

**BIGGER
PICTURE**
The Exclusive
Inside Story

PAGE 24



Unlocking
PPM's
Secrets

PAGE 7

★ ★ ★ CMT's ★ ★ ★
**BRIAN
PHILIPS**
The Interview

PAGE 33

Radio Group
Ratings & Revenue



COUNTRY
AIRCHECK

JUNE 2010

EMI
RECORDS
NASHVILLE

soaking up the summer...

We may not remember June through September drinking our troubles away, while we drink a little drink, smoke a little smoke...



TROY OLSEN
"Summer Thing"

"'Summer Thing' is the perfect radio record - but that's only part of the story. To appreciate Troy Olsen, make your EMI rep get you the rest of the project. He has two years worth of hits ready for us. Troy has the potential to help lead a new generation of country."

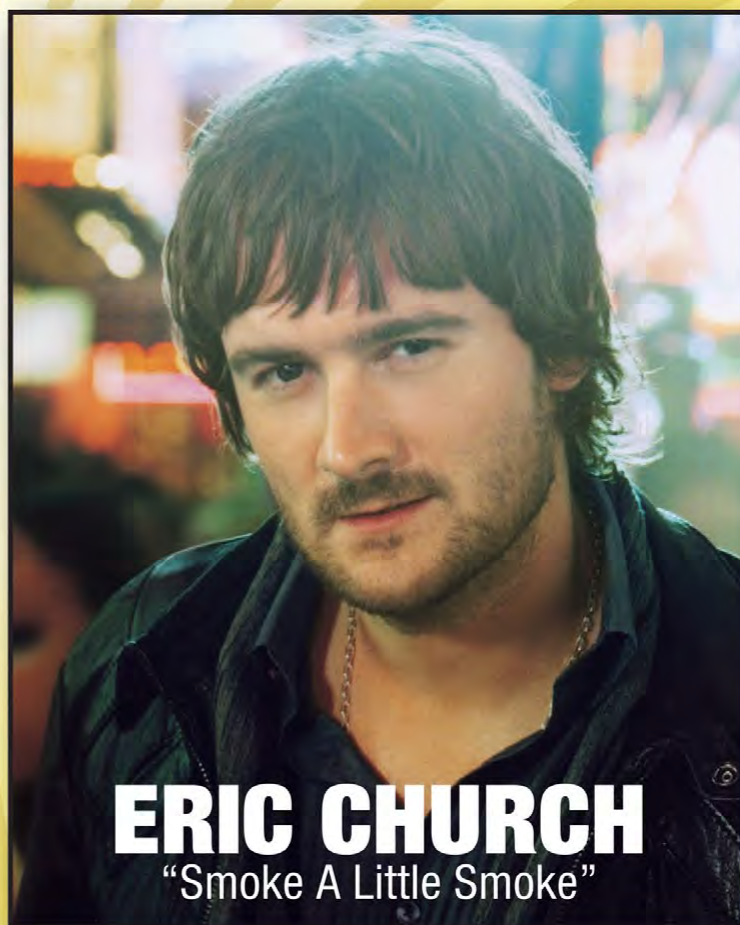
-GREGG SWEDBERG, Clear Channel

"LOVE this song and artist! This tune is a Troy built HIT!"

-TRAVIS MOON, KAJA PD

"Wow! Troy Olsen is the whole package. Positively the best new music I've heard from a new artist this year!"

-COYOTE CALHOUN, WAMZ PD



ERIC CHURCH
"Smoke A Little Smoke"

"This is one record you just can't quit (in your head). No ifs, ands or buts.... it's a hit."

-TIM ROBERTS, WYCD PD

"This is THE song from Eric Church that defines what everyone has seen live. This record will jump out of the radio and Church fans will love it, but everyone else will say 'what the Hell was that and where do I get some more of it?!'"

-NATE DEATON, GM, KRTY

"Drinkin' and Smokin', that's what makes Church FUN!"

