance**, attempting to "fit in," or "blend into" a scene
2. **Underspending**
3. **Including too much information**
4. **Placing the sign too high.** The eyes of drivers tend to stay focused at windshield height. Low signs are better in town. Tall signs are better on freeways where they will be read — at windshield height — from great distances.

Great signs are always the most interesting piece of scenery in their vicinity. This is why they're noticed even when people aren't looking for them. Would your client like to have such a sign? Believe it or not, it's possible. Not cheap or easy, but possible.

Consider the sprawling white letters stretched across a hillside in southern California: HOLLYWOOD, a landmark known around the world. Did you know that sign was originally erected by a real estate developer to identify his remote suburban subdivision, *Hollywoodland*?

These are the little-known factors that turn business signs into landmarks:

1. **They are dramatic.** This can be due to the fact that they're:
  - a. grossly oversized,
  - b. strangely placed, or
  - c. three-dimensional



The HOLLYWOOD sign fits all three criteria.

2. **They are incongruent**, contrasting sharply with their surroundings due to:

a. **color.** Snow white HOLLYWOOD letters against a hillside of dark brown and green.

b. **installation.** The famous HOLLYWOOD sign is not on a pole or a board. Its individual letters sit directly on the ground.

c. **context.** There is nothing immediately around it to distract from it. Or if there is something important nearby, it is incorporated into the sign itself.

3. **There is something wrong with it.** Ever notice how the HOLLYWOOD letters aren't level, but rise and fall with the terrain?

I doubt if the builder of that Hollywood sign did these brilliant things intentionally. The point is they worked, even if some were accidental. Does your client have the courage and determination to repeat on purpose the things he did right by accident?

These four obstacles will hold back anyone who lacks maniacal persistence:

1. **Sign codes and ordinances**
2. **Opinions of friends**
3. **Recommendations of "professionals,"** such as the sign company, the architect, or the manager of the shopping center. (Remember, these are same the people responsible for creating all the signs that currently are invisible.)
4. **The budget**

If your client is able to bulldoze past these roadblocks, the public will soon be using their sign as a reference point when giving directions. And the client will have you to thank for it. ☑

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## QUICKREAD™

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## Stronger Ads = More Complaints

An Open Letter To Clients Using Radio

It's no secret that stronger ads generate faster business growth. But with every higher level of awareness comes an increase in complaints:

"I'm sick of hearing your ads." TRANSLATION: "It makes me mad that I can't ignore you."

"Your ads don't sound professional. They're not polished and smooth." TRANSLATION: "It makes me mad that your ads stand out."

"I'm offended by your ads and I'll never do business with you." TRANSLATION: "Complaining is what I do to make me feel important."

During the past two decades, my fastest-growing clients have always been the ones willing to run my ads as I've written them. Clients who tweak ads to make them softer typically grow at a softer pace.

When people complain about an ad, does that mean the ad isn't working?

When people love an ad and compliment you on it, does that mean it's generating traffic and profits?

"Yo Quiero Taco Bell."

Didn't sell a taco.

You've got to decide once and for all how you're going to measure success. It doesn't matter what you consider to be success. It only matters that you have an objective way of measuring it — and in the process — the effectiveness of your advertising.

Do you want people to say that they love your ads? No problem, I can make that happen. Do you want to measure units sold and dollars collected? No problem, I can make the mercury rise on that thermometer, too. Just not on both.

Every effective ad writer has spent millions of dollars of other people's money to learn what doesn't work. Here's why: The worst ideas always make the most sense. Breakthrough ideas are always counter-intuitive.



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- Stronger ads generate faster business growth, but with every higher level of awareness comes an increase in complaints.
- The worst ideas always make the most sense. Breakthrough ideas are always counter-intuitive.
- Most ads aren't written to move anyone. They're written not to offend.
- Clients who tweak ads to make them softer typically grow at a softer pace.

"If the big ad agencies are doing all the wrong things, is it because they're stupid?" I was asked this question last week by Karen Jonson, a magazine writer. My impulse was to answer fliply, "Yes," but I choked it down, slowed my internal RPM, and listened to my heart. "No," I told her, "the problem big agencies face is that they're never able to sit across the table from anyone who has unconditional authority to say 'Absolutely yes.' When a creative person knows they must gain



the approval of a group, they'll play it safe and give the group what they want, rather than what they need."

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The next time you're watching a super TV show or listening to a funny comedian, ask yourself, "How much would this show be changed if a group of people were allowed to strip away everything in it that might offend?"

No committee will ever approve a great ad. They'll castrate it. But in their minds they're merely "tweaking it, softening it, taking off the offensive edge." Subject a talented ad writer to a lot of second-guessing and he or she will respond by rewarding you with ads that all your friends and family are guaranteed to like.

Congratulations. Now you've got ads that sound exactly like everyone else's. ☹️

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## Surprise! It's A Great Ad

Akintunde, my friend from botanical-green Nigeria, says his first impression of America was that everything smelled burned. He spent his first few days looking for the fire. Finally, he realized it was only the hydrocarbons of a hundred million cars. Things don't smell burned to Akintunde any more. He has become acclimated.

Familiar things often grow invisible, and that's bad news for business owners. There are identifiable elements in successful ads. Don't let them become invisible.

**1. Salience** — To persuade, we must speak to the customer about something the customer cares about. Cognitive neuroscientists call this *salience*. Most ads have too little salience to be remembered five minutes later. How many ads from this morning's paper do you recall? What was the last banner ad that appeared on your computer monitor?

a) Targeting: One way to increase salience is to find people who are already interested, people who are currently, consciously in the market for what you're trying to sell: Yellow Pages, search-engine optimization, direct mail. Reaching people who are currently, consciously in the market is the main idea behind targeting. Based on this definition of targeting, radio sucks at it. While targeting sounds efficient, it's actually dangerous to wait until your customer is in the market. Do so and you'll likely be just another face in the crowd.

b) Copy: Focused copy is the best way to increase salience. Long copy is better only when you have so many good things to say. Abundant words wrapped around a small idea won't work. A thick layer of words obscures the salience of a message.

**2. Repetition** is the only cure for insufficient salience. How much repetition is required to drive your message into memory is determined primarily by the salience of the message.

a) Sleep is the enemy of advertising. It erases the noise of yesterday, especially the sights and sounds of selling. Therefore, when you desire a person to take quick action, the challenge is to reach them with maximum repetition, allowing minimal sleep between hits. This calls for vertical, rather than horizontal, ad scheduling.

b) Branding is involuntary, automatic recall — the product of salience X repetition. A shortage on one side of the "X" can be supplemented by a surplus on the other side. When using mass media, an opportunity exists to implant your brand as an associative memory in the

minds of persons not currently in the market, so that your name becomes the first remembered when they finally need what you sell. Branding requires horizontal scheduling, repetition over time.

Salience is determined by the central executive of Working Memory, located in the dorsolateral prefrontal association area of the brain. Working Memory is conscious awareness, imagination, the attention of your customer — and all Creation, not just your business category, is shouting for it. Every sight, sound, smell, taste, and memory screams for the spotlight. Your prospects will pay attention to your message only as long as it's the most interesting thing in their world.


Whether or not you'll be remembered in the future is determined by salience X repetition. But salience and repetition assume your message has successfully entered Working Memory. Most messages never get there. They fail because they were predictable. Want to lose a person's attention in a hurry? Just say and do what they expected you to say and do. Predictability is the silent assassin of advertising.

"We often imagine our memories faithfully storing everything we do. But there is no mechanism in our heads that stores sensory perceptions as a permanent, unchangeable form. Instead, our minds use a complex system to convert a **small percentage** of what we experience into nothing more than a pattern of connections between nerve cells. Human memory is not at all like videotape." — Matt Crenson, science writer for The Associated Press, Dec. 10, 2000


**Surprise carries its own salience and is the foundation of delight.**

Most ads never arrive at the Emerald City of Working Memory, because the poppy field of Broca's Area dragged them under. Remember the field of poppies in *The Wizard of Oz*? After a long journey, Dorothy and her friends finally catch a glimpse of their destination. They need only to cross a field of flowers to enter the city and meet the mighty Wizard, but the poppies cause them to fall asleep halfway across the field.

"The Emerald City" is Working Memory, conscious awareness. If we do not reach it, we cannot speak to the wizard. "The Wizard" is the prefrontal cortex of your customer's brain, that center of decision-making, planning, and judgment. "Dorothy and her entourage" are your message. "The Poppy Field" is Broca's Area of the brain — ignoring, subduing, or erasing every sensory stimulus that was predictable.

"The Snow" that re-invigorates your message is any element of the unexpected... the chilling delight of surprise... elemental dissonance... incongruence. It's the last thing Broca would ever suspect — and the last thing most advertisers would ever consider. 

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### QUICKREAD™

- Things familiar often grow invisible.
- Salience and repetition are identifiable elements in successful ads.
- Salient messages speak to the customer about something the customer cares about.
- Predictability is the silent assassin of advertising.
- What re-invigorates your message is any element of the unexpected: surprise, elemental dissonance, incongruence.



