



ROY WILLIAMS
THE WIZARD OF ADS

What To Expect In 2009

Ready To Play Leapfrog?

The coming year will be fun, adventure-filled, and profitable for people who have their wits about them.

A number of small business owners are positioning themselves to overtake their much larger rivals. Are you prepared to help your clients play leapfrog?

Not many years ago, General Motors and Circuit City were the dominant players in their categories. Today they're on their knees, having made the same mistakes:

MISTAKE 1: They took their fingers off the pulse of the customer.

In 1960, GM sold nearly 60 percent of all new cars. Today, just one of the GM brands, Chevrolet, maintains 4,200 dealerships in the U.S. But Toyota sells more cars than all five GM brands combined, through just 1,400 locations.

LESSON: *Having the right product is more important than heritage and convenience, so make sure your client is offering the right product in their ads. A great ad for the wrong product will fail every time.*

MISTAKE 2: They stopped taking risks.

When companies achieve success, they usually quit innovating and become guardians of the status quo. But yesterday's perfect solution is obsolete tomorrow. Vinyl records were replaced by 8-track tapes. 8-tracks were replaced by cassettes. Cassettes were replaced by CDs. And now CDs are being replaced by MP3 players. The same is happening with business practices.

LESSON: *Success, like failure, is a temporary condition. Never assume you've arrived. Small, nimble companies will soon be nipping at your heels.*

The client with the biggest ad budget is no longer your best prospect. The best prospect is the advertiser with the strongest unheard message. Large clients get twitchy and hunker down when money is tight; they take their fingers off the pulse of their customers. Smaller clients get aggressive and consequently increase their ad budgets. Be the radio station that brings these new clients to the dance. The time for prospecting is now. Call on people who have never used radio.

Tomorrow's successful advertiser will be more loyal than yesterday's category leader. These new leaders will be oriented toward long-term thinking, so bring them a long-term solution. Pitch a 52-week schedule. Ask for 100 percent of their ad budget. Think beyond the present moment.

Consider the following: A large group of 4-year-old children is led into a room, one at a time. The room is equipped with a two-way mirror. Each child is seated and given a marshmallow. "You can eat the marshmallow right now if you want. But if you wait until I come back to eat your marshmallow, I'll give you a second marshmallow to



go with it." The giver of marshmallows then leaves the child alone in the room.

What can we learn from such a test? Can it tell us anything

important about a child's future? Can the same idea be applied to advertisers today?

One-third of the children ate the marshmallow immediately.

One-third held out for a short time, then ate the marshmallow.

One-third waited 15 to 20 minutes until the giver of marshmallows returned with the promised second marshmallow.

Small indicators are valuable to a savvy consultant, just as they were valuable to Walter Mischel*, a scientist at Stanford 40 years ago:

Fourteen years later, at the age of 18, each of the 216 original children was located. Those who didn't eat the marshmallow scored an average of 210 points higher on the SAT (610 verbal/652 math vs. 524 verbal/528 math).

At age 40, the group that didn't eat their marshmallows had more successful marriages, higher incomes, greater career satisfaction, and better health than the marshmallow eaters.

The 4-year-old who eats the marshmallow is oriented toward the present. The 4-year-old who waits is oriented toward the future.

Likewise, the advertiser who buys a short flight to run a "high-impact sales event" is oriented toward the present. The advertiser who buys a 52-week schedule is oriented toward the future.

A successful ad consultant uses small indicators to make big decisions. In your prospecting, look for little signs that indicate long-term thinking. These are your best prospects for buying and maintaining successful, 52-week ad schedules.

Category leaders are going into hunker-down mode. They're cutting their advertising and abandoning their leadership positions, assuming that everyone else will cut back as well. But when a leapfrogger sees a leader's brake lights, he hits the accelerator. Find yourself some leapfroggers. Be instrumental in growing their businesses. Steal market share from the leaders in hunker-down mode.

Are you beginning to see what I meant by fun, adventure-filled, and profitable? **INK**

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads Inc.. E-mail: Roy@WizardofAds.com

*Walter Mischel was a professor of psychology at Stanford, Harvard, and Columbia universities and a past editor of Psychological Review. He was elected to the National Academy of Sciences in 2004 and became president of the Association for Psychological Science in 2007.

Is It An Ad "Depression"?

Consultant and economic forecaster Jack Myers projects that total U.S. ad spending fell 2.4 percent in 2008, and will fall by 6.7 percent in 2009 and 2.3 percent in 2010. For radio, Myers sees a 5 percent decline in ad spending in 2008, to \$19.7 billion, followed by a 12 percent dropoff, to \$17.3 billion, in 2009, and a further 8 percent decline in 2010, to \$15.9 billion.

Source: Jack Myers, 2008-10 Advertising & Marketing Investment Forecasts, Dec. 11, 2008



Please Don't Throw Me In The Briar Patch!

We're living in a time of tumultuous change. A misinformed president declares a war. The value of homes — which was never supposed to fall — fell. The SEC can't make Wall Street color between the lines, and \$700 billion goes missing. A \$50 billion Ponzi scheme is perpetrated by one of the most respected men on Wall Street. A governor allegedly tries to sell a seat in the Senate. Gasoline sold for a dollar a quart and General Motors became insolvent.

But I'm not worried. I was born in a briar patch.

I began my career in radio during the term of another president who wasn't quite up to the job.

It's 1979. Mortgage interest rates are 18 percent and jobs are scarce. Gas stations don't always have gas. The Middle Eastern boogeyman of that era, the Ayatollah Khomeini, brazenly invades a U.S. embassy and kidnaps 52 U.S. diplomats. When we send our best and brightest soldiers to rescue our diplomats, we return home empty-handed. The Ayatollah holds us hostage for 444 days.

"Elected largely on his promise to never lie to the American people, Carter soon seemed out of place in the vastness of the presidency. Events conspired to further impede his progress: rising energy costs, high unemployment, Americans held hostage in Iran, Soviets in Afghanistan. A man of peace who took pride in bringing together age-old antagonists, Carter was finally viewed by his countrymen as lacking presidential stature." — American Experience, PBS

And the whole time, it seems the only thing we needed was a head cheerleader with a more beautiful dream. Ronald Reagan took office with a sparkling smile. "Things are fine. Expand your business. All is well. Go out to dinner. Life is good." And we believed him.

Economy rebounded, cold war ended, Mary Lou Retton vaulted a perfect 10, and the Berlin Wall came tumbling down.

"All men dream, but not equally. Those who dream by night in the

dusty recesses of their minds wake in the day to find that it was vanity: But the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act their dream with open eyes, to make it possible." — T. E. Lawrence (of Arabia)

In defiance of the current recession, some broadcasters are investing in new, unproven ideas. Maybe they're being foolish. Maybe the right thing would be to hunker down and cover their heads with their hands. But did you ever notice how hunker sounds like clunker, junker, lunger, and punker? I prefer dream, as in team, gleam in the eye, beaming smile, and cream of the crop.

Hunker down or dream. It's your call.

The Seven Steps To Hunkering Down

1. Stay scared. Call it *street smart*.
2. Cultivate cynicism. Call it *straight talk*.
3. Praise pessimism. Call it a *reality check*.
4. Believe you are wiser than everyone else.
5. Feel secretly superior.
6. Take no action that might improve your condition.
7. Crow I told you so when things get worse.

The Seven Steps To Pursuing a Dream

1. Know what you're trying to make happen.
2. Expect good things to happen for you.
3. Plant seeds of good things daily.
4. Trust that some of your seeds will grow.
5. Measure success by clearly established criteria.
6. Make progress daily without fail.
7. Believe in the power of ELBs.

ELBs are **Exponential Little Bits**, tiny but relentless changes that compound to make a miracle. The power of an ELB lies not in its size, but in its daily occurrence. For an ELB to work its Exponential magic, the Little Bit must happen every day, every day, every day.

When daily progress meets daily progress, it doesn't add, it multiplies. To harness this magic, you must learn to ask yourself: What difference have I made today? And never go to sleep until you have done a Little Bit to move yourself closer to your goal. You must do a Little Bit every day, no matter how tiny the thing might be.

Exponential Little Bits work both ways. They can lift you up or hold you down.

Start with a dollar. Double it every day for just 20 days, and you'll have \$2,097,150 dollars. But if you reduce each day's total by just 10 percent (a Little Bit) before the next day's doubling, you'll amass only \$793,564. Reduce each day's doubling by 35 percent and you'll wind up with only \$56,784 — a holdback of 95.83 percent.

There's a line in Robert Frost's poem "Mending Wall" that says, "Something there is that doesn't love a wall, that wants it down! I could say 'Elves' to him, but it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather he said it for himself."

Is there a wall between you and your goal?

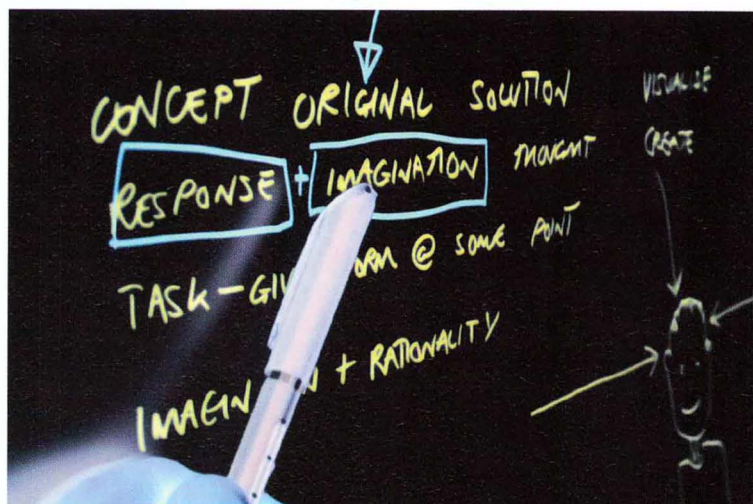
I could say how to bring it down.

But I'd rather you said it for yourself. **INK**

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads Inc.. E-mail: Roy@WizardofAds.com



Prospecting 2009: Be Prepared For What Is



Prospecting is easy when you're in step with current trends. These are the trends that will shape 2009:

CHEAP THRILLS

"If it feels good, do it."

Sales of alcohol, movie tickets, and ice cream will increase. This happens during every recession. Who can offer the public an altered consciousness, an alternative reality, a cheap escape from the merely mundane? These businesses will thrive, and your ads for them will be extremely effective.

REPAIR INSTEAD OF REPLACE

"Instead of buying a new one, I'll hold on to the one I've got."

Sellers of new houses, new cars, new clothing, and jewelry will have to get extremely creative. Traffic will be hard to generate for these categories, regardless of what you do. Consequently, they'll be tough to keep on the air. But repair businesses are trending magically upward. Kitchen cabinets, flooring, foundation repair, and countertop replacement are on the move. Auto repair shops, paint shops and shoe repair are seeing increased traffic. Look for companies that provide repairs and upgrades. They have a story to tell and they need your help telling it.

TIGHTROPE BUDGETING

"Should I shepherd my resources or push harder than ever?"

Market share is up for grabs because businesses are slashing their ad budgets. Some will hunker down and try to hang on. Others will push harder than ever while their competitors hibernate. You'll find these aggressive pushers in positions 3 through 10 in their categories. Numbers 1 and 2 will be playing it safe, hunkered down. If you can't convince the leaders to get aggressive, help a smaller competitor steal their market share. This is America. We're capitalists. Some businesses will quit advertising and go broke as a direct

result. Others will advertise aggressively and go broke because they lack financial staying power. The correct course of action depends on an accurate assessment of the competitive environment. Can you give clients an objective perspective to help them make a wise decision?

FEWER COMPETITORS

"If the economy stays tough and fewer businesses occupy my category, won't that leave more for me?"

