

Strategic Advice from Radio's Premiere Talent Coach

Planet Reynolds

We Create Personality Radio



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Don't Just Stand There and Do Nothing...

Imagine being a big fan and turning on Letterman, Leno, Kimmel, or Fallon each evening and seeing them do nothing more than talk to the camera for an hour. No monologue, no interviews, no talking to people on the streets or games with the audience. Snooze City, huh? Yet, as I travel the country and listen to streams when in the office of some radio morning shows, that's all they are. Conversations with the occasional airing of callers. Each break one, big, long, boring paragraph of chatter. Go pull PPM meters and watch them drop off as breaks like that drag on and on. Listeners bail because there's nothing stimulating in it for them. The nightly talk shows listed above are hard at work as you read this to come up with ideas around the topics of the day which are intended to entertain the audience, create talk and an experience fans can't miss, by tickling the imagination of the viewer. Your morning show PIs require this, too. Innovation is a critical image every morning show needs to constantly be working on so their big fans don't get bored. Predictably is our enemy, given consumers' attention spans and their need for stimulation. The end user experience is linked not to the topics your morning show chooses, but what your show does with those topics. This isn't code for doing bits. But your show must come up with ideas and approaches around the relevant topics of the day that

capture listeners' attention and give to them an experience so fulfilling they come back. A terrific example of this is what Karson and Kennedy at MIX 104.1, Boston did with Karson's son on the eve of another Red Sox World Series title (listen [here](#)). This was a real, imaginative, memorable, and fun idea and wasn't a wacky bit. It came from their strategy, their heart, and their hard work. It could be one of my favorite ideas in the last several months because it plays on so many levels and captures so many images in a few short minutes. Look at Apple. Steve Jobs built the company on the development of the next cool gadget you had to have. Everything they've released in the last few years is nothing more than a revamped version of what's already there. While iOS7 is part of their marketing strategy intended for us to fall in love all over again with our devices, the empire is getting restless and Samsung is taking advantage of that. Morning shows can be driven based on relatable, compelling conversations and listener calls each day. But they can't be just that for four hours a day, five days a week. Listen to your show and monitor their Innovation Inventory. How many new ideas or bold approaches have they developed recently? If not, it might be time to re-tool the prep process and have a conversation with them about the user experience and what they need to do which will keep their big fans from not straying to see what your competitor is up to.

Issue #36 November, 2013

The Reynolds Group coaches morning shows to better connect with their audience. Focusing on the demo and challenging them to develop fun, relevant content and entertaining ideas makes more people want to tune in!

We're entering the time of year where it's appropriate for morning shows to do community service work. Shows need to, at a certain stage of their development, win images in this area. That said, here are some suggested guidelines:

1. The simplest thing most stations do is attached themselves to an already existing program (i.e. Toys for Tots). The perils of doing this is that the charity might get most of the image credit, given the program is already established.
2. Think through partnering up with certain charities. Many are old, stale, dated brands. You don't want those negative attributes transferred to you (at a CHR I work with, we are very careful about doing this as we don't want to damage our contemporary images).
3. Are you doing something that is purely local or national? Local wins big and listeners reward it even more. Take care of your community, please.
4. Instead of partnering with a charity, consider adopting a cause instead. Then, own it by doing big, bold things to burn it in. Doing a few big things over the course of the year will cut through better and give you a chance to clean the station up of all the smaller things you're presently doing.



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Each Sunday we publish the Hot List your talent can use to stay on the topics that make you accessible to the biggest audience. Sign up for (it's free): email steve@reynoldsgroupradio.com

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