# Are Your Salespeople 2-Faced?

There are essentially two kinds of ad buyers, two kinds of good radio schedules, two kinds of good ad copy, two kinds of good radio reps. The best managers understand this, and encourage their salespeople to become one kind of good rep or the other.

Most managers insist their salespeople learn to be both kinds. The result of this jump-both-ways training is often a selling style that seems duplicitous, deceptive, and unstable. Let's take a look at the two kinds of everything.

## TWO KINDS OF AD BUYERS:

1. Sophisticated. Buys cost-per-point, has a plan. Doesn't want a consultant, wants the lowest price. These buyers will soon be purchasing their radio schedules online. For now, they need reps who will sell them *their way*, who will answer questions *as asked*, and not try to steer the conversation. To these buyers, radio is a commodity. If they needed a friend, they'd buy a dog. They don't want your advice about copy, production, or scheduling. Price your proposals accordingly. And no, a 15 percent discount isn't enough. These buyers often call the station unannounced and ask for a sales rep.
2. Unsophisticated. Buys whatever feels right or makes the most sense. Can be angry and belligerent, remembering all the reps who have disappeared with their money. These buyers are looking for an expert they can trust, one with deep convictions and obvious expertise in marketing. They'd never admit it, but they're looking for a marketing partner. These are reluctant package buyers. They need access to real expertise and experience in planning, copy writing, scheduling, and production. To these buyers, radio isn't a product, but a service. These buyers never call the station and ask for rates, so prospect patiently and price your proposals accordingly.

## TWO KINDS OF RADIO SCHEDULES:

1. Short flights. Vertically stacked. OES or as many as the PD will let you air for a single client. "Where's the remote van? We need a crowd. Can we get some live mentions? What else can we give for added value? Is that all? This had better work..."
2. 52-week schedules. Horizontal over time. Attempting to establish a three-frequency with about two-thirds of your total weekly cume each week. Typically 21 ads per week, plus or minus two ads, between 6A and 7P. These schedules were designed to make the

advertiser a household word, so that your listeners think of the advertiser's name immediately when they need what that advertiser sells. Low-maintenance accounts. Base billing. These schedules are there every month, creating a shortage — and consequently higher rates — for the short-flight package buyer.

## TWO KINDS OF AD COPY:

1. Short-term, high-impact, results-oriented. Maximum salience through time-limited urgency, usually scheduled for maximum repetition with minimal sleep in between. This copy burns hot, then burns out. Most success stories are built on this kind of copy because advertisers can see it working. Or not.
2. Long-term, subconsciously persuasive "branding" ad copy. No time limits. These are the hardest ads to write because they require a message so memorable that it is intuitively stored in declarative memory. These ads don't cause listeners to say, "That's a hell of an ad," but rather, "That's a hell of a product." Many branding disasters are being created by sales reps and copywriters who assume that repetition alone will be enough. They are horribly wrong.

## TWO KINDS OF GOOD RADIO REPS:

1. Specializes in selling short flights to sophisticated buyers. Energetic, personable, live-wire hustlers. Impact! Positive thinking. Roll the dice. Where the action is. Lives fast, dies young, and leaves a beautiful corpse. Send a rep like this to a buyer like this and you've got an action movie in the making. These reps interview well, work hard, and take off early on Fridays. That's why radio is knee deep in them. And why it has so few long-term advertisers.
2. Specializes in selling permanent schedules to brand builders. Tends to be quieter, more studious, and patient. Easy to underestimate because they are much less impressive in an interview. The key to spotting these sellers is to ask them what they read. The longer and more diverse the reading list, the more likely they'll connect deeply with long-term buyers.

The strongest of today's radio stations are the ones with two types of sellers, each one encouraged to sell however they like to sell. But most stations have only one kind of seller because they lack the patience to allow long-term sellers to develop long-term business.

**Recommendation:** Join the elite group of stations that keep 60 percent of their inventory sold out months in advance. (Two sellers carrying 20 accounts each with the typical schedule being 21 early-week spots, 52 weeks in a row.) Hire and train a couple of long-term thinkers to sell advertisers that think the same way. Do it and prosper. 📺

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## Radio And The Fat Lady

Your strengths become your weaknesses. If it worked really well for a really long time, it's hard to get used to the idea that it doesn't work as well anymore.

— Technology analyst Roger Kay, speaking of Dell's eroding leadership among computer manufacturers

Roger Kay could just as easily have been speaking to radio folk about yesterday's on-air selling techniques, don't you think?

Techniques must change with the times. But the underlying reason for the success of a technique never really changes at all. It just changes clothes and gets a different haircut.

All success in radio is built on the neurological fact that human beings are gifted with the ability to attach complex meanings to sounds. This gift is facilitated by an oversized auditory association area in combination with Wernicke's and Broca's areas, highly specialized language regions in the left hemispheres of our brains. It is this unique ability to attach complex meanings to sounds — and then re-create those sounds, using the diaphragm, larynx, lips, and tongue — that is at the root of mankind's superiority over the animal kingdom. This will never change. It is hard-wired into the human genetic code.

Simply stated, Man is a creature of sound. The most meaningful of these sounds are called words. Radio is in the business of sounds and words. So why isn't radio at the forefront of a relentless investigation into these languages of the mind?

Yes, *languages*. Within the realm of sound, there are three major categories of languages:

**1. Spoken Phonemes:** A phoneme is the smallest identifiable unit found in a stream of speech. The phonological system of a

spoken language includes an inventory of its sounds and their features, and a set of rules that specify how these sounds interact with each other. But phonology is just one of several aspects of language, and is related to other aspects such as phonetics, morphology, syntax, and pragmatics. A working knowledge of phonemes is one of the secrets to ad copy that sells, and sales presentations to which the prospect says "Yes."

**2. Music:** When measuring the impact of a piece of music on the human brain, researchers examine six separate components within the music: **1. Pitches:** the vibrational frequencies of the notes in the melody; **2. Key:** the set of pitches to which the notes belong; in our western world, a repeating series of 12 for each "octave" in the key; **3. Musical Intervals:** the differences in pitch between one note and the next. How wide are the gaps? **4. Contour:** the shape of the melody as it rises and falls; **5. Rhythm:** the relative lengths and spacing of the notes in the melody; **6. Tempo:** the speed at which a melody is played. Artfully selected and sequenced, each of these six components helps us to powerfully communicate in the powerful but non-verbal language of music.

**3. Literature:** That's right, the written word. I'm better known as an author than a broadcaster for one very simple reason: *The written word allows each of my listeners to hear me at precisely his or her own rate of comprehension.* Beyond that singular distinction, the written word is merely the broadcast of silent sound. As you read this, you're hearing my words in your mind. Were you aware that the written word has no meaning until it has been translated into the spoken word it represents? (This explains all those times you've been laying in bed, reading a book, and dimly realize that you've been scanning the same paragraph over and over but you still have no idea what is says.) I mention writing as an auditory discipline only because weak writing lies at the root of every underperforming radio campaign.

I ask you once again: Why isn't radio at the forefront of an unstoppable investigation into the magic of the languages of sound?

Radio has always attracted the mavericks, renegades, free spirits, intuitives, and creative geniuses of media. Has the time come to unleash these hounds of radio to retrieve the rabbit of creative innovation? Or will radio continue to sit quietly with hands folded and let the Internet become the new playground of creative genius?

Just thought I'd ask, before the fat lady sings. 📻

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## Marketing's Melting Face

Things are changing fast in the world of marketing. New technologies are being invented that sharply reduce the need for creative talent, intuition, and gut feel.

In other words, the guys in the white lab coats are drying up the last of the fun.

By now, I'm sure you've seen those little Bluetooth earpieces that function as a wireless cell phone headset. Now, imagine marrying one of those to a next-generation lie detector, and using it to measure the raw, unfiltered responses of people to various ads.

Bye-bye, focus groups.

Using this new technology, you'd no longer need to ask people how they feel about a particular ad. You'd just hook the earpiece around their ear, tape the lead wire to their temple, play the ad for them, and then study their immediate response to the ad. In fact, you could tell *them* how they feel about it! I imagine there'll soon be auditoriums full of people wearing these earpieces, listening to spec radio ads and watching spec TV spots.

You could also have the person flip through a series of proposed magazine ads, and watch as the earpiece transmits data about which ad would be most effective. And don't you think record companies might want to use this technology to help figure out which songs to push?

How do I know about this, you ask?

Sigh.

Three years ago, I produced an hour-long audio book called *Thought Particles: Binary Code Of The Mind*. Very few in radio spent any time or money checking it out, but shortly after its release, a student from the Pentagon arrived to take our three-day Magical Worlds Communications Workshop, and

was intrigued. He was followed by engineers and astrophysicists from NASA, and then we welcomed a bunch of interested doctors. Included among them was Kary Mullis, who won the Nobel Prize for chemistry.

Most recently, we were visited by a department head from the Los Alamos Nuclear Research Laboratories. Evidently, scientists and doctors found *Thought Particles* fascinating.

Among others who've shown interest are musicians, journalists, ministers, artists, and educators. But the radio folks for whom I wrote the book just yawned and asked,



"When are you going to write a book that will tell me how to sell agencies?"