It's important that your client understand upfront that an increase in market share doesn't always mean they'll have higher sales than they did last year. When a competitor exits a category, you have to ask: 1) What was the sales volume of the failed competitor? 2) How much has the category shrunk compared to last year? If the competitor's now up-for-grabs volume exceeds the shrinkage of the category, your client might see some benefit. But if the competitor was a minor player, the shrinkage of the category will erase any immediate benefit to your client. In effect, your client winds up with a larger slice of a smaller pie. The big payoff won't happen until the economy begins to rebound.

Make sure your client realizes that to finish 2009 with sales figures equal to 2008 is a very aggressive goal when they occupy a shrinking category. Market-share growth is different than sales-volume growth. Don't trap yourself by promising to grow sales above last year's numbers. A good, long-term relationship begins with honesty and candor.

RAID THE NEWSPAPER. NOW!

"I walk to the end of the driveway each morning to retrieve a newspaper telling me things I've known for 24 hours."

In the past, "columnists" and "reporters" were people who had access to a publishing pipeline. But in an Internet-connected world, isn't every blogger a columnist and a reporter? How many more months will pass before newspapers are published digitally and round-the-clock?

The time to poach newspaper advertisers is now. And since small newspaper ads cost a lot more than you imagine, don't limit your targeting to only those prospects that run big ads. To win a newspaper advertiser, suggest a radio schedule to drive traffic to a specially prepared homepage on their website. There, your advertiser has unlimited space for full-color pictures and hyperlinked text, with web traffic easily counted as well. It's much easier to sell a newspaper advertiser on a plan that uses radio to drive traffic to their website than it is to sell them a plan for using words alone to replace the newspaper's pictures.

Times are changing, and we must change with them. This is not a dark hour for radio but the beginning of the end for newspaper. Let's put them out of their misery, shall we? **INK**

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads Inc. E-mail: Roy@WizardofAds.com



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Substance Over Style

Advertising In A Recession

Ah, the power of details. Every ad has style and substance, cheese and meat. Most ads are cheese because ad writers are rarely given meat. Style cheese is music, tone of voice, sound effects, and hyperbole. Substance meat is provable fact and concrete detail.

My success as a writer is due to the fact that I demand meat from the business owners I serve. I'd much rather fight over meat to put in their ads than apologize to them for their ads not working.

Style affects how people feel. Cheese.

Substance changes what they know. Meat.

IS YOUR ADVERTISING MEATY OR CHEESY?

Here's an example of a 146-word, cheese-filled ad:

Pearls have always been off-white, but not anymore! [STORE] has just received a shipment of colored freshwater pearls. We have a whole panorama of colors to choose from! Come and see these wonderful new fashion items that have arrived just in time for the Spring Season. Come early and shop while the selection is best. Don't be left out in the cold! Step into Spring with a spring in your step with fashionable, colored freshwater pearls. You'll always find the newest thing in cutting-edge fashion at [STORE] where we've been serving the good people of [TOWN] since [YEAR]. Colored pearls are hot! Colored pearls are cool. And you won't believe the price. Get yours before they're all gone at [STORE] where you can see them from 9 AM to 6:30 PM Monday through Saturday. Colored, freshwater pearls, exclusively at [STORE, LOCATION] or online at [WEBSITE] or call [PHONE].

Here's another 146-word ad, but with accelerated style and a few chunks of meat:

MALE: When a painting has gentle colors and a soft glow, it's usually a watercolor. I love watercolors. I like their optimism. I like the way they make me feel. So when I saw the Watercolor Pearls from the town of Wen-chow on the coast of the East China Sea, I ordered a hundred strands for the women of [TOWN].

FEMALE: Wait till you see the colors!

MALE: Silky black,

FEMALE: Blushing pink

MALE: Supple green

FEMALE: Wet blue

MALE: Smooth white

FEMALE: Moonglow silver

MALE: Translucent apricot

FEMALE: Dripping chocolate

MALE: Each strand is 16 inches long.

FEMALE: Some strands are all one color.

"IF YOU SAY THAT THERE ARE ELEPHANTS FLYING IN THE SKY, PEOPLE ARE NOT GOING TO BELIEVE YOU. BUT IF YOU SAY THAT THERE ARE FOUR HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE ELEPHANTS FLYING IN THE SKY, PEOPLE WILL PROBABLY BELIEVE YOU."

— Gabriel Garcia Marquez, winner of the 1982 Nobel Prize in Literature

MALE: Others are multiple colors, a pastel rainbow of freshwater pearls.

FEMALE: At just 79 dollars a strand, 100 strands won't last long.

MALE: And the East China Sea is a loooooong way from here.

FEMALE: Take a look right now at [WEBSITE].

MALE: Or try them on up-close and personal at [LOCATION].

FEMALE: Watercolor pearls, exclusively at [STORE].

Meat chunks:

1. the town of Wen-chow
2. a hundred strands
3. black, pink, green, blue, white, silver, apricot, chocolate
4. Some strands are all one color
5. Others are multiple colors
6. 79 dollars a strand
7. East China Sea

Specifics are more powerful than generalities, even when those specifics merely accelerate your style:

1. Rainbow is more specific than panorama and is therefore more easily visualized.

2. In his first appearance, the MALE voice says "... make me feel."

3. Each specific color name is then accelerated by the use of a modifier that might also describe a woman's skin: gentle, soft, silky, supple, wet, smooth, translucent, dripping.

4. And most of those tactile words follow the phrase, "the women of [TOWN]."

Any questions? **INK**

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How To Raid The Newspaper For Billing

Close your eyes and imagine all the unsold advertisers of your city. Now say out loud: We keep getting who we get, and we keep losing who we lose, because we keep doing what we do.

Radio sales will continue to decline with the economy unless you and I find a way to attract those advertisers who have chosen not to buy radio in the past.

Consider: The city has dozens of deeply entrenched newspaper advertisers. They're so totally against radio that they're no longer even on your radar screen. They've said: *I have a visual product. Radio isn't visual.*

You've said: We make radio visual through excellent description. Your customers will see your product in their imaginations. This is far more powerful than simply showing them a photograph.

Blah, blah, blah.

We keep trying to sell radio our way. Why not sell them their way? Newspaper advertisers don't trust reach and frequency; they trust circulation and display. So instead of explaining how words are more powerful than pictures, say instead: **The Internet makes radio visual.**

We already have a website.

Yes, and your website gives you unlimited column inches to display your product. Your homepage is a full-color, full-page ad that appears daily in the newspaper of the 21st century. The only thing you need now is circulation.

What do you mean?

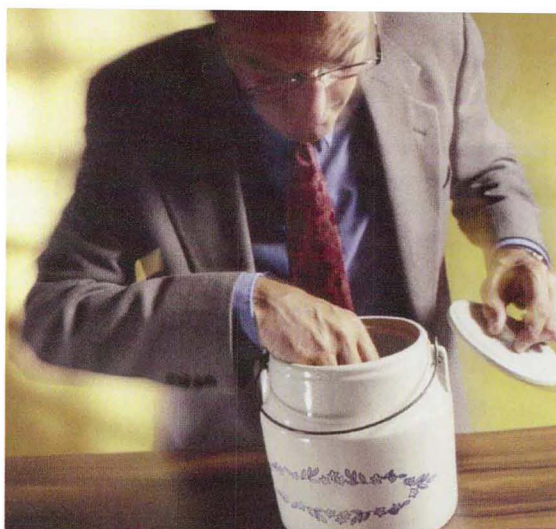
Dollar for dollar, nothing drives traffic to a website like radio. Search engine optimization is good, but it's passive. And Google AdWords have become shockingly expensive. But don't take my word for it. Do a test.

What kind of test?

Dollar for dollar, time for time, see who can drive the highest number of unique visitors to your website. Will you test \$1,000 in one day? \$10,000 in one week? Pick a number and a window of time that lets you use the newspaper to its full advantage. Measure the number of unique visitors to your website along with the volume sold of the featured item. Then spend the same number of dollars over the same window of time on a single radio station. Measure again the unique visitors to your website and the volume sold of the featured item. Based on a series of local tests conducted across America in 2008 by Wizard of Ads, Inc., a radio station will generate four to nine times as many unique visitors to your website along with commensurate sales of the featured item.

I don't know. The newspaper has always been good for us.

And newspaper will continue to be good for you. But



today's newspaper is the Internet. Yesterday's newspaper is in serious trouble all across America because you and I walk to the ends of our driveways each morning to pick up papers that tell us what we've already known for 24 hours. Newspaper circulation is declining slowly because we continue to subscribe. But newspaper readership is already gone. Today's public is reading the electronic paper. That's where you should put your display ads.

You're saying I should run radio ads and give our store address and our store hours and then say "or see us online atcom"?

Absolutely not. We want the customer to see the product, right? Your online display is a half step between your advertising and your store. We can get 50 people to walk to their computers to see the product before we can get one person to drive to your store. The whole ad needs to be about your offer, a product, its features and benefits. We tell them about it, then say: "See it for yourself. Up close and in full color. Take a look right now atcom." The Internet makes radio visual.

I don't know....

Talk to your friends, your staff, your customers. Don't ask them whether they subscribe to the paper. Ask them whether they read it this morning. Then ask them what they've learned online today.

Can you see how this new conversation could yield a new result? If you're willing to give it a try, the first step is to discover the invisible budgets of hundreds of newspaper advertisers. Have one of your people catalogue every ad in the newspaper for 30 days. (You'll need to buy two copies of the paper if you plan to cut out the ads since the page is printed on both sides.) Measure the ads and assume each advertiser has a contract for 1,000 column inches. You're going to be shocked how much money is being spent by obscure little advertisers that aren't being called on by your people.

Newspaper is working less well for advertisers today than it was a year ago. And it worked less well last year than it did the year before. The newspaper advertiser already knows this. Why not remind him about the electronic newspaper he already owns?

All he needs now is circulation. You can deliver it, but only if you make the ad about the website, not about the store. Now go put the newspaper out of its misery. **INK**

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads, Inc. E-mail: Roy@WizardofAds.com



Glitter When You Walk

Everyone in radio needs to read *Marketing Outrageously* by Jon Spoelstra. Not just the salespeople. Not just the on-air staff. Not just management. Everyone.

Customers are twitchy today. They need to see, feel, and taste excitement. No problem, right? Radio has always been the most exciting media. But radio folks are tired, beat down by the economy, hammered by the home office, crowded by budgets, worried by nervous clients. Radio people need a high-voltage jolt of hilarious outrageousness, an injection of swagger, a glimmer of mischief, an open vein of new ideas, raw, shining in the sunlight. This is it. *Marketing Outrageously*.

Are you up for it?

Once upon a time, Rush Limbaugh pushed the envelope. But that envelope today is all stretched out of shape. America is asking, "Hey, Radio, is that all you got?" Howard Stern once shocked America in the same way Dr. Ruth Westheimer shocked us when Howard was just a boy. But that shtick is wearing thin. Again America whispers, "Hey, Radio, is that all you got?"

It's time for advertisers, not radio personalities, to rock the public. Not with outrageous language, but with startling offers, fascinating packages, and innovative opportunities. Read *Marketing Outrageously* by Jon Spoelstra and you'll instantly become a sustaining resource for your clients, an endless fountain of ideas that work.