-MIKE CULOTTA & JAY ROBERTS, WQYK

EMI
RECORDS
NASHVILLE

www.troyolsen.com

www.ericchurch.com



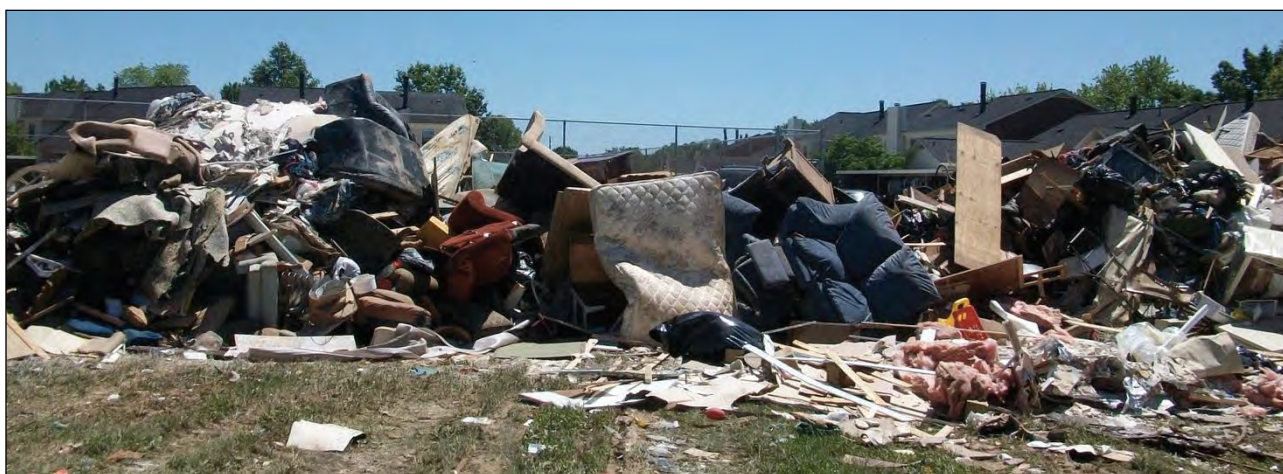
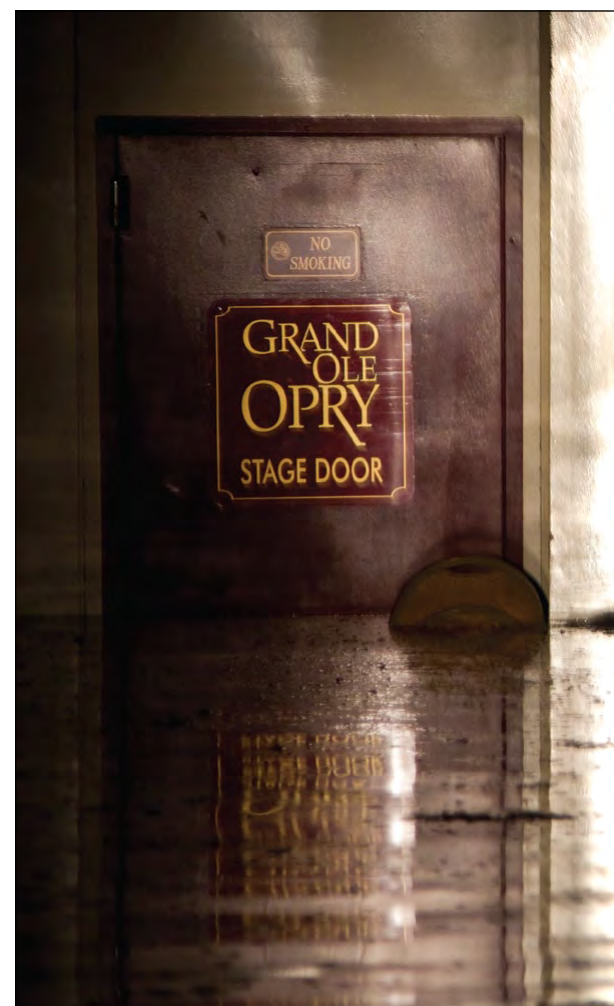
THE FLOOD

Unrelenting rain put Nashville to bed Saturday night, May 1, and the next morning many woke to water pouring into their houses and their cars floating away. People were dying; drowning in vehicles or washed away in currents. Real heroism fueled hundreds of water rescues. Thousands of homes stewed in destructive water. Tragedy.