Sometimes I fear for radio.

The human mind is structured around auditory input. The unique gift of humans is our ability to attach complex meanings to sounds. We are creatures of phonemes, the components of words. We are moved by pitch, key, tempo, rhythm, contour, and interval. These are the tools of radio, solidly within its domain. Yet no one in radio is studying them. "I'll study them if they'll tell me how to sell the car dealer," is the typical kind of response I hear from radio.

A radio is a mood selection device. This is easily demonstrated. But have you ever put on this kind of grand show for a buyer? Have you ever taken them on a tour of the full spectrum of human emotion in just five short minutes? I'm betting you haven't.

Oh well. I guess you can always talk about Gross Rating Points. ☹

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- You could have the person flip through a series of proposed magazine ads, and watch as the earpiece transmits data about which ad would be most effective.
- The unique gift of humans is our ability to attach complex meanings to sounds. We are creatures of phonemes, the components of words. These are the tools of radio. Yet no one in radio is studying them.





## Radio At Its Highest And Best

A radio outsider holds the key to empowered programming

Have you allowed Pandora to read your mind yet?

Pandora.com is a streaming music service crafted by a couple hundred musicologists whose ideas about music are much bigger and more divergent than mere format or genre. Tell Pandora what songs you like, and she'll soon figure out what all those songs have in common — that you never realized. Pandora also learns from the songs you tell her you don't like.

Radio programmers who want to think outside the box can learn a lot from Pandora. Flirt with her and she'll help you escape the numbing sameness of old school format-think. Pandora is like Jack on steroids.

I fed Pandora everything from my favorite James Taylor and Jimmy Buffett songs to the blistering rage of Bone Thugs and System of a Down. I even admitted a fondness for certain songs of Janice Ian and Frank Sinatra and Nat King Cole.

Pandora responded by telling me that I tend toward songs with a subtle blues or country influence. I also learned that I'm a sucker for paired harmony, a syncopated rhythm, interesting part writing, and strong melodies. And that's just a few of the characteristics my favorite songs all tend to have in common.

The benefit of all this back-and-forth interaction with Pandora is that she will soon weave together a seamless collection of eclectic choices that no human programmer would ever have put together. She'll play songs you never knew existed, songs that make you say, "Wow! This is the coolest music I've ever heard in my life!"

Pandora is discovery. She is adventure. Even as I write this, I've got Pandora playing through my laptop. A moment ago I heard, *I Concentrate On You*, by Steve Tyrell. Never heard it before in my life. Loved it. Right now, Pandora is playing *It's Alright* by Big Head Todd & The Monsters. Who the heck is Big Head Todd?

My previous experience with her causes me to suspect that soon Pandora will change the tempo and take me in another of my favorite directions. Wow. What a coincidence. Just as I typed "another of my favorite directions," the mellow

mumblings of Big Head Todd segued into the bee-sting guitars of Ten Years After playing another song I've never heard in my life, *When It All Falls Down*.

Click the CD cover that appears on your laptop while a song is playing, and Pandora will let you give a Thumbs Up or Thumbs Down to the song, then link you to iTunes to buy the MP3 or to Amazon to buy the CD. She'll even explain why she chose that song for you.

Pandora is a radio outsider. She's not a member of our club. That's why I'm bringing her to your attention.

Azar Nafisi, author of *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, is another outsider. In a recent interview she said, "Poor reading, like poor writing, is imposing what you already know on texts. You should go into reading to discover, not to reaffirm what you know." Her comment was aimed at the blindness that comes from living in that hard-edged little box insiders call home, a dreary existence known as the status quo.

Let's expand Nafisi's comment and make it about radio: "Poor programming is imposing your own idea of format on the listener. You should go into programming to discover new connections between songs, not to strengthen the connections you already knew were there."

Now for the happy news: I knew nothing about Pandora until a senior executive from one of radio's largest broadcast groups brought her to my attention during a recent visit to the Wizard Academy campus. Happily, at least one broadcast group has its stethoscope pressed against the heart of Pandora to discover whatever magic might be found.

Yes, radio continues to evolve. Accelerated and empowered by new technologies, she is spreading her wings and learning to fly.

Welcome to the skies of tomorrow. It's going to be a beautiful day. ☀

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### QUICKREAD™

- Pandora.com is a streaming music service crafted by a couple hundred musicologists whose ideas about music are much bigger and more divergent than the mere idea of format or genre.
- Pandora is a radio outsider.
- Like Pandora, you should go into programming to discover new connections between songs, not to strengthen the connections you already knew were there.





# Radio Intonation Shorthand

One of the biggest problems faced by radio writers is getting the voice talent to deliver the words exactly as the writer intended them to be heard. And the very best scripts are the easiest to screw up in the recording booth, because they contain lots of broken sentences. Newbies write unbroken sentences. That's why their ads sound phony. Because you and I generally speak in broken ones.

## THE WIZARD'S PRICELESS TIPS FOR RADIO WRITERS:

1. When possible, read the script to the voice talent *before* showing them the copy. That way, they'll *see* it on the paper as they first *heard* it in their ears. This goes double for clients. Read them the ad, and they'll love it. Let them read it for themselves, and they'll think it needs more work. We hear ads emotionally, but we read ads analytically.
2. Use intonation shorthand, and teach it to your voice talent:
3. Words made bold are meant to be **punched**. Compressed and made tighter. A little louder, even. Think of bold lettering as a sort of micro-exclamation point.
4. Words in italics are meant to be *stretched*. Take some time, reader, with the italicized words. Emphasize them. Not with volume, but with time. And writer, always **use a stopwatch** on your scripts while reading them out loud with all the intended inflection. Proper delivery of words takes time. Make your script too long, and artistic inflection will be the first thing to go.
5. ALL CAPS IS SHOUTING. But you already knew that. Any script writer who writes in all capital letters is doing so out of pure tradition. Any defense of that sad practice is idiotic. All caps are hard to read because

we've been trained over thousands of hours to see the beginnings of new sentences indicated as much by capital letters as by periods. Proper names are capitalized for an auditory reason as well.

6. Underlining is the cue to deepen the voice to a slightly lower register. This is an auditory way of communicating gravity.
7. Hyphenated sections are meant to be read as a single, unbroken word-without-pause.

If you write the way people speak, you'll use **bold letters** and *italics* more than any of the other techniques.

Underlining to achieve gravitas is used primarily when a master writer has exceptional voice talent at his command.

Hyphenated-words-without-pause will be used primarily to speed across tedious mental images that cannot be shortened through any other method.


ALL CAPS WILL BE USED RARELY.

Here's an example of what it looks like. See if you can read the following ad out loud the way I hear it in my mind:

**KESS:** Back in 1919, a man named *Tolkowski* decided that every round diamond should have 57 facets. Nobody else had a **better** number, so 57 facets became the standard for round diamonds. Go figure. This is Richard Kessler. If you want to see the world's new standard for beautiful round diamonds, just stop at any Kesslers and ask to see "The Kessler 81." *The amount of energy this diamond throws off makes you wonder if it's plugged into the wall.* Twenty-four additional facets make the Kessler 81 look like someone hit the "Fast Forward" button on the diamond-sparkle machine. A **Kessler 81** is 100 percent more beautiful than a standard-round-diamond, but costs only 2 percent more money. See it for yourself, then you tell me whether it's worth **2 percent** more. **You** be the judge.

**RICK:** Compare the new Kessler 81 to any other diamond. It's like comparing a light bulb that's **turned on** to a light bulb that *isn't*. Available only at Kesslers Diamonds.

**KESS:** I'm Richard Kessler, and I've got a Kessler 81 for *you*.

Now go write some ads that sell stuff. 

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## QUICKREAD™

- One of the biggest problems faced by radio writers is getting the voice talent to deliver the words exactly as the writer intended them to be heard.
- Newbies write unbroken sentences. That's why their ads sound phony.
- When possible, read the script to the voice talent *before* showing them the copy. That way, they'll *see* it on the paper as they first *heard* it in their ears.
- Use intonation shorthand, and teach it to your voice talent.



# Radio's Equals And Opposites

Dr. Roger Sperry won the Nobel Prize in 1981 for his discovery of brain lateralization, explaining once and for all the neurological tug-of-war between facts and faith, science and art, sales and programming.

The left-brain says, "When you do big numbers, radio is fun." The right-brain says, "Make radio fun, and you'll do big numbers. It's an epic battle between the left-brain and the right: methodical money versus soaring spirit. And both are necessary if you want to grow.

Consolidation was all about the lefties gaining power. Conversations were about "efficiencies" and "power ratios" and "maximum utilization." But now it seems the pendulum has begun to swing back toward the right-brain visionaries.

About a year and a half ago, one of my best friends called to say he'd been "made redundant." I'm pretty sure that means fired.

"Can you believe it?" he asked me. "Sure, I can believe it. What amazes me is that you were able to hang on for as long as you did."

My buddy believes in right-brain radio. In a recent press release announcing his return to major-market broadcasting, he said: "Radio is show business, and I believe that everyone in the radio industry has to work cleverly to create a bigger 'show' so we can all do more 'business.'"

