

KAB TRANSMITTER

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If you don't serve your industry well, it won't serve you well.



Chairman's Message:

Gordon Johnson – KLEY AM/KKLE AM/KWME FM

It's with great pleasure, and a good deal of pride, that I add my voice to those praising broadcasters for a job well done during the recent tornado outbreak in Kansas. I am grateful that no lives were lost during the storms. We also need to recognize the job done by the National Weather Service. Seldom do we see the kind of advance warning of the type we saw during the day before the storms actually hit. All of the pieces were in place, and the warning systems, including local emergency management, broadcasters, and the weather service did their job

of protecting the public.

I'm sure there's probably more to come before the storm season is up, so here's a word of encouragement to broadcasters across the state to keep up the good work. We probably won't have nearly as much advance warning next time. Great job everyone.

Public/Political File On Line

The FCC will now require that television stations post their public and political files on line for public inspection nationwide. The FCC will host an online database making available information about political ads running on local affiliates of the four major TV networks in the top 50 markets. The database will be available 30 days after the Office of Management and Budget approves the new policy.

Although this only impacts Kansas City for our state, the other TV markets – Wichita, Topeka and Pittsburg – will have to comply with the political rule in two years, but must place the remainder of their public file on line in six months.

Broadcasters opposed the ruling, citing costs of disclosure and competition with other media forms. Television stations under federal law are required to offer political candidates the lowest available advertising rates. By forcing broadcasters to be the only medium to disclose on the Internet our political advertising rates, the FCC jeopardizes the competitive standing of stations that provide local news, entertainment, sports and life-saving weather information free of charge to tens of millions of Americans daily.

The KAB, along with the NAB and the 49 other state associations offered a compromise to the FCC that was rejected. It would have allowed stations to provide the total spending by a candidate or campaign, rather than each and every commercial time and rate. This information will have to be uploaded on a nearly daily basis 60 days out from a general election. We will keep you posted as we learn more information from the FCC.

NABPAC

If you haven't already made a contribution to the NABPAC, I hope you will consider one. This money is used to support members of Congress who have been friendly to broadcasting issues. Here in Kansas we have a delegation that understands the fights we have with the FCC, cable and record industries.

We will not be able to utilize that NABPAC money unless we have Kansas broadcasters participate. Your contribution can be a small amount if that's what you can afford. But we need to show NAB that we care about the issues in Congress. A reminder that this must be a personal contribution – it cannot be one from the company. You can contribute by going to the following link. The password is NABPAC www.nabpac.com



Student Seminar

Over 100 students from across Kansas attended the annual Seminar and Career Fair in Wichita. In addition to awards being handed out for the student competition, attendees were able to meet one on one with broadcast professionals representing a number of Kansas stations.

There were panels and round tables throughout the day, and 12 stations had booth set up to meet with college seniors and accept resumes. Our thanks to all those who participated as either a panelist/round table host or educator who brought students for the day. The evaluations were very positive, but many mentioned they would like to see more schools there and more stations at the career fair.

KVOE Earns Crystal Award

KVOE-AM Emporia was awarded the National Association of Broadcasters' Crystal Radio Award. Ten winners were chosen among 50 finalists who were honored in Las Vegas at the NAB Show Radio Luncheon. They are the first small to medium size radio station in Kansas to earn the honor.

The station was honored for their community service this year, which included Drive for Food that collected over 22,000 non-perishable food items for Salvation Army food pantry and the annual National Teacher's Hall of Fame radio auction on their airwaves which raised \$17,000.

Since 1987, the NAB Crystal Radio Awards have recognized radio stations for their outstanding year-round commitment to community service.

2012 KAB Sports Seminar





Broadcasters and students were hosted by the Kansas City Royals for the annual Sports Seminar. There were 110 people in attendance and some new round tables were added this year – Sporting Kansas City and The Negro League Baseball Museum. Also for the first time, Mark Elliott of WIBW Radio critiqued play by play samples from attendees.

The Hod Humiston Award was presented to Gerard Wellbrock of KAYS in Hays for his outstanding work as a sportscaster and for his work in the community. In the afternoon, despite a tough losing streak, both Royals Manager Ned Yost and GM Dayton Moore took time to answer questions and discuss the future of the club. Our thanks to Fred White and Megan Mackey for arranging the Crown Club as our meeting place and for the free tickets to the game that evening.

KAB Members Receive Murrow Awards

KFDI AM and KWCH TV of Wichita, KCTV TV, KMBC TV and KSHB TV all of Kansas City, have won regional Edward R. Murrow Awards from the Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA). They competed against other stations from Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska, and will compete in the national competition. The honors each received:

SMALL MARKET RADIO

KFDI Radio – News Documentary, *Andover Tornado Anniversary*

SMALL MARKET TELEVISION

KWCH TV – Newscast, *Eyewitness News*

LARGE MARKET TELEVISION

KCTV TV – Continuing Coverage, *Kansas City Public Schools in Chaos*

KSHB TV – Investigative Reporting, *William Norris Investigation*

Feature Reporting, *Miraculous Save*

KMBC TV – Overall Excellence

Newscast, *KMBC 9 News*

Website, *KMBC.com*

The RTDNA has honored outstanding achievements in electronic journalism with the Edward R. Murrow Awards since 1971. Recipients must demonstrate the journalistic excellence that Edward R. Murrow made a standard for the electronic news profession.

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How To Open Up A Can of Pink Slime and Pull Out A Great Spot

I used to help emcee Spamarama™, the world's largest tribute to Potted Pork Products here in Austin, so I know something about pink meat and opening cans, but that's not what this article is about. This article is about how to create great commercials. I have learned the hard way that local direct clients are not creative geniuses when writing commercials. When I let them dictate their own commercials, the chances of a cancellation at some point due to lackluster response was virtually certain. So, I figured out early that if I could win control over the creative message, the campaign's chances for success would be much better and I'd keep the business longer. So as the client and I discussed creative, I started asking the clients harder questions.