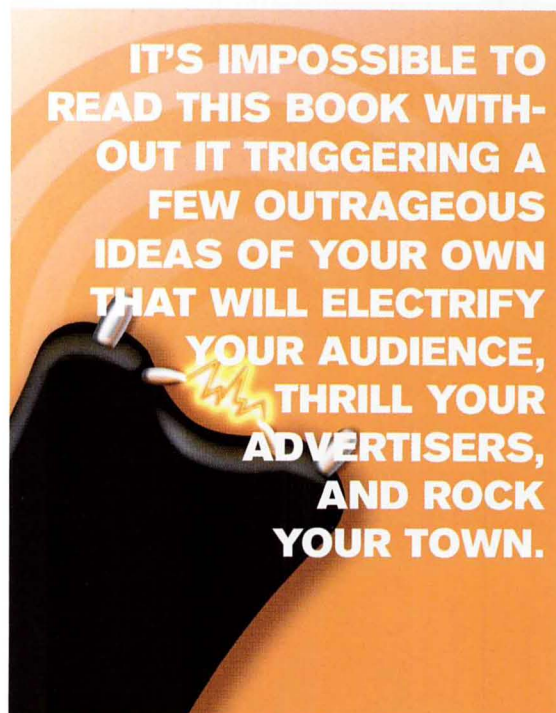
A half-hearted marketing strategy is like buying a ticket halfway to Europe. Don't let your clients do things halfway. As Napoleon Bonaparte told a friend on the day he decided to take over the country, "Small plans do not enflame the hearts of men." Enflame the hearts of your clients with ideas that pop their eyes open and make their breath catch in their throats.

Jon Spoelstra doesn't believe in small ideas, small plans, or small results. And after reading *Marketing Outrageously*, neither will you.

Spoelstra worked with the New Jersey Nets back when that team ranked at the bottom of the NBA roster. He had no star players, no up-and-comers, no loyal fans — but he made the Nets the most profitable franchise in all of basketball. And he did it without winning games.

Spoelstra says, "I've got a warped perspective on advertising: I think advertising should get results you can feel. Don't give me any of that image or identity stuff; I want revenue that I can track to the ad. Anything less is, to me, like throwing money into a tornado and hoping for the best."

When Alan Aufzien, chairman of the Nets, didn't want to let Spoelstra exceed the team's marketing budget, Spoelstra said, "I'm going to run the ads and pay for them personally. You don't pay a nickel for advertising. I pay the whole thing. I'll keep what comes



in from the ads until I'm reimbursed. Everything above that, we'll split fifty-fifty."

Aufzien decided to break tradition, and, for the first time ever, the Nets went over budget. Way over. The additional ticket sales that happened as a direct result covered all the costs of advertising and brought in an additional million dollars in profit. And that doesn't include all the additional revenues from concessions at the ballgames.

In just three seasons, the revenues from paid ticket sales went up from \$5 million to \$17 million. Local sponsorships ballooned from \$400,000 to \$7 million. And the market value of the team grew from \$40 million to \$120 million.

You might disagree with some of what Spoelstra says, but it's impossible to read this book without it triggering a few outrageous ideas of your own that will electrify your audience, thrill your advertisers, and rock your town.

Have you been feeling less than electric? Plug in to the high voltage of *Marketing Outrageously*.

Marketing Outrageously is fun.

Marketing Outrageously is politically incorrect.

Marketing Outrageously is using your imagination.

Marketing Outrageously is being willing to be laughed at.

Marketing Outrageously is putting revenue first and everything else second.

Marketing Outrageously is dropping your assumptions and starting all over with a fresh point of view.

Marketing Outrageously is the opposite of marketing safely — but it may be the only truly safe way to market.

The cover price of *Marketing Outrageously* is \$25.95, but it's available from most online sellers for about \$16.50.

Buy it. Get electric. Let your light shine. **INK**

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads, Inc. E-mail: Roy@WizardOfAds.com



10 Things Never To Do In Your Ads

1. Never promise everything you plan to deliver.

Leave something to become the delight factor. That unexpected extra bit you deliver "because we love you" will go a long way toward helping the customer forgive and forget any areas where you may have fallen short. Great ads are written in three steps: (1.) **How to End.** What will be the *last mental image* your ad presents to your customer? Begin with the end in mind. (2.) **Where to Begin.** A clear but interesting angle of approach will gain the customer's attention. (3.) **What to Leave Out.** Surprise is the foundation of delight. What will you intentionally **leave out** of your ad so that you can deliver a delightful surprise? Additionally, what will you leave out so that the imagination of the customer is engaged?

2. Never begin a sentence with the word "Imagine..."

If you're planning to take your customer on a journey of imagination, plunge them into it. "The wheels of your airplane touch down, but not in the city you were promised..." "You must now choose between two good things..." "If you had more enemies like these, you wouldn't need friends..."

3. Never include your name in an ad more often than it would be spoken in normal conversation. Cramming the name where it doesn't belong is AdSpeak. Back when Americans encountered one-fiftieth as many ads each day, the rule was to include the name of the advertiser seven times every 30 seconds. Do this today and your ads will sound like they were written in the 1940s.

4. Never conjure an unpleasant mental image.

Fear and disgust work face-to-face, but they often backfire when used in mass media. Conjure these unpleasant emotions in the minds of the masses and you'll leave your listeners with a vaguely bad feeling attached to your name. They'll want to avoid you, but they won't be able to recall why.

5. Never respond to a challenge from a competitor smaller than you. Drawing attention to a smaller competitor makes them larger in the eyes of the public. Conversely, if someone bigger than you is foolish enough to shine their spotlight on you, dance in it.

6. Never claim to have exceptional service.

Most people won't believe you. And those who do believe you will expect more from your staff than they can possibly deliver. It's a lose-lose proposition. Rather than promising exceptional service in your ads, tell the public something objective, factual, and verifiable that

causes them to say, "Wow. Those people really believe in customer service." Never praise yourself. Say things that make the customer praise you.

7. Never mention the recession.

I understand how tempting it is to say, "In order to help you combat the recession, we're offering..." But all you're really doing is reminding the customer that now is not a good time to be spending money.

8. Never make a claim you don't immediately support with evidence.

Unsubstantiated claims are the worst form of AdSpeak. Win the confidence of the customer by giving them details, facts, and objective proof. Specifics are more believable than generalities.

9. Never use humor that doesn't reinforce the principal point of your ad.

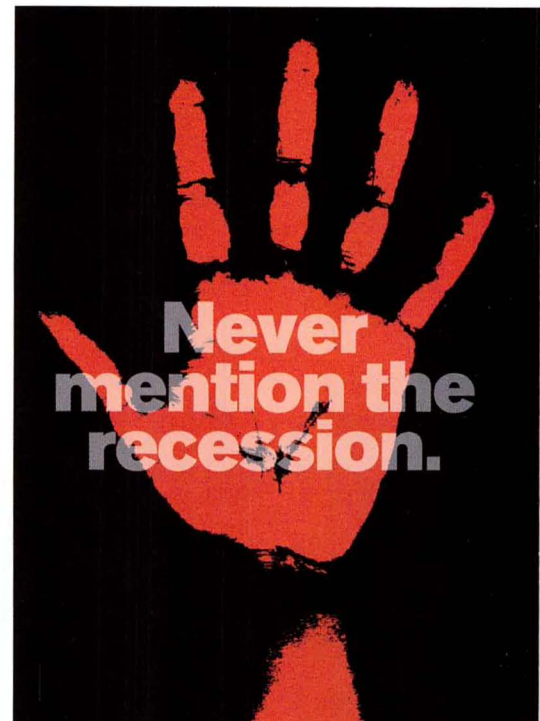
Here's the litmus test: If remembering the humor forces you to recall the message of the ad, the humor is motivated. Good job. But if recalling the humor doesn't explicitly cause you to remember the ad's main point, the humor will make the ad less effective. Sure, people will talk about it. They just won't buy what you're selling.

10. Never say things in the usual way.

From billboards to storefronts to packaging to logos on T-shirts, ads whisper and wheedle and cajole and shout and compete to win our attention. A 1978 Yankelovich study reported that the average American was confronted with more than 2,000 advertising messages per day. When Yankelovich revisited that study in 2008, the number had jumped to more than 5,000 messages per day. The mundane, the predictable, the usual is filtered by Broca's area of the brain and rejected from our consciousness. Surprise Broca and win the customer's attention with words and phrases that are new, surprising, and different.

Now go take over the world. Haven't you heard? This is the year of radio. **INK**

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads, Inc. E-mail: Roy@WizardofAds.com





Market Managers Make The Difference

I come to you today as someone whose employees and partners spend tens of millions of dollars each year purchasing radio ads in large towns and small across America, Canada, and Australia.

Speaking as a buyer of advertising, the centralized ownership of radio stations hasn't made much of a difference, as far as I can tell.

Consolidation was a stock market play that leveraged a certain predictable economy of scale that comes with owning multiple stations in a market: Fire half the people and tell the other half to do twice as much work. Payroll plummets, your bottom line jumps, and you're instantly the darling of Wall Street.

Longtime owner-operators cashed out as

between groups is obvious. "If you hold the line on your rates and we hold the line on ours, we'll both make more money." The home offices are, I'm certain, unaware of all this. Collusion is the result of carefully worded comments that pass between market managers. It happens locally and rarely.

There is no great danger that groups are going to share information they shouldn't. The danger is that they aren't sharing information they should.

You might assume that sellers would quickly ascertain the criteria used by major buyers to make decisions and then sell each buyer in the manner that buyer prefers. You would also assume that a market manager who just scored a big buy from a well known buyer would let the rest of the market managers in his or her group know how they did it, right? Nope. Not happening.

One of my buyers, Joe Hamilton, recently gave the bulk of a client's 52-week budget — about \$150,000 — to the stations of a single broadcast group in that client's local market. Strangely, the same broadcast group was the only group excluded from a \$1.8 million buy Joe placed in another market the following week. That group's stations were in line to score about \$500,000, but they muffed it. Joe Hamilton didn't change. His criteria for buying media didn't change. What changed was the negotiating style of the broadcast group in the second market.

Market managers aren't telling the other market managers in their groups how they made the sale, because making the sale usually means giving the buyer what the buyer wants. And in the bizarre world of radio, accommodating the buyer is seen as weak. What managers like to talk about is how they bent the buyer to their will. "I made them..." "I forced them..." "I held the line..."

Funny, isn't it? Sellers think buyers are arrogant, deceptive, and egotistical. Buyers think exactly the same of sellers.

Want to hear something even funnier? A competitor of the broadcast group that scored the \$150,000 buy one week and missed the \$1.8 million buy the next sent me an e-mail accusing me, personally, of showing favoritism to that group. Evidently, he hadn't heard they were the only group left out in the cold in a major market.

Sadly, my accuser was the head of a broadcast group.

Funniest of all: I have nothing to do with any of the buys placed by my firm. I just train the people and write some ads.

Yes, radio remains a free-for-all of egos, budgets, and ratings.

Sigh. **INK**

MARKET MANAGERS AREN'T TELLING THE OTHER MARKET MANAGERS IN THEIR GROUPS HOW THEY MADE THE SALE, BECAUSE MAKING THE SALE USUALLY MEANS GIVING THE BUYER WHAT THE BUYER WANTS. AND IN THE BIZARRE WORLD OF RADIO, ACCOMMODATING THE BUYER IS SEEN AS WEAK.

consolidators bundled radio stations, slashed expenses, and looked to Wall Street for their reward. Nothing new. All of this had been done a hundred times in a hundred different industries.

But centralized ownership didn't create centralized management. There were no policies, procedures, or practices put into place by consolidators. Buying radio remains a free-for-all of local egos, budgets, and ratings.

The experience of buying from a big broadcast group doesn't change from group to group. It changes from city to city. In most cities the competition for ad dollars is hungry and fierce. But hunger and ferocity can wear many faces.

One would think that distinctive styles of selling, serving, and negotiating would have emerged from within each group by now, but such has not been the case. A group that's wondrously helpful and elegant in one town may be obstinate and arrogant in the next. The face of every broadcast group is the face of its market manager.