In other words, "It takes a spectacle to create the spectacular."

I'm reminded of Tom Peters, who said, "Reward spectacular failure. Punish mediocre success." But the left-brain says, "Hey, wait a minute! I don't feel so good about this go-for-broke strategy. Isn't there a way to tweak the plan and ameliorate the craziness?"

**The secret to lasting success** is not to search for a middle ground, but to let the pendulum have its full arc. We need methodical enforcers of policy as much as we need boundary-pushing rule-breakers. Businesses get big when the left-brain folks take over. But now everything is under control with systems and methods and accountability, they must answer the following questions:

1. How do we keep our latest innovation from becoming our last?
2. How do we keep our organization as agile as a startup?
3. How do we keep a fear of risk from blinding us to opportunity?

In other words, "How do we keep alive the magic that our

right-brain predecessors created for us?"

Believe it or not, those three questions are so prevalent among America's big companies that they're featured in an ad campaign for IBM Consulting. Here are my answers to each of them:

## How do we keep our latest innovation from becoming our last?

Trust your intuition. Remember how to play. Do at least one crazy thing each day. **SPECIFICALLY:** When your mind wanders and you're thinking a strange thought, ask, "What would it cost me to chase this rabbit?" If you can afford the time, unleash your fun-loving beagle to chase that zigzagging rabbit of distraction. These furry friends may lead you to a brilliant innovation. The rabbit is a topological recognition cue and the beagle is pattern recognition, a function of your brain's intuitive, wordless right hemisphere. Having recognized a possible solution to a puzzle you've been unconsciously trying to solve, the freewheeling beagle of the right brain whispers to the logical lawyer of the left, "Look at that! Follow me!" It is this rabbit of inexplicable distraction that will guide you to Wonderland.


## How do we keep our organization as agile as a startup?

Repeat every day: "The truth shall make you free, but first it shall make you angry." **SPECIFICALLY:** Allow people who don't appreciate your success to study your core strengths in search of the weaknesses that could be exploited by a challenger. When a competitive strategy is discovered that could actually work, do it to yourself before someone else does. Become your own competitor. And be merciless.

Recognize that all answers are temporary. Allow no cow to become sacred. Yesterday's brilliant insight is tomorrow's traditional method. **SPECIFICALLY:** Hang a banner in the hallway, "I can't understand why people are frightened of new ideas. I'm frightened of old ones." Gather your staff every morning and say these words in unison like the Pledge of Allegiance. I'm serious. The inertia of cultural memory cannot be overcome without employing a physical action and repeating it as a group for at least 13 consecutive days. This is essential if you plan to overcome "the way it's always been." Changing corporate policy, having a meeting, and sending out a memo won't get it done.

## How do we keep a fear of risk from blinding us to opportunity?

Remember that proof-of-concept never requires you to bet the farm. Ideas that seem prohibitively dangerous can always be affordably tested. Create a culture of experimentation whose mantra is, "There are no ideas too crazy to test." **SPECIFICALLY:** Budget for failure. Set aside hard dollars for testing new ideas with "an increase in knowledge" being the only expected outcome. Risk is now eliminated. Fear is gone. You have created the perfect environment for successful Research and Development.

Hopefully, there is something here you can use. Now go do that thing you do. 

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## QUICKREAD™

- The left-brain says, "When you do big numbers, radio is fun." But the right-brain says, "Make radio fun, and you'll do big numbers."
- The secret to lasting success is not to search for a middle ground, but to let the pendulum have its full arc.
- Ideas that seem prohibitively dangerous can always be affordably tested.





## “Se Habla Español” No Es Suficiente

Sure, you know enough Spanish to read the title and know that it says “Spanish Spoken Here” is Not Enough. But do you know enough about the evolution of Latino culture in America to know why that statement is important today?

One of America’s leading consultants on marketing to Hispanics is a huge believer in radio. Did you read the *Associated Press* interview with Juan Guillermo Tornoe? “Whether you market to Latinos in Spanish or in English doesn’t really matter so much as whether you understand what’s on their mind. The Latino marketing barrier isn’t language, but culture,” says Tornoe.

In other words, writing ads in English and then translating them into Spanish — even accurate Spanish — is a time-tested recipe for disaster. Believe me. I’ve done made this mistake more than once.

Translating words is easy. But translating ideas and values from one culture to another is an entirely different matter. To connect with Hispanic shoppers, you must write ads that reflect Latino values — a strong emphasis on family and religion, for example — mingled with traditional American aspirations.

A recent story in *Newsweek* said, “As Latino spending power steadily rises, grocery stores, movie studios and clothing companies are paying close attention to this \$636 billion-plus market. What they’re discovering is that Hispanic-Americans, particularly young spenders between the ages of 14 and 34, want to be spoken to in English, even as they stay true to their Latino identity ... These young consumers are creating this new identity that says ‘I can have the best of both worlds.’”

According to Tornoe, Hispanics don’t need to see a Latino salesperson in order to feel comfortable in your store. “It’s more about ethnic diversity,” he says, “If a Latino shopper sees a Chinese salesperson, an African-American or a Native


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American, they’re going to feel more comfortable than if the staff is all white.” The American Hispanic mindset is, “Live Latin. Speak English.”

But Latino shoppers don’t want to be segregated. “They choose the same stores for the same reasons and go with the same frequency as non-Hispanics,” says Candace Corlett of market-research firm WSL Strategic Retail. “Clothing retailer Men’s Wearhouse learned that the hard way. In 2003, the company launched its Eddie Rodriguez stores, a lifestyle and clothing chain targeting Latino men. By the end of this year, all six stores will be closed.”

So how big is America’s Hispanic market today? Consider the following:

- In 280 of America’s 3,141 counties, non-Hispanic whites haven’t had majority status since 2000.
- Between 1990 and 2009, the Hispanic population will increase by 121 percent, compared to 14.1 percent for the rest of the population
- Salsa outsold ketchup by nearly \$175 million over the 52-week period ending October 8, 2005.
- The number of Hispanic businesses is growing four times as fast as the number of American businesses.
- From 1994 to 2004, Hispanic buying power posted a compound annual growth rate of 7.7 percent; nearly three times the 2.8 percent total U.S. rate of disposable income.
- The Hispanic population grew by 53 percent from 1990 to 2000, more than three times the rate of the rest of America.
- About half the total growth from 2000 to 2004 of America’s entire population were Hispanics (5.7 million people).
- 22 percent of all children in America are Hispanic.
- There are more Latinos in America than Canadians in Canada — 44.2 million Hispanics live in the U.S. as of July 2004, making Latinos the nation’s largest ethnic minority.
- Latino shoppers spend the longest time in the mall, and spend the most money at department stores, mall shops, and restaurants.

I think the time has come to learn what Latinos care about. What do you think? 

Stations wanting to interview Hispanic marketing consultant Juan Guillermo Tornoe can reach him at [jgtornoe@gmail.com](mailto:jgtornoe@gmail.com). Roy H. Williams, president of Wizard of Ads Inc., may be reached at [Roy@WizardofAds.com](mailto:Roy@WizardofAds.com).



### QUICKREAD™

- Writing ads in English and then translating them into Spanish — even accurate Spanish — is a time-tested recipe for disaster.
- To connect with Hispanic shoppers, you must write ads that reflect Latino values.
- Hispanics don’t need to see a Latino salesperson in order to feel comfortable in your store, but Latino shoppers don’t want to be segregated.





## To The 40 Grandest Poobahs In Radio

Gaining and holding people's attention is the key to radio's future

Is that "Grandest PoohBahs" headline meant to be an insult? Absolutely not. It's there, like all headlines and opening statements, merely to grab the attention of a targeted reader. And today, I'm targeting just 40 of them.

Have you ever noticed how hard it is to gain the attention of busy people? Too much to do, too little time, too many options, not enough day to get it all done. Sound like anybody you know? Give it a moment, and you'll soon realize that I just described *everybody* you know. People are getting busier every day. Even "unimportant" people, like the listeners to your radio stations.

So here's my question to the 40: How is radio planning to gain and hold the attention of an increasingly disinterested public? Is there a plan?

This morning I received a *Radio Ink* headline by e-mail, "**Analyst Calls April Radio Revenue 'A Big Miss.'**" The story said, "Wachovia VP/Equity Research Marci Ryvicker is calling April's 4% radio revenue decline 'a significant miss.' Ryvicker goes on to say that the decline for April radio revenue makes the third month in a row that radio was negative. National revenue dipped 7% during the month of April with local not doing much better, posting a 4% decline. Ryvicker adds, 'We continue to suggest investors be selective in the broadcast sector.'"

Was that decline in revenues a blip from which radio will quickly recover? Or was it the beginning of a trend? I don't pretend to know the answer. I'm merely asking the question.

So here's my question to the 40: How is radio planning to gain and hold the attention of an increasingly disinterested public? Is there a plan?

Here's another question: Is it only the investment community that's beginning to lose interest in radio, or is it the American public?

Gaining and holding people's attention is the key to radio's future.