While the nation's attention was locked on the Gulf of Mexico and Times Square, Monday's rising Cumberland and inundated landmarks began to give the national media the resonant images needed for fleeting coverage. But it took Music City's most

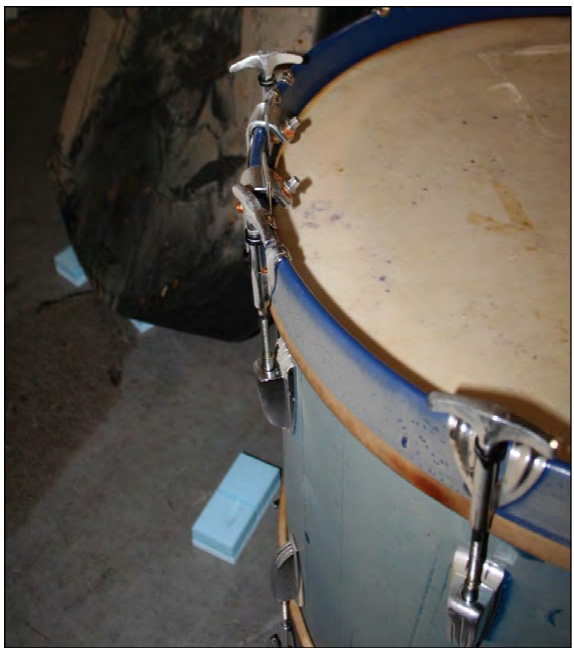
visible citizens exerting their influence to explain the disaster's true scope.

Music makers who once may have hailed from Oklahoma, West Virginia, Pennsylvania or Australia proved themselves to be true Tennessee Volunteers. And their significant efforts and contributions were wonderfully dwarfed by countless unheralded acts of assistance, support and love that continue unabated. Country Aircheck remembers those days on these pages. We honor those who've lost. And we salute everyone who has given, and keeps on giving, so much.





THE FLOOD



UNLOCKING PPM

PDs Share Their Secrets

Even in dog years, the People Meter knowledge base is a few shy of adolescence. Still, radio's brightest minds are chewing through the reams of data Arbitron spits out each week looking for the connections, patterns and keys to ratings victory. In Country there are more than 50 programmers for whom PPM is already currency, and probably just as many approaches.

The nature of today's radio business can limit the exchange of ideas, especially inter-company, but Country Aircheck aims to bridge that gap. We asked all Country PDs in PPM markets for a tip, strategy, observation or key metric or two with the promise we'd keep their particulars out of it. So here's a collection of PPM wisdom, with the names omitted to protect the "share" holders.

Don't overreact. The natural reaction is to strip your radio station down to nothing. We all did it as we came on board as new PPM markets. And you do have to find ways to cut down the chatter, but you can't do it at the cost of the magic, imagery and theater-of-mind of radio. iPods can do a better job for most people of giving them just music. Don't let the entertainment and magic get sucked out of your station. Don't cut your station back at the expense of your brand.

If you have a running bit that you find really works – 10 questions, top 10 list – split it into two bits separated by the spotset that you have to run anyway. Hook the listener and "waste" a spotset where they will likely stay or come back.

Do your absolute best to *ignore* weeklies and any data extrapolated from a single weekly base (e.g., Mscores). You wouldn't accept a music test based on sample sizes that small, so why would you accept ratings that, when drilled down to that level, are built on a statistically invalid sample size? Instead of looking at weeklies, I keep a running four-week average that is updated with every weekly release.

It really changes the way you do promotions and events. All of a sudden, the banner war on the streets becomes a little less valuable. Now, some stations take it to the extreme and say we're not going to waste any more money on banners. But banners are important. You still have to create a presence and vibe for your station in the city. Bannering four miles of freeway on the way to the concert to aid recall? Maybe not so important.

