



The Client's Glass Ceiling

Every business that tries to rise to its full height will bump its head on a glass ceiling it didn't realize was there. That glass ceiling is created by the business owner's core beliefs about the customer.

Traditionally, 5 out of 10 customers will be in transactional shopping mode. The other 5 will be in relational shopping mode.

Shoppers in transactional mode are looking for information, facts, details, prices. Their thoughts revolve around the product itself, not the purchase experience.

Relational-mode shoppers are looking for a pleasant experience. They want to find the right place, the right person from whom to buy, an expert they can trust. The transactional shopper is gathering the information that will allow them to be their own expert.

A customer can be a relational shopper in one category and a transactional shopper in another. The labels don't define the customer. They describe only the mode of shopping, the momentary mindset of the decision maker, the type of ad to which he or she will respond.

Here's what's currently happening in America:

One of the 5 relational shoppers has begun to think transactionally.

The reasons are:

1. concerns about the economy. **Access to money is going down.**
2. information available via search engines. **Access to information is going up.**

Americans spent \$29.7 billion **online** at Christmas (Nov. 1 to Dec 31) — approximately \$100 for every man, woman, and child in the nation — up 19 percent from the previous year. In other words, there were 100 fewer dollars per person spent in brick-and-mortar stores in your town than were being spent just a few years ago at Christmastime.

And for the first time in the history of Starbucks, traffic is in sharp decline. Meanwhile, McDonald's improved their coffee and is reaping the benefits of more efficient buying, brewing, and serving. After considering the investments of money and time

demanding by each coffee provider, more and more customers are choosing McDonald's over Starbucks.

These same forces are at work in every business and service category. **Efficiency is the new customer service.**

Starbucks has always sold relationally. We're paying for the atmosphere of the café with its half-lit earthtones and iconic logo — the idea of affordable luxury — as much as we're paying for the coffee. But some people have begun to compare the quality and price of the coffee itself to the quality and price available from McDonald's and other providers.

Beginning to get the picture?

Starbucks, a powerful brand, has found their glass ceiling. In other words, they're selling as much coffee as can be sold relationally.

I'm sure you have your own idea about how Starbucks should respond to their decline in traffic, but the point of today's memo is this: A glass ceiling exists when a client overestimates the number of people who prefer to buy the way the advertiser prefers to sell.

People never really change their mind. They merely make new decisions based on new information. Will Starbucks give us new information, a new perspective in 2008, or will they just whine at their marketing department for the inexplicable decline in traffic?

How about your clients? What new efficiencies will they introduce to lure flagging traffic in the coming recession? (Yes, I used the R word.)

The Tiny Giant is that 1 relational shopper in 5 who is moving to a transactional perspective. This effectively shifts the marketing balance from 5/5 to 6/4 — which doesn't sound like a big thing until you realize that 6 is 50 percent more than 4.

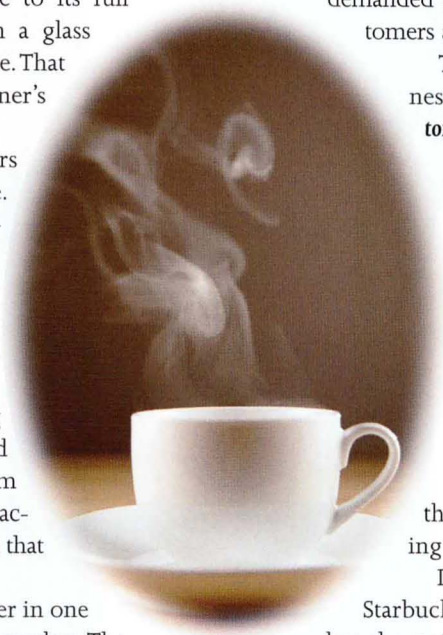
Does your client have the clear answers that 6 in 10 shoppers demand? Are they giving the growing tribe of transactional shoppers the information, facts, details, and prices they expect?

Or are they simply demanding that radio deliver more customers in relational shopping mode? (Please, I'm begging you for your own sake, don't fall into the trap of believing the answer is for your client to "target" relational shoppers though some magical radio format.)

Insist that your advertiser give you a message that will move the needle on the "who cares?" meter.

Your listeners' response, your advertisers' results, and your own financial future hang in the balance. ☒

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QUICKREAD™

- There are two types of shoppers: transactional and relational.
- Businesses that cling too tightly to beliefs about their customers eventually hit a glass ceiling.



Civic Responsibility

New America's Shifting Perspective

Labels like Baby Boomer and Gen-X and Soccer Mom assume a person's outlook is determined by when they were born. This is a very foolish assumption.

Baby Boomers aren't Boomers anymore. Most have adapted their outlook to what's happening now. By the end of 2008 there won't be a Baby Boomer left in America. The last, reluctant holdout will finally admit that Woodstock is over, Kennedy is dead, and the Idealism of the '60s was a wistful dream.

The 1993 book *Generations* asserted that western society swings from an Idealist outlook to a Civic perspective and back again with the precision of a pendulum. And at the bottom of each arc, the new views introduced by that generation's youth will be adopted by the adults within six years of the tipping point.

In January 2004 I launched a public presentation, **Society's 40-year Pendulum**, in which I made the following statement: "2003 was the first year in a six-year transition from the Idealist perspective to the Civic." 2008 will be the sixth and final year of that transition.

1963 introduced the Idealist outlook we associate with Baby Boomers. 1968 was the final year of that transition. By 1969, everyone in America, regardless of age, was seeing through rose-colored lenses. 2003 was 1963 all over again, but this time we're headed in the opposite direction. 2008 will be the last year of our transition to a Civic perspective.

To make the most of this transition, here's what to remember when selling in 2008:

1. Efficiency is the new service. Inefficient organizations built on high-touch "relationship" selling will decline. Today's customer is magnetically drawn to efficiency.

Your customer is saying, "Quality and price. And quick, please. I've got things to do."

2. Authenticity is essential. Naiveté is rare today. Your customer is equipped with a highly sensitive, amazingly accurate BS detector. When selling, remember: If you don't admit the downside, they won't believe the upside.

3. A horizontal connectedness is replacing yesterday's vertical, social hierarchy. Labels like "white collar" and "blue collar" sound almost racist today. The new American

dream isn't about pulling ahead and leaving the others behind. It's about becoming a productive member of the team. "Winning" has become less important than "belonging."

Labor unions were deadlier than a bag of hammers in 2004, a relic of the past, so when I predicted that collective bargaining would reawaken and gain momentum during the coming Civic outlook, audiences often laughed or folded their arms and curled a lip, thinking I was advocating organized labor. (I wasn't.)

Have you heard about the Hollywood writer's strike? Expect to see Wal-Mart unionized in the upcoming years. Hide and watch. See if I'm not right.

4. Word-of-mouth is the new mass media. Video games and cable TV stripped our kids of their innocence at an early age, but the technology that robbed them of idyllic childhood also empowered them with cell phones, blogs, and BlackBerrys. Viral marketing wasn't created by the advertising community; it's simply the result of a horizontally connected generation (a.) sharing their happy discoveries with each other and (b.) trying to protect one another from mistakes.

WHAT THIS MEANS TO BUSINESS: It's no longer enough just to have great advertising. When your customers carry cell phones and can e-mail all their friends with a single click, you need to be exceptionally good at what you do.

5. Boasting is a waste of time. "Being cool" has given way to "Keepin' it real." "I'm number one," gets the response, "You ain't all that." Your customer is saying, "Talk is cheap. Actions speak louder than words. Don't tell me what you believe. Show me." IN YOUR ADS, do you include "proofs of claim" your listeners can experience for themselves?

6. Everyone is broken a little. And the most broken are those who pretend they are not. It's time to take the advice of Bill Bernbach, "I've got a great gimmick. Tell the truth."

7. Keep in mind that during the next 12 months, as we complete the transition from the Idealist outlook to the Civic perspective, these trends will be accelerated by the facts that: (a.) Access to information is going up and; (b.) access to money is going down.

By the way, if I ever win a Pulitzer, I'll immediately start wearing French shirts with three-inch cuff links that spell out PULITZER PRIZE WINNER in diamonds.

Unless what I said earlier about "the last, reluctant holdout" is true. In that case, I expect my attitude will change approximately one second before midnight on December 31, 2008. ☞

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QUICKREAD™

- This year, society will complete its shift from an Idealist to Civic perspective.
- Relationship selling is out. Efficiency is in.
- Do away with boastful claims. Advertisers don't believe you.
- Word of mouth is the new mass media.



RAB Report Card: A+

It's no secret that I've never been a fan of the RAB. Comments I've made in the past include: "stuck in the '70s"; "irrelevant"; "out of touch"; "pompous and in denial" — and those are the kinder, gentler remarks. Those comments never got printed, of course, but my opinion has never been secret.

When an emissary from RAB arrived in my office in May of 2001 to broker peace and convince me to speak at RAB2002, I told him that RAB conventions were mostly "just a lot of old white guys in suits lying to each other about billing." He laughed, then told me how he was hoping to change the organization from within, and we had a great time together. At the end of the afternoon I promised him that if he lasted one full year at RAB I'd do what he was asking me to do. I also predicted that he wouldn't make it a year. He smiled and said, "I'm going to be here, and I'm going to hold you to your promise." He was gone just a few months later.

I wasn't immediately on board with Jeff Haley either, because frankly, I didn't know anything about him and assumed he would be a stay-the-course kind of guy, another guardian of the status quo.

But I'm man enough to admit when I'm wrong.

I was impressed when I read what Haley said at RAB2008: "For the first time in the history of our organization, with success from Cadillac, Target, and Wal-Mart, we have generated more revenue for our clients than we have cost them. You have positive ROI with the RAB." After a round of applause, Haley quickly responded, "Thank you. We can do better."

What? The guy in charge of the RAB believes his organization should be directly responsible for bringing more dollars into radio than they take out of it? This revelation lifted my eyebrows.

But the thing that dropped my jaw was when Haley called on the entire industry to be open to change when it comes to electronic measurement. "We must speak with one voice on our most important issue," he said. "It is time for the industry to take ownership for communicating a specific plan, and take responsibility for a consistent point of view. I am calling for a unanimous and unequivocally clear position that all radio broadcasters agree to adhere to. We are the leader in audio entertainment and information. Let's embrace new technology. Let's be passionate and enthusiastic. Let's believe."

This is not the kind of thing a man says when he's afraid to rock the boat. This is the kind of visionary leadership that's inspired millions of Americans to get behind Barack Obama.