**Good News:** there are people who know precisely how to gain and hold attention. Successful speechwriters, novelists, songwriters, comedians, and cartoonists each have their own techniques for breaking through walls of disinterest.

**Better News:** Most of their techniques could easily be adapted to radio.

**Fabulous News:** The impact of these new attention-grabbing-and-holding techniques would show up as an increase in measurable results for advertisers and a national increase in time spent listening.

**Bad News:** Radio rarely considers talent from outside its own little ghetto.

Might I be so bold as to suggest that ideas from outside radio might prove to be useful in helping radio reinvent itself for a new generation?

Are you aware of the 40 proven, scientific techniques that could reenergize our weary media? Google "TRIZ" and you'll find research that indicates there are only 40 answers behind every innovation in history. Amazing breakthroughs and discoveries are now being made by people who took the time to investigate the 40 principles of TRIZ and adapt them to their respective industries. I've studied it, and am convinced that TRIZ could trigger a whole new way of doing radio.

I know it sounds insane, but isn't it worth a few keystrokes?

Read about TRIZ and you'll soon see how every innovation, every new patent, every breakthrough revolves around one or more of its 40 principles. General Electric knows it. IBM knows it. Boeing knows it. NASA knows it. And now you know it, too. Everything revolves around the 40.

Just like in radio.

I want to personally thank all 40 of you for reading this. I know how busy you are. ☎

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### QUICKREAD™

- How is radio planning to gain and hold the attention of an increasingly disinterested public?
- Gaining and holding people's attention is the key to radio's future.
- Google "TRIZ" and you'll find research that indicates there are only 40 answers behind every innovation in history.
- Read about TRIZ and you'll soon see how every innovation, every new patent, every breakthrough revolves around one or more of its 40 Principles.





## How To Track Ad Results

Try one — or all three — of these strategies

There will always be advertisers who want to “hold their advertising dollars accountable.” You meet these people every day, right? Rather than debate with them the counter-productive nature of treating their advertising like a cosmic gumball machine — in goes the budget, then you crank the handle and out come the results — I usually just give them what they want.

There are basically three ad tracking strategies from which to choose:

**STRATEGY 1. Under-price a well-known consumable.** This is the classic Loss Leader strategy. The general idea is that enough customers will buy additional items to offset the losses created by the under-pricing of the lead item. Would you make a trip to the grocery store if they were advertising milk at 75 cents a gallon and eggs at 25 cents a dozen? You can easily track the effectiveness of the advertising through the number of units sold, or by the increase in customers. The losses created through the under-pricing of the item will be relative to the amount of traffic generated. Think of it as pro-rated advertising. The better it works, the more it costs. The downside to this strategy is that customers who switch to you for reasons of price alone will switch from you just as quickly, for the same reason.

Don't confuse the Loss Leader strategy with couponing. Generally, coupons appeal only to the lowest quality of customer. If you're going to offer a bargain, do it openly. Your best customers, the relational ones, will be offended by the idea that some customers pay a higher price than others.



**STRATEGY 2. Feature an item with a powerful story.** The quantity of customers generated through this strategy will be less than when using the Loss Leader strategy, but they will be a better quality of customer. The keys to this strategy are: a. You must find an item with a powerful story, then, b. You must find a writer capable of telling that story well. Again, the effectiveness of the ad can easily be tracked through sales of the item and/or a general increase in customer count.

Both strategies 1 and 2 must be limited-time offers. “While supplies last” is always a bad idea. You must name a specific calendar date when the offer

will expire and then be sure you have enough of the promotional item in stock to satisfy every inquiry. “Limit one per customer” is usually okay as long as it was said plainly in the ad.

**STRATEGY 3. Plant a word flag in the ad.** A word flag is an unexpected, memorable name, word, or phrase that customers will voluntarily mention in their efforts to be friendly or to “connect” with you. **Example:** I once ended a radio ad by having an unintelligent-sounding caller call the store and ask, “How much should a hamster weigh?” The flustered clerk responded by saying that he wasn't sure. To which the caller replied, “I got one up to 72 pounds! You think maybe it's a wolverine?” Customers continued to smile and ask, “Where do you keep those 72-pound hamsters?” for several months after the advertising schedule had expired. The downside of this strategy is that it produces less traffic, but usually of the highest quality. The customers responding to these ads will be coming to you because they've decided they like you. **Note:** It is not a word-flag to say, “Mention this ad and receive a 20 percent discount.” Those sad ads make you seem unfocused, unintelligent, and desperate.

It is possible to combine one, two, or even all three strategies in a single ad. But you've got to have a brilliant ad writer. Do you?



### QUICKREAD™

- There are basically three ad tracking strategies from which to choose.
- Under-price a well-known consumable.
- Feature an item with a powerful story.
- Plant a word flag in the ad.
- It is possible to combine one, two, or even all three strategies in a single ad. But you've got to have a brilliant ad writer.

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## How Often Should I Change My Ads?

About 15 years ago I concluded that a medium-impact broadcast ad should be replaced only after the typical listener has heard it at least 12 times, and a low-impact ad should be replaced after achieving a frequency of 20. I arrived at these conclusions by carefully monitoring the results of radio campaigns of clients around the country.

But the times have changed, and so have you and I. It appears that the media filters we carry in our heads are like computers: They've been forced to get faster in order to keep up with the demands our high-speed society puts on them.

My most current research indicates that today's moderate-impact broadcast ad begins to show diminishing returns after achieving a frequency of only 8 to 10. Let the same listener hear an ad 12 times or more, and you'll see a clearly diminished effectiveness after achieving a frequency of 8 to 10. It appears that our brains have learned to recognize more quickly what we've heard before, and subconsciously to tune it out.

Dang. This means we've got to write 20 to 50 percent more ads in every 52-week campaign to maintain maximum effectiveness.

Additionally, it would appear that low-impact "institutional" ads are no longer able to pound out market share using the blunt instruments of frequency and consistency alone. That day is over. If your advertisers don't have something meaningful to say, they should really keep their money in their pockets. In other words, we've got to improve: 1. our message uncovering skills; and 2. our ability to develop innovative strategy — or we'll soon be hearing more people than ever say, "I tried radio and it didn't work."

One thing that hasn't changed is that a listener still has to hear a new ad two or three times before it will begin to affect their choices, even when they're familiar with the advertiser and have a positive opinion of them. What this means is that the first week of a new ad will yield softer results than you can expect to see in weeks two and three. But after an ad achieves a frequency of 8 to 10, you'll see it plummet to a whole new depth of non-response.

You can take my word for all of this, or you can do the experiment yourself. Here are the criteria that were used in my proof set:



### QUICKREAD™

- The media filters we carry in our heads are like computers: They've been forced to get faster in order to keep up with the demands our high-speed society puts on them.
- Current research indicates that today's moderate-impact broadcast ad begins to show diminishing returns after achieving a frequency of only 8 to 10.
- After an ad achieves a frequency of 8 to 10, you'll see it plummet to a whole new depth of non-response.

1. Begin with an advertiser that gives radio 100 percent of his/her ad budget and
2. achieves at least a 3-frequency in the typical week and reaches at least 40 percent of the 18+ market, 52 weeks a year. This 3+frequency will be a multi-station radio buy as measured by a 1-week, master reach-and-frequency analysis.
3. The advertiser in question should maintain a presence in at least five unrelated markets with a similar reach and frequency achieved in each market.
4. The advertiser must keep meticulous sales and traffic records.
5. The total sales volume of the advertiser should be in the tens of millions of dollars and the ad budget should be in the millions. In other words, we need a large sample size.
6. The advertiser must be known to be truly objective. They cannot have a hidden agenda or a secret axe to grind.
7. Data must be collected weekly for at least 14 months.

#### Definition of terms:

1. **A low-impact ad** is the typical radio ad, answering who, what, when, where, and why. It is informative without being interesting.
2. **A medium-impact ad** speaks to the heart as well as the mind. It is well written and surprisingly produced (meaning that it has elements of the auditory unexpected, such as dramatic pause, unusual voice inflection, interesting sound effects, incongruent music, Broca-surprising word pairings, nouns used as verbs, etc.). Medium-impact ads never carry an expiration date. They are not used to make limited-time offers, but rather for brand and traffic building.
3. **A high-impact ad** includes the urgency of a deadline.

Years ago I began teaching the power of a weekly 3-frequency, and radio stations across America created the 21/52 plan. This is still a good plan. The only thing that has changed is that:

- a. Your ads must have at least moderate impact, salience, or relevance to the listener. Ads that have no relevance will not be remembered, no matter how much frequency you give them.
- b. You need to change copy after an ad has been heard by the typical listener 8 to 10 times.

If you're willing to spend 14 months and millions of dollars, you can repeat my experiment and come to the same conclusion I found. Or you can save your clients all that time and money and just take my word for it. ☛

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## When Should I Use The Client's Voice?

If you ask radio listeners or television viewers to name their favorite ads, they'll usually list ads that produced high entertainment but low results. Ask advertisers to name their favorite ads, and they smilingly tell you about messages that made them a lot of money but that no one else remembers.

