

the
Conclave *Presents*

THE TATTLE

Since 1975

Publisher: Tom Kay Editor: Ben Holsen
Cartoons Suggested by Lenny Bronstein & Jay Philpott

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Again this week, the TATTLE drops its usual format to bring you highlights of the just-completed 2012 Learning Conference. This week, we recap other reports of the Conference as found on the pages of various industry trades/websites. In this issue, here's what RADIO INK, RAMP, & Perry Michael Simon's THE LETTER said about the 2012 Conclave - with our thanks!



FRED JACOBS RECAPS DAY ONE OF THE CONCLAVE

Facebook Tweet

Conclave 37 got underway with Jacobs Media's Summer School 3. I have to tell you that after doing these

the last three years, this was the best of the bunch – really well attended from the early 9 am start (and they had to drag in more chairs). You can look at the tweets from today at #Conclave37 and for Summer School at #JMSS3.

A few highlights from our 8 Summer School sessions (9a-12:15p):

1. Lori Lewis: "The same standards you have on the air should apply to what you communicate via social media." Her "5 Zuckerisms" session broke down Mark Zuckerberg's thoughts about the true purpose of Facebook from that company's IPO filing. Lori also talked about Facebook's algorithm and some great information to help ensure your posts are seen by as many of your "likes" as possible. Lori: "If you want 'shares' and 'comments' and Facebook, stop chasing 'likes.'"
2. Paul Jacobs hosted "There's An App For That" and reminded everyone that while the mobile space is exciting, "Everything that is great now will be old within six months." He also encouraged stations to use apps like TuneIn and iHeartRadio but achieve deeper mobile branding with individual station apps.
3. Consultant Michael Brandvold (music industry strategist and former web guru for KISS and Gene Simmons) ran "Tweet Like

A Rock Star." His best quote, "Tweeting is a reality show." He encouraged stations to tweet as often as 12 times a day because the Twitter audience turns over. A lot like scheduling promos for radio stations.

Brandvold also talked about how fans of bands (and radio) just want recognition, and that a simple thank-you goes a long way. This is simple to do but SO powerful. Brandvold told the room that when it comes to social media, CARE. Connect, Acknowledge, Request, Engage. What's the dumbest thing a rock star can do on social media? Brandvold: Not be there.

4. Arbitron's Jenny Tsao attributed the difference between top-rated PPM stations and also rans that play the same music with the same basic rotations to branding. She highlighted some of PPM's top performers – among 18-34s, WHMH of Greensboro/Winston Salem-High Point, and among 25-54s, KGMS in Memphis.

5. I spoke about the "Emotional Triggers" of broadcast radio from Techsurvey8, and the line that got retweeted and talked about..."The number one negative about Pandora – 'I miss hearing people.'" And: "The way to beat Pandora? Do great radio."

6. Coleman Insights' Chris Ackerman discussed the balance of winning in PPM in the short run and branding benefits in the long run. A good example is the 20- 30% ratings hit you take with a fundraiser vs. the value of doing great community service and supporting your brand strength.

He did a great job of explaining the trade-off of in-the-moment content versus branding. An example was Whole Foods. They might make more money by carrying Diet Coke (in the moment) but by doing so might erode their brand equity.

7. Jacobs Media's Lori Lewis on how the Department of Defense uses social media. She talked about the importance of using metrics that matter, as well as monitoring online chatter – especially about the competition.

Lori: "Loose tweets sink fleets." She also reminded the room that "You can't force trust. It's about affinity and authenticity."

8. Chris Iles, Corporate Communications Manager for the Minnesota Twins was a killer guest, and did a great job of talking about "Socializing Baseball." People were really buzzing about this session which closed out Summer School 3. The Twins are very active on the social media front. They have specific revenue objectives to their social media activity, but he explained that 80% of it is still about relationships and fan engagement - and that allows for the extra 20% to be about making money.

Even though they're very active on Facebook and Twitter, the Twins also use Pinterest – a great way to engage their female fans. He also noted the Twins' president is on social media. "It's a big priority for the team." Chris talked about how the Twins

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July 18-20, 2012
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Minneapolis

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essentially did “random acts of social media at the beginning, but got more strategic as time went on. Today, they use social media to allow fans to tell stories on their Facebook page – like “What’s your opening day tradition?” They also use a Tweet Board at Target Field, and fans enjoy the acknowledgment of seeing their tweets on the big screen. After Summer School...