There are a handful of towns where collusion

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads, Inc.. E-mail: Roy@WizardofAds.com



Bad Math And You

Always remember these three things when making a decision:

1. Not all facts are helpful.
2. You lose sight of the big picture when you get too close.
3. It's easy to tell lies in the language of math because most people are convinced math never lies.

HERE ARE SOME FACTS TAKEN FROM THE 2000 CENSUS:

The average American family size is 3.14 persons.
The average number of children per household is .90.

Problem: Let's say you want to move to a "family" town, a place where lots of people are married and have children still living at home. You need to find a city with more than nine-tenths of a child per household, right?

You've narrowed your search to three towns with 50 percent more children than the national average of .90 per household. Riverview, Prairieville, and Mountaintop each have 1.35 children per household. On paper, the three towns look equal.

In reality, they're radically different.

The people of Riverview dislike children. That's why 90 percent of all Riverview households have no kids. But Riverview has a polygamous religious group, so 5 percent of Riverview families have 13 children each and 5 percent have 14 children each. Welcome to Riverview.

Prairieville is composed largely of immigrants from an overpopulated nation. Consequently, the people of Prairieville believe it's immoral to have more than one child.

8 percent of Prairieville households have no children.
74 percent of Prairieville households have 1 child.

5 percent have 2 children.

5 percent have 3 children.

4 percent have 4 children.

4 percent have 5 children.

In Prairieville, 82 percent of the population looks down on the 18 percent with more than one child. "Breeder" families are social outcasts. You and your 2 kids are just going to love it here.

The people of Mountaintop are happy to be alive. The

town motto, "Live and Let Live," is painted on the water towers and the police cars.

33 percent of all households in Mountaintop have no children.

22 percent have 1 child.

33 percent have 2 children.

7 percent have 3 children.

2 percent have 4 children.

1 percent has 5 children.

1 percent has 6 children.

1 percent has 7 children.

Although it's true that each of these three towns has 1.35 children per household, it's a completely irrelevant fact and

1. Not all facts are helpful.

We took one step too many when we calculated the number of children in the average household. This illustrates the fact that

2. You lose sight of the big picture when you get too close.

I'm sure you would agree that we learned more about Prairieville, Riverview, and Mountaintop from the raw data than from their identical averages of 1.35 children per household.

You realize I'm talking about **gross rating points**, don't you?

Reach times frequency equals gross impressions.

Gross impressions expressed as a percentage of population equals gross rating points.

The math behind gross rating points isn't just plain stupid, it's fancy stupid. (Stupid with raisins on it.)

An advertiser is considering five different schedules that deliver 100 gross rating points each. The first schedule will reach 100 percent of the population once. The second schedule will reach 50 percent of the population twice. The third schedule reaches 10 percent of the population 10 times. Schedule four reaches 5 percent 20 times. Schedule five delivers 1 percent 100 times. But there's no way for the advertiser to evaluate the potential effectiveness of these schedules because when we multiplied reach times frequency we took one step too many.

Gross rating points are valid only if you accept the premise that each of the five schedules would work equally well because reach and frequency are interchangeable.

Do you believe reach and frequency are interchangeable? If so, you'd be just as happy in Prairieville or Riverview as you would be in Mountaintop. After all, they each have 50 percent more children than the average American town. And real estate is so much cheaper in the first two towns than in Mountaintop! I wonder why? Oh, well, it doesn't matter. Because the numbers are the same, and numbers never lie. **INK**

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads, Inc. E-mail: Roy@WizardofAds.com

THE MATH BEHIND GROSS RATING POINTS ISN'T JUST PLAIN STUPID, IT'S FANCY STUPID.



Style Tips For Ad Writers

Your unconscious writing style is how you write when you're simply being yourself. You also have a formal style and even a whimsical style. But three styles is usually as good as it gets.

Language, however, is extraordinarily plastic. You can make it do anything you want. With a little conscious effort, you can speak and write in a thousand voices. The possibilities are intoxicating. I'm going to give you 10 ways to expand your literary voice. But please, I'm begging you, don't get legalistic or analytical with this stuff. Style is like a frog:

You can dissect the thing, but

it somehow dies in the process.

Let's begin with a sentence in ordinary language: The optional ingredients available for your omelet are mushrooms, tomatoes, onions, broccoli, jalapenos, and cheese.

1. ADD.

Now let's add the word "and" between each of the ingredients. Notice how the list gains rhythm and length: The optional ingredients available for your omelet are mushrooms and tomatoes and onions and broccoli and jalapenos and cheese.

Adding conjunctions slows a list down. And depending on how the list is intoned, adding conjunctions can give it greater dignity or convey the speaker's own impatience by signaling that he, too, thinks the list is too long.

2. SUBTRACT.

Next we'll subtract words from the original sentence, including the standard "and" that appears between the next-to-last and last items in a list: Optional ingredients: mushrooms, tomatoes, onions, broccoli, jalapenos, cheese.

Subtraction adds authority, accelerates the pace, says more in fewer words.

3. SUBSTITUTE.

Engage the imagination by substituting an unexpected adjective or verb for the one you would normally write: Personalize your omelet with — splash! — into the

bubbling butter, mushrooms or tomatoes, onions or broccoli, jalapenos or cheese or all of them all at once.

OK, I confess, I not only substituted jazzy verbs for boring ones, I repeated "or" four times and "all" twice. On purpose. For Style.

4. REARRANGE.

I might have ended the previous paragraph, "I purposely repeated 'or' and 'all' for the sake of style." Instead, I chose an arrangement of multiple false endings similar to the multiple punch lines at the end of a Steven Wright joke:

"I woke up the other morning and I couldn't find my socks. (pause) So I called information. (pause. audience laughter.) She said, 'Hello. Information.' I said, 'Where's my socks?' (pause.) She said, 'They're behind the couch.' (pause. audience laughter.) And they were." (Audience laughs its butt off, forever after going through life without a butt. Beware of Steven Wright.)

5. DISCONNECTED LISTS.

Combine wildly disconnected things in a list, then connect them in the closing fragment of the sentence.

"A cathedral, a wave of a storm, a dancer's leap, never turn out to be as high as we had hoped." — Marcel Proust

"Sparkling eyes, laughter, sunshine, speed, come with every Nissan 370Z Convertible."

6. PERSONIFICATION.

Give human attributes to inanimate objects.

"The gas pedal of this car throbs with hot impatience."

The shattered water made a misty din.

Great waves looked over others coming in,
And thought of doing something to the shore
That water never did to land before...

— Robert Frost, *Once By the Pacific*

7. BREAK THE RULES OF LOGIC.

Tease the imagination by stating things that don't make immediate sense.

"In two words, im possible."

"Give me chastity, but not yet."

"Who is it that has tied my son to that sword?"

8. BREAK THE RULES OF GRAMMAR.

Slip the handcuffs, seize attention.

When Winston Churchill was reprimanded for ending a sentence with a preposition, he apologized, then added, "This is the sort of English up with which I will not put." No one remembers the rest of the conversation.



It Ain't Always The Ads

A business can be hugely successful in spite of bad ads, and a business with great ads can fail miserably. I tell you this to keep you from assuming that all the winners are winning because they have great ads.

Did Sam Walton become the world's most successful retailer because he had the world's best ads? Was it because he chose a superior name? (Walmart doesn't sell wall coverings? Gosh, now I'm confused.) Was it because he designed a beautiful logo? (That medium-blue-and-white Walmart sign in block letters is really snazzy. Wow.) Did Sam Walton become a multi-billionaire because Walmart had the world's brightest and best-trained people?

Or was it simply because his stores usually have what we're looking for?

Remember Woolco, the early superstore created by the legendary Woolworth Corp., the folks who invented the dime store concept more than 100 years ago? And Kmart, the fair-haired child of the 900-pound-gorilla Kresge Corp.? These were much better capitalized than Walmart, they had infinitely greater buying power, and their store locations and people and advertising were every bit Sam

Walton's equal. But today these companies are bankrupt because the stuff on their shelves wasn't quite what we were hoping to find. So we quit going there.

People moan and wail about Walmart bankrupting local retailers. But Walmart isn't doing this by themselves; it requires the cooperation of millions of shoppers. Why don't they buy from their local retailers? Because one time too many, those local retailers didn't have what the customer was looking for, so now they go straight to Walmart. It's quicker.

Walmart became a juggernaut through superior inventory management. Sam Walton focused his energy on having in stock what customers wanted. "We can order it for you" isn't customer service. It's just another way of saying, "We're out of touch. Please go somewhere else."

In your ads, you will set the height of the bar that your client must jump. And every time your ads fall short of your listeners' expectations, they cripple their own reputation a little bit more. How many times can your client disappoint your listeners before your listeners quit responding to their ads?

Walmart didn't become successful by offering **lower prices**. They became successful because they keep in stock what people want. And they dominate

the distribution pipeline. Winners win due to **path dominance**.

Is Budweiser the best beer in America?

Yet it remains number one.

Was DOS ever a good operating system?

Yet it made Bill Gates a billionaire.

Was VHS technology ever half as good as Betamax?

Yet it became the standard format of VCRs worldwide.

Would you pay top dollar for a meal you knew in advance would be lousy?

You do it every time you buy a hot dog or nachos in a sports arena.

Path dominance is built upon distribution and convenience. Budweiser became the King of Beers by purchasing all the eye-level shelf space from America's retailers. And their contracts with restaurant chains ensure that Bud will always be on tap. With path dominance like that, Budweiser would've succeeded even if they'd spent their advertising dollars on talking frogs.

Bill Gates knew that Apple's operating system was superior to his own, but he won the game through path dominance. When Apple refused to license its operating system to other computer manufacturers, Bill said, "Hey, you wanna build computers? Here, use my operating system. It's called DOS."

The original name was QDOS, standing for Quick and Dirty Operating System. No, I'm not making this up.

Likewise, back when video rental stores had a VHS section and a Betamax section, Sony refused to license their fabulous Betamax format to the other makers of VCRs, so JVC said, "Hey, you wanna make VCRs? Here, use our format. It's called VHS."

Then, when you and I went to buy our VCRs, we were able to choose from dozens of units using the VHS format and only two or three models using Betamax. And now there's no Betamax section anymore. Path dominance.

If the heat and air conditioning installers in your city all stocked the same brand of air conditioner in their warehouses and made all other brands "special order," is there any doubt in your mind the brand they stocked would quickly become number one?

So please, don't assume that all winners deserve the rose garland around their necks. When the competitive environment allows for path dominance to emerge, the winner's circle will usually be occupied by a company with a lousy product, untrained people, and terrible advertising.

Path dominance is like an ocean tide; it can rise and flow above every obstacle. Ignore it, and it will drown you. **INK**

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads, Inc. E-mail: Roy@WizardofAds.com





ROY WILLIAMS
THE WIZARD OF ADS

Mid-Air Collisions

Traffic on roads and waterways occurs on a single, horizontal plane, so it's easy to see how collisions could occur. But what about collisions in the air? With all that empty space above, below, left and right, why do mid-air collisions happen?

Pay attention and you'll learn how to move your radio station into a brighter future.

Mid-air collisions happen because airplanes on a collision course are virtually invisible to one another. When a speck in the distance moves across your windshield, you're not on a collision course. It's when the speck is motionless that you're in danger. But things that aren't moving tend to be ignored.

Then all at once the unmoving speck becomes huge and everyone is dead.

Managers notice change. We track it, discuss it, theorize about it, try to accelerate it when it's good, and reverse it when it's bad.

When a thing isn't moving, but stays as it has been, we tend not to notice. "We've never been strong in mid-days, so these weak mid-day numbers are nothing to worry about." Why is the status quo so easily accepted?

EXERCISE: OBSERVE FIVE THINGS THAT AREN'T MOVING AND ASK YOURSELF WHY. HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES:

Observation 1: We've never been strong in mid-days.

Question 1: What would we have to do to increase our mid-day shares? Would we be willing to do it?