You can't deny that PPM is an accurate representation of the usage of the folks who carry meters. For instance, diarykeepers write down much more early-morning listening than meter carriers show. I find it hard to believe that folks sleep in until 6:45 am, but still write down that they listen to radio at 5:30 am. The meter is missing some early tuning to radio, especially by women.

Remember you're dealing, in most cases, with a gross under-sampling. I don't think you could find a legitimate statistician in the world who would say these sampling rates are a decent representation. Still, it's the world we live in and how we choose to be measured.

UNLOCKING PPM

Do not run live interviews. Record them. Every one. Then use the content in bit-size pieces. Consider theme-ing the interview, too. Coming up tomorrow, “Five things Brad Paisley won’t admit to his wife.” Then run them in five :30 segments through a daypart. You get more out of the interview, can set specific appointment times, and people who don’t care what Brad thinks or says are not interrupted for very long.

We have a big opportunity to stop the constant and badgering branding. Frankly, it’s hard to get used to doing that, but it must be done.

Setting appointments is important because having listeners come back to the station a number of times is as important as getting listeners to stay with the station. A successful Country station should strive for six to eight occasions per day. The average occasion is 10 minutes. Arbitron says that there is not much you can do about that, but you can get people coming back. Try to move listeners from hour to hour and daypart to daypart.

You have to keep in balance. You can get sucked into the data, spend the whole day staring at your computer and end up chasing your tail instead of worrying about how your talent is sounding, what your rotations are and generally paying attention to your content.

Isn’t it strange that we send 140-character tweets to Twitter, but when it comes to talking on air, jocks insist they have to have “their time.” Baloney! How about tweeting your whole show and reading those very lines over the songs?

YOU MUST HAVE FEWER INTERRUPTIONS OVERALL. IF YOU’RE NOT AT TWO BREAKS, YOU HAVE TO GET THERE. IF YOU HAVE TO, SHOOT YOUR SALES MANAGER.

Arbitron has found that spots across the quarter-hours maximize the time in the quarter-hour to collect the required five minutes of listening.

The sample is too small to accurately represent share rank of anything but the two or three highest-cuming stations in most markets. It’s a disaster for small cume/high loyalty formats like Classic Country, or for stations without a full market signal. And narrow demos wobble radically, as the panel members change 8-10% from month to month.

Keep track of the special things that you do in a diary so that you can go back and repeat winning events.

One thought to a break has never been more important. Forget the standardized call letter/dial position open/ending to each break, too. You can brand your station in so many ways, so saying the name of the station first thing in your break has never been more unimportant. Pick one thing to talk about, then create a five-second headline that makes people stick with you for the rest of the break. (“There’s a song I’m about to play that you will absolutely hate, but I’m going to play it anyway.”) Would that keep you listening? It’s certainly different! And by the way, the song they’re going to hate is Miranda Lambert’s “The House That Built Me” ... “because it makes you cry, and now your co-workers wonder why you’re crying. Don’t ya hate that?” Ah, the power of music ... played on the radio.

Don’t knee-jerk at those weeklies. It can be real easy to go down that hole and suffer analysis paralysis. If you are *sure* you have a good game plan, stick to it! PPM rewards consistency.

The less talk, the better. It’s a simple PPM fact: seconds count. The longer we can keep listeners and the quicker we can get them back, the better. If music is our franchise, anything else violates the promise.

Spotset positioning is fairly critical to gain as much of each quarter-hour as possible. They should cross quarter-hours.

The bigger the cume, the better the station will do in PPM because it’s AWTE (Average Weekly Time Exposed), not our age-old TSL. The more stores that have the station on, the better chance that meter gets exposed to the station.

Information overload is the buzz. You have to be careful about “following the needle” too much. You can micromanage PPM to the point of lousy radio, and that’s no good. But you have to respect how people use your radio station, and PPM is a window to that usage. You can then program in ways that choreograph the usage to your advantage.

When analyzing data, overlay the predicted schedules of people listening. For example, if people leave the station at 10 before the hour, was it a bad song, bad jock break or did they simply arrive at work and have to leave the listening environment?