Does your station measure the success of its commercial breaks by how few listeners bang the buttons on the dash? Or do you measure success by how often your clients bang the buttons on the cash register?

Damn. Sales and programming collide again.

Old-school radio people believe announcers should sound smooth and mellifluous. Flawless. Golden. The new school believes people on the air should sound authentic. Relaxed. Believable.

Have you ever told a client his voice wasn't suitable for radio? "Leave it to us. We'll use one of our professional announcers."

**INTERPRETATION:** "We'll make your ads sound exactly like everyone else's."

**BOTTOM LINE:** Smooth, polished ads are easy to ignore. That's why they're less likely to cause your listeners to change stations, and why they're less likely to generate results for your client.

I've built a career by selling 52-week schedules to clients who need to gain the trust of the public. And I'm widely known to use my clients' voices in their ads.

I use client voices for three reasons:

1. They're more believable.
2. They're less easy to ignore.

3. They create the highest level of personal connection with the listener to be accomplished through mass media. This trust-bond is essential when the product or service category is one in which the customer has a high level of fear. *Diamonds. Used cars. Medical procedures.*

But I don't use client voices:

1. When the client sounds as though he or she is reading a script. (We can usually coach the client past this tendency, however, and so can you.)

2. When the advertised product or service is part of a no-fear category. *Restaurants. Electronics. Concerts.*

3. When the script requires character voices.

As long as I've been in radio, program directors have been suggesting that I allow them to add music pads beneath my clients' dry-voice ads. I've been rejecting their helpful sabotage for just as many years. Music beds are like soap: They allow you to mix the oil of highly produced music programming — flowing with rhythm and meter — with the repellent water of unstructured talking. In other words, adding a music bed will make your ad less noticeable.

If you're considering a client spokesperson:

■ **Be sure your client is prepared to endure the criticism of friends and family.** Any time results are sharply on the rise, so are complaints: "You really ought to let a professional do your ads."

■ **Avoid clichés and overused phrases.** If your client says things that feel predictable to your listener, the ad will seem contrived and artificial.

■ **Be sure the client doesn't sound as though he or she is reading.** Extemporaneous is good. Mispronunciations are good. And struggling to find just the right word is the stuff of miracles.

Uh-oh. Is this beginning to sound like you have to record a lengthy chat with your client and then edit bits into a warm and cozy patchwork quilt of "unrehearsed" audio? Sorry about that, but I never said this would be quick or easy. I said *only* that it is powerful.

Though I don't use music beds, I occasionally add barely motivated sound effects. I said *barely motivated*. You're looking for a sound that doesn't belong, but somehow fits. I don't want the effects to flow seamlessly into the ad any more than I want to inject smooth music or oily clichés. Think of these sound effects as punctuation, a palate cleanser in a multi-course meal, an audio *non sequitur* that will elevate attention then blend into cognitive resolution at a higher level.

If you have any training in music, think of this as a major seventh. In the words of composer and symphony conductor Ron Nelson, "The major seventh chord is highly unstable ... by simple virtue of the notes used in this chord, its primary use is as a portal to a resolution ... an end to a phrase, a new key or even a new section of music." Its notes don't quite belong together, but they somehow miraculously fit. If you don't understand music theory, ask a friend who does. This is important.

If you can wrap your arms around what I've tried to explain to you today, it will make your clients — and you — a lot of money. Good luck. ☺

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### QUICKREAD™

- Smooth, polished ads are easy to ignore.
- Client voices are more believable, less easy to ignore, and create personal connection with the listener — essential when the customer has a high level of fear in the purchase.
- Don't use client voices when the client sounds as though he or she is reading a script, when the script requires character voices, or when the advertised product or service is in a no-fear category.





## Mirages Of Marketing

### Radio Is Good — But It's Not A Miracle Cure

It's easier to sell something you believe in. That's why we work so hard to convince ourselves that radio is the best investment an advertiser can make.

Sometimes we do too good a job on ourselves, and believe so much in radio that it causes us to chase the truth, like a mirage, across the desert.

#### MIRAGE 1: RADIO IS A MIRACLE CURE.

Have you ever done such a good job of convincing your prospect of the power of radio that they handed you their broken business and told you to fix it? If you've never walked into that minefield, don't worry, I've done it often enough for all of us, and have always gotten blown to bits. Not even radio can fix a fundamentally flawed business.

One of the hardest things about selling radio is that it doesn't work the same way for everyone. In the end, everything hinges on whether the stuff being advertised is any good.

Bill Bernbach, legendary principal of the Doyle Dane Bernbach advertising agency, understood this. He said, "Advertising doesn't create a product advantage. It can only convey it... A great ad campaign will make a bad product fail faster. It will get more people to know it's bad."

Writing ads comes easier when you have something to say, so do your best to find advertisers who have something to say. You'll be stunned by how much better the ads work.

#### MIRAGE 2: IT'S YOUR FAULT.

Companies in pain rarely look inside themselves for the problem. They always look outside. "It must be the advertising." Give them a minute and they'll convince themselves that you, the outsider, are in fact the one responsible. And if you let them, they'll convince you, as well. Don't let them.

You want the truth? Your client's success isn't determined by the quality and power of your station. It's determined by the quality and power of the offer in the ad. A good ad for a good product will work on anyone's station. Ads for bad products work on no one's station. Good ads work even better on formats where they fit. Weak offers don't work, regardless of the quality of your audience.

It's not your fault.



#### QUICKREAD™

- Not even radio can fix a fundamentally flawed business.
- Your client's success is determined by the quality and power of the offer in the ad.
- Clients rarely tell the whole story. Learn to hear what they're not telling you.

#### MIRAGE 3: YOUR CLIENT HAS TOLD YOU THE WHOLE TRUTH

I'm always staggered by the size of things my clients conveniently forget. I recently had a meeting with a long-time client who informed me that he was hiring a firm to do "data mining." For the uninitiated, data mining is the new buzzword for analytical hyper-targeting. At the end of the day it means "Let's do a lot of cross-referencing and create a magical mailing list and then send something to all these Perfect Targets."

I smelled where my client was headed as soon as he began talking about using "a rifle shot instead of a shotgun blast." But you can't argue with results, right?

"Last Christmas I let them do an experiment for me, and it made me a lot of money."

My client went on to explain how iPods and satellite radio have completely destroyed broadcast radio in his town. "No one listens to the radio anymore. Maybe it's different in other towns, but here, no one listens to the radio. We're just not reaching the people anymore. No one is listening."

Did I mention that my client has strongly resisted my urgent plea to update his inventory, his pricing, and his image? "No, Roy. The rifle shot is where it's at. Targeting is the answer."

Here are the details of his Christmas experiment: Data mining came up with 2,500 Perfect Targets, 934 of whom immediately came into the store and consummated the purchase. Impressive, right? I was blown away. Those kinds of results are nothing short of miraculous.

But I still smelled a rat, so I asked, "What offer did you make?" "We sent 2,500 people a \$100 gift certificate."

Oh, the miracle of targeting!


"How many of the 934 respondents bought something for almost exactly \$100?"

"About two-thirds of them. But the other one-third spent enough money to make the whole thing profitable."

I suggested we test the matter by picking random names from the phone book and mailing each person a \$100 gift certificate. I have absolutely no doubt that we'd see a similar result. My client refused to listen.

Sigh.

I share this so you'll feel more normal. People don't always listen to me, either.

**Bottom line:** Clients rarely tell the whole story. Learn to hear what they're not telling you. 

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## Radio R & D?

### Reward Your Employees For Their Great Ideas

If radio hopes to move with strength into the future, it must embrace research and development. But not the narrow and skewed R & D we've used in recent years. Please, no more of that. To paraphrase Andrew Lang, radio has been using research like a drunk man uses a lamppost — for support rather than illumination.

Yes, the crowd under the streetlight knows best what ought to be changed, but the preconceptions of our researchers give them the perspective of the drunk. The world looks different from the gritty sidewalk than it does from the carpeted boardroom. Fearful of findings that don't support executive leanings, radio's researchers have become yes men who ask the same old questions:

- **What are the revolutionary formats that would win audiences back from iPods?**
- **How can we make commercials palatable to the public?**
- **What is the reality of the Hispanic market potential, and how is it accessible to Anglo advertisers?**
- **Should we be doing something different in overnights?**
- **Why don't agencies think more highly of radio? (And please, I beg you, don't tell me again that it's because they make more money producing ads for print and TV.)**
- **How can we take grocery store dollars from newspaper?**
- **How can we take new car dollars from TV?**
- **How can we get at the truth?**

It's easier than you think.

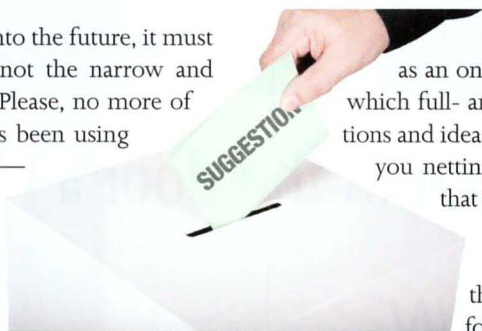
Most corporate communications come from the top down, but the message that matters most is the one that travels from the bottom up. Have you provided a path for that important message to travel?

