



Jacobs Media Summit 11: "24 Hours To The Future"

On Tuesday, September 19 and Wednesday September 20 in Dallas, Texas, **Jacobs Media** once again unveiled their annual Rock Summit. This year's event focused a keen eye on the future of radio as it relates to new media and succeeding in an iPod and YouTube age. The session was opened by newly appointed **NAB** CEO/President **David Rehr**.



Opening Remarks by NAB CEO/President David Rehr

Acknowledging the competitive realities that radio faces on an ongoing basis, and its tendency to work from the defensive rather than the offensive, Rehr pointed out that "in the world we live today, we can't wait for people to come to you, you need to go to them." He noted radio's advantageous reach versus satellite radio, and the need for regulatory oversight of its satcaster adversaries.

Rehr aggressively outlined six methods the NAB is utilizing to promote the strength and prowess of terrestrial radio. He stated the NAB would go on the offensive promoting radio in print, television, PSAs and other mediums. Rehr also urged broadcasters to respond to the disinformation and negative slants levied on radio in the mainstream press.

Other points of contention included the need to influx new life and ambition into the art of terrestrial radio broadcasting, something which also included embracing new and developing technologies along with the advantages HD Radio would offer.

Rehr's background in the beer industry, an industry laced with competition and also heavily lobbied, suits him for the task at hand, one that also includes similar political lobbying with sympathetic minds on Capitol Hill and within the FCC.

"The Future Of Marketing"

"The Future Of Marketing," panel discussed the benefits of consumer generated media, highlighting three successful interactive station promotions. Classic Rock **WCSX**/Detroit Promotions **Jennifer Williams** told the audience of the station's rolling billboard campaign that turned listeners' cars in to mobile signage. Teaming up with a local wrapping company, the station reached out to their database and gave them an opportunity to choose album artwork and other images to wrap on their vehicles, along with the station's logo.

KAZR/Des Monies PD **Ryan Patrick** spoke of his station's interactive TV commercial campaign. In a YouTube and Google video culture, KAZR cashed in on the growing amateur video trend by asking listeners to submit their own station commercials to be judged and eventually aired on TV and via the station's Web site.

WMMR/Philadelphia PD **Bill Weston** recapped their **Preston & Steve** morning show billboard campaign which had listeners supply taglines to possibly be used on a number of Philly

billboards. The contest generated a lot of listener interest and will be utilized once again in an upcoming billboard campaign.

"The Future of Online Revenue"

The presentation by CEO of **Borrell Associates, Gordon Borrell**, stressed the importance of radio tapping into a largely underexposed revenue stream: online ad sales. He challenged attendees to change their perspective on online advertising, and showed examples of successful, benchmark radio Web sites. He implored radio to focus on opportunity, not threat, and to change their current thinking. He stated that online advertising has topped \$19 billion last year, surpassing billboards, magazines and the yellow pages, and may pass radio by 2010.

Borrell also noted that local online advertising is growing the fastest, and radio is well positioned to accelerate its online ad initiatives. Radio online revenues doubled in 2005 and he projects a 50 percent growth in 2006.

To be successful in generating serious online dollars, Borrell stressed that radio must create multiple revenue streams, experience top-level executive support, and employ an online-only sales force.

He concluded by reaffirming that a significant advertising medium is at hand, and not to underestimate it. He advised radio companies to invest aggressively but wisely, and leverage their biggest assets: promotion and creativity. He also stressed that stations should maintain a high level of staff separation, and re-iterated that stations should definitely hire online ad salespeople.

"The Future of Media"

In what was the most talked-about presentation of the Summit, **Jason Calacanis**, new media visionary and CEO of Weblogs, Inc., (an **AOL Company**), addressed attendees and pulled no punches. His speech honed in on the "lost" war for 12-24-year-old listeners. iPods and instant gratification mentality have become too attractive for younger demos to turn away from. Although, he ironically admits, between satellite radio and podcasts, "I'm listening to more radio than ever, but I never turn on a radio."

In his opening, he asked why it was that Apple doesn't offer a FM tuner with its iPods. His answer? "**Steve Jobs** wants you dead and wants you guys out of business."

"He wants to own the audience," he said, "and guess what? He won. It's over. I don't want to talk to you about winning. I want to talk to you about surrender. It's time to forget that there's a war. You lost. It's time to surrender and build anew. Terrestrial radio is never going to get back to where it was. There's too much competition and its inherent technological structure can't compete with the new technological options that are out there. So what do you do? You surrender to the users and then you start beating them at their own game."

His shock method was used to stimulate minds and drive home the point that there are new doors of opportunity opening for radio, those that include creative ad revenue streams, podcasting, and niche programming. Radio has huge reach, passionate sales people, and can create great



content via superior production and talent, and could essentially win after surrendering.

Overall it was a fascinating, if not controversial speech that offered many takeaways and stirred conversation throughout the week.

"The Future Of Management"

On Wednesday, the Jacobs Summit opened with a speech by *Management By Baseball* author **Jeff Angus**. "I'm here because almost anything you need to know about management you can learn from baseball," he began. Angus continued by sharing four main reasons that his theory holds water.

One is that baseball is the perfect accountability engine – everything is transparent and open. Another is that baseball managers practice a wider and more diverse set of management practices on a daily basis than most Fortune 500 CEOs, he claimed. He also stated that baseball is a zero sum game. "There's not an unlimited number of wins available in the pool," he said. His final reason for the parallel between baseball management and radio management is that the talent is the product, and you "never stop refining what you bring to the table. You never sit still."

Angus' speech cut through on many levels, and his vast knowledge of the history of baseball and the dots he's connected over to corporate and private management, while not obvious on the surface, when explained, really rang true.

"The Future Of Marketing"

In what was the Consultant & author of *Creating Customer Evangelists* **Ben McConnell** gave a great speech on the importance of listener interaction and interconnectivity. Through the amateur culture world of social media, plenty of opportunities have arisen to connect with your listeners and allow them to shape your content or participate in station activities.

From phone requests to text messaging and blogging, to uploading content to places like YouTube, Google and other various viral video sites, the younger end, or Millennials (people born after 1982), as he calls them, need to be reached. They grew up with computers, cell phones, MP3 players, broadband connections and video cameras. Very few count terrestrial radio in the mix.

The basis of his presentation was to underscore the importance of not fighting the mediums that Millennials grew up immersed in, but co-opting them and, as Jason Calacanis had said, beating new competition at their own game by giving this demo a chance to be a part of your process.

As the Summit concluded there were many points of view that sank in and more than a few bullet points to chew on. In the end it was a terrific experience, and we once again commend the folks at Jacobs Media for another job well done. See you at Number 12!

To view all of the presentations online, go to <http://www.jacobsmedia.com/summit/>.



Ben McConnell