Observation 2: We've never done well in the restaurant category.

Question 2: What would it take to sell restaurants? Are we willing to do it?

Observation 3: Our TSL is always about the same.

Question 3: What could be done to increase it by 25 percent? Reach and frequency would skyrocket. Our schedules would be instantly more efficient. Are we willing to do it?

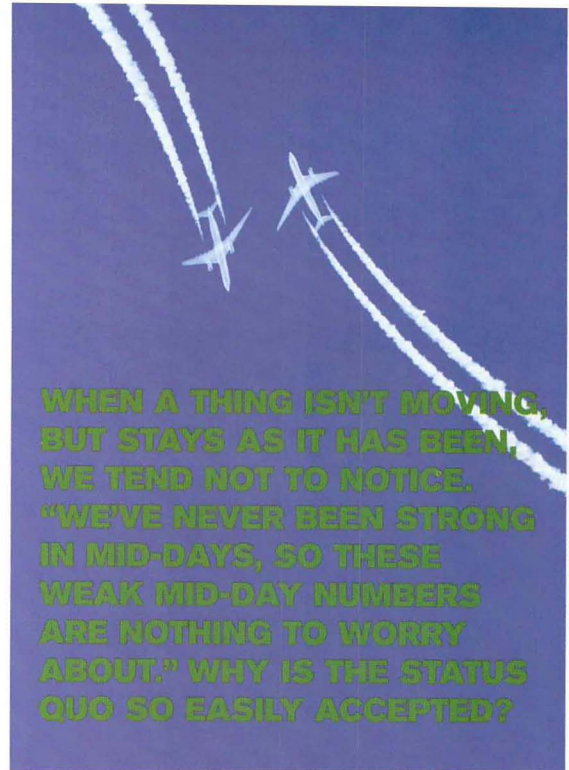
Observation 4: Agencies rarely buy us.

Question 4: What do agencies want that we're not giving them? What would it take to do it? Are we willing?

Observation 5: We sell the same clients year after year.

Question 5: Why do the other ones not buy from us? What's their decision-making criteria, and is there a way for us to satisfy it?

Ah, that's the big one. Radio people are seldom



WHEN A THING ISN'T MOVING, BUT STAYS AS IT HAS BEEN, WE TEND NOT TO NOTICE. "WE'VE NEVER BEEN STRONG IN MID-DAYS, SO THESE WEAK MID-DAY NUMBERS ARE NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT." WHY IS THE STATUS QUO SO EASILY ACCEPTED?

willing to sell the customer in exactly the way the customer prefers. Radio people want to debate with you, preach to you, "educate" you, explain to you that you're looking at it wrong.

Be honest. It feels good to write off clients that don't buy you as "dishonest, bigoted, closed-minded, they love to see themselves on TV, rate grinders, unwilling to consider any way of thinking but their own" — right?

Here's one more thing that isn't changing. Let's see if we can come up with a fresh way to deal with it:

Observation: The client's criteria for choosing his or her advertising isn't changing.

Question: Are we willing to embrace their way of thinking and sell them in the manner they prefer?

"They only buy visual media." The Internet makes radio visual. Show them a spec landing page as you play the spec ad that would drive thousands of listeners to it. **BONUS:** You get free objective measurement (in the form of unique visitor count) to demonstrate how well it's working.

"They're bargain hunters. They always buy what's cheapest." So give them a bargain. Do you really get that much pleasure from saying, "They got the business because they're rate whores?" Your banker doesn't care what you had to do to get the money. And neither does your boss.

"They don't like us because one time we..." So apologize. Face to face. Mean it. Ask for a fresh beginning. Remember, when something isn't changing, the thing that's going to have to change is you.

Your billing is a reflection of your choices. You chose your format, your announcers, your promotions, your rates, your policies, and your salespeople. You can make new choices if you want. None of these things is carved in stone.

What do you choose? **INK**

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads, Inc.. E-mail: Roy@WizardofAds.com



A Brand New Day For Radio

Selling radio is easier today than ever before, and it's easier to make radio work. I began my career 30 years ago selling quick-fix radio schedules to anyone who wanted to draw a crowd.

My town had 21 radio stations but only one newspaper — and everyone read it. Truth be told, back in those days a newspaper ad with a big picture of a featured item would usually pull a much bigger crowd than I could gather for the same money. Everyone in radio tried to pretend it wasn't so, but newspaper was a sprinter that delivered quickly. Radio usually came in second. So I changed my tactics and began selling long-term branding campaigns to advertisers who lacked a high-impact message. "Radio has intrusiveness. It's a repetition media. Give me a year and I'll make yours the

RUN AT LEAST A SPOT AN HOUR, 24 HOURS A DAY, ON EVERY STATION YOU USE. IF THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR WON'T LET YOU AIR A SPOT AN HOUR, SEE IF YOU CAN GET HIM FIRED.

company people think of first and the one they feel best about." Jewelers, plumbers, and insurance agents were my bread and butter. They believed me, and I grew their companies.

But things are different now. The media landscape has changed. Newspaper is dying, but radio is doing fine.

Newspaper isn't losing subscribers, it's losing readers. We walk to the ends of our driveways each morning to pick up newspapers that tell us things we've already known for 24 hours. Most days we don't even take it out of its little cellophane bag. And advertisers know this. They know it from the lack of response to their ads.

Radio didn't kill the newspaper, the Internet did. But it's dead just the same.

Today's radio isn't just the best solution for long-term branding, it's also the world's fastest sprinter. Dollar for dollar, a vertically stacked radio schedule is the best way to deliver a high-impact message and create a traffic jam. But please, I'm begging you, make sure you have a high-impact message before you promise your advertiser that traffic jam.

Here's a radio ad we ran last month for a furniture store that's been in business long enough to remember when newspaper ruled the world:

ROY: Final markdowns have now been made at the Spring Cleaning event at Furniture Market.

TAMARA: Swivel-back chairs 29 dollars.
DEVIN: Bookcases 99 dollars.

TAMARA: Dining tables 48 dollars.

ROY: Don't like these prices? MAKE US AN OFFER.
If it's not nailed down, it's got to be sold!

DEVIN: Leather sofa — 485 — Leather.

TAMARA: Queensize pillowtop mattress 274.

DEVIN: Two-piece china cabinet 99 dollars.

ROY: THIS STUFF HAS GOT TO GO.

TAMARA: We've cleaned out 10 years of accumulation from the warehouse.

ROY: This is solid wood furniture.

TAMARA: Solid oak dining chairs 19 dollars.

DEVIN: Rustic twin bunkbeds 199.

ROY: You can't build 'em for that!

DEVIN: It's not going back to our warehouse.

TAMARA: It's going to YOUR house.

ROY: Back up the truck and take it home NOW!

DEVIN: Hagglers welcome.

ROY: Anything left on Monday is getting busted up and tossed in the dumpster.

TAMARA: This is your LAST CHANCE . . . Make us an offer!

ROY: Furniture Market! [LOCATION]

This simple, high-impact radio ad shattered the furniture store's previous sales record. When the three-day event was over, the store's owner had to lie down and put a cold rag on his head.

You'll notice that the copy wasn't special, but the offer was. High-impact ads don't require creativity. They need:

1. a truly powerful offer
2. sizzling clarity
3. brain-numbing repetition

Please don't say, "We've got great prices." Name a price! Then name another. The public knows if they're hearing good prices or not. Substantiate your claims with cold-blooded examples like "Solid oak dining chairs 19 dollars."

Now go find an advertiser that's choking on inventory and convince them to blow some out as bait. Run at least a spot an hour, 24 hours a day, on every station you use. If the program director won't let you air a spot an hour, see if you can get him fired.

Go. Advertisers need you. **INK**

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads, Inc.. E-mail: Roy@WizardofAds.com



ROY WILLIAMS
THE WIZARD OF ADS

The Poodles And Tigers Of Radio

He held an important position at the Pentagon and shall remain nameless for obvious reasons. "You don't become a general in the military unless you're a conformist," he told me. "It's a beauty contest. If you challenge the status quo, you're never going to be put in charge. The average general is a lapdog, a shaved poodle on a leash."

I told him I saw the same thing happen in radio during the years following consolidation. The innovators, troublemakers, and talented geniuses were all squeezed out. To remain employed, you had to keep your head down, toe the line, and make no waves. "Eat all your vegetables. Raise your hand before speaking. Don't run with scissors."

Radio, that legendary island of pirates, misfits, and outlaws, was washed, sanitized, pressed, and folded. "Play dead. Roll over. Sit up and beg. Good boy." Wall Street rewards predictability and predictability requires conformity. "Innovators, go elsewhere." And they did.

Radio became boring because its people became boring. Might as well buy an iPod.

But today we're seeing the deconsolidation of radio. Can somebody shout hallelujah, please? Down are coming the flags of once-mighty broadcast groups. The Jolly Roger of the innovator flaps in the breeze again.

Nimble, crafty, cunning, and quick, the innovator acts instead of reacts, isn't afraid of risk, and doesn't play well with others. Conformity be damned. Leadership is not a group project.

The poodles of radio are meeting the tigers.

HOW TO THINK LIKE A TIGER

1. YOU ARE FOCUSED AND FEROCIOUS.

"When the stars threw down their spears and watered heaven with their tears, did he smile his work to see? Did he who made the lamb make thee? Tyger! Tyger! burning bright in the forests of the night, what

immortal hand or eye dare frame thy fearful symmetry?"
— William Blake

Yes, Blake was right. He who gently made the lamb made the tiger also. Pursue your goals with ferocity and singularity of purpose. Ferocity is a wondrous tool.

"Those who expect moments of change to be comfortable and free of conflict have not learned their history." — Joan Wallach Scott

2. YOU CHOOSE YOUR FIGHTS WITH COURAGE.

A man kills a tiger from a distance. But a tiger kills a man face to face, looking into his eyes.

I used a shotgun to kill a little bird on a snowy day when I was 11. Then, as I looked down from Mount Olympus at the broken little angel in his crystal tomb, I covered him with a tear and swore that I would hunt no more until little birds were given shotguns.

Choose a fight that is worthy of you. Look into the eyes of a giant.

3. YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT IS AT STAKE.

With every step we take, we reach a point of no return, and wonder what might have been.

"Time is the substance I am made of. Time is a river that carries me away, but I am the river; it is a tiger that mangles me, but I am the tiger; it is a fire that consumes me, but I am the fire. The world, alas, is real; I, alas, am Borges." — Jorge Luis Borges

Am I trying to bring you down? No, I'm trying to awaken the tiger within you.

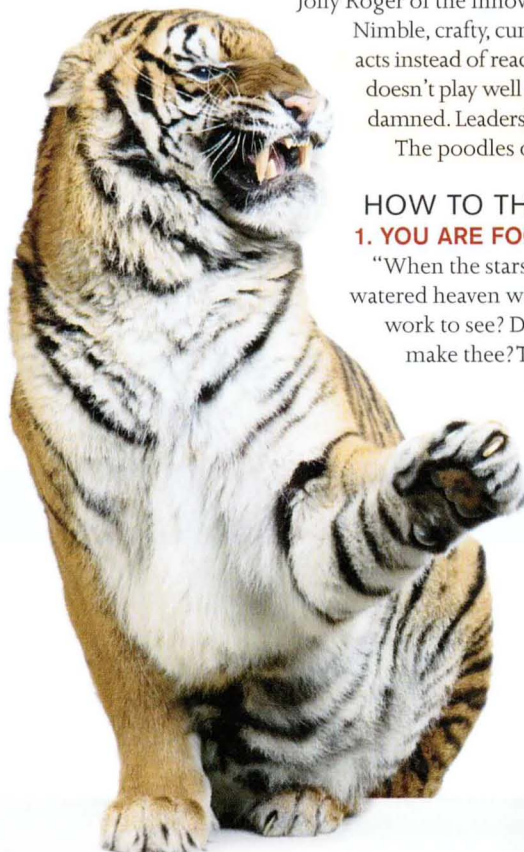
The grains of sand are falling and you are in the midst of your one and only life. America turns on the radio day after day, hoping to be surprised. You must not let them down.