QUICKREAD™

- I've never met Jeff Haley.
- I've never been a fan of the RAB.
- I'm man enough to admit when I'm wrong.



I've never met Jeff Haley, but I like him.

The thing that put me over the top was Haley's clear assessment of MP3 players like the ubiquitous iPod: "Without new music, the player becomes stale and irrelevant, relegating the MP3 to just one more fad. FM radio will definitely drive the success of the MP3 player." This would have been little more than old-style RAB denial, but Haley was quick to note that radio's future is also linked to MP3 players, over 100 million of which are already in the hands of the public. He wrapped up by saying: "What would it mean for our business if all of those players featured access to radio content?"

Wow. Here's a leader who

- sees what needs to happen;
- isn't afraid to say it; and
- is fully in step with the times.

God bless America. God bless RAB. God bless Jeff Haley. The future is looking brighter. ☑

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Seven-Step Secret Of Success

How To Get Where You Want To Go

1. See your destination in your mind.

When you don't know where you're going, any road will get you there. — White Rabbit

2. Start walking.

The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. — Lao Tzu (604 BC-531 BC)

3. Think ahead as you walk.

It's like driving a car at night. You can see only as far as your headlights, but you can make the whole trip that way. — E.L. Doctorow

4. Don't quit walking.

Don't wait. Where do you expect to get by waiting? Doing is what teaches you. Doing is what leads to inspiration. Doing is what generates ideas. Nothing else — and nothing less. — Author Daniel Quinn

5. Set no deadlines. You get there when you get there.

I am extraordinarily patient, provided I get my own way in the end. — Margaret Thatcher, April 4, 1989

6. Look back at the ground you covered each day.

God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning — the sixth day. — Genesis 1:31

7. If you find yourself at the same place you were this morning, take a step before you lay down.

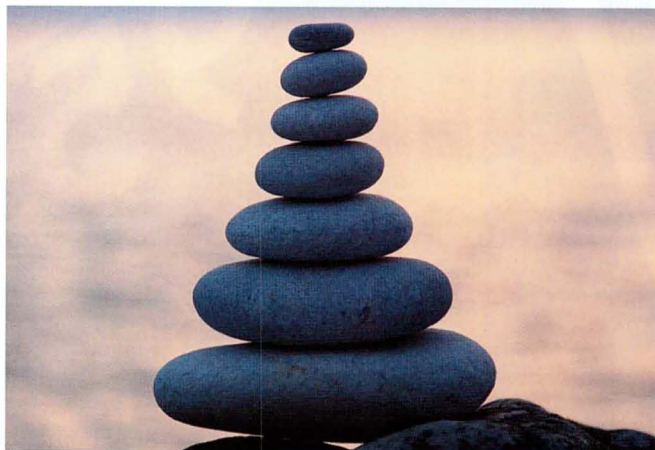
It is better to burn the candle at both ends, and in the middle, too, than to put it away in the closet and let the mice eat it. — Henry Van Dyke

Never let a day pass without making at least a little bit of progress. Do NOT tell yourself you'll make up for it tomorrow. (That seductive lie is the kiss of death.) Call a client. Send an e-mail. Make an activity list. Something. Anything.



QUICKREAD™

- Never let a day pass without making at least a little progress.
- The magic isn't in the size of your actions, but in the relentlessness of them.
- Shut up and start walking.



The magic isn't in the size of your actions, but in the relentlessness of them.

A common mistake is to do these steps out of order. If you skip Step 1, *See your destination*, and go straight to Step 2, *Start walking*, you'll be a wanderer, a drifter on the ocean of life, on your way to lying beneath a tombstone that reads: He Had Potential.

Even more dangerous is to go directly from Step 1, *See your destination*, to Step 3, *Think ahead*, without ever doing Step 2, *Start walking*. These are the people who never get started. Gen. George S. Patton warned his soldiers against this analysis paralysis when he said: A good plan today is better than a perfect plan tomorrow. In other words, there is no perfect plan. Shut up and start walking.

Violate Step 5, *Set no deadlines*, and you've set yourself up to fail. The problem with statements like: My goal is to have a million dollars in the bank by the time I'm 30, is that you don't know what tomorrow will bring. If you don't have the million dollars before your 30th birthday, you're officially a loser. Take a look at the list above. These seven steps work because they are relentless, not because of some artificial urgency created by a person who's been to one too many positive-thinking seminars.

Visitors to Tuscan Hall at Wizard Academy recall a stairway that leads into a wall, then does a 180 halfway up to finish by going in the opposite direction. At the top of those stairs a beautiful, long catwalk runs the entire length of the building to a gallery of fine art overlooking the floor below.

This is the journey of life. Real life.

Start walking. If you find yourself headed in the wrong direction, you can always turn around.

But only if you have a destination.

Do you?

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The Wizard Of Ads

By Roy H. Williams

The Aristocracy, The Efficient, And The Screwed

America's radio stations will soon be divided into three business models. At one end will be the Aristocracy. At the other end will be the Highly Efficient. Both of these will make money. The place you don't want to be is in the middle, among the twitching wounded. Sadly, most radio stations today are in the middle.

Here are radio's three business models of tomorrow:



Syndication is a tried-and-true method of improving the product while reducing expenses. Yes, syndication is coming to radio — in a very big way. Remember those colorful people of radio that got squeezed out by the Wall Street bean counters — the mavericks, pirates, and gun-slingers you thought were gone forever? Peek inside the emerging syndication houses, and you'll see they're back.

1. The Aristocracy: Intensely local, heritage stations will continue doing fine. Heritage stations have high-profile air personalities who are deeply involved in the community. They get tall talent fees for live ads because their endorsement carries weight. They emcee charity events, cut ribbons at grand openings, and make listeners feel like they have a friend. Keep up the great work, guys. (Your station has a high cost of operation but you're highly profitable anyway. Everyone secretly wishes they could be you.)

2. The Twitching Wounded: These are the victims of consolidation's original plan: "Hey, I've got an idea! Let's buy five stations in a town then reduce our cost of operations by firing half the people and telling the other half how lucky they are to still have a job. The salary dollars we save will drop to the bottom line and Wall Street will see us as efficient operators and give us boatloads of cash." Their diabolical scheme worked. Those who bundled, shrink-wrapped, and sold thousands of radio stations to Wall Street are swimming in cash today. But don't look for them among today's group heads. The bundlers have all packed up, sold out, and left town. Sadly, most of the properties they left behind are skeletons without meat, towers without talent, frequencies without fans. These are the stations occupying the middle ground, the place you don't want to be.

3. The Highly Efficient: At first glance, these stations will look like the victims of yet another wave of cost cutting. Don't be fooled.



QUICKREAD™

- Deconsolidation has begun. The age of syndication is upon us.
- 50 years ago, networks like ABC, CBS, and NBC offered local TV affiliates better shows than the affiliates were able to produce themselves.
- Listen to the people of your town. Are they saying, "We want the local TV shows"?

Syndication came to television 50 years ago. Networks like ABC, CBS, and NBC offered local TV affiliates better shows than the affiliates were able to produce themselves. And the better shows were cheaper than local productions. The viewers won. The stations won. The bottom line got fatter. National advertisers loved placing ads in hot, national shows.

National shows have been the exception in radio, rather than the rule. They're about to be the rule.

Yes, two-thirds of America's morning drive jocks will be replaced by 10 or 12 syndicated morning shows beamed in from somewhere else. This will happen in other dayparts as well.


Frankly, I'm in favor of it.

"But radio is local. Our listeners want local. Syndication is anti-radio." I said in the beginning that intensely local, heritage stations will continue doing fine. But let's be honest. Is your station truly a heritage station, or are you just pretending?

Listen to the people of your town. Are they saying, "We don't want *Desperate Housewives*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *American Idol*, and *Lost*! We want local TV shows"? Are they saying, "We don't want *Spiderman*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, and *Lord of the Rings* in our theaters! We want local movies"? Are they saying, "We don't want *Rush Limbaugh* and *Howard Stern*. We want a local political pundit and a local shock jock"?

Ten years ago, consolidators cut costs by cutting the fat. Then, when pressured for more profits, they did the only thing they knew to do; they cut deeper into muscle. Occasionally they cut arteries. Radio was crippled. Radio stations began dying. Stock prices dropped cold and hard, icy hail on the barren landscape.

There were plenty of heroic efforts in the emergency room. Not all group heads were selfish. Not all were shortsighted and stupid. I've watched from the sidelines as good men and women did the best they could under impossible circumstances.

Now radio is going private again. Deconsolidation has begun. The age of syndication is upon us. Don't be afraid of it. 

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Conversation With A Radio Newbie

Sharing The Secrets To Local-Direct Success

If you sell radio the way it ought to be sold, you'll sell a 52-week schedule without ever telling the client your format. What you're selling is ongoing access to your weekly cume audience. Your format doesn't really matter.

"So you're suggesting I sell qualitative targeting?"

No, because if you start down that road, the client is going to figure out that billboards target geographically better than radio, magazines and television target psycho-graphically better than radio, Google adwords target hot prospects better than radio, and direct-mail delivers specialized micro-targets better than radio.

"So you're saying radio isn't very good at targeting?"

It's better than newspaper.

"That's it?"

Pretty much.

"Okay, so we won't talk about the format and we won't talk about targeting. Is there anything else I shouldn't talk about?"

Don't talk about your spot rates. Talk instead about the price of an annual agreement of at least 1,100 ads aired at the pace of 21 or more ads per week.

"Why?"

Because if you don't, the client will want to buy a few ads and "test the waters."

"What's wrong with that?"

Radio relies on repetition. When a client puts together his own schedule, he'll always reach too many people with too little repetition.

"And that's a bad thing?"

It's a very bad thing. It's one of the two main reasons so many business owners say "I tried radio and it didn't work."

"What's the other reason?"

Flaccid copy.

"What makes an ad flaccid?"

Flaccid ads answer questions the advertiser wishes the customer would ask.

"Like what?"

Name of the business. Street address. Name of the business. Store hours. Name of the business. Friendly and professional staff. Name of the business. We won't be undersold. Name of the business. Committed to your complete satisfaction. Name of the

business. Financing is available with approved credit. Name of the business. Buy from us, you'll be glad you did.

"Why would anyone write an ad filled with clichés like that?"

1. Because the advertiser likes to hear his own name. He thinks name recognition equals top-of-mind awareness. It doesn't.

2. Because the advertiser doesn't have anything meaningful to say and he believes it's your job to drive traffic. It's not.