Make sure you encode your online stream to get credit in PPM.

Hook up an electric wire to the control room chair. Have a switch installed in your office to blast the jock with a few volts when they go too long. (Okay, I’m kidding. The engineers really, really love the idea, though.)

Radio is radio, regardless of how we measure it. In the “old days” of Drake radio, there were no music beds under bits. It was mix first and talk. Really not such a bad idea. The music kept coming and your personality was mixed in with the music. Sounds rather rigid, but it was a period of legendary stations commanding huge audience numbers with well-known personalities. As a matter of fact, it led to the modern Country movement as Country stations using a much more relaxed approach to the music adapted some Top 40 mannerisms, and here we are: tighter, brighter and more attuned to the audience.

Every blemish shows with PPM. Every moment on the air has to be as perfect as possible. Every personality break, every song, every promotion, *everything*. Otherwise, they leave.

Cell-phone-only households remain a major problem, especially with minorities and younger demos, but even Country is heavily impacted. In spite of skewing 35+, at least one in five Country homes no longer has a landline, making them largely invisible to Arbitron at present.

Clean, concise, crisp. You have to have a really well-laid-out break. It can’t meander. If you can’t sum it up in a few words, you probably shouldn’t. And it’s got to have meat to it. Without substance, there’s nothing for the listener to care about.

For those just coming into PPM, don’t get over-hyped by cume spike. It’s going to go up, yeah, but look how long they’re listening. And get accustomed to looking at Average Quarter-Hour Persons instead of share unless every station in your market is encoding.

Promos that sound like commercials are gone. You have to get to the point and send them to the web. Let the site tell them how to buy tickets.

Want to understand PPM and the on-air sound? Get your face out from in front of a computer, put some earphones on and get on the air. The days when a PD could program from his or her office are behind us. *Being on the air* is how to do radio. **CAC**



Volume 4, Issue 2, June 2010
Country Aircheck
1102 17th Avenue South, Suite 205
Nashville, TN 37212
615-320-1450
Fax: 615-320-1453

Publisher/CEO
Lon Helton
lon@countryaircheck.com

VP/Editorial
Chuck Aly
chuck@countryaircheck.com

VP/Sales & Marketing
Mary Forest Findley
maryforest@countryaircheck.com

VP/Operations
Jeff Green
jeff@countryaircheck.com

Associate Editor
Erin Duvall
erin@countryaircheck.com

Associate Editor
Lauren Tingle
lauren@countryaircheck.com

Coordinator/Graphics & Admin.
Kelley Keith
kelley@countryaircheck.com

Coordinator/Graphic Design
Mike Page
mike@countryaircheck.com

Art Direction
Jerry Holthouse
Jerry@nashville.com

Special thanks to Joe Chambers and the Musicians Hall of Fame for the photographs.

© 2010 Country Aircheck. All rights reserved.

SO YOU WANT A BIG CHART RECORD...

WE CAN HELP!

SYNDICATION SERVICES, INC.

SINGLE LAUNCHES • NATIONAL RADIO MEDIA DAYS • SYNDICATION PLANNING & EXECUTION

CONTACT US TODAY

TIM P. RILEY • 615-646-7035 • TIMRILEYMUSIC@COMCAST.NET

ACM RADIO WINNERS

Robin Leach To Luke Bryan's Mom



ACM Small
Market Station

WGSQ/Cookeville, TN (tie)

NOT JUST ANY COMMUNITY

Standby flights, engine problems and Jimmy Wayne fans couldn't dampen the spirits of WGSQ PD Gator Harrison, who took home the Small Market Station trophy on behalf of his staff.

I thought the gambling wouldn't start until I got to Vegas, but it was [a gamble] the whole way there. My wife, God bless her, is world-famous for being late. My flight was scheduled at 8:20am and we got to the airport at 8am. The people at the ticket window wouldn't even let me try to make the plane. I flew standby the whole way, and while over New Mexico, the pilot says, "We're going to have to make an emergency landing for your safety. We're having engine problems." Cue a distinct awkward nervousness [throughout the cabin]. When we land in Albuquerque, this lady says, "Please be patient because right now we don't know anything." After another hour, we finally hit Vegas and I still had time to catch up with my friends and stay up until 3am.

