

...BULLET POINTS...

Effective Radio Contesting

The most important part of deciding what type of cash giveaway your station wants is to determine what your station needs. Do you have a big morning show that always outperforms the station and needs a way to get that audience to use the rest of the station more? Do you need to support a new morning show and generate new cume for morning drive? Do you have a station that does not get as many tune-ins per week as your format usually generates? Do you have a station that traditionally trails your competition with cume?

The best way to spend your promotion money is to determine the goal of the contest and make sure you are designing a contest that will help you achieve that goal. And if you can make the contest fun for the vast majority of the audience that will never play, so much the better.

Radio contests typically have one of two primary goals:

1. Increase cume/awareness to a daypart or station
2. Increase TSL to a daypart or station



Cume Building Contests

Contests to increase cume awareness to a station or daypart almost always involve television or other media marketing support or buzz content designed to get listeners talking about the station:

- Show Us Your Call Letters -- where listeners try to get the station's call letters exposed.
- Outrageous Acts -- where listeners do strange things designed to get media coverage for the station.

The prime example of a contest that utilizes television to generate cume is The Birthday Game, where listeners' birthdays are advertised on TV to win money the next day on a radio morning show. In this day and age, the amount of money required to do this type of listener promotion is rarely available.

TSL Contests

Contests designed to increase TSL can have one of several goals:

- Push morning show audience listeners into other prime dayparts
- Push other dayparts into the morning show
- Push the audience into more horizontal tune-ins



Morning Drive to Other Dayparts

The most common contest is the “Song of the Day” promotion where the morning show identifies a song that will be played one or several times more throughout the day and the audience can win money for being the correct caller when the songs play.

To move the morning show audience into other dayparts, be sure to make the song announcement to the entire morning show audience, not just the portion of the morning show audience that can listen at one time, say 7:20am. Make the song announcement a minimum of every hour (e.g. 6,7,8 & 9:20) to move the entire morning show audience into middays and or pm drive.

Other Dayparts to Morning Drive

Contests that are designed to increase morning show come by advertising a way to win on the morning show are less common but can be effective at getting sampling of a new morning show. Examples of this contest are:

- *Secret Sound*: Contestants hear a sound played in middays and pm drive and call in to identify the sound the following morning.
- *Cash Clues*: The audience listens in middays and pm drive for a clue that will pay cash the following morning.

To insure the most players for contests like these, be sure to execute the contest more than one time in the morning to enable all listeners to play, not just those that can listen in any one hour.

Push Horizontal Tune-ins

Getting more tune-ins each week is another great way to increase TSL. For example, use contest money to get Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday’s audience to come back Friday. *Thousand Dollar Thursday* is a contest designed to get listeners during the week to tune back in on a specific day for more listening occasions.

Generally the more days of build-up to the giveaway day the better. And, as with all contests, the simpler the better. Announce the payoff day and the times of the payoff each time. A name like the *Friday’s 9 2 and 5 Thousand Dollar Payoff* uses a name that explains a contest just by saying the name. This contest can be run for as little as \$3000 a week and at the same time puts a big enough prize up to push horizontal (weekly tune-in) TSL numbers.

Since most listeners listen habitually, the audience at any one time during a day is the most likely audience to be available for listening at the same time the next day. The most available audience for a 9 am thousand-dollar giveaway on Friday is the audience at 9am Monday-Thursday.

The Workforce Payroll Contest can payoff with remarkable at-work TSL by spending something like \$800 per day. This one requires a good size station database. Call a listener's name out of the database every hour during the workday for a call back within 10 minutes to win \$100 per hour until the next loyal listener steals the job. This contest works exceptionally well on rock stations. (One way this contest works beyond winning cash is in how it generates star power for everyday working stiffs who are winning a bit more money and being interviewed and congratulated every hour.)



Add Some Fun to it

A very small portion of any radio station's audience will play a contest. To help make a more memorable promotion for the majority of the audience that doesn't play contests, include some fun and tension into the contest. Hearing someone win \$1000 has some entertainment value, but hearing someone win when they have just risked it all has much more.

Here's an example of a cash giveaway that is fun and generates suspense and interest for anyone listening:

[KISS FM Dallas Cash or Crash](#)



Personal Programming and Interactivity

Power is shifting from the content provider to the content receiver as personal programming expectations and interactivity rise with all the new technologies. Radio can benefit by coming up with techniques to offer the perception of listener more control and interactivity.

- ✓ **WABB Mobile**, is having great success with the station's I-Pod Shuffle lunch hour. This random music approach gives the impression of musical depth and the unpredictability that anything could come up next. It gives the station the opportunity to play a huge variety of music that wouldn't necessarily fit regular programming. Listeners interact with WABB's I-Pod Shuffle by "feeding the pod," sending in their requests via email (feedthepod@WABB.com) or phone. WABB is reaping ratings benefits by embracing this technology and conveying the perception of engaging the listener.

- ✓ Another way to develop listener interactivity is to use the station's website as part of the contest. **KDMX Dallas** has a "Pick Your Purse" promotion that invites the listener to visit the station's website, which then displays a selection of designer handbags for the listener to choose from. The listener's must tune in weekdays at (9-2-5) for an opportunity to *pick your purse*. The contest is a great vehicle to attract new and come listeners to your website where they can become more familiar with the stations programming and personalities.

Book Recommendation



The Way of the Superior Man by David Deida

The discussion of this book caused a firestorm of controversy in the Rock Session at last month's morning show bootcamp. Don't let the title fool you, although directed to men the book highlights the differences in males and females pertaining to relationships without taking sides. This book is insightful but contains a small amount of language that might be offensive to some. This guy started with a cult following that is expanding into the main stream. Since so many morning shows devote a lot of time to relationship content, this new and different way of looking at relationships although controversial is a relevant read.



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