3. Because the radio rep thought their job was finished when he or she got the order. It wasn't.

"Why doesn't name recognition equal top-of-mind awareness?"

The missing ingredient is **relevance**. An advertiser with a relevant message will create a deeper awareness with less repetition than an advertiser who has nothing relevant attached to their name.

"So you're saying that name recognition doesn't matter as much as a credible, relevant message attached to the name?"

Bingo.

"Has it always been this way?"

No, our mental filtering of messages according to their relevance is a fairly new development in society. Yankelovich says the average American encountered only 2,000 advertising messages per day in 1978. Today it's more than 5,000.

"Who is Yankelovich?"

Yankelovich is a research company that's been measuring consumer attitudes, beliefs, aspirations, and behavior since 1958.

"You said it's not my job to drive traffic. Whose job is it?"

It's the advertiser's job to drive traffic. Your job is to deliver the strongest traffic-driving message he'll let you deliver. Whether that message drives traffic will depend on what the message says.

"So I should always fight for a meaningful message? Otherwise the radio station and I will get blamed when the advertiser's flaccid message doesn't deliver?"

Right. He'll accuse your station of having the wrong audience.

"I'm beginning to see the dangers of pitching qualitative targeting."

And since qualitative pitching is what all the other reps do, you'll set yourself apart by focusing your energy in another area.

"You said one reason for flaccid ads is that reps think their job is finished when they get the order. So most radio salespeople will get the order signed and then leave the message to someone else?"

That's exactly what I'm saying.

"Gosh, that seems stupid."

Listen to me. You're going to be a great account executive and make baskets full of money for yourself and your station.

"You think so?"

I know so. ☺

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QUICKREAD™

- Name recognition does not equal top-of-mind awareness. Relevance does.
- The average American encountered only 2,000 advertising messages per day in 1978. Today it's more than 5,000.
- Don't let a client buy just a few ads to "test the waters." It won't work.



Thriller As The Soundtrack To *Casablanca*

Today we're going to fart around a little. You up for it? (Of course you are. Like me, you chose a career in radio.)

Much has been written about how Pink Floyd's 1973 album, *Dark Side of the Moon*, synchronizes with *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) as a shockingly appropriate soundtrack. The movements of the actors seem to be choreographed to the rhythm and tempo of the music. The lyrics of the songs often describe exactly what is happening on the screen.

Dark Side of the Moon and *The Wizard of Oz* follow a similar, archetypal pattern of tension and release. Consequently, one can be overlaid above the other with surprising synchronicity.

This synchronicity is due to predictable, chaotic patterns that repeat throughout society and the arts.

In science, chaos isn't randomness, but a higher level of order than can fit into the human brain. It is a more complex degree of organization than you and I can comprehend. Chaotic systems are not random. They are magnificent. The formation of clouds, the shape of fire, the motion of waves, the twisting of tree branches, and the birth of a snowflake are not random events but the results of chaotic systems.

A fractal image is the map of such a system.

Mathematically created, fractals are three-dimensional. In other words, they look the same from a distance as they do under a microscope. The guiding pattern — driven by what scientists call "the strange attractor" — is endlessly repeated in an interlocking design to create a larger copy of the same pattern.

From this we can better understand the old saying, "The reason history repeats itself is because we didn't pay attention to it the first time." Solomon said it famously in Ecclesiastes, "What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything of which one can say, 'Look! This is something new'? It was here already, long ago; it was here before our time."

Solomon, I believe, was speaking of fractal, archetypal patterns.

In their book *Generations*, William Strauss and Neil Howe show us how western society has swung like a pendulum between two equal-but-opposite magnets for more than 400 years. In a civic cycle we are drawn upward toward a beautiful dream of working together for the common good. But in 20 short years our beautiful dream hardens into the shackles of duty, obligation, and sacrifice.

The last civic cycle began in 1923 and reached its zenith in

1943, when the pendulum began its 20-year descent toward 1963 and the beginning of the most recent idealist cycle.

In an idealist cycle we're drawn upward toward individuality and self-expression. But in 20 years our beautiful dream becomes contrived, hollow posing. The last idealist cycle reached its zenith in 1983 (also the pinnacle year of Michael Jackson's career). The pendulum then began a 20-year decline toward the relative normalcy and balance of 2003.

Society, according to Strauss and Howe follows an archetypal pattern.

I believe that every great success follows one of the many fractal, archetypal patterns and that you will find these patterns underlying every mass-appeal success in music.

The Wizard of Oz was made in 1939 and *Dark Side of the Moon* in 1973, exactly 34 years later. Last week I wondered, "What would happen if I took the movie of the year and the album of the year from the two zeniths of the most recent social cycles, 1943 and 1983

respectively, and played the album as a soundtrack for the movie? The synchronicity should be obvious because of the similarities in the guide patterns of these out-of-balance, zenith years."

Coincidentally, the movie of the year for 1943, *Casablanca*, is every bit as iconic as *The Wizard of Oz*, and while *Dark Side of the Moon* remained on the charts for 10 years, Michael Jackson's *Thriller* (1983) quickly became the top-selling album of all time.

Funny thing, I was right about the synchronization. See for yourself. Just start the *Thriller* CD exactly as the Warner Brothers logo dissolves into a map of Africa. Prepare to be amazed.

It appears that Solomon was right. We are drawn to predictable patterns of tension and release when our society is out of balance and suffering for it. "It was here already, long ago; it was here before our time."

But the more important point is that radio is the only medium that ever bothers to explore these sorts of mysteries. We're the people who'll watch *The Wizard of Oz* while listening to Pink Floyd, just to see what happens. It's in our DNA.

Radio people are the cool kids. We drive more convertibles, do more stunts, cause more trouble, and have more fun than all the other media combined. Never forget that.

Be cool. ☼

Radio is the only medium that ever bothers to explore these sorts of mysteries. It's in our DNA.

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Taking The Lead

Clients Who Challenge The Norm Catapult Ahead

Here's the Pattern: When times are tough and customers are scarce, business owners buckle down and try to become even better at the things they do well. They do this because they trust the Guide pattern, "This has always worked in the past."

Most of your clients are doing this right now.

But following the Guide pattern in a declining market won't take them where they want to go, since staying who they are won't expand their customer base.

To grow their sales volume your clients must increase their market share. They must attract those customers who, in the past, have chosen not to do business with them. But your listeners won't make a new decision until you've given them new information. As long as the client keeps doing what they've always done — and saying in their ads what they've always said — your listeners will keep making the decision they've always made.

They'll keep buying somewhere else.

To grow, your client must expand their identity. Add to their message. Appeal to additional customers.

The Challenge pattern of new circumstances demands that your client choose a new Guide pattern.

Leaders usually cling to old Guide patterns in times of stress. This is why challengers often overtake leaders during times of upheaval. The leaders were reluctant to reinvent themselves.

For more than a quarter century I've made my living dethroning market leaders and setting my clients in their places. And in all those years I've never seen a category leader do anything but what they do best. This predictability makes them easy to defeat. The successful challenger is always willing to adopt a new Guide pattern and stretch beyond the comfort zone.

A few weeks ago I said to the 39,000 business owners

who subscribe to my weekly newsletter, "If you dominate your business category and you're struggling to stay on top, my experience tells me you probably don't have the courage to make the necessary changes that would allow you to move to the next level. So you might be wasting a plane ticket to Austin."

Now you know why I wrote it.

WHEN A CLIENT WANTS TO REINVENT THEIR BUSINESS, TELL THEM:

Step 1: Do exactly what you fear a competitor might do. Be your own competition.

Step 2: Evaluate your ad copy. If your ads have been transactional (full of facts and details), build a relational offering for your customer. If your messages have been relational (service and commitment based), create a transactional package.

Step 3: Ignore those friends who will accuse you of having lost your focus.

Step 4: Release unhappy staff members to go where they can be happy or they'll torpedo your plan with half-hearted implementation.

Step 5: Advertise aggressively. "Aggressive" doesn't require a big budget. It requires a big message. In the words of Robert Stephens, "Advertising is a tax you pay for being unremarkable."


The more unremarkable your client's message, the more ad dollars they'll have to spend to see even the most lackluster results. These are the clients who will forever say, "I tried radio and it didn't work."

But it wasn't radio that failed. It was the message. And you were the one who let them air it.

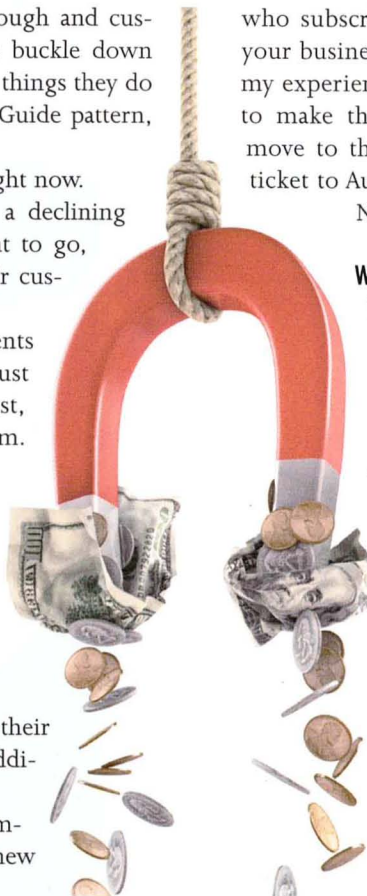
When you insist that your client give you a convincing message — a message without loopholes — you cause your client to succeed. Your client causes you to succeed. You and your client cause your station to succeed. Your station causes radio to succeed.

A convincing :30 or :60 is all it takes to make advertisers change their tune from "I tried radio and it didn't work" to "I'm moving all my budget to radio."

Flaccid, limp messages make radio unimpressive. Don't let your client give you a soggy message and then tell you that your station failed. Fight for a message that will work.

Writing great ads is easy when you have something to say. 

Roy H. Williams, president of Wizard of Ads Inc., may be reached at roy@WizardofAds.com.



QUICKREAD™

- In a slow economy, businesses must attract those customers who, in the past, have chosen *not* to do business with them.
- They won't do that until you provide them with *new* information.
- What's worked in the past won't work anymore.



Who's The Boss?

Three competing bosses run a radio station. Superficially these bosses are the program director, the general manager, and the sales manager. But probe deeper and you'll see that the powers behind them are the listener, the station owner, and the advertiser.

The program director works for the listener. The general manager works for the station owner. The sales manager works for the advertiser.

And each of them believes their boss to be more important than the other two.