A lot of country fans hover around the MGM elevators. I got off, and this guy comes up to me with a Sharpie and something to sign. I took it from him not even knowing why, and I started to sign my name. Then it dawned on me. "I'm not who you think I am," I told him. He said, "You mean you're not Jimmy Wayne?" I was with Jay Cruze and Brian Stewart, and they were just laughing. I didn't even realize we looked anything alike, but it happened all week long. So I made



Only Prettier: WGSQ PD Gator Harrison receives the Small Market ACM from Miranda Lambert.



Winners' Circle: Wearing his "I'm Not Jimmy Wayne" shirt, WGSQ PD Gator Harrison (l) hangs with Luke Bryan at the ACM Awards after-party.

an "I'm not Jimmy Wayne" t-shirt for the night of the Awards. By that point, every radio guy and record person I knew was calling me Jimmy. It became the running joke. I hope I represented him well.

Being Luke Bryan's first radio station visit, it was very special to see him win his first ACM. His mom sat in front of us and when he won, he hugged his mom and she cried. I don't think he cared about anyone in the room except his mom. He had his priorities straight.

The thing that sets us apart is that we don't have to be radio gypsies because we're all from here. Middayer Philip's first job in radio were these call letters. It's the same for Big Stew. Styckman is from Smithville, and this is where he calls home. This is not a community. It's our community. This isn't a station. It's our station. This isn't a job. This is our lives. We're blessed to share it on a national stage like the ACMs.

ACM Small
Market Station

WUSY/Chattanooga, TN (tie)

TEAM SPELLED 'USY



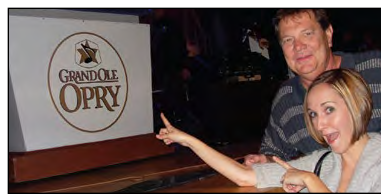
Country Lovin': While Jay Cruze may have gotten the cold shoulder from Robin Leach, Randy Houser (l), Trace Adkins (second from r) and Toby Keith (r) were much obliged to pose with him.

When Country Aircheck spoke with former OM/PD Jay Cruze following the ACM telecast and prior to his May 3 departure from the company, he attributed this award to his staff.

Our guys have really worked their butts off this year. They roll their sleeves up, and this is their baby. I've never seen anyone take more pride in their station than the people I get to go to work with every day.

I've never seen a radio station serve its community like US101 does. When we had flooding hit the area and people lost

Long Road To Nashville: PM drivers Dex and Mo hosted a night at the Grand Ole Opry with the Oak Ridge Boys, Trace Adkins and Montgomery Gentry.



their homes, we were sitting around and either Bear, Ken or Dex said, "Let's just get a couple of big rigs out in a grocery store parking lot and do a one-day drive." And I'm going, "We can't load up two rigs in one day." And he said, "Betcha \$100." Needless to say, I paid someone 100 bucks.

This was our first year doing our *Heart Strings For Hope* guitar pull for St. Jude Children's Hospital, but the 13th year doing the event. It raised \$41,000, which brought our overall total for St. Jude to \$317,000. Songwriter Kelley Lovelace hosted it with performers Mallery Hope, Luke Bryan, Randy Houser and Montgomery Gentry. Originally only Eddie Montgomery was going to be able to make it, but he got there and said, "I've got a surprise for ya, Troy's here, too."

Toby Keith and Randy Houser played at Keith's bar at Harrah's ACM weekend. After it's over, Houser is like, "Hey, man. Come here." He took me back in a little room and Toby, Joe Nichols and Trace Adkins are there. The highlight of the whole trip was when I saw this little dumpy guy sitting in the corner and I thought he looked familiar. Then I heard him talk, and it was Robin Leach from *Lifestyles Of The Rich And Famous*. I asked him for a picture and he said, "Work, work, work. No time for pictures." I just got dissed by Robin Leach; that's awesome!