It’s interesting that it’s called the Conclave Learning Conference. I don’t think any other radio event truly gets to the fundamentals like this one. A case in point, two concurrent sessions...

Ratings 101 featuring Arbitron’s Jon Miller and Harv Blain (Vallie, Richards, Donovan). These guys really broke it down, brining in paper diaries and a meter to literally illustrate the way that ratings work. As Miller called it, showing “how the sausage is made.” It was a great X’s and O’s look at the Arbitron system. Across the hall, Time Management for Dummies. (Ironically, the session was late in getting started.)

Jim Hopes, CEO of the Center for Sales Strategy was the presenter, and he went right to the basics of prioritization. In fact, he told the room that it’s impossible to manage time because it’s fixed. “Effective time management is really priority management.” Later, “The Voice-Over Edge” was an upbeat panel moderated by Dennis Green (Cumulus) featuring Pat Garrett and Rachel McGrath (both very talented VO people), Jhani Kaye (CBS/LA), Nate Zietz (agent/CESD) and Mark Todd (Ops Mgr – Journal Omaha).

Fun session with some great quotes...

Jhani Kaye on selecting VO talent: “It’s all about casting.” He told the room that when it’s time to bring in a new voice person, he refuses to look at the packages, pictures, bios. He judges solely on the sound. Mark Todd: “Radio stations are communities...so the voice that runs through the station is the common threat 24/7 365.”

Rachel McGrath talked about how she gets in the right mindset for the audience she’s talking to: “I imagine the listener right there in front of me.” And “A voice person is a dime a dozen these days. A great voice person is a gem.”

Nate Zietz went a little baseball on us: “The most important thing...is to have the five- tool VO actor. If you are versatile, you’ll have longevity in this business.”

HUCKABEE SPEAKS TO FULL HOUSE AT CONCLAVE

Facebook Tweet 7-20-2012

(by Fred Jacobs) It was an interesting second day at the Conclave in Minneapolis, complete with fireworks. Mike Huckabee led off the festivities by being interviewed in front of a full house in the main ballroom. He had strong comments telling attendees, “Like politics and radio, you’re only as good as you were yesterday.” He also added an interesting comment about those who say dumb, offensive things but, “only apologize if I offended someone.”

In Huckabee’s mind, you should “Man up and admit you made a mistake.” He compared the role of a Vice President to a spare tire: “You’re kept in the dark, out of sight, but all pumped up and ready to go when you’re needed.” Says that local hosts make better interviewers because they ask deeper questions, connected to local issues and concerns.

Then, a couple of sessions where “Minnesota Nice” was MIA. Starting with the “Syndicated All-Star Session,” featuring Jim Brickman, George Noory, Todd Schnitt, and Andy Dean. It was moderated by Perry Michael Simon, and for a while was pretty much what you’d expect from a panel of nationwide hosts.

They talked about how they got started in the business, but then Andy Dean began to turn the session into what Pamela Muldoon referred to on Twitter as a WWE match. At times, Dean looked bored, aloof, and even not paying attention. At other times, he attacked Schnitt who gave as good as he got. Some attendees were either entertained by the banter, while others couldn’t believe it was happening. As one tweeter noted, there’s a fine line between arrogance and confidence.

Next up, “Keeping It Local” moderated by Mike Stern, featuring Clear Channel’s Mike Crusham, WCCO PD Bob Shomper, Entercom Madison Ops Mgr David Moore, and consultant Keith Hill. In this session, Hill was the agent provocateur. He argued that radio is “broken” because of voicetracking and cutbacks. He also advised attendees: “Do not take a job at Clear Channel, Cumulus, or CBS. Find a job with a local owner-operator.” All this, with managers from Clear Channel and CBS on the panel. Moderator Stern fired back that there are lots of local owners who are pretty crazy, too.

On the substantive side, the panelists agreed on lots of things: Social media and the Internet make it even easier for local hosts to prepare their shows.

Shomper: Vertical recycling works and helped grow CCO’s share. Crusham: “I bemoan the past but the past is gone.”

Crusham: “Radio is tribal.”

All-time great local host? Dave Moore says Alaska’s Rick Rydell.

Shomper: Bob Sirott

The always inspiring Val Geller’s “Finding Future Stars”

“All-stars are storyteller junkies. If you’re a great storyteller and love stories, you’re halfway there.”

And “Every great talent takes risks.”

And Val’s big 3: Tell the truth, make it better, never be boring.

Doug Harris (head honcho at Noisemaker Communications) had a fun session that had attendees taking notes...