Whose radio station is it?



THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR IS QUICK TO POINT OUT THAT:

1. the airwaves belong to the public and
2. broadcast licenses are granted for free by the FCC because
3. our frequencies are to be used in the best interest of the people

The program director is annoyed that everyone seems to forget the station would be nothing without its listeners.

THE GENERAL MANAGER IS QUICK TO POINT OUT THAT:

1. the tower and the transmitter aren't owned by the public and
2. payroll is coming from the bank account of the station owner because
3. our listeners are getting a free service. They don't pay a dime

The general manager is annoyed that everyone seems to forget the station owner has a right to expect a return on his investment.

THE SALES MANAGER IS QUICK TO POINT OUT THAT:

1. the advertiser can spend his ad budget with anyone he chooses and
2. programming exists only to gather audience for the commercial breaks because
3. our advertisers have to see results or they'll quit giving us money

The sales manager is annoyed that everyone seems to forget it's the advertiser's money, not the station owner's, that pays all the bills.

A century and a half ago John Godfrey Saxe wrote a poem about six blind men studying an elephant. The first blind man felt the wide side of the elephant and judged an elephant to be like a wall. The second man, feeling the tusk, proclaimed an elephant was like a spear. The third blind man felt the trunk and said an elephant was like a snake. The fourth, feeling the knee, exclaimed an elephant was like a tree. The fifth felt the ear and said an elephant was like a fan. The sixth, feeling the elephant's tail, was certain an elephant was like a rope.

Strangely, each of the six blind men was right. Just like each of radio's three bosses is right.

Now follow me into my strange little world, that alien habitation of the media buyer and gun-for-hire ad writer:

Even though I reject most newspaper schedules and most television opportunities and spend tens of millions of dollars buying 52-week radio schedules for my small-business clients in 38 states and three foreign countries, the only people who really hate me are the sales manager of the radio station

I didn't buy and the program director of the station I did buy.

The sales manager hates me because I bought the most reach with the best frequency and didn't pay a premium to reach his station's "better" audience. So now the sales manager is going to do his or her best to cause my client to have doubts about my judgment. "We're concerned about your future. We really are. Your media buyer doesn't really understand our market. And frankly, they're not very professional. They don't represent you well."

It happens at least once a week.

The program director hates me because I put ads on his station that are hard to ignore and nothing irritates a radio audience so much as having to listen to an ad. "He puts voices on the air that don't belong on the radio. And his scripts don't sound polished or professional. And his ads are offbeat and weird. They're just not right for our audience. You'd see much better results if you let our in-house people write and produce your ads."


It happens almost every day.

To be fair, I'm sure that each of these good people believes the right thing to do is trash the buyer whose decision they dislike and the writer whose ads annoy them and their audience. But the perspective we haven't considered is that of the advertiser who "tried radio and it didn't work."

"I bought the schedule they proposed and ran the ad they wrote and frankly, it was a waste of money." That's when these people come to me, the rule-breaker.

If a radio schedule airs on your competitor's station rather than your own, does that mean the buyer made a foolish mistake?

If an ad irritates your audience, does that make it a bad ad? What if it's generating better results than all the previous ads the audience liked?

I can't offer you a tidy conclusion to these observations and, if you're wise, you won't try to create one. My hope is that you'll step back and look at radio with an open heart, and you'll see that each of us is just another blind man doing what he believes is right. 

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Repetition And Results

It's a question asked by business owners in every town, village, and hamlet. It's asked by the cautious, the anxious, and the wise. It's asked of every newspaper, television, and radio rep.

How many ads will I have to run before I begin seeing results?

Due to the fact that small-market radio stations sell a higher percentage of local-direct accounts than stations in larger markets, small-town reps usually have a better sense of how to answer the **How many?** question. Large-market and national reps rarely receive detailed feedback from the agencies they serve because agencies almost always employ a media mix, so they're never sure how much credit to give to radio.

Here's how to frame your answer to the **How many ads?** question. I'm assuming, of course, that you already know the importance of frequency, so let's set that aside for a moment and talk about factors that not even frequency can overcome.

The number of ads your client will have to run before they begin seeing results will depend on the client's **product purchase cycle** and the **impact** of the message.

I've written often about impact. Product purchase cycle refers to how often the average person buys the product. The shorter the product purchase cycle, the quicker you'll see results.

EXAMPLE: Let's say 120,000 mattresses (annual transaction count) were sold last year in my market of 1,000,000 people. To determine the product purchase cycle for a category:

1. Divide the population of the trade area by the annual transaction count for the category ($1,000,000/120,000 = 8.33$).
2. This is your annual product purchase cycle (8.33 years would be the annual product purchase cycle for mattresses).

To determine the percentage of population in the market for a product:

1. Divide the annual transaction count for the category by the population of the trade area ($120,000/1,000,000 = .12$).
2. Move the decimal 2 places to the right. This is the percentage of your population that will be in the market for the product this year (12 percent).
3. Divide that percentage by 52 to see how many customers will be in the market for that product this week ($12/52 = 0.23$ percent of the population will buy a mattress this week).

To determine the annual transaction count for any category in your trade area:

1. Use Google to find the number of units sold in America each year.

2. Divide by the population of the U.S. to get a per capita number.

3. Multiply the per capita number by the population of your trade area.

Additionally, ask your client if he or she happens to know the national volume for the category. Compare that number to what you turned up on Google. Do this openly so the client can see any discrepancy. Ask the client which number feels more accurate to them, and use that number.

If you were to begin a high-frequency, high-impact radio campaign this morning, you could overflow any restaurant in your city by supertime. No problem. This is because 100 percent of the population eats every day and a high percentage of us are willing to eat out tonight if given a good reason to do so. But how many of us are looking for a new mattress?


Results can be delivered quickly when the product purchase cycle is short. But the longer the product purchase cycle, the longer it's going to take for the

campaign to gain momentum:

1. Any ad for a product the customer doesn't currently need is, by definition, a low-impact ad. Regardless of what the ad says, its relevance will be lower to the customer who feels no need. This means the campaign will take longer to get results.
2. Weeks from now, when we've finally delivered enough repetition of this low-impact ad for it to be remembered when the customer finally needs the product, we have a new problem: We have to wait for the customer to need the product.

Bottom line: If a client is anxious and their product has a short product purchase cycle, create an offer with real impact and make sure the client has frequency. Radio will sparkle and shine.

But if your client is anxious and their product has a long purchase cycle, make sure they grasp the need for a 52-week commitment. Any attempt to "test the waters" with a short-term schedule is likely to end in disaster.

Alone, impact and frequency aren't enough to overcome a long purchase cycle. The missing ingredient is commitment. 

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Let's Talk People Meter

The PPM data leaking from Arbitron is telling us things we need to know. Some of it we didn't want to know. Some of it frankly alarms us. But the truth is always a good thing.

As I understand it, Arbitron's snazzy little electronic gizmo is proving:

1. The average American listens to at least twice as many stations as he reports in his diary. In Los Angeles, for example, PPM has proven that 20 different stations attract more than one million listeners each week. According to the outdated diary method, only six stations had weekly cumes of more than a million.

2. Radio stations share far more listeners than we ever dreamed. The downside of this new knowledge is that your audience isn't special. "I can find your listeners at several different places on the dial. Radio is a commodity. I can buy around you." Ouch. That kind of hurt, didn't it?

3. Qualitative profiles are about to become homogenized. Gone are the days when you could say "Our listener is..." "Our listener earns..." "Our listener drives..." What are old-school radio sellers going to do when qualitative selling finds its pants down around its ankles?

4. The biggest call letters in radio are seeing their AQH numbers drop as much as 30 percent when compared to the old diary system numbers. This is due to the fact that diary people tended to "vote" for their favorite station even when they had actually been listening to someone else. The PPM doesn't rely on the listener's memory and it doesn't "vote" for stations it wants to help out. Good news for small stations. Bad news for "popular" ones.

5. It takes more ads to achieve frequency than we realized. Advertisers have always tended toward radio schedules with too little frequency, and that tendency is now more dangerous than ever. We don't need advertisers saying "I tried radio and it didn't work," so be sure you load up on frequency. The good news is that we convinced a station in Los Angeles to let us run 36 ads in a single day last week, 6 a.m.-midnight, and the results were truly

spectacular. (We're doing a scientific test of newspaper vs. radio: dollar for dollar, time for time, message for message. I'll give you complete details in the next issue.)

6. Second-tier dayparts, especially weekends, are bigger than we realized. So don't be afraid to add those lower-cost avails into the mix when you're trying to build frequency for your client. This is particularly important now that Yankelovich has updated the 1978 study that revealed the average American encountered 2,000 advertising messages in a day (billboards; logos; signage; product packages; radio, TV, and newspaper ads, etc.). According to Yankelovich, the new number is more than 5,000 per day.

7. iPod, kiss my ass. Are you tired of people telling you that no one listens to the radio anymore, that everyone is listening to iPods? Portable People Meters don't lie. They know the difference between an iPod and a radio. Electronic data is trustworthy. Use it to sell radio.

Some of what I've written may have a touched a dental nerve, especially if your station has seen an erosion of AQH due to the Portable People Meter. In my defense, I can only say that the truth remains the truth, even when it's inconvenient.

I very much agree with RAB's Jeff Haley, who recently said, "We must speak with one voice on our most important issue. It is time for the industry to take ownership for communicating a specific plan and take responsibility for a consistent point of view. I am calling for a unanimous and unequivocally clear position that all radio broadcasters agree to adhere to. We are the leader in audio entertainment and info. Let's embrace new tech, be passionate and enthusiastic. Let's believe."

The future looks brighter than ever. Get on board with electronic measurement. Shift what needs to be shifted. Adjust what needs to be adjusted. March to the beat of this different drummer and sing your song from the mountaintop. 📻

Roy H. Williams, president of Wizard of Ads Inc., may be reached at roy@WizardofAds.com.

Portable People Meters don't lie. They know the difference between an iPod and a radio. Electronic data is trustworthy. Use it to sell radio.

FILLING YOUR ONLINE SPOT BREAKS

Are you still calling it AD insertion? The bigger picture is CONTENT insertion. Think of it this way: If your terrestrial station has four breaks per hour with four minutes per break to fill, the odds are great that you don't have all 16 of those minutes sold online, right?

What's the content you're using now?

Many stations still just "vamp," filling time with a combination of (a) inane generic station promos ("Hi, I'm big Bob Johnson, joinin' you for the ride home every weekday afternoon from 3-7...") or (b) an endless pit of diseases and begging in the form of national PSAs, each of which sounds great if used with actual commercials, but totally depressing and paranoia-inducing when

played one after the other, hour after hour.