ACM Medium
Market Station

KUZZ/Bakersfield (tie)

PALACE IN THE SUN

A three-time CMA Station of the Year recipient and previous ACM Station of the Year winner, KUZZ and PD Evan Bridwell show up big-time in Vegas and in their community.

Our promotions director, Jerry Hufford, who is an ACM board member, was one of the first guys Brad Paisley hugged when he won Male Vocalist. That was right after Paisley had fallen into the water during his performance.

We received our first ACM in 1999 before they had the designation for market size, and just one station was awarded Country Station of the Year. That's when the ACMs were in Los Angeles. During those years, there wasn't the hotel environment where you could really showcase, network and have different side events. Being in Vegas made it a more complete event. ACM week in Vegas is CRS on steroids. I don't know how you can possibly top Vegas.

The thing that most stations don't have is an incredible venue across the parking lot that we have here with the award-winning Crystal Palace. We are able to own all of these country music acts in the minds of our listeners. The perception is that we are putting on all these shows, even though in reality we had nothing to do with some of them.

KUZZ Cares For Kids At Christmas is an event where listeners can nominate families who may not normally speak up for themselves. Then we invite people to call and adopt that family. We put



Two-Timers: The KUZZ staff accepts the station's second ACM Station of the Year honor. Pictured (l-r) are GM Mel Owens, Miranda Lambert, MD Toni Marie, PD Evan Bridwell and ACM Pres. Bill Mayne.

everyone together for a big breakfast at the Crystal Palace hosted by our morning team, and they get to know each other and exchange gifts. This year we had 75 families. Talk about a feel-good event!

On that note, because of our success in the past with the *Country Cares* Dream Home, we're going to be giving away two homes this year. According to the St. Jude folks, this is the first time that's ever been done anywhere.

ACM RADIO WINNERS

**ACM Medium
Market Station**

KIZN/Boise (tie)

WE ARE FAMILY

OM Rich Summers may have accepted the trophy, but he went to Vegas with the people who made it happen on his mind.

This was earned with a good effort by the whole staff – a staff dedicated to doing good radio, caring about the listeners and the local community. Everyone has, at one time or another, done mornings, so they can all handle an artist interview. We have an open hotline policy, so when artists come through we give them the number and will put them on the air anytime they call.

The disabled veterans of Canyon County needed a new van for transport to doctor's appointments, so we reached out to Toby Keith and Trace Adkins to cut a series of PSAs. The veterans got their van. We also raised money for families with our annual *Keep Kids Warm* campaign, which helps those who might be asking, "Do we pay the gas bill or buy presents for kids?"

I was amazed how heavy that trophy was. When Miranda Lambert handed me the award, I had my arm around her and I

Van Hailin': Pictured (l-r) are night jock "Hot" Rod Thompson, AM driver Kevin Mee, WFW Post 63 Commander Don Ladin, PD Rich Summers and promotions assistant Brandy Horsley.

asked if I had to let go. Blake Shelton said, 'Yes.'

It's really cool to see artists you met early in their careers at the ACMs. Luke Bryan came on a raft trip during his first radio tour, and that night we had a BBQ in my backyard where he played guitar and sang. To see him win Top New Artist this year was great. He saw me in the audience and I congratulated him as he congratulated me. It was a pretty cool moment.

We tied with KUZZ/Bakersfield for the award, and someone asked if it bothered me. Absolutely not! I actually spent eight months at KNIX/Phoenix when the late Buck Owens owned the station. I brought a lot of what I learned under Larry Daniels to Boise. I think it's kind of a nice legacy to Owens, the format and to good radio that KUZZ won and somebody who had worked for Buck shared the award. I think he would be proud.



**ACM Large
Market Station**

WQDR/Raleigh

HEART AND SOUL



This honor was not only the first ACM for WQDR, it was the first major award the station has ever won. PD Lisa McKay took the entire airstaff with her except for those who couldn't make the trip to Vegas.