4. YOU TAKE CHARGE AND ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY.

"There's a tendency today to absolve individuals of moral responsibility and treat them as victims of social circumstance. You buy that; you pay with your soul. What limits people is lack of character. What limits people is that they don't have the nerve to star in their own f-ing movie, let alone direct it." — Tom Robbins

Carpe diem. Seize the day, tiger. It is yours. **INK**

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads, Inc.
E-mail: Roy@WizardofAds.com





How Come We Don't Talk Gooder?

Your radio station might play music, but your ads will always be words. Words — and the effects of words — are the only product you sell.

In a logical universe, radio people would be language ninjas, warriors of words, soldiers of sentences, giants of jargon. But our skill with words is average at best.

"Language is the primary conductor between your brain and the minds of your audience. Ineffective language weakens and distorts ideas." — John Wesley, 2007.

In other words, ineffective language is why radio ads don't always produce the results they could.

George Orwell, of 1984 and *Animal Farm* fame, blamed our limp language on two factors: staleness of imagery and lack of precision. In *Politics and the English Language*, Orwell offers the following advice:

1. Never use a metaphor, simile, or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print. (In other words, avoid clichés.)
2. Never use a long word where a short one will do.
3. If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.

4. Never use the passive where you can use the active. (When the subject of the sentence is acted upon by the verb, the sentence is passive: "The man was bitten by the dog." When the subject of the sentence takes the action, the sentence is active: "The dog bit the man." Active is usually better because it's shorter and more forceful.)

5. Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word, or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.

Orwell also warned against pretentiousness:

I am going to translate a passage of good English into modern English of the worst sort. Here is a well-known verse from Ecclesiastes:

"I returned and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of

understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all."

Here it is in modern English:

"Objective considerations of contemporary phenomena compel the conclusion that success or failure in competitive activities exhibits no tendency to be commensurate with innate capacity, but that a considerable element of the unpredictable must invariably be taken into account."

Radio writers often resort to pretentiousness when an advertiser has no clear advantage over his competitors, or when we do a bad job of uncovering the advertiser's advantage. That's when we fill their ads with fluff. "You won't believe your eyes. Can't be beat. Guaranteed. Amazing." Avoid pretentiousness by writing facts instead of opinions. Objective, measurable details are more believable than subjective, philosophical opinions.

Fluffy ads are doubly tempting:

1. They're easy to write.
2. Egotistical advertisers always love them.

AskArt.com is a website for the promotion of painters and their paintings. Here are the instructions the site gives for artists preparing to post their bios online:

Please do not submit biographies with minimal facts or excessively promotional writing such as the following (unusable) wording.

What NOT to send:

"The artist John Doe is the quintessential master of light, color, and scene. His brilliant canvases are full of feeling, where love can be felt through all the senses. Through his skillful brushwork, and drawing from his life experiences, he creates images where the viewer feels he has truly become one with the subject. Doe's paintings are sure to be sought by the discriminating collector. I/we have numerous spectacular works by Doe available for sale."

It's forgivable that painters would fall into clichés and egotistic claptrap because they chose to study pictures instead of words.

But what's radio's excuse? **INK**

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads, Inc.
E-mail: Roy@WizardofAds.com



ROY WILLIAMS
THE WIZARD OF ADS

Sleep: The Ultimate Sales Assistant

1. Mornings are for sales calls. Afternoons are for everything else.
2. Four out of five "yes" answers will happen before noon.
3. You're four times as likely to make the sale when your meeting is in the morning!
4. Prospects are more open-minded in the morning.
5. Sleep restores optimism.
6. Rest washes the mind of frustration, anxiety, and fear.
7. Each morning is a brand-new day.
8. Morning meetings mean no one has yet ambushed your prospect with bad news.
9. "Things always look better in the morning."
10. Your prospects have not yet spent their discretionary time budget.

We've known these things for 30 years.

But now, new research indicates that morning appointments are even more powerful than we thought, especially if you need your prospect to embrace a new paradigm.

Dr. John Medina of Seattle Pacific University's **Brain Center for Applied Learning Research** says, "There is growing evidence that the reason we need to sleep is not just so that the body can physically recuperate from the day's activity, but so that the brain can learn."

Medina goes on to say that our brains are "almost unbelievably active during 'rest,' with legions of neurons crackling electrical commands to each other in constantly shifting patterns, displaying greater rhythmical activity during sleep than when the brain is wide awake."

The autumn 2006 issue of *Response* magazine reported an experiment in which students were asked to solve a series of math problems. "Unbeknownst to these students, there was an easier, 'shortcut' way to solve the problems which could potentially be discovered while doing the exercise. The students never discovered the easier method during the initial training. But when you let 12 hours pass after the initial training and then ask the students to do more problems, approximately 20 percent discover the shortcut. But if during those 12 hours the students had 8 hours of regular sleep, the number of students discovering the shortcut triples to approximately 60 percent. No matter how many times the experiment is run, the sleep group consistently outperforms the non-sleep group to the tune of approximately three to one."

SALES APPLICATION: When you need your prospect to embrace a radical idea that you know is going to choke them, make sure they hear the idea — and all the evidence that supports it — the evening before your morning appointment. Share the idea in such a way that there's no



chance the prospect can shut you down with a summary judgment. One way is to leave them a voicemail. "I know this is going to sound utterly insane, but one of the things I'm going to suggest tomorrow is that you..." Don't just tease them. Drop the bomb. The whole thing. And then give them the supporting logic and wrap up by saying, "But that's just the crazy stuff. We've got a whole lot more to talk about. I'll see you in the morning."

Remember: Sleep is your friend. A thing that seems ridiculous to your prospect in the evening will often make sense the following morning.

Read a list of the functions of the right hemisphere of the brain and you'll notice they're all manifestations of pattern recognition. The right brain is all about patterns of events, causes and effects, solving the mystery, answering the riddle. And the right hemisphere never sleeps.

Conscious awareness exists primarily in the left brain, the home of data-gathering and rational, sequential, deductive reasoning. Conscious awareness goes away when the left brain goes to sleep. But the unsleeping right brain cranks on through the darkness, integrating the new information into the old, helping your prospect understand how the awkward puzzle piece you presented fits perfectly into the pattern they've always known and trusted.

But the pattern-recognizing right brain has no language functions. Words and their meanings exist only in the left. The language of the right brain is intuition: gut feelings and hunches.

In my first book, *The Wizard of Ads*, I wrote, "Win the heart and the mind will follow. The intellect will find logic to justify what the emotions have decided." I might have more accurately written, "Win the right brain and the left brain will create logic to justify what the right brain has already decided."

The right brain works its marvelous magic during the night while uptight Lefty is asleep.

Drop your bomb in the evening. Support it with your strongest logic. Finish your discussion in the morning. Your close rate will skyrocket, I promise. **INK**

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads, Inc. E-mail: Roy@WizardofAds.com

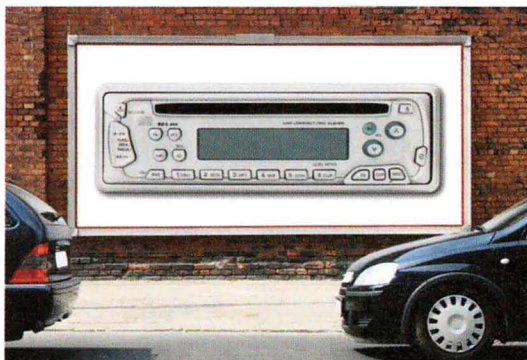


How Do You Want To Feel Right Now?

We've invented a machine that lets you select your mood. This astounding device can be adjusted to make you feel however you'd like to feel. It's called a radio.

The distinct advantage of humans is our ability to attach complex meanings to sound. The most important sounds are called words.

NOTE: The written word has no meaning until it has been translated into the sound it represents. How many times have you been lying in bed reading a book when it occurs to you that your eyes have been scanning the same paragraph over and over, but you still have no idea what it says? Your eyes continue to take in the written words, but these visual symbols are no longer being translated into their corresponding sounds. Consequently, no comprehension.



Pitch, key, tempo, rhythm, contour, and interval are elements of music, another language of sound, to which we attach complex meanings. Control the music, and you control the mood of the room.

Not even a chimpanzee can clap in rhythm to music. Conscious rhythm is uniquely human, a function

of Broca's area. It makes sense, doesn't it? That same region of the brain that coordinates diaphragm, larynx, lips, and tongue so that we can articulate stored sounds called words also coordinates the muscles that allow us to clap, tap, and dance. Animals can't clap for the same reason they can't talk. No Broca's area.

Imagine an auditorium of chimpanzees clapping in unison to Elton John's *Bennie and the Jets*. Pretty scary, huh?

In all its variations — iPod, CD player, etc. — a radio is a mood-selection device, a delivery system for the complex sounds that so greatly alter our mood. How do you want to feel right now? Just press the button.

*Faint traces of music drift
To my ears in the lonely night
Words barely audible yet familiar
A little too familiar this time
Taking me back to times and places
I never knew I had left behind.*

*Intending to turn the radio off
I only manage to increase the volume
Hoping you will somehow hear
And miraculously return
To sing each broken phrase with me*

These opening lines of *Memory Radio* by Jenny Leigh were written in non-rhyming meter, also known as free

verse. Meter is achieved when words are arranged so that a predictable rhythm is created in their pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables.

- Iambic meter is soft/hard (x /)
"That time of year thou mayst in me behold"
- Trochaic meter is hard/soft (/ x)
"Tell me not in mournful numbers"
- Spondaic meter is hard/hard (/ /)
"Break, break, break / On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!"
- Anapestic meter is soft-soft/hard (x x /)
"And the sound of a voice that is still"
- Dactylic meter is hard/soft-soft (/ x x)
"This is the forest primeval, the murmuring pines and the hemlock"

Meter is magnetic.

"Bounty. The quicker picker-upper."

Meter makes slogans sticky.

Where do you want to go today? **Microsoft**

It's everywhere you want to be **VISA**

The ultimate driving machine. **BMW**

When it absolutely, positively has to be there overnight. **Federal Express**

Meter makes words musical.

"Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the house, not a creature was stirring..." — Clement C. Moore

"Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered..." — Edgar Allan Poe

"My client would not, could not, did not commit these crimes." — Johnnie Cochran

Think of stressed and unstressed syllables as hard and soft drumbeats. Use meter to weave a musical rhythm into your message and it will, like a song hook, get stuck in the phonological loop of working memory in the dorsolateral prefrontal association area of the listener's brain. Additionally, you'll have moved your message from the suspicious left hemisphere — the half of the brain that interprets words — into the open-for-anything right hemisphere responsible for interpreting music.

The right hemisphere of the brain isn't suspicious. In fact, it doesn't know right from wrong, true from false, or reality from fantasy. Hmm. This could be useful...

One last thing: I've always wanted to see a billboard featuring the giant buttons of a car radio. Above those buttons are the words, "How Do You Want" and below the buttons, "To Feel Right Now?"

I'm betting it would cause millions of drivers to turn on their radios.

But what do I know? **INK**

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads, Inc. E-mail: Roy@WizardofAds.com



ROY WILLIAMS
THE WIZARD OF ADS

Per Inquiry Or NTR?

Radio stations are bringing in about 20 percent less money than they were a year ago. Most retail businesses are doing about the same. Radio and retail have endured a long dry spell together and the extended forecast shows little chance of rain. Damn.