For best results, instead of those poor attempts at filler audio, consider actual content like one-minute features from syndicators, local features from your well-known talent, or hosting deeper cuts or new music from your music library.

— by Tom Zarecki/Jetcast, tomz@jetcast.com



Radio/Newspaper Smackdown

You've told people for years that radio will outperform newspaper, but do you have any proof? Have you done a controlled experiment, or do you just expect people to believe you?

If I told you our experiment was constructed specifically to test radio versus newspaper, I'd be lying. Like most discoveries, we stumbled upon this one by accident.

Here's how it happened: Lifestyle Centers of America is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to lead you and me to a healthier, happier life through better nutrition, physical activity, and helpful new habits. My team was recruited to give them marketing advice.

Our first assignment was to craft a message that would drive interested persons to a brand new website. We decided to test our messages using a series of quarter-page newspaper ads.

The first thing we did was locate a newspaper that would deliver a quarter-page display ad to 89,000 subscribers for only \$900. Total circulation would be much higher, of course, due to newsstand sales and pass-along readership, but we were looking strictly at paid circulation for the Sunday edition. If you've ever looked at newspaper rates, you'll recognize this to be an extremely efficient, low-budget buy.

The second thing we did was craft a message for our client. My secret hope was to see 300 to 400 unique visitors within 48 hours at PlantFiberDiet.org, our virgin website. We got 71 visitors. I didn't blame the newspaper. I blamed my message. Tweaking wasn't going to get me where I needed to go, so I scrapped the whole concept and created a new message from scratch.

Two weeks later, that second ad got us 217 unique visitors within 48 hours; a definite improvement, but not enough. I knew my message was stronger than the results were indicating. That's when I said to one of my media buyers: Find me a radio station that will let us air 36 60-second ads in one day — two spots per hour, 6 a.m. to midnight — for \$900. If the program director limits us to only one spot per hour, hang up and call someone else. When you're driving traffic with a one-day schedule, there's no such thing as too much frequency.

No surprises so far, right?

Now pay attention, because this next part is where most people would screw up an otherwise valid media test. **To be reliable,**

the test has to be dollar for dollar, message for message, time for time. If we spent \$900 in one day with one newspaper, we needed to spend \$900 in one day with one radio station. **Dollar for dollar, time for time.**

Too often, advertisers want to take a one-day newspaper budget and spread it out over several days on the radio, or worse, spread it out over several stations. To be a fair test, we had to spend all the money in one day on one station. Radio needs repetition, so I refused to buy stations that would have delivered huge reach but with lower frequency. My 36-ad schedule was non-negotiable. Call me nuts if you want. I'll tell you how it ended in a minute.

Both messages are identical. We had a better-than-average newspaper layout and below-average radio production. Newspaper was given every advantage. We even waited two weeks for the newspaper traffic on our website to die down to zero before launching our radio schedule.

The result of spending \$900 in one day on one radio station? Our first test yielded 4,308 unique visitors within 48 hours. This seemed too good to be true, so I told my media buyers I was worried they'd gotten a radio buy that wasn't typical. "Find me a deal the average buyer could buy, any day of the week, for the same price we're paying."

We waited another two weeks until residual traffic died down to about 150 unique visitors per day, then ran the second radio campaign in a town 1,000 miles from the first campaign.

As I expected, our net result from the second test was lower than the first city, where we'd gotten far too good a deal. After deducting 150 visitors per day, the first 48 hours yielded only 3,033 unique visitors for \$900. This was 30 percent less than our first test, but still 14 times more visitors than our best newspaper results.

Newspaper and radio delivered an identical message with an identical budget spread over an identical amount of time. Radio delivered 14 times the results.

You can run the test yourself if you want. We'll even help you.

For a link to see the newspaper ad and hear the radio ad, e-mail Tamara@WizardOfAds.com.

Take no prisoners. 📡

Roy H. Williams, president of Wizard of Ads Inc., may be reached at roy@WizardOfAds.com.



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What's Wrong With This Picture?

The Internet has the buzz, billboards have the real estate, and radio reaches America, but newspapers and magazines get all the money. These are the facts:

The total, combined ad revenues for

1. the Internet, with all its banners, pop-ups, co-registration schemes, and Google AdWords accounts (\$11.3 billion), plus
2. the ad revenues from all the billboards sprinkled across the 3.54-million-square miles of these United States (\$4 billion), plus
3. the combined revenues of all of America's commercial radio stations (\$10.7 billion) is still \$2.2 billion less than the combined ad revenues of America's few hundred newspapers (\$28.2 billion).

Look at the circulation figures of the largest local newspapers in America and you'll see their readerships are no greater than the weekly cumes of the larger radio stations in their cities.

America's three largest newspapers are national. The biggest issue of *USA Today* last year had only 2,524,965 readers. The *Wall Street Journal* weighed in with 2,068,439 readers. The *New York Times* reached just 1,627,062 people with its most widely read issue.

Now let's look at the reach of the 10 largest local newspapers, according to newspaper's own Audit Bureau of Circulations:

1. *Los Angeles Times* 1,173,096 readers (Arbitron's Portable People Meter recently indicated no fewer than 20 stations in Los Angeles have weekly cume audiences that exceed 1 million people)
2. *Chicago Tribune* 940,620 readers (four stations in Chicago have cumes that surpass the readership of the *Chicago Tribune*)
3. *The Washington Post* 929,921 readers
4. *New York Daily News* 775,543 readers
5. *New York Post* 741,099 readers (Four stations in New York have cume audiences that surpass *The New York Times*; 15 stations have audiences bigger than the *New York Daily News* or the *New York Post*.)
6. *The Denver Post/Rocky Mountain News* 704,168 readers
7. *The Dallas Morning News* 702,135 readers
8. *The Philadelphia Inquirer* 688,670 readers
9. *The Houston Chronicle* 677,425 readers
10. *The Detroit News/Detroit Free Press* 640,356 readers

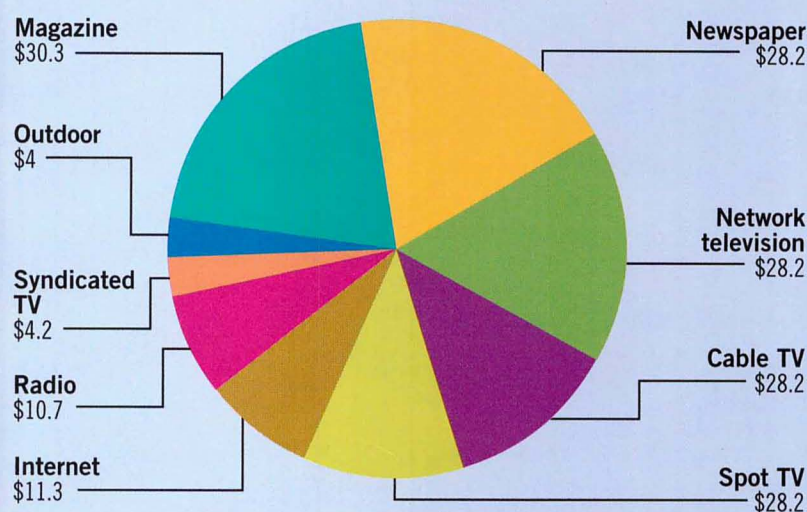
The 100th-largest newspaper in America is the *Spokesman Review*, with 119,155 readers in Spokane, Washington. Keep in

mind that the *Spokesman Review*, along with 99 other newspapers and a few papers even smaller, took in 2.64 times more ad money than all 10,000 of America's commercial radio stations put together.

I need to lay down for a minute and put a cold rag on my head.

WHERE THE AD MONEY IS GOING

(IN BILLIONS)



Sources: TNS Media Intelligence, Advertising Age

With the billions of dollars spent in media each year, why has radio never convinced a major school or university to comparison-test radio versus newspaper in a series of controlled experiments?

Oh, wait. I can hear your arguments already:

"Those studies have already been done, but no one pays attention."

Sorry, but insider organizations like the Radio Ad Lab don't have enough credibility. It needs to be a major public university or other entity whose motives and methods would be above suspicion.

"Agencies aren't going to buy radio, no matter how well it works. They're going to buy print so they can collect all those fees for photography and artwork and layout."

Some agencies may actually be that shallow and self-serving, but most are under pressure to perform for their clients. When the client's business doesn't grow, the agency gets fired. As difficult as this may be for you to believe, agencies buy what they have the most confidence will work. Radio people usually fail to give them confidence.

"Radio will generate the results, but the media mix will get the credit."



Getting Beat Up On Rates?

Like it or not, your rates are the result of a battle between supply and demand. This is a battle that affects the price of every commodity.

Yes, I said it. Radio advertising is a commodity. Your listeners can be found at several places on the dial, and Ralph McGee is Ralph McGee whether he's listening to Classic 101, Easy 103, or Mix 97.5. The only question is who can deliver Ralph most efficiently. When a media buyer is able to reach Ralph for less money, why does it hurt your feelings when he chooses to do so?

"Well, our station has rate integrity."

OK, no problem. Integrity is good. Now answer the following questions, and be sure to answer with integrity. Would you like to have an advertiser on your air who:

1. Was happy to buy Sunday-Wednesday?
2. Was willing to air the same typical week 52 weeks in a row?
3. Was willing to pay you for all your listeners, regardless of age or gender?
4. Was prepared to do all their own creative?
5. Blamed only themselves when an ad failed to pull?

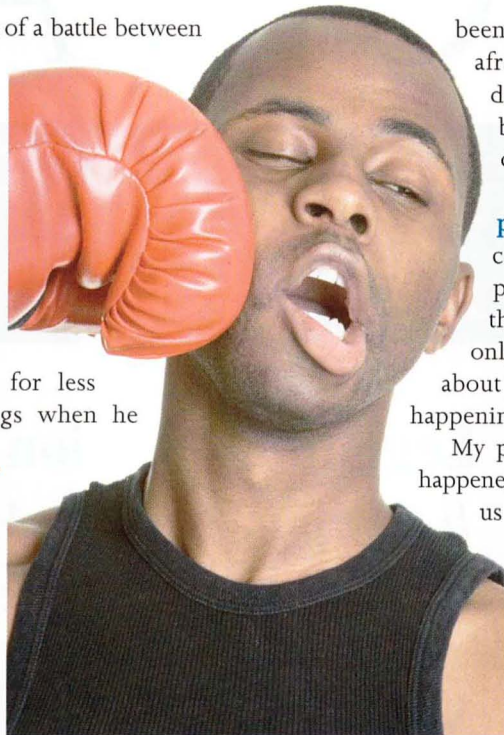
How attractive would that advertiser be to you? Does she deserve a better rate than the short-flight, drivetime-only, high-maintenance whiner who blames your station for all his failures? How much better rate does she deserve? Bottom line: Some managers and AEs pursue this good advertiser more aggressively than others.