Quotes: “Sales thinks programming’s favorite word is ‘no.’ Programming thinks sales’ favorite word is ‘yes.’ A PD’s best defense against bad sales promotions – a “station bill of rights.” Put together your rules for how promotions are going to be done at your station.

One of the more interesting sessions of the day, “New Ways To Make Money,” moderated by Jacobs Media’s Paul Jacobs. On

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the panel, Chief Strategy Office of Federated Media James Derby, Dir of Bus Dev & Strategy for Hubbard Interactive Rob McCracken, Northern Lights Broadcasting's Sam Elliot, and an interesting addition – a non-radio person, Maureen Carlson from a company called Good Scout.

Paul Jacobs: "Radio has two secret weapons and needs to leverage them – our cume and our megaphone. Stop with the CPM and CPP." Rob McCracken talked about how Hubbard has "rebranded" its digital marketing efforts using "2060 Digital." He says they've become one of the biggest social media agencies in the Midwest.

Carlson talked about how non-profits are now using corporate dollars for cause marketing, but need media partners. Oftentimes, she doesn't know which stations to talk to, or even who to talk to at the station. The room – and the other panelists – really responded to this, definitely thinking that non-profit + corporate opportunities may be a missed opportunity for radio.

To get help because they were using the receptionist to handle social media, Northern Lights' Elliot talked about how they've brought in an outside agency to help them with social.

Derby: Out of 7 reps at most stations, 1 or 1Ω "get" digital.

McCracken: "The old days with the PD and sales manager fighting over promos is over." Important to get buy-in from both.

Derby noted that ad agencies are now referring business to Federated Media because of the sophistication of their digital departments.

Good Scout's Carlson: Don't give ways your PSAs or just show up at events. Sit down the non-profit and think about strategic opportunities that are win-win.

Federated Media's Derby: "It's about the ask. The digital dollars are out there. Be aggressive."

Finally, this quote from Matt Fisher (mornings, KKIA, The Moose) : "Conclave is such a valuable tool for the radio industry. I wish more stations and staff members were here to benefit."



(July 18) Conclave Starts Today!

This morning at 9am CT, the 37th annual Conclave Learning Conference gets underway in Minneapolis with Jacobs Media's Summer School 3, packed with an ambitious slate of informative topics, from social media strategies, useful marketing campaigns used by the military and the Minnesota Twins, the traits of successful radio stations, differentiating your station from digital competition, and successful long-term brand strategies versus short term programming maximization.

The festivities conclude this Friday, July 20 with Kurt Hanson's RAIN Summit Midwest. Sandwiched in between will be a delicious blend of educational sessions, keynote addresses from former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee and RAB President Erica Farber and Friday's Rockwell Award presentation to Jacobs Media's Fred Jacobs and Airplay Intel's Rich Meyer. Also look for relatively alphabetical appearances by Chris Ackerman, Ken Benson, Harv Blain, Jim Brickman, Alan Burns, Andy Dean, Dave "Chachi" Denes, Jane Dyson, Valerie Geller, Steve Goldstein, Dennis Green, Doug "The Creative Animal" Harris, Tom Kay, Jhani

Kaye, Jim McGuinn, Mike McVay, George Noory, Dave Ryan, Todd Schnitt, Mark Todd, Jon Zellner and many, many other influential industry luminaries. It's huge, and it's underway now at the Doubletree Park Place Hotel in Minneapolis. Complete registration and agenda details are available as we speak at theconclave.com.

(July 20) Conclave Wraps Today

After an ambitious two days of educational activities, informative sessions and a keynote address by former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee yesterday, the 37th annual Conclave Learning Conference comes to a conclusion later today. Among the highlights of this final day will be the 9am session featuring an on-stage interview with Erica Farber, the recently named President of the Radio Advertising Bureau. Erica will share her invaluable insights with the session's moderator, Conclave Learning Conference Agenda Chairman and Coleman Insights President/COO Warren Kurtzman. Immediately thereafter, Kurt Hanson's action-packed RAIN Summit Midwest rolls from 10am-1pm, followed by the Rockwell Awards lunch that honors this year's dual recipients: Jacobs Media's Fred Jacobs and Airplay Intel's Rich Meyer. It's safe to say that Conclave Executive Director Tom Kay and his hardworking team have done it again, and we anxiously look forward to the 38th Conclave next summer!