Economists are reporting that the current recession has caused baby boomers to abandon the acquisition stage of life and move into preparation for retirement. Not only are boomers spending fewer dollars to scratch the retail itch, they're moving money out of retirement accounts, thereby lowering the dollars available to Wall Street for American business development and the economic growth that accompanies it. Double damn.

Contrary to what these first two paragraphs might indicate, I'm not a negative person. But neither am I a subscriber to fatal optimism:

"If we think happy thoughts, everything will turn out OK."

"We just need to maintain a positive mental attitude."

"We're winners. We can do it. We're special."

Yes, I believe in boldness, audacity, and the acceptance of risk. But I also know the comedians at Despair.com spoke the truth when they said, "FAILURE: Because sometimes your very best just isn't good enough."

How do we become infected with fatal optimism? Malcolm Gladwell says it happens slowly.

As novices, we don't trust our judgment. Then we have some success, and begin to feel a little surer of ourselves. Finally, we get to the top of our game and succumb to the trap of thinking that there's nothing we can't master. As we get older and more experienced, we overestimate the accuracy of our judgments, especially when the task before us is difficult and when we're involved with something of great personal importance.

How should radio deal with the current recession?

1. Ignore it? Choose not to participate?
2. Sell harder and raise rates?
3. Reopen abandoned streams of revenue?

Ah. You want to hear more about number three — abandoned streams of revenue — right?

We've heard a lot in recent years about NTR, nontraditional revenue. It's considered to be wholesome and good, the mark of a creative and resourceful manager. I've never spoken to anyone in radio who had a philosophical problem with NTR.

But *per inquiry* advertising is another matter. For the past 40 years, *per inquiry* has been considered poisonous and evil, the mark of a weak and stupid manager. (For those not old enough to remember *per-inquiry* ads, we're referring to commercials aired by stations for a sales commission paid by the advertiser *per inquiry*.) Television stations made a fortune *per inquiry*, while radio categorically rejected the concept. Radio insisted the advertiser take all the risk.

Opportunities abound that are neither traditional NTR nor *per inquiry*, but something in between.

CONSIDER: The greatest asset of a radio station is its sales force. A team of local, feet-on-the-street salespeople who call on business owners all day, every day, is the fantasy of hundreds of American businesses that control tens of billions of dollars. But none of these businesses is a prospect for 30-second or 60-second radio ads.

Are you progressive enough to make a play for those billions of dollars, or will you screw it up by trying to talk these businesses into buying a traditional radio schedule?

Here's just one example of what I'm talking about:

1. An enormous amount of hotel and conference room inventory in America's better resorts is controlled by the time-share industry.

2. These time-share folks pay handsomely for off-premises canvassing, generally \$100 to \$150 to the seller who convinces a couple to take a quick tour of an investment property in return for a deeply discounted mini-vacation at a popular resort (usually two days, three nights for just \$69 to \$99, total cost).

I'm not suggesting that you air ads for these \$69 mini-vacations in return for a \$100 commission for each one you sell. That would be straight *per inquiry*, and my gut tells me I might as well ask you to change your religion and sell your children into slavery.

No, I'm just suggesting your salespeople mention to their clients that they know of a low-cost way to take the whole staff to a resort for a corporate retreat. If everyone knows the score going in, the tour is no big deal, and you make \$100 to \$150 per couple for every staff member employed by your very appreciative client. No *airtime* required.

Your salespeople chat and gossip with clients all day. Why not monetize it?

But then, on the other hand, maybe the answer is just to raise rates and sell harder. **INK**

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads, Inc. E-mail: Roy@WizardofAds.com



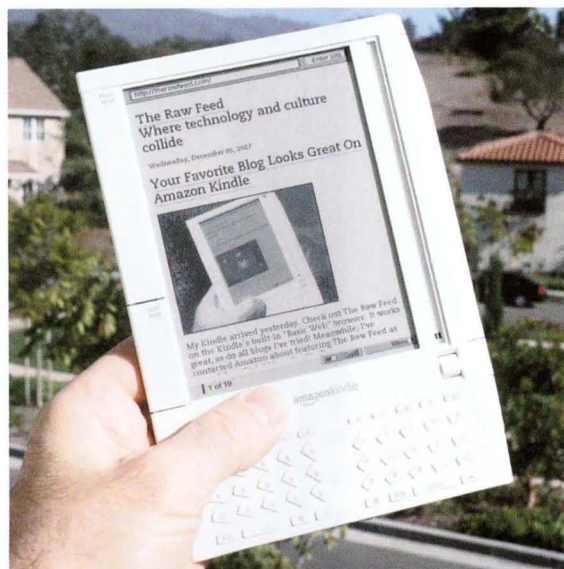
ROY WILLIAMS
THE WIZARD OF ADS

Radio And The iPod

I immediately thought of Jeff Haley when Apple announced that its next iPod nano will include an FM tuner. Microsoft had announced its plan to put an HD Radio tuner in the Zune the day before Jeff's first visit to Wizard Academy. I remember him setting his jaw and clenching his fist when he said, "When Apple puts a tuner in the iPod, that's the day we win big." I agreed with Jeff that day, and I still do.

Strangely, the majority of broadcasters I've polled feel that the tuner in the iPod is no big deal. Do radio folk underestimate the importance of Apple's announcement, or do I overestimate it? Perhaps I'm a simpleton, but these are my thoughts:

1. Due to its extreme portability and the privacy afforded by its tiny headphones, the iPod is a genuine competitor for the ears of America. Any person listening to an iPod has been a person not listening to the radio. Do you know of a better way to increase time spent listening than to put a portable radio with headphones into the pockets and purses of tens of millions of people?
2. Online music videos, YouTube, video games, and the iPod have long been touted as harbingers of the death of radio. Pompous little techweasels love to yawn and say, "Radio is so 1940s." Apple's decision to add a tuner to the iPod happily slaps these weasels across the snout. God bless America.
3. Coke blinked in 1985 when it responded to the Pepsi Challenge by changing its formula to create New Coke. McDonald's blinks every time it sues Burger King over an ad. And now Apple has blinked by adding a radio tuner to the iPod. Apple acted like we



didn't matter. Then they found out that we do matter.

The same techweasels who were saying, "Radio is on its way out," were also saying, "Books on paper are a thing of the past because the Amazon Kindle is JUST SO COOL." The Kindle, for the three of you who don't know, is the publishing equivalent of the iPod. It can store

thousands of books in electronic form and deliver them on demand, page by page.

Here's another happy slap to the misinformed weasels:

"Google Inc. is giving 2 million books in its digital library a chance to be reincarnated as paperbacks. As part of a deal announced September 17, Google is opening up part of its index to the maker of a high-speed publishing machine that can manufacture a paperback-bound book of about 300 pages in under five minutes. **This new service is an acknowledgment by the Internet search leader that not everyone wants their books served up on a computer or an electronic reader like those made by Amazon.com Inc. and Sony Inc.**"

— Michael Liedtke, AP Technology Writer

Digital delivery is replacing the newspaper, but it's not replacing books. We keep books, reread books, and identify with books. Likewise, the iPod allows us to keep and relisten to the music we identify with.

But books have never been a threat to the news industry. We call it news because it's new every day. Unlike a newspaper, the Internet gives us 24/7, instant access to breaking news. That's why newspapers are dying. But the Internet has no such advantage over radio. This is why the Internet and the iPod were never a threat to the news and new music components of radio. To be exposed to new music, you need a radio tuner. Apple has finally realized this and tacitly admitted it with the introduction of the new iPod nano.

In other words, the edgy, trendy, cool kid has asked to sit next to us. We should be having a party!

Par-TEE! Par-TEE! Par-TEE!

And we should aggressively accelerate our search for new music.

But then again, maybe I'm a simpleton. **INK**

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads, Inc.
E-mail: Roy@WizardofAds.com



Turn, Turn, Turn

The Mark Of A Remarkable Business

Retailers become very interested in what you have to say when you can advise them about more than just advertising. To that end, I offer you the single most powerful concept in business, an idea far more captivating to retailers than anything else you might have to say. But be warned: These waters are deep. You can quickly get into conversations that are over your head.

Business midgets focus on profit margin: "I can sell these for double my cost!" But business giants focus on turn: "How many more would I sell if I lowered my price?"

Retailers call it *inventory turn*. Restaurateurs call it *table turn*. Either way, it's a measurement of how efficiently a business uses its assets. Inventory turn tells the retailer how many times he sold and replaced his inventory over a period of time. Table turn tells the restaurateur how many times he emptied and filled his restaurant during a single mealtime.

TURN IS SALES DIVIDED BY INVENTORY

Bob and Samantha are competitors. Bob makes a 100 percent markup on everything he sells. Samantha adds only a 50 percent markup. Which of them has the better business?

Your instincts tell you Bob makes more money, but, actually, it's Samantha.

Bob carries an average inventory of \$6 million and sells each of his items an average of once a year at twice the price he paid for it: \$12 million in sales with an annual gross profit of \$6 million. Bob turned his inventory once.

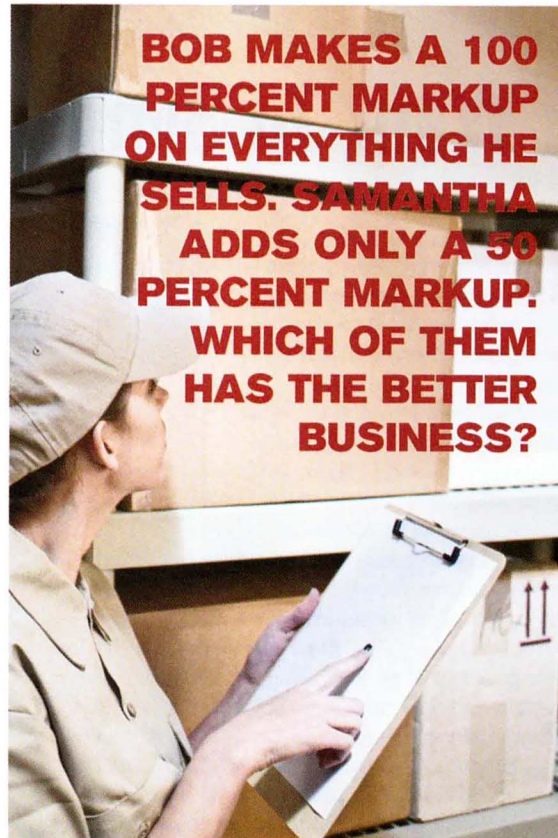
Samantha carries an average inventory of just \$1 million. She sells and replaces each item an average of 12 times a year, adding only a 50 percent markup each time. Samantha does \$18 million in sales and her annual gross profit is \$6 million — exactly the same as Bob's. **But Samantha turned her inventory 12 times.**

Both retailers made \$6 million, but Bob is slowly going broke. Samantha is quickly becoming rich and powerful.

Bob invests \$6 million to make a gross profit of \$6 million a year. This means Bob has to make a \$6 million investment every time he wants to open a new store. And Bob's inventory is growing outdated because he has to sit on it for a whole year before he can replace it. The problem compounds itself each year.

Samantha invests just \$1 million to make \$6 million. She can open a new store with just a million dollars invested in inventory. But wait, it gets better.

Bob bought only \$6 million worth of product last year. Samantha bought \$12 million. And Samantha is



opening new stores. Lots of them. This is what makes Samantha powerful. Soon the suppliers will be charging Samantha lower prices than they charge Bob because Samantha is a much better customer. And the suppliers will give her 90 days to pay, but Bob must continue paying immediately.

Do you realize what just happened? Not only can Samantha open a new store with an investment of just \$1 million in inventory, she can sell that inventory for \$1.5 million each month for three months — putting a total of \$4.5 million into her bank account — before she has to pay the first million dollars for the first month's inventory. This leaves \$3.5 million sitting in Samantha's bank account, allowing her to inventory three new stores, each of which will be able to fund three additional stores in just 90 days.