A professional media buyer is putting that advertiser's budget up for auction. How many Ralphs will you bid for it? If you choose not to put your hand in the air, that's your choice. And if it makes you feel better to say the other station got the business because your station has integrity, that's OK, too. But, please, let's not pretend the media buyer doesn't know what he's doing.

A stunning number of AEs and managers have taken my clients to lunch so they could explain, in detail, that my media buyers are incompetent fools. They'll say:

1. If the advertiser is image-conscious: "They're not representing you with the dignity and class people associate with your business. I'm only telling you this because I care about you, and you deserve to know what's happening."

2: If the advertiser is results-minded: "Their buy doesn't make any sense to me. I can show you how it could have



been a whole lot better. Frankly, I'm afraid they don't know what they're doing. I'm only telling you this because I care about you and you deserve to know what's happening."

3. If the advertiser is extremely polite: "They don't return my phone calls, and when they do, they're not polite. Frankly, every time I talk to them, I'm embarrassed for you. I'm only telling you this because I care about you and you deserve to know what's happening."

My phone rings. My client tells me what happened. I remind them that they instructed us to cut their ad budget this year by \$100,000, \$250,000, or a million dollars. I e-mail my client a copy of the proposal my media buyers rejected on their behalf. We compare it to the proposals we bought for the client. The client is never mad at us after that.

I know times are tough in radio. You have a job to do, but so does the media buyer, and no one is making you sell your airtime for less than you're willing to take. You have the final say.

The media buyer has been entrusted with too few dollars and given an impossibly tall hill to climb. The instructions he received from the client sounded something like this: "The economy has put our business in a tough spot. It's imperative that business improve, but we're going to cut the ad budget. You have to get more done with less money. Good luck."

When dealing with a professional buyer, the secret is to listen. Remember, the buyer has a method for decision-making. Get in step with it. You're never going to convince them that they're "doing it wrong." And don't wait too long to deliver a knockout proposal. When your opening offer is overpriced, the buyer is less likely to take your calls.

Whining about getting "beat up" on rates just makes you sound weak. The last person who accused me of "beating him up" was a U.S. senator, who made his complaint in front of a number of governors and congressmen after I delivered a keynote speech at a private conference. I told him he needed to get an old woman to knit him a pair of balls. The extended roar of laughter let me know the rest of the room agreed with me.

I'm sorry if anything I've written hurts your feelings. It certainly wasn't my intention. ☹

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How I Dealt With Rejection

Uncover Your Clients' Message, And You'll Never Lose

Salespeople are highly compensated because rejection hurts. They told me to rub Zig Ziglar on the wound, but the sting and the ache stayed with me.

The smiley seminar speaker said, "Look in the mirror each morning and repeat these affirmations...." Sorry, I've already got a religion, and it makes me very uncomfortable with self-worship. I know there's a God, and it isn't me.

My manager tried to teach me how to overcome objections, but that only made me feel worse. People were rejecting me because they assumed I was a professional liar, and I was becoming one.

Everywhere I went, I heard: "I tried radio and it didn't work."

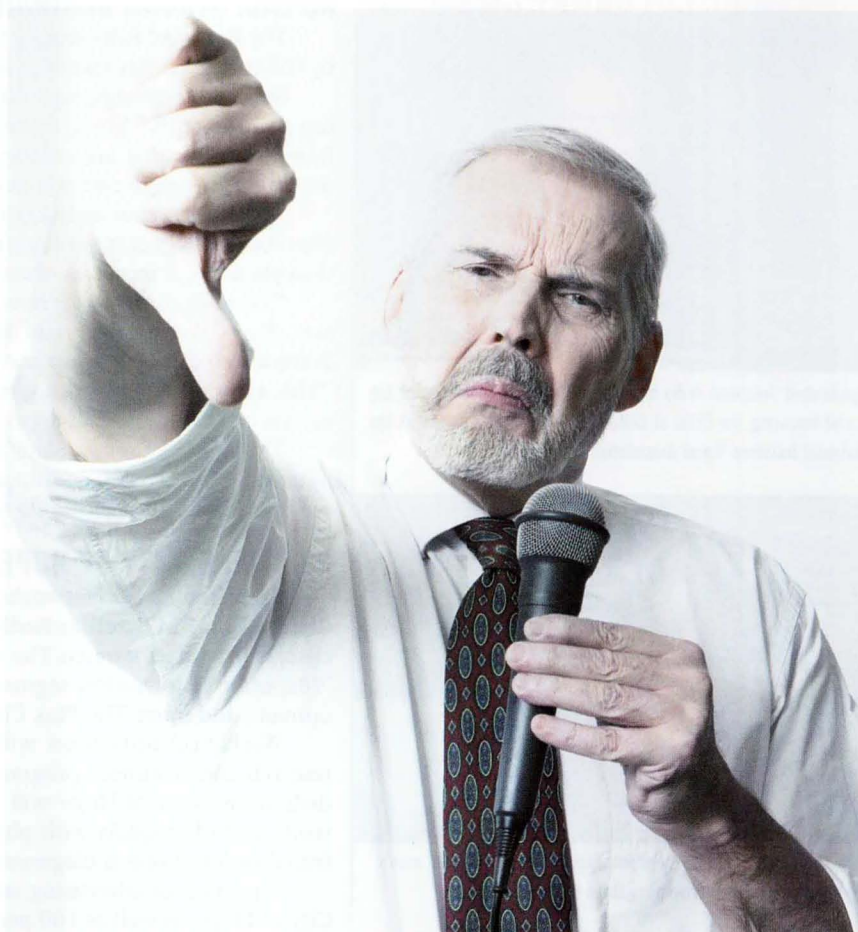
"Yeah, I know," whispered the little voice inside me. "I see it not work every day."

You would have fired me by now, right? I would have fired me, too. But Dennis Worden saw a spark in me that he believed he could fan into a flame. Lucky for both of us, he was right.

My career found wings the day I encountered an advertiser who had a message worth hearing. I delivered his message to my little audience, and his business exploded. No question about it, my tiny station was making him rich. I finally had a success story to tell my prospects. But a success story is a double-edged sword: Filled with names and dates and details and numbers, success stories cut through the doubt and make prospects say yes. The edge that cuts the seller is the implied promise: "The same thing will happen to you."

But if the advertiser's message is weak, you'll soon be hearing: "I tried your station and it didn't work." I had been groping blindly in a pitch-dark room when I flicked the light switch on the wall. Suddenly, everything was clear: *Message and copy are two different things.*

The fish trap exists because of the fish. Once you've gotten the fish, you can forget the trap. The rabbit snare exists because of the rabbit. Once you've gotten the rabbit, you can forget the snare. Words exist because of meaning. Once you've gotten the meaning, you can forget the words. — Chuang-tzu, 350 BC



If Chuang-tzu had been in advertising, he would have said, "Copy exists because of message. Once you've gotten the message, you can forget the copy."

That first successful client owned an auto-body shop. He had an invisible location, but a powerful message that had never been told. I was merely the guy who uncovered his shining message and held it up in the light. That was 30 years ago, but I can still tell you the essence of Danny's message:

1. No one ever plans to have a traffic accident.
2. You don't really have to get three estimates from three different body shops.
3. You don't even have to pay your \$250 or \$500 deductible.
4. Your insurance company will happily pay whatever their adjuster says is the right amount.
5. When you've been involved in a traffic accident, call me.
6. I'll send out a wrecker to pick up you and your car.
7. I'll give you a free loaner car to drive while I'm repairing your car.



Radio Ads For Real Estate

Real estate is a business with mountains of money. It's also a business in pain. Add these together and it means ka-ching for radio, if you know how to make the phone ring.

You're about to sell a 52-week schedule that will make the Realtor of your choice fabulously wealthy. Can you get an appointment with a Realtor?

The downside of my plan is that you'll have to visit a different house and write a new :60 each week for 52 weeks. If you're not willing to do that, read no further.

Here's how to make magic in real estate:

1. **Ask the Realtor to show you an unusual house.** More often than not, you'll want the house to be in the price range an average person could afford.
2. **What makes the house quirky or weird or memorable isn't really important.** What matters is that it has something distinctive about it.
3. **Visit the house.** Ponder the distinctive feature until it triggers the memory of a cultural icon.
4. **Pull the icon into the radio copy.**
5. **Be sure to mention the price of the house.**
6. **Never mention the square footage, the number of bedrooms, or the address.**

Let's say it's a white frame house with a front porch, the kind that blanketed America during the first half of the 20th century. Older parts of every town are littered with these. The only thing this house has going for it is a giant tree in the front yard.

ANNOUNCER: Telling your friends how to find your new house will be easy.

FEMALE ON PHONE: We're the house with the giant tree in the yard. You can't miss us.

ANNOUNCER: That big tree is begging for a tire swing. Will yours be the family that finally hangs one from that massive branch? Add a white picket fence and it's the house of Tom Sawyer. Here comes Becky Thatcher down the sidewalk. This is the house of a Norman Rockwell image. In a moment you'll see Andy and Barney cruise by in the patrol car. Aunt Bee is baking a pie in the kitchen. This is a house to grow up in. A house for celebrating Thanksgiving and Christmas. A home to come home to. And just two hundred and nine thousand dollars makes it yours. Want to see it? Call Molly Murphy at 555-5555. She's not one of those big-hair, lots-of-jewelry Realtors. She's regular people.

REALTOR: Molly Murphy. Small hair, modest jewelry. 555-5555.



OK, that was easy. Let's try again. This time it's a house begging for a remodel. The appliances are a weird color, the sinks and bathtubs are porcelain pink, and the bathroom tile is checkerboard black and white. The light fixtures are strange.

ANNOUNCER: Did you ever see Audrey Hepburn in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*? Distinctive. Avant-garde. Sophisticated. Straight out of *New Yorker* magazine.

This is the house of Holly Golightly. Ridiculously retro. Definitely not for everyone. But absolutely adorable. And it has a driveway built for a sports car. There's only one like it, and this is it. Two hundred and fifty-nine thousand. And the shrubbery! I'm not even going to try to describe it. Listed by Harvey Rich Realtors, of course. Harvey Rich has all the interesting houses.