THE LETTER

YOUR FUTURE IN RADIO

Perry Michael Simon/as published in ALL ACCESS
7/27

There were a lot of young broadcasting students at last week's Conclave Learning Conference in Minneapolis. None of them asked me anything. I can't blame them, because most of them probably have no idea who I am or what I've done or why I would have anything to offer. But if they had asked, I have some ideas about what I would have told them about a career in the radio business.

I would have told them about the low pay, long hours, and limited appreciation from the bosses. But they probably know that already. The more important part would've been this: if you have any innovative bone in your body, you might want to consider another business. It wasn't always this way, but it's especially so right now. Innovation in radio is discouraged, and that, of all the problems facing the industry, is one that distresses me the most. That's not to say that there aren't opportunities. If what you're looking for is a standard career doing standard things that have been done before, there are still opportunities in radio. But if you want to try something different, you're better off looking elsewhere. Think about it: what was the last truly innovative thing that's come out of the radio business? Hard to come up with one, isn't it? Most of what's new in radio has been reactive, like doing customizable audio after Pandora did it, or podcasts after everybody with a microphone did it. (Or Adult Hits after the iPod shuffle play became popular, for that matter) Radio was even late to the game doing streaming audio, partly because of the royalty and union issues and partly because they just didn't see any way to make money on it. And on the creative side, do I have

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to even tell you where radio stands? Is there any real difference between your typical talk show or morning show today and one from 20 years ago? Is anybody doing anything different?

Maybe you are doing something different, but you're in a minority. Radio today is pretty much the same as radio 20 years ago. It's mostly the same formats, largely the same people, and innovation is hard to find. Meanwhile, it's never been a better time to be a creative person, because the opportunities are endless. Unfortunately, those opportunities are mostly outside of radio. The barriers to entry on the Internet are nonexistent, and while the revenue may also be close to nonexistent at this stage, that will change. Yes, it's heartening to see young people at the convention looking to get a break into the radio industry, but I found myself asking who these people are and what motivates them. After all, it's easier to do your own thing in a podcast, on a stream, or on YouTube, and the rewards might be bigger in the long run. So, why radio?

There's an answer for that, too. The audience on radio is still bigger. There's more money there right now, too, even though it ain't what it used to be. And, for a lot of people, the romance is still there. Even with all the cutbacks, even with the lack of innovation, even with the celebration of mediocrity and the recycling of the same people for the same jobs over and over, there's something about radio that's still magic. Hallucinatory, irrational, romantic, call it what you will, but even now, there's something about being on the radio that you don't get from any other medium. Just don't ask me to define what it is, because, after several decades in this business, I still can't put it into words. With all of that, I'm still concerned that this industry rewards mediocrity and ignores innovation. Even the slightest threat of an attempt at a different variation on a standard format draws criticism, derision, and ostracism. Any move of a talk station to FM still draws the "FM is for music" "waste of a station" response, and the death of every experiment seems to draw more than its share of celebration (or was I imagining the glee with which the demise of the Merlin FM news operations drew? Even if the stations weren't executed well, how is it a good thing that two all-local, well-staffed spoken word stations were shut down and replaced by music you can get on your iPod or streaming or Spotify or Pandora, only without customization or much personality? Has the need to make investors happy RIGHT THIS VERY MINUTE OR ELSE led to it being impossible to get the time necessary to develop and grow a successful news franchise? Is anyone else disturbed by that?).


And with all of that, we get what we deserve: a dial filled with adult contemporary, top 40, and talk stations that closely resemble

what we had 20 years ago. Is that the business young people want to get into?

Apparently, there are still a few who do. I'm glad about that, because radio needs all the young blood it can get. But if they believe that any new ideas they bring to the table will get a warm and interested reception from the leaders of this business, they're going to be in for a surprise. On the other hand, if they wait a few years, they might be able to buy stations and do things their way. The price of entry isn't exactly going up.

Ah, see? Too cynical. Maybe it's better that I don't talk to those kids. For the sake of the industry, it's better that they take their shot at making things work without a curmudgeon like me talking them out of it. You never know what can happen until you try. And maybe someone will somehow be allowed to put a new idea into play and radio will finally innovate again. It has to start somewhere, with someone, at some time. Maybe it'll start in Minneapolis, with a kid fresh out of school, at a Conclave. Or in a basement someplace, with someone with a computer and a microphone, when nobody's looking. Either way, the industry needs to be looking for new people and new ideas. Now would be a good time to start.

Next week: What Blogs & Twitter had to say about the 2012 Learning Conference!



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