60 Minutes correspondent Mike Wallace just died. When I was a young journalism student at the University of Texas in the 1970s, he was one of my heroes. What got me about Mr. Wallace was his sheer audacity. He asked the real questions that provoked real responses from the people he interviewed. He was an expert at "poking around" until he found the nerve. And then, when he poked that sensitive area, the real "meat" (usually self-incriminating) would come out of the interviewee. Regardless of whether you liked Mike or not, you must admit that like poison ivy, like poison jelly fish tentacles, he really knew how to get under someone's skin.

My technique for interviewing local direct clients to evoke better commercial responses is not quite as caustic as Mike Wallace's was, but it's similar in some ways. Here's how. I ask tough questions about "elephants in the room" issues that the client's potential customers are thinking about but NOBODY is publicly talking about. I know how to talk to local clients and "open their heads", like a can opener, so I can draw out what's really inside of them. I'll explain further, but first let's examine the standard industry process for extracting commercial information from clients.

The broadcast sales executive visits with the client to get essential copy and creative points. The client, with the same lifetime of experience of watching television and listening to the radio as his media rep, regurgitates his standard cliché "ad-speak" as he dictates what he wants to talk about this month in his advertising scripts. He can't help it. Like us in media, all of his life he too has been exposed to radio

and television commercials. So, when he's ready to talk advertising his eyes roll back in his head and he begins vomiting up "ad-speak", the foreign language of advertising.

He says for example, that we need to tell our audience that his business is family owned and operated. It's important to mention that his sons both work there. He has three convenient locations to better serve you. His business is the best-kept secret in town. His service is the best in town. People love his loyal and friendly salespeople. And, as he drools out his favorite choice bits of magical memorized madness, his media sales rep dutifully writes down each familiar, age-old bite.

Like a trained robot, the media sales rep goes back to the station where he artfully inserts a few of his own clichés, until he has the perfect Crap-Master script notes to deliver to production. Then, the production director takes his turn. He edits, and in the process adds a favorite cliché or two of his own just to save a little time, and then cuts the spot with just the right amount of fake B-roll for television and sound-effects in radio. On top of that, he then pukes out the spot in a voice that nobody actually uses in real life. The finished result, Pink Slime. A cliché wallpaper commercial that looks or sounds just like everybody else's commercial. It's a spot with no bite, no spice and with no basis in reality whatsoever. And, the commercial is rarely about the consumer, it's usually all about the client.

Remember the game, 'Telephone', the one where you whisper something in somebody's ear, then they whisper the phrase into the next ear, and 15 people later, you realize that the original phrase has been twisted into something completely different than was originally intended? The Pink Slime effect is just like that game. Despite the client's best intentions, his message is completely distorted, written and processed into a foreign language that consumers don't really speak or comprehend.

What I do is call the client out as soon as the clichés begin to dribble out of his mouth. I was talking to the owner of a septic system company. "When you say 'best service in town', you mean..." I say. And then I shut up. The client might then go automatically into another cliché, "Well, people love our loyal and dedicated employees and we're family owned and operated," to which I respond, "When you say loyal and dedicated, you mean..." and then the client stops and thinks and says, "If your septic system fails at three o'clock in the morning and your alarm calls our number, the phone will ring in our house. Then, one of us will get up, answer it, get dressed and drive to your house and fix it." Voila! That's the kind of meat I'm looking for in a commercial. That's something that would make a difference to someone with a septic system.

By opening cans, lots of great secrets are revealed, secrets that clients have been keeping to themselves for years. In some cases, these tasty tidbits of information might identify and solve problems that may be literally keeping consumers awake at night. In talking with a car dealer, he started immediately with the best service cliché. After questioning, he admitted that nearly every week he helped some of his good customers by providing them with free loaner cars while theirs were being worked on and in some cases, went to bat for customers and got the manufacturer to pay for repairs that were not technically covered by warranty. Where were those commercials for all of these years?

It's quite amazing what can be revealed when the account executive takes the time to ask good questions. I was working with my personal HV/AC guy. He wanted to advertise. He's one of the most honest people I've ever worked with, but as we were discussing his advertising he just brought up the usual clichés. Family owned and operated. His wife and son both work there. All of them are A.S.S. certified. Fast and friendly. Blah, blah, blah. The ad-speak he was giving me was all about him, not about the consumer. And, the honest part just wasn't coming through. Then suddenly it hit me like a hot kiss at the end of a wet fist (thank you Peter Bergman). I remembered that he knows where the key to our house is. That means we don't have to wait for him to show up (sometime between 8AM and Infinity). I asked him, "Chuck, do you have other customers that tell you where the key is?" and he said, "Yeah, sure." "How many?" "Oh, fifty or sixty." Wow! That's trust. Other people with air

conditioning and heating problems would probably very much appreciate information like that when deciding who to call and fix their system.

Do the right thing and open up some heads yourself. Repeat the cliché and ask the client to explain what he means. Ask tough questions about elephants in the room, those things that should be discussed in commercials but that the client is ignoring. Don't just settle for "Pink Slime" creative.

Originally printed in *Radio and TV Business Report*. (Paul Weyland is a broadcast sales trainer, author and speaker. You can reach him at paul@paulweyland.com or at www.paulweyland.com or by phone at (512) 236 1222. Read Paul's book *Successful Local Broadcast Sales*, available on line or at bookstores)

If you have anything you would like to place in the newsletter send it to kent@kab.net