HARVEY RICH: Boring houses are for boring people. Harvey Rich has interesting houses. And I'd love to show you this one. 555-5555 Harvey Rich.

Now let me make this clear: The goal is to make the phone ring. Frankly, you don't care if your listeners buy this house or not. And neither does the Realtor. He or she just wants to make contact with folks who are thinking of moving. The Realtor wants a shot at listing the current home. And if your listeners don't like the home featured in the ad, the Realtor will happily drive them to some other ones.

NOTE: This technique also works well as a classified in the newspaper. But if the writer yields to temptation and adds any of the typical "three-bedroom, two-bath" real-estate language, it'll kill response deadlier than a bag of hammers.

This is a signature technique, so don't give it to a Realtor who only wants to buy a short flight when things get slow. Unleash it on a Realtor who is ready to pull the trigger and ride the bullet.

BIG ENDING

No one is looking for a Realtor. Everyone is looking for a house. You just need to find a Realtor who can understand that. You're looking for a Realtor with a big brain and a small ego. You're looking for a Realtor willing to air 100-plus ads per month, 12 months a year. Choose your Realtor wisely. Be sure you like them. You're about to make that Realtor very rich. 🏠

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RAB Update: Jeff Haley For Real

My coffee cup is one of those stainless-steel things with a flip-top opening that puts a brown coffee-grunge smudge on the tip of my nose when I tilt it too high. So when Jeff Haley arrived at Wizard Academy at 7:30 a.m. to meet me, I saw his hand move hesitantly to the tip of his nose. I knew it was an unconscious effort to wipe the smudge off mine. I licked a finger and scrubbed the coffee off my snout. The tiniest flicker of a smile crossed Jeff's lips. Neither of us spoke of it, but we were both laughing out loud inside.

We had never met before. But now we knew each other.

He dutifully endured my showing off the 32-acre campus before we settled down to talk. Jeff Haley is an elegant diplomat. No big surprise. But soon we were both laughing out loud out loud.

Now I am surprised.

I asked him how he got the job, and he told me exactly how it happened. Then he spoke about the challenges he faces. We talked about branding. Scheduling. Agencies. Barack Obama and Sarah Palin. Ford Motor Company. Procter and Gamble.

Jeff Haley is a visionary, an action guy who is easily bored but hides it well.

A man who sees the future of media as clearly as if it were written across the sky by the finger of God. Jeff's eyes glittered when he spoke of the opportunities facing radio today. He sees radio as "sponsored audio" and calls it "the reigning king of audio entertainment."

Sailing. Mutual friends at J. Walter Thompson. Google. Chinese pictographs. (He spoke of the Chinese word for crisis. I explained the Chinese word for strife.) I told him he should spend some one-on-one time with Charlie Rahlly; every time I hang out with him it makes me a better man. Then we shared personal stories about John Huey (editor-in-chief of all 150 of Time, Inc.'s magazines, including *Time*, *Fortune*, *People*, *In Style*, *Sports Illustrated*, and *Entertainment Weekly*). By then we were really laughing. When I began telling my favorite Roy Laughlin stories, Jeff said, "I've got to meet this guy. Can you arrange it?" I promised I could.

I asked him about Arbitron's Portable People Meter technology and some of the controversy surrounding it. He gave me an unvarnished answer: "The diary measures listener loyalty. PPM measures audience size. Broadcasters need to get on board with it."

Two hours into our conversation I became worried about whether radio could hold onto him. Jeff Haley is a visionary, an action guy who is easily bored but hides it well. A graduate of Holy Cross with a degree in the English Classics. A man who

sees the future of media as clearly as if it were written across the sky by the finger of God.

Jeff's eyes glittered when he spoke of the opportunities facing radio today. He sees radio as "sponsored audio" and calls it "the reigning king of audio entertainment." His voice rang with conviction as he talked about radio's need to embrace and assimilate the entire spectrum of digital audio entertainment.

He was carrying a copy of that morning's *New York Times* (Sept. 18). On the front page of one section was a story about the new Zune from Microsoft. Jeff was jazzed about the story, and his excitement was contagious. He showed me a circled paragraph. "Every Zune has a built-in FM radio. When you hear a good song, you can click the center button to capture it, provided it's a station that broadcasts song-title data," the article explained. "In a Wi-Fi hot spot, the Zune downloads the song from the Zune store immediately. When you get home, the downloaded song gets copied back to your PC. It's addictive, awesome, and completely natural. What better way to discover new performers and songs than listening to the radio?"

That *New York Times* story, written by David Pogue, has Jeff Haley's fingerprints all over it. Jeff sees the Zune as a step in the right direction. I handed the paper back to him and quietly thought back over my 30 years in radio. I tried to remember an RAB chief with as much vision, energy, and firepower. I guess I lost track of time.

"Roy?"

I snapped back to the present. We shook hands and said goodbye.

A man has to be careful when he writes a column like this one, or people will suspect he has a brown smudge on his nose that isn't coffee.

I'm hoping you know me better than that.

Here's what happened: Jeff Haley and I finally met. We spent a few hours together. I'm eager to see what he does next.

You should be, too. ☎

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Thinking Outside The Box

Jump-Start Radio's Creativity With A Fresh Perspective

Dr. Gregory Berns is a heavyweight: He's a neuroscientist, a psychiatrist, and the distinguished chair of neuroeconomics at Emory University. His research has been profiled in the *New York Times*, *Forbes*, and *The Wall Street Journal*. His new book, *Iconoclast*, was published by Harvard Business School Press.

Everyone in radio should read it. Here are a few selected quotes:

The brain has three natural roadblocks that stand in the way of truly innovative thinking:

1. flawed perception
2. fear of failure
3. the inability to persuade others.

BANG. We've read only the first line of the front flap and Berns has already put three bullets in the heart of radio's problem. Dr. Berns later explains these things in detail:

"Did you know that when you see the same thing over and over again, your brain uses less and less energy? Your mind already knows what it's seeing, so it doesn't make the effort to process the event again. Just putting yourself in new situations can make you see things differently and jump-start your creativity."

Berns says our brains take shortcuts through categorization — and the more experience we bring to a subject, the stronger our tendency to categorize. In other words, when it comes to creative problem-solving, all your years of experience are working against you: "Categories are death to imagination... Often the harder one tries to think differently, the more rigid the categories become. There is a better way, a path that jolts the brain out of preconceived notions of what it is seeing: bombard the brain with new experiences. Only then will it be forced out of efficiency mode and reconfigure its neural networks... The surest way to evoke the imagination is to confront the perceptual system with people, places and things it hasn't seen before."

Need a fresh perspective? Want to think new thoughts, find new solutions, create a whole new paradigm?

1. Listen to the new hire not yet infected by standard operating procedures.
2. Seek the opinions of other people who don't fully understand the problem.
3. Look at a map of your city. Choose an area completely unfamiliar to you. Drive there, then get out and walk for an hour. Call a friend to come pick you up.
4. Change your reading habits for 10 days.
5. Quit listening to the radio.

6. Go to restaurants you suspect you won't like. Order something weird.
7. Read out loud *The Road Not Taken* by Robert Frost.
8. Watch *How to Hype a Black and Mild* on YouTube (7 min., 38 sec.).
9. Sit at a bus stop for 30 minutes. Talk with whoever sits down next to you.
10. Attend the worship services of a faith that is not your own.

If you're like most managers, you'll read this column and say, "I get it," but you won't actually do anything. At best, you'll choose a couple of actions that fall within your comfort zone.

Berns continues in *Iconoclast*: "It typically takes a novel stimulus — either a new piece of information or getting out of the environment in which an individual has become comfortable — to jolt attentional systems awake and reconfigure both perception and imagination. The more radical and novel the change, the greater the likelihood of new insights being generated."

If you're like most managers, you'll read this column and say, "I get it," but you won't actually do anything. At best, you'll choose a couple of actions that fall within your comfort zone.


James Michener won the Pulitzer Prize in 1948 for his book *Tales of the South Pacific*. He went on to earn more than \$100 million as the author of more than 40 novels.

At age 88, Michener wrote in *This Noble Land*, "I feel almost a blood relationship with all the artists in all the mediums, for I find that we face the same problems but solve them in our own ways. When young people in my writing classes, for example, ask what subjects they should study to become writers, I surprise them by replying: 'Ceramics and eurhythmic dancing.' When they look surprised I explain: 'Ceramics so you can feel form evolving through your fingertips molding the moist clay, and eurhythmic dancing so you can experience the flow of motion through your body. You might develop a sense of freedom that way.'"

Michener sold more than 100 million books. Thousands of young writers asked for his advice. But do you suppose any of them take classes in ceramics and eurhythmic dancing? Or did they just say "I get it. Form and freedom," and then move on?

Transformation happens experientially, not intellectually. James Michener knew this. Dr. Gregory Berns knows this.

And now you know it, too.

Will you do the deed, take the action, pull the trigger, and ride the bullet? Or will you, like the rest of them, think to yourself, "I get it," and consider the lesson learned? 

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Tomorrow's America

Humility And Simplicity Are The New Motivators

Americans have always treasured independence and achievement. We've seen ourselves as fighters who stood tall after every victory, chin up, chest out, shoulders back. And to the victor go the spoils, right? Big houses, big cars, lavish vacations; these were the American dream.

But we recently learned that America is not an only child. There is no American economy or American environment separate from the rest of the world. The wind blowing through Kansas today blew across Mongolia yesterday.

Take a breath of Mongolian air. Smile into the light. This story has a happy ending: We're about to discover the joys of humility and simplicity. Smaller houses, smaller cars, a simpler lifestyle. We may even become the "kinder, gentler nation" Ronald Reagan's vice president believed we could be. (From the Republican National Convention acceptance address of George H. W. Bush, August 18, 1988.)

I first presented **Society's 40-Year Pendulum** in Stockholm, Sweden, in January 2004. Since then, more than 100 trade associations, state governments, and broadcast groups have asked me to help their people better understand the rumblings of societal change they feel beneath their feet.

Ten completed social cycles — 400 years of history — seem to indicate that in the six years following a 40-year tipping point, the majority of older consumers will choose to follow the younger consumers' lead.