Samantha has opened 12 stores in just six months. If she keeps it up, she'll have 432 stores at the end of a year. And Samantha started with just \$1 million in inventory, while Bob started with \$6 million.

Bob likes to boast that he offers "six times the selection," but the public knows Bob charges \$100 for the same item Samantha sells for just \$75.

The moral of the story is this: You can't get a high inventory turn without offering the public what they really want. The person who selects a company's inventory is the most important person in a company.

But what do I know? I'm just an ad guy. **INK**

Roy H. Williams is the chancellor of Wizard Academy, a nonprofit, nontraditional business school. To understand what is meant by *nontraditional*, Google "inventory turn" and compare the dozens of definitions you'll find to the one we've offered above.

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads, Inc.
E-mail: Roy@WizardofAds.com



ROY WILLIAMS
THE WIZARD OF ADS

Are Your Clients Touting Social Media?

When I was an AE, business owners would often dismiss me by saying, "I believe in word of mouth." Then, with a smug look, they'd say it again, as though the words made them feel fine and righteous. "Word of mouth is the best form of advertising."

I almost opened the Word-of-Mouth Advertising Agency in 1984. My plan was to hire people to ride elevators in tall buildings and say things like, "Have you tried that new café over on Third Street? I hear it's really good." My fantasy response was to reply to business owners, "You believe in word of mouth? Great! That's what I sell!"

Today's business owners are investing in a form of quasi-advertising similar to my elevator plan. We hear about it everywhere: "Social media is the new marketing."

But it isn't true.

I just Googled "social media marketing" and clicked the uppermost link. It opens with these words writ large: "[Company Name] creates and leads powerful social media campaigns that will intelligently rocket your traffic, promote your brand, and grow leads and sales with maximize [sic] ROI to give you a feeling of power and importance in the marketplace."

Really? You're going to intelligently rocket my traffic and give me feelings of power and importance? Can you add a little something to my biceps while you're at it?

Lest you think me out of touch, let me remind you that I accurately predicted the impact of social media in my "40-Year Pendulum of Society" presentation in December 2003, long before Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter came into being. In January 2004, I made the same presentation in Stockholm to the great advertising agencies of Europe. From there I took it to Sydney, then to Canada and the U.S.

Social media is **not the new marketing**.

I've learned over the years that most disagreements revolve around a lack of definitions of terms, so let me give you my definitions for three commonly used terms:

• **Advertising** is what you buy from the sales department of any media.

• **Public relations** are what you get for free from the news department of any media.

• **Social media** is word of mouth empowered by Internet and cellphone technologies.

(Based on these definitions, the purchase of targeted ads on Facebook would be classified as advertising, not as social media.)

REUTERS—Oct. 8, 2009: Three-quarters of small businesses say they have not found sites such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn helpful for generating business leads or expanding business in the past year, according to a survey conducted for Citibank Small Business of 500 U.S. businesses with fewer than 100 employees.

If you haven't yet invested a few hundred hours in a

social media campaign for your business, let Reuters and me save you the time: Three-quarters of the businesses that have tried it were disappointed in the results.

Are there business examples of success using social media? Of course:

1. Using **Twitter**, discounters are building lists of bargain hunters who want to be the first to know about new offerings. Announce a highly desirable product at a highly desirable price, and you can draw quite a crowd. But that's always been true, hasn't it?
2. **Barack Obama's** skillful use of social media helped propel him to the presidency. His secret? From the beginning of their campaigns, Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton were both sending tweets on Twitter. The difference is that when Obama had 44,596 subscribers following his tweets, he was following 46,252 others. Clinton was following no one. Imagine how those 46,252 people felt: "Hillary Clinton wants me to hear her opinions. Barack Obama wants to hear mine."
3. **Feasibility studies** are hugely enhanced by social media. A single question, "Who likes the flavor of bacon?" resulted in 35,000 possible customers, 10,000 inquiries, and 3,500 sales of Bacon Salt.
4. **Entertainment** has always triggered word of mouth. People will stand in the lobby and text their opinions to their friends before ever leaving the theater. Are you in the entertainment business?

Bottom Line

1. Not every business is equally suited to leverage social media.
2. Many businesses are jumping onto the social media bandwagon without understanding its limitations.
3. Social media is not a replacement for advertising.
4. The universal benefit of social media is that you can search your own company name (on Facebook, etc.) and find out what's being said about you.
5. The business benefits of social media often fall short of an acceptable return on the time invested.
6. Create ecstatically happy customers and they'll spread the word through social media. Create disgruntled customers and they'll spread the bad word even faster.
7. Focus your attention on your customers. Social media will take care of itself.

If, after all this advice, your clients still cling to the idea that social media is going to revolutionize their business, suggest that they search for detailed stories of how actual people have used social media to trigger the kinds of results they're hoping to achieve. They will soon find, as I have, that most of the success stories fall squarely into the four categories of success I've listed above. **INK**

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads, Inc. E-mail: Roy@WizardofAds.com



What Do Your Listeners Care About?

Peg The Needle On The Relevance Meter If You Want To See Results

Advertisers are hungry for trackable, direct-response, cause-and-effect advertising. Deep down, every advertiser has the fantasy that someday he'll be able to say, "Every time I spend (x) dollars on advertising, I'm guaranteed to make (x) dollars in profit."

You've had advertisers confess that to you, right?

Advertisers tend to think of advertising as a giant gumball machine: You put in your ad budget, crank the handle, and out come the results. And because AEs like to sell qualitative data, they've convinced these advertisers that *reaching the right people is the key*.

But success is more often determined by how you crank the handle. Specifically:

1. How **relevant** is your message? Are you talking about what people *actually* care about, or only what you wish they would care about?

2. In what **psychological** environment was your message delivered?

Everyone knows that more people listen to the radio during morning drive than at any other time during the day. But morning drive listeners are thinking about what awaits them at work. It's during the drive home that they're thinking about what awaits them at home. Consequently, ads about home life — food,

furniture, entertainment, clothes, home services, etc. — tend to work better during afternoons and evenings.

Traditional ad-think says:

1. Target the right people.
2. Leverage the right media (visual media for visual products, etc.).
3. Use creativity in delivering your message.

But nontraditional ad-think gets far better results:

1. **What you say matters most of all.** Speak to a felt need. Good advertising isn't about the product or the company that sells it. Good ads explain how the customer's life will be different.

EXAMPLE:

Don't say, "Dr. Bill Dipweasel was voted gentlest dentist in Saginaw County."

Say, "Get your teeth fixed. You'll be more attractive and your confidence will skyrocket. People will treat you differently."

2. **How you say it is critical.** Clarity is more important than creativity. Talk the way people talk. People don't say, "I've elected to have cosmetic dentistry." They say, "I've decided to get my teeth fixed." (Dr. Bill Dipweasel will give you push-back on this because he doesn't think "get your teeth fixed" sounds professional. Also, he wants the ad to be about him.)

Advertising works best when it speaks to what customers already care about. This is called *speaking to a felt need*. Few, if any, of your listeners harbor a secret, unmet desire to go to the dentist. But tens of millions of us secretly wish we were more attractive and more confident, and that people treated us differently.

Good ads aren't about the company that's paying for the ad. Good ads are about the listener.

Qualitative targeting?

Facebook allows advertisers to target customer profiles and interests with laser-like precision. But online advertisers are getting far better results with Google AdWords because these Google ads appear when a qualitatively *untargeted* customer is in looking-for-answers mode. Facebook ads appear when the qualitatively "perfect" customer is in connecting-with-friends, wasting-time mode.

I realize it's counterintuitive, but when you reach them is often more important than *who* you reach.

Bottom line: Qualitative targeting is overrated.

Quit looking for the right people. Instead, dig deep for a message worth shouting from the housetops. You'll be surprised how many people become the right people when your advertiser begins saying the right thing.

You've got a choice to make:

A. You can wrestle with Dr. Dipweasel until he finally agrees to let you talk to his customers about something they actually care about.

B. You can do what Dr. Dipweasel wants to do and then backpedal, dance, and make excuses when the schedule doesn't deliver what he expected.

A or B. It's your choice. **INK**

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads, Inc. E-mail: Roy@WizardofAds.com





Selling To The Civic Mindset

Romulus Whitaker is saving the rainforest in Tamil Nadu, and with it, dozens of species of animals. The problem is complex, but so is Romulus Whitaker.

Tim Bauer is fighting air pollution in the Philippines with a two-stroke cylinder head that reduces hydrocarbon emissions by 89 percent. Thousands of engines must be retrofitted. The work is rugged, but so is Tim Bauer.

Gomel Apaza teaches villagers about sustainable food production high in the Andes Mountains of Peru. His techniques are reliable, so the villagers live happier lives.

Reliable. Rugged. Complex. Apaza, Bauer, and Whitaker: making a difference. *Making the world better for everyone.* And the watch they wear is a Rolex: Reliable. Rugged. Complex. *Because time is important to people who get things done.*

Your Rolex is waiting patiently for you to come and pick it up at Barnes Jewelry. I'm Vess Barnes, and I've got a Rolex ... for you.

occurs to you that life here is very simple: You live or you die. No compromises, no whining, no second chances. This is a place constantly ravaged by winds and storm, where every ragged breath is an accomplishment. You stand on the uppermost pinnacle of the earth. This is the mountain they call Everest. Yesterday it was considered unbeatable. But that was yesterday.

As Edmund Hillary surveyed the horizon from the peak of Mount Everest, he monitored the time on a wristwatch that had been specifically designed to withstand the fury of the world's most angry mountain. Rolex believed Sir Edmund would conquer the mountain, and especially for him they created the Rolex Explorer.

In every life there is a Mount Everest to be conquered. When you have conquered yours, you'll find your Rolex waiting patiently for you to come and pick it up at Justice Jewelers. I'm Woody Justice and I've got a Rolex ... for you.



This ad features the individualist as hero, and asks very different questions:

1. Are you the kind of person who wins against impossible odds?
2. Can you take a minute to come pick up your trophy?

That Mount Everest ad was hugely successful 14 years ago, but we, the people, have changed. Have you noticed?

Our transition from the idealist "Me" mindset to the current, civic "We" way of thinking began right on schedule in 2003, and was essentially complete by the end of 2008.

Right on schedule? Yep. We shift from one mindset to the other every 40 years, and we've been doing it with the precision of a metronome for more than four centuries. (If you want to dig deep into this, read *Generations* by Neil Howe and William Strauss.)

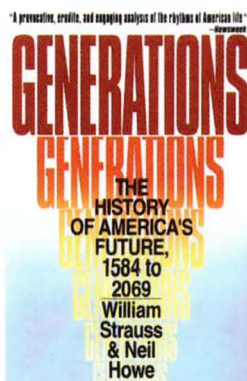
Want to make your ads work better? Abandon the idea that customers should reward themselves. Quit saying to them, "You deserve it." Tell them instead that the advertised product "makes a difference," that it "helps," and use the word "give" in a variety of applications, such as, "Give it a chance."

Sadly, my Apaza, Bauer, and Whitaker ad won't be given a chance.

Rolex didn't approve it.

Sigh. **INK**

Roy H. Williams is president of Wizard of Ads, Inc.
E-mail: Roy@WizardofAds.com



I wrote that ad for the "We" generation of 2009. Spotlighting the selfless servant as the modern hero, the ad asks two questions:

1. Do you want to make the world a better place?
2. Are you the kind of person who gets things done?

If so, you should be wearing a Rolex. Hand Vess Barnes some money.

You might remember a quite different ad I wrote for the "Me" generation 14 years ago:

You are standing in the snow, five-and-one-half miles above sea level, gazing at a horizon hundreds of miles away. It