Are you encouraging and collecting the suggestions of your people?



#### QUICKREAD™

- Are you encouraging and collecting the suggestions of your people?
- Do you reward good ideas by shining the spotlight of company-wide recognition?
- Be sure the employee is thanked for the effort, even when the idea isn't used.
- The combination of reward, immediate response from management, and regular spotlighting of good suggestions will make your employees feel tied to the company's success.



It can start with something as simple as an online suggestion box, an e-mail address to which full- and part-time staff can send their observations and ideas. Do you have such a suggestion box? Are you netting the wisdom from that ocean of talent that lies on the other end of your payroll?

Probably not.

We rarely improve things until they're measured. Do you have a method for measuring the number and quality of suggestions you get from your employees? Do you reward good ideas by shining the spotlight of company-wide recognition? A co-worker's smiling photograph in a newsletter — holding a check they can take to their family — will inspire other employees to start digging for the gold that lies underground.

How many diggers do you currently employ? Have they been doing any digging lately?

The search for good ideas is like any other treasure hunt. There's got to be a reward for finding the treasure.

Smart companies attach a financial reward program to the employee suggestion box. If the company uses your money-saving suggestion, management will calculate how much money it will save in one year and give you a bonus check for a portion of those savings.

But radio isn't in need of money-saving. It's in need of audience-building. Does radio management have the humility, openmindedness, and wit to create ways to reward audience-building? To reward money-making? The stick of discipline rarely moves the donkey. It's the carrot dangling from the end of that stick that drives the strong beast forward.

Where would you like the strong beast to take you? I suggest you try holding a carrot in that direction. The donkey isn't nearly as dumb as you think.

If you think you may want to launch such a plan, be sure the employee is thanked for the effort, even when the idea isn't used. And never fail to give a brief explanation as to why the idea was passed over. Do this, and you'll see that even when an idea isn't used, that employee will continue to submit new ideas.

The combination of (1) a reward and (2) an immediate response from management and (3) regular spotlighting of good suggestions will make your employees feel tied to the company's success.

Hey, I'm not making this stuff up. Smart companies have been doing these things for years. 📧

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# The Fading Strength Of Repetition

The Audience Is Still There — They Just Won't Pay Attention To Drivel

Have nervous clients been telling you that you're losing your listeners to satellite radio and the iPod?

Broadcast radio has lost about 4 percent of its audience over the past three years. That number is slightly higher in the younger demos, but still not high enough to justify the panic among radio advertisers. So is the problem with radio just in their heads?

According to my research, involving hundreds of pieces of radio copy for advertisers in dozens of markets over a period of more than 500 weeks: No. The problem of radio's diminished effectiveness is very real. Radio isn't working like it did two years ago. But clients are wrongfully assuming that audience attrition is to blame.

I get paid according to how much my clients grow. So I don't really care what the problem is. My job is to find it and fix it.

Here's what I discovered, tested, and proved:

**1. Internet surfing has trained radio listeners to quickly disregard empty words.** You spend about a minute a day going through the mail, right? Until recently, these 6 minutes a week were your only exercise in the high-speed evaluation of content. But now you're spending at least 6 hours a week scanning search engine results and web pages for relevant, meaningful, salient information. Those hours are teaching you — and your listeners — to recognize more quickly and disregard word-fluff and other irrelevant information.

**2. Salience has become more important than repetition.** (I did not say repetition no longer matters.) Salience is the word used by cognitive neuroscientists for meaningfulness, or relevance.

**Bottom line:** Meaningful (salient) messages are working better than ever, especially when the fundamental premise of your ad is clearly stated in the opening line. Ads full of unsupported claims and overworked image-building phrases are being rejected before they ever enter your listener's subconscious.

Our brains admit information into mid-term and long-term memory according to a formula of salience x repetition. Traditionally, radio has been able to overcome a lack of salience in the message with an abundance of frequency in the schedule. Today's listener isn't letting us get away with that anymore.



## QUICKREAD™

- According to my research, the problem of radio's diminished effectiveness is very real, but clients are wrongfully assuming that audience attrition is to blame.
- Meaningful (salient) messages are working better than ever.
- Ads full of unsupported claims and overworked image-building phrases are being rejected before they ever enter your listener's subconscious.

The audience is still there. What's gone is their willingness to pay attention to drivel.


Is this beginning to make sense to you? For your clients to see the big-time results that radio can deliver, they must:

1. **Air ads about things your audience really cares about.**
2. **Write those ads in a style that rings true.**
3. **Avoid heroic chest thumping such as "We are the number one..." because it is falling on increasingly deaf ears.**
4. **Close the loopholes in the ad copy!**
5. **Provide specifics; they're more believable than generalities.**
6. **Understand that substance is more important than style.**
7. **Realize that creativity and repetition can no longer be expected to overcome a shortage of salience. You've got to convince your client to give you a message that matters.**

In the past 18 months I've seen radio ads fail that once would have produced good results. Yet other ads are working far better than I would have expected. Here's a piece of radio copy that triggered a miraculous result for my client, Sean Jones. Based on all that I've told you so far, see if you can figure out why.

SEAN JONES: "Your life and her life have become intertwined like two ropes, looped into a knot. And that's a good thing. It gives you both something to hang on to. If you're in love, you know exactly what I'm talking about. This is Sean Jones of Spence Diamonds, and I'm suggesting you spend **ninety-nine dollars** on the woman you love. But wait till you hear what you **get** for that **ninety-nine dollars**: The new Love-Loop necklace is 14-karat gold tied into a beautiful knot and set with glittering **diamonds**. And each Love Loop comes with its own gold chain so you can slip it over her head as you kiss her. She's gonna like that. White gold or yellow gold, set with glittering diamonds in a powerful symbol of your love and commitment. Ask to see the Love-Loop necklace, just **ninety-nine dollars** at Spence Diamonds. Don't wait for a special occasion. Buy her diamonds just **because you love her**."

One last thing: My client had never seen this jewelry item and had none in stock. I saw the item, recognized the symbolic story that could be written about it, and suggested to Sean that he buy some and air my ad as an experiment. He sold **thousands** of them. I was paid an embarrassingly large bonus.

Deliver a measurable result. It's a hundred times more convincing than any demographic, psychographic, or reach-and-frequency data you could ever deliver. 

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## Refer To An Unseen Action

Leaving Out Some Details Will Draw The Listener In

To increase the **magnetism** of a message, **refer to unseen action**.

"Thoughts are the threads that bind us to deeds. Deeds are the ropes that bind us to habits. Habits are the chains that bind us to destiny."

— inscription carved on the West Wall at the palace in Maygassa

Where is Maygassa? Who carved the quote? How large is it written? How long has it been there? These are the questions that immediately spring to mind, right? By referring to an event in an untold story, a writer

1. **stimulates curiosity,**
2. **elevates interest, and**
3. **heightens awareness.**

Would you like to generate that level of interest for your clients?

A famous paragraph written by Ernest Hemingway opens by saying, "They shot the six cabinet ministers at half-past six in the morning against the wall of a hospital. There were pools of water in the courtyard."

One Hemingway reviewer observes: "What cabinet ministers of what country, for what crime, or for what historical movement, and with what justice, or with what miscarriage of justice, we are never told...these elements were rigorously excluded from the writer's art, in order to intensify the descriptions of pure pain and horror."

— Maxwell Geismar, July 1, 1962

Here's a quote taken from *The Engines of God*, lifted from the diary of Janet Allegrì: "I've been thinking a lot about my life the last few days, and I have to say that it doesn't seem to have had much point. I've done well professionally, and I've had a pretty good time. Maybe that's all you can reasonably ask. But tonight I keep thinking about things not done. Things not attempted because I was afraid of failing. Things not got around to. Thank God I had the chance to help Hutch throw

her foamball. I hope it gets out. It's something I'd like to be remembered for."

Who is Hutch? Why did she throw a foamball? Who did she aim it at? Why did she need help throwing it? What the heck is a foamball, anyway? And aren't you just a bit curious about Janet Allegrì and what else might be hiding in that diary?

Dang. I did it to you again.

Referring to an untold story is a powerful technique, rarely used. Most writers just don't have the guts to do it. Or if they do, their client lacks the wit to recognize the magnetic attraction of it.

Here's a radio script written by the great Adam Donmoyer that obliquely refers to an untold story. See if it doesn't leap off the page and bang you on the snout:

Do you remember what it was like before you met her? Seriously, do you remember all those girls that seemed okay at first, but later — **whoa!**

But now you're beginning to understand what they mean by "happily ever after," right?

Do you have any idea how many guys are out there **still lookin'** for exactly what you have?

Don't screw this up, man. Remember what happened to Leeroy.

You need to think about lifting up the top of an engagement ring box while you're down on one knee. That's really not such a scary idea when you imagine that it's her you're giving it to, right?

The **scary** part is shopping for a diamond. You don't want to go swimming in those shark-infested waters. No, no, no. You want to go where it's happy and safe. You want to go to **Preston's [Guitar Stinger] Rocks.**

No pressure, no hassle. Just great prices, the hottest styles of engagement rings and financing if you need it.

