

August 29, 2003

It's All About Relationships

Don Anthony and the gang at *Morning Mouth* did another great job this year hosting *Morning Show Bootcamp*. We met people from morning shows all over the world and all were willing and excited to share ideas on morning radio entertainment.

This year the AC Forum panel was on Community Relations/PR:

- Roula and Ryan/KHMX Houston
- Gene and Julie/WLTM Atlanta
- Dean Novak/Dean and Darci, Bakersfield
- Dain and Peggy/KSL Salt Lake City
- Louis Kaplan, host

How do I get the press in my town to pay attention to my show?

It's all about relationships:

- Make a call to each TV station, newspaper in your town and find out:
 1. Do they prefer fax or email notification of promotions
 2. The name of the assignment editor
 3. What are the deadlines for the next issue?
- Call each press contact occasionally. Milk the relationship with free tickets, information scoops for them. Call them sometime WHEN YOU DON'T NEED SOMETHING.
- If possible have a morning show feature that uses a guest celebrity from media contacts (anchors, columnists, etc.). Invite them on the show and make them a radio star. Roula and Ryan have guest on their version of Hollywood Squares "Smart Alec." There is no better way to be on a TV anchor's radar screen than to make him a radio star for a day.
- Establish a connection with your local "Action Reporter" and feed him potential leads when they call in to your show.
- When you see a local TV anchor promoting a pet cause, contact them and offer support (i.e.: an on-air interview). This is a great way to establish a relationship.

- When you are talking about something you see on TV, mention the anchor's/reporter's name that gave the story. They get as excited when people tell them they were mentioned on the radio as you do when you get mentioned on TV.
- Send a fax to assignment editors with "topics of the day" for your show and the hotline number to contact you.
- Offer to send mp3 copies of content or phone calls with listener's views. Frequently TV stations are not set up to get audience reaction to news and sometimes they want them.
- Have your radio station wired for TV access. Easy plug-ins for audio, a staging area for the cameras that has been set up with logos in the background, etc.

Jeff Dauler from Q102 in Atlanta hosted the "**Producer's Forum**" with panelists that included Jimmy Baron, Marsha Rickett (from NBC), Chad Mitchell and Mark Renier. This session covered PR as well and had some other good ideas:

- There is a great web-site for celebrity contact information, "whorepresents.com." This site will (after you register) give you information about any actor's agent, publicist, manager and attorney.
- On good press relations:
 - ✓ Have relationships with local writers, assignment editors, etc.
 - ✓ Know the types of things each station/newspaper likes
 - ✓ Avoid massive amounts of press releases
 - ✓ Give publicists/assignment editors your cell number
 - ✓ Think of the TV/Newspaper angle for what you want covered. Think before you approach an assignment editor "how does this bit support their mission?"
- Know your local anchor's pet causes and offer to support them.
 - ✓ "We're going to have some great phone calls on today from kids who don't have fathers and thought you might want to use some of the audio to support your anchor's Big Brother's Big Sister's campaign."
 - ✓ "We'd like to get your anchor on to talk about the work they are doing cleaning up downtown."
- Newspapers are dying for content that will appeal to 18-34 year olds to build younger readership. Make other media aware of your targets and inform them when you are doing stuff they can turn into a story of interest to this key TV demo.
- When trying to get an interview from a reluctant guest, try a community service angle: "your story is very inspirational; you could help a lot of people by coming on air and sharing your story..."

- CNN looks for hosts that have the pulse of their community to get reactions to news stories. Write to Marylynn.ryan@cnn.com and let her know who you are and how to contact you when they need a local perspective.
- Marsha Rickett is the press person for NBC TV shows. She is the person to contact if you want NBC TV stars on your show.
 - ✓ Email Marsha at marsha.rickett@nbc.com. You won't likely hear back from her (she gets a lot of emails).
 - ✓ Send her basic information on your station and show like ratings positions with target demos, times you do interviews and contact information.
 - ✓ Be persistent, send her updates on your show and market
 - ✓ Be open to supporting her new stars
 - ✓ You'll hear from her when she has something for you, be available.
- ASK for call letter mentions when you are being booked for interviews or when the TV stations are filming your events. Make sure the reporter, camera person, etc. has exactly how you want to be referred to for the story to minimize "local station" or wrong call letters credits. Business cards that spell all your station information out are a good investment.

Programming Nuggets for Morning Shows:

- ◆ Get out of the building and live your life. Spend less time on IMs and emails and more time at the circus/park with your kid finding stories for tomorrow's show.
- ◆ Live the lifestyle of your target. Go where they go, watch what they watch.
- ◆ Experiencing creative block? Grab three magazines you've never read and read them. You will come up with new ideas from each.
- ◆ If you want your boss to jump under the bus for you, be prepared to jump under the bus for your boss.



2660 Townsgate Rd. Suite 800 Westlake Village, CA 91361
 Randy Lane: (805) 497-7177 Fax: (805) 497-9858 Email: randy@randylane.net
 Stan Main: (512) 266-7952 Fax: (603) 215-9557 Email: stan@randylane.net