The last tipping point occurred in 2003. You may recall that I wrote to you about it in December of that year. That article, available at MondayMorningMemo.com, was titled **1963 All Over Again**. Here are four of its key paragraphs:

Forty years is how long a true "generation" stays in power, during which time social change will be evolutionary, rather than revolutionary. But in the waning years of each generation, "alpha voices" ring out as prophets in the wilderness, providing a glimpse of the new generation that will soon emerge like a baby chick struggling to break out of its shell.

Baby Boomer heroes were always bigger than life, perfect icons, brash and beautiful: Muhammad Ali... Elvis... James Bond. But the emerging generation holds a different view of what makes a hero.

Boomers rejected Conformity and their attitude swept the land, changing even the mindset of their fuddy-duddy parents. But today's teens are rejecting Pretense. Born into a



world of hype, their internal BS-meters are highly sensitive and blisteringly accurate. Words like "amazing," "astounding," and "spectacular" are translated as "blah," "blah," and "blah." Consequently, tried-and-true selling methods that worked as recently as a year ago are working far less well today. The world is again changing stripe and color. We're at another tipping point. Can you feel it?

THEN, FOUR YEARS AGO (NOV. 1, 2004), I WROTE:

The Age of The Baby Boomer ended in 2003. The torch has been handed to a new generation with new ideas and values. Sure, we Boomers still hold the power at the top, but the prevailing worldview that drives our

nation is completely other than the one we grew up with. Businesses that don't get in step are going to find it increasingly difficult to succeed...

Being a Baby Boomer isn't about when you were born. It's about how you see the world...

Baby Boomers were idealists who worshipped heroes, perfect icons of beauty and success. Today these icons are seen as phony, posed, and laughable...

Baby Boomers believed in big dreams, reaching for the stars, personal freedom, "be all that you can be." Today's generation believes in small actions, getting your head out of the clouds, social obligation, "do your part."

The adoption curve of the new values by the mainstream of society began in 2003 and will be complete by mid-2008 or early 2009. You have plenty of time to get in step with tomorrow. But you need to get started today. The six-year transition from an Idealist outlook into a Civic mindset will be complete in December 2008.

NOVEMBER 2008: TOMORROW HAS ARRIVED.

What this means to business: Purchases in the future will be less about impressing others, more about personal meaning and relationships. Are you prepared to make these adjustments in your promotions, your jock patter, your radio copy? Do you understand the rules of the Language of Intimacy?

Tomorrow is here, right on schedule. Humility and simplicity are the new, national adventure. Those who champion these virtues will prosper. And no medium is prepared to embrace them like radio. 📻

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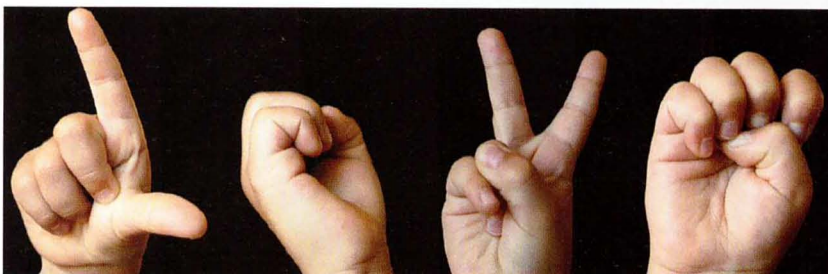
Radio's Language Of Love

Most women can tell at least one funny story about a tragic first date. In most of these stories, a misguided man spends the entire evening thinking of tactful ways to say:

"Let me tell you how wonderful I am."

"Let me tell you what I can do."

"Let me tell you why I'm special."



Although we're rarely drawn to people who begin their sentences with "I," "Me," and "My," this first-person perspective remains central to mainstream ad writing. And it's why most Americans detest mainstream advertising.

"At [name of company]..."

"We offer..."

"Voted the number one..."

This outdated language of self-promotion is known as **AdSpeak**. The new language of marketing is the language of **Intimacy**. Connectedness. Shared values. Here's an example:

I'm [name of person speaking.] I sell diamonds. Exquisite diamonds. But diamonds aren't the most precious gift you can give. Not by a long shot. The most precious gift you can give is to get her undivided attention and look directly into her eyes as you say I... Love... You. And then just keep looking into her eyes. I... Love... You. She would rather hear that every day than own the biggest diamond on earth. Are you going to say it? Say it today. And mean it with every beat of your heart. I... Love... You! A diamond is just a symbol. The **important** thing is not to forget what it symbolizes. Love sparkles brighter than diamonds. Commit your life to someone you love. That's all that really matters. [Name of jewelry store] sells diamonds. Exquisite diamonds. But they're nothing compared to what you can give for free. LOCATION TAG

(copyright Oct. 12, 2008, Roy H. Williams Marketing)

This ad isn't selling jewelry, it's selling a jeweler. Putting diamonds into their proper perspective seems almost like anti-advertising, doesn't it?

Intimate ads are believable because they confirm what the customer already knows. The fact that the advertiser knows it as well — and is willing to admit it — is what surprises and impresses the customer. Click: **Connection**.

HOW TO AVOID ADSPEAK IN YOUR ADS

1. Limit self-reference. Reduce the number of times you refer to your company or your product in your ads. (New York Times bestselling authors Jeffrey and Bryan Eisenberg offer a free, online analysis of ad copy at www.futurenowinc.com/wewetext.htm.)

Their "We-We Calculator" scores ad copy instantly. Just copy and paste your ad into the text block and the software does the rest.)

2. Don't say it. Lead the customer to say it. Instead of saying "We're honest," say something that only an honest person would say. Let the customer respond, "Wow. That's honest."

3. Admit the downside. It makes the upside easier to believe. "A diamond is just a symbol. The **important** thing is not to forget what it symbolizes."

Behavioral scientist Desmond Morris became interested in why some couples stay together for life while other couples divorce. He discovered that those who stayed together had followed similar progressions of intimacy, allowing sufficient time before advancing to the next stage. He theorized that this gave the couple time to bond more deeply during the courtship phase of the relationship. Couples who rushed through these "bonding steps" usually didn't have as strong a bond and were far more likely to divorce.

WHAT THIS MEANS TO BUSINESS

Customer courtship should begin long before your customer is in the market for what you sell. The customer won quick and easy will be lost just as quickly and easily.

Let's look at the stages of intimacy as they relate to business:

1. Eye to Body General awareness

In Business: Name recognition

2. Eye to Eye Each person knows the other has seen them

In Business: Targeted advertising is purchased to reach the customer

3. Voice to Voice Conversation. Can be one-sided, or a dialogue

In Business: Your ads are read or heard by the customer

4. Hand to Hand Holding hands. Acknowledgement of possible relationship

In Business: The customer considers visiting your place of business

5. Arm to Shoulder Closer contact than holding hands

In Business: Contact is made in person or by phone

6. Arm to Waist Indicates a growing familiarity and comfort level in the relationship

In Business: Second contact, a repeat visit

Buying Credibility

Tom Wanek believes credibility can be “purchased” by risking one or more of six currencies. The more you put at risk, the more believable your message.

Study these techniques. Your ability to consult clients, make convincing presentations, and write persuasive ads will rise to a whole new level.

CURRENCIES THAT BUY CREDIBILITY

1. MATERIAL WEALTH

Of the six currencies, we see material wealth risked most frequently in the form of money-back guarantees and statements like, “Find a lower price anywhere and we’ll refund the difference plus 10 percent.” But no one wants to jump through hoops to prove some other company offers “a better price on an identical product” so these claims go largely unnoticed. Can you think of a better way to increase your credibility by enlarging the customer’s perception of your financial risk?

2. TIME & ENERGY

Is your client in a business that provides an in-home service? Imagine the power of an ad that says, “If we’re not there when we promised, we do the job for free. Unlike other companies, we would never waste your time, then ask you to pay for ours.” Variations of this classic example of risking time and energy to increase credibility have been used by the Clockworks group to build a number of America’s most successful in-home service franchises. How else might your clients risk time and energy to increase their credibility?

3. OPPORTUNITY

Ladies, when a man claims to love you but continues to date other women, is his statement credible? A self-imposed restriction on opportunity — dating you exclusively — adds credibility to his statement, does it not? Likewise, the manufacturer who gives access to just one retailer in an area is perceived as committed to that retailer’s success. Is there a way your clients might risk opportunity to strengthen credibility? How about your radio station? I’m not suggesting that you work with only one competitor in a category. I’m saying only that a meaningful sacrifice of opportunity will add credibility to your claims. How many ways might this be done?

4. POWER & CONTROL

The original purpose of Amazon.com was to sell books. But by choosing to allow visitors to write negative reviews, they increased the credibility of the positive reviews and quickly became one of the Internet’s giants. Danny Burton, the owner of an auto body shop, advertises on the radio that he’ll fix your car for whatever amount your insurance adjuster agrees to pay, thereby saving you your deductible. Danny gave power and



control to the insurance adjuster and grew his business by 1,200 percent in just 24 months. Likewise, your station can gain power by giving it away and you can increase your credibility by giving up control. An additional benefit of giving away power is that it transfers a sense of ownership to your

audience. Giving up control adds authenticity to your voice and separates your message from the worn-out ad speak of the past.

5. REPUTATION & PRESTIGE

In a report released in November by CNN/Opinion Research, President George W. Bush had an approval rating of just 24 percent. In a press conference held the following week, the president said he regretted saying he wanted Osama bin Laden “dead or alive” and that he had urged the Iraqi insurgents in 2003, “Bring ‘em on.” He said he was sorry that such language made the world believe he was “not a man of peace.” By putting his prestige at risk and eating a slice of humble pie, Bush regained some of his lost credibility. How might your station risk prestige? How might your clients risk it in order to gain credibility?

6. SAFETY & WELL-BEING

You’re 12 years old. Your stepfather says he loves you as much as if you were his own, but you’re not sure you believe him. But when you fall through the ice while skating on a frozen lake, your stepfather dives into the freezing water to rescue you. Do you believe him now?

The president of Lifelock, an identity-theft protection program, runs ads that say, “My name is Todd Davis. My Social Security number is 457-55-5462. So why publish my Social Security number? Because I’m absolutely confident LifeLock is protecting my good name and personal information, just like it will yours. And we guarantee our service up to \$1 million.” By risking his personal well-being through the publication of his Social Security number and risking his company’s material wealth by reimbursing up to \$1 million in identity-theft losses, Todd Davis has built Lifelock into the dominant player in its category.

Wanek’s Currencies of Credibility give you a framework for discussing ways to strengthen your claims. But these currencies are available only to the committed, the creative, and the daring.

But hey, you’re all that. You chose radio. 

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