They don't call us Preston's Rocks [Guitar Stinger] for nothing. We do diamonds **better than anybody**, because diamonds are all we do.

Back behind the Arby's on 96th, just west of I-69.

If you'd like to hear that radio ad in its final form, just go to [www.MMMemo.com/PrestonsAd.htm](http://www.MMMemo.com/PrestonsAd.htm)

And don't forget to bang the wonkus.

Don't even think about adapting that script for a local client. Copyright law prohibits it. **Don't use the ad, use the technique.** 📺

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### QUICKREAD™

- Referring to an untold story is a powerful technique.
- Most writers don't have the guts to do it, and most clients don't recognize the interest it will generate.
- By referring to an event in an untold story, a writer stimulates curiosity, elevates interest, and heightens awareness.



# Talk Loud And Draw A Crowd

## Exposing One Of Radio's Great Myths

### Q: WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS IS FALSE?

1. Thomas Edison invented electric light.
2. Guglielmo Marconi invented radio.
3. Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone.

Because this is a magazine about radio, you're probably assuming the Marconi statement to be the false one, right? If so, you're only one-third correct. All three statements are false.

Nikola Tesla invented radio in 1893 when Marconi was just 19 years old, then wrote a series of scientific papers describing exactly how to build one. Underrated to this day, Tesla was perhaps the most brilliant scientist to stride the earth since Leonardo da Vinci.

But Guglielmo Marconi knew how to talk loud and draw a crowd. Marconi read Tesla's descriptions, then built a radio and claimed it was his own invention. Newspaper stories everywhere began touting the young genius Marconi.

How certain are we that Marconi stole the credit for Tesla's invention? Nine months after Tesla's death in 1943, the Supreme Patent Court of the United States announced its decision: "Nikola Tesla is the father of wireless transmission and radio." The court concluded that Marconi was lying. Case closed.

So what about Alexander Graham Bell? Was he simply another poser who knew how to work the press? At the risk of sounding harsh: yes. The telephone was invented by an Italian immigrant named Antonio Meucci, who died penniless. Meucci didn't know how to talk loud and draw a crowd. Alexander Graham Bell did.

How certain are we that Bell stole the credit for Meucci's invention? In 2001, the 107th Congress of the United States passed House Resolution 269. In a nutshell, that resolution acknowledges that "Meucci invented the telephone, Bell stole it from him, and we all feel real bad that Meucci got screwed." Antonio Meucci had been dead for 112 years. During those years, Bell Telephone became one of the largest and richest companies on earth.

Speaking of the largest and richest companies on earth, the backbone of the Microsoft empire — the DOS operating system — wasn't created by Bill Gates or Paul Allen. They bought it from the little company that employed its creator, Tim Paterson, and then Gates and Allen flew into high gear to popularize it. Talk loud and

draw a crowd wins again. But at least Gates and Allen bought DOS instead of stealing it.

Thomas Edison was a great inventor. His first invention was a stock ticker that was purchased by the New York Stock Exchange. With the money he made from that invention, Edison hired a staff and set up his famous laboratory in Menlo Park, NJ.

Joseph Swann in England and William Sawyer in the U.S. were also brilliant inventors. Swann and Sawyer were each working on the production of electric light by running a current through a filament in a vacuum. When Edison learned they were further along in their experiments than he was, Edison simply announced that he had perfected the light bulb and immediately received all the recognition. He made that announcement more than a year before he actually produced electric light. By the time Swann and Sawyer announced their inventions, electric light was already old news, even though Edison hadn't yet actually done what he'd claimed.

Edison's statement to the press bought him the time he needed to complete his experiments. Talk loud and draw a crowd.


Am I suggesting that you don't have to be creative to be successful? Yep. Is it honorable to pretend you've created something when in truth you've just "borrowed" the idea from someone else? Absolutely not.

### My point is this: Fame is not a reliable indicator of talent.

How do you measure success?

Nikola Tesla, the inventor of radio, was awarded 221 worldwide patents and 113 U.S. patents. He saw money only as a tool that allowed him to continue his research for the betterment of humanity. After 1915, he faded into obscurity.

Tesla was a genius who changed the world but died with nothing to show for it. Marconi was a thief who won the Nobel Prize for what he stole from Tesla. Who would you rather be?

**RS.** From the Interesting Cultural Trivia Department: The rock band Tesla has a song called *Edison's Medicine*. One of its lines says, "They'll sell you on Marconi. Familiar, but a phony." Like their namesake, these guys have done their homework. 

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WEAF network NBC-Red; the WJZ operation becomes NBC-Blue. Later and lesser-known networks were NBC's White, Orange and Gold.

**1927** — First coast-to-coast hookup broadcasts the Rose Bowl.

**1927** — The Radio Act of 1927 is passed. The Federal Radio Commission is born and grants 620 licenses.

**1927** — United Independent Broadcasters Inc. is



William S. Paley

formed on Jan. 27. Four months later, Columbia Phonograph Manufacturing Co. rescues the company from financial ruin. Columbia is unable to secure sufficient advertising, and sells the company for \$500,000 to Congress Cigar Co.

executive William S. Paley. The company is renamed Columbia Broadcasting System, or CBS.



### 1930s

**1931** — Radio revenue is estimated at \$170 million.

**1932** — Franklin Delano Roosevelt begins making radio speeches during the presidential campaign. He ultimately wins by a landslide.

**1933** — FM is demonstrated to RCA by Major Edwin





## The Right Thoughts In The Right Order

Ad Writing Is Simply Organized Salesmanship

Are you one of those consultants who believes the message of an ad should be dictated by the media chosen to carry it? Do you believe that radio copy is fundamentally different than direct-mail copy, magazine copy, TV copy, or face-to-face selling?

Or are you one those radio folk who imagines a distinction between salespeople and ad writers.

Ad writing is simply organized salesmanship. Are you in sales?

**Imagine making a sales presentation** — in writing — to a person you know very little about. You could do it, right? You'd simply have to depend more on your product knowledge and less on your sparkling smile, steady gaze, and winning personality. You'd have to write plainly and clearly:

1. What you're offering to do;
2. How you plan to do it;
3. Why your offer is better than the others.

Congratulations. You wrote an ad. Mail it to someone, or to several someones, and see what happens. If you said something worth hearing, you're likely to make a sale.

**Now organize your thoughts** into the fewest possible words so you'll be better able to hold your prospect's attention.

Oh, so you've decided to make this a really good ad! Remember, shorter is better. Saying more in fewer words is the key to holding people's attention. There's no such thing as a good sales letter that is longer than a single page.

**Locate the most meaningful statement** in your presentation and move it to the beginning.

This is going to be a powerful piece of persuasion. Open big if you want to see big results. Make a single point wholeheartedly. Weak ads make multiple points half-heartedly.

**Trim what you've written** so it can be read out loud in a specific number of seconds.



### QUICKREAD™

- Do you believe that radio copy is fundamentally different than direct-mail copy, magazine copy, TV copy, or face-to-face selling?
- Most beginners write ads that take about 90 seconds to read out loud. Tighten it to 60 seconds, and watch your ad gain power.
- If you want to become better at selling radio, follow the seven steps outlined here.



Congratulations again, you've just created a radio ad. Most beginners will instinctively write ads that take about 90 seconds to read out loud. Tighten it to 60 seconds, and watch your ad gain power. A real pro can make that message ring like a bell in 30. And the best-of-the-best can rock the world in 15 attention-riveting seconds.

**Dramatically increase the point size** of your opening statement and add a photograph or illustration to reinforce it.

That's a fine magazine or newspaper ad. And it reinforces everything you've been saying on the radio! You've got the beginnings of a **comprehensive master marketing strategy**. Keep this up and people will think you know what you're doing.

**Instead of a stationary photograph**, try using a series of video images to reinforce your radio script.

Television, anyone? Hey look! Your master marketing strategy just got stronger. The only dangerous assumption we're making is that you've got enough ad budget to buy sufficient repetition in all these different media. In truth, you probably need to pick just one of these media, and then become the king of that mountain.

**Now post any or all** of these media variations to a website.

Did I hear you say e-commerce? Use your website as a 24-hour relationship deepener and expert salesperson, even if you don't plan to transact money online. Your corporate website should be the most highly organized repository of expert advice and salesmanship within your corporation.

Now break all these components apart again and use them to prepare, rehearse, or illustrate your next face-to-face sales presentation. If you sell by presenting useful and interesting information in a clear and logical manner, you're either a really great salesperson or a fairly average ad writer.

**If you want to become better at selling radio:**

1. Sit down — as an exercise — and write an ad for what you're trying to sell. Is it a package? A promotion? A 52-week annual?
2. Record your ad in the production room. You work at a radio station, right?
3. Listen to what you've recorded.
4. Tweak it and make it better.
5. Record it again and again until you can't make it better.
6. When you've got it memorized, deliver your ad in person.
7. Yes, you're going to raise a few eyebrows.

And you're going to raise your billing, too. ☎

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