The MGM Grand was full of artists. I don't know if they all were staying there or just hanging out in the casino, but you couldn't swing a proverbial dead cat without hittin' one of them. Everybody stopped to give autographs or take pictures.

My biggest highlight was when we actually got the award – a wonderful gathering of super-

talented radio people, food, drink and good company. Our morning show went right up to Miranda and put her on the radio – we're pretty much shameless!

A lot of our imaging, some live breaks and our TV commercial have our ACM award built into them. Our ACM entry is also on our website so people can listen to it. We're thanking our listeners the whole time for helping us win. If you listen to that aircheck, it's mostly them.

We've been nominated many times, so I was grateful and ecstatic to be able to win it and bring my whole staff because it really is a team effort. We give our heart and soul on the radio every day. We're live and local, put personality into every break and contest, and do a lot of things for our listeners who have come upon hard times.

When you give people ownership of their job and are their biggest cheerleader and fan, you'd be surprised the things people will do because everybody wants to win.

**ACM Major
Market Station**

KMPS/Seattle (tie)

AFFIRMING COMMUNITY SERVICE

Like many industry folks, PD Becky Brenner admits she may have come home from Las Vegas with her pockets a bit lighter, but she did return with a much bigger prize: the station's first ACM honor.

Luke Bryan's mom was in our row. It was fun to watch him win, but then to be able to double the experience by having his mom there, and to see the kind of pride and emotion that she had for him made it so much better. She was crying and shaking, and every time Luke would come walking back to talk with her, she would start crying again. It was just fantastic.

Reba's performance of "I Keep On Lovin' You" was great to see. We hear so much negativity about marriage, Hollywood couples and how tough it is to stay together in the entertainment industry. Showing pictures of all the longtime, successful married couples was so endearing and heartwarming. It just said, "Hey, there is hope for relationships, people." I'd love to see that song win Song or Single of the Year.

Modern-Day Saints: "We love our St. Jude radiothon," says KMPS PD Becky Brenner. "We've been doing it for about 20 years." Along with volunteers and St. Jude staffers, here's nearly the entire air staff including Tony Thomas, Brenner, Flo, Big Daddy and Stephen Gilbreath and Promotions Coordinator Alexandria English. KMPS has raised more than \$6 million for St. Jude.



Here at KMPS, the key is finding the people who are in it for the right reasons. We're very thankful to have a 100,000-watt station that allows us to get out there and help all the communities we serve. Everybody on the staff is so giving of their time and their talent, and we're very blessed to be able to do that because we work in radio. Personally, that's why I got into it. The power of radio to impact people's lives is amazing. And when you cover all of western Washington, there's a lot of need out there. All of the community service work we do is just an affirmation of the power of that.

**ACM Major
Market Station**

KSCS/Dallas (tie)

TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT

KSCS/Dallas won its first ACM Major Market Station of the Year honor this spring. It was PD Chris Huff's first visit to Sin City.

Las Vegas is sensory overload! When you think how much money was spent in this city to accommodate the construction of these colossal resorts, it starts to boggle the mind.

Miranda Lambert presenting the award was special because she's been such a great friend to KSCS. Miranda's a Texas girl, and grew up just down the road. I give her a hard



time whenever she comes through because she knows I've got one of the first albums she put out – a homemade CD she and her mom sold out of their trunk as they drove across the state.

In '09, Pat Green wanted to be in his hometown for the release of his new CD. We thought, "Let's do something more special" than the usual interview or in-store appearance. So Pat came out to a horseracing track for a "drive-by" CD signing, leaning in, taking

pictures and signing autographs for everyone in the car. We had a line *two miles* long. Nobody had ever done anything like this before, and it showed the power

of combining an artist, a radio station and the listeners. That was a very magical day.

Winning this award speaks to how much we enjoy trying to find ways to engage our audience, and to be recognized for that is certainly a high honor. There's no way to narrow down to words the amazing display of veteran talents at KSCS, and we couldn't do any of this if it weren't for our listeners.

Poster Chillin': In conjunction with a Toby Keith/Trace Adkins concert, KSCS created a "Tanks For Your Support" poster for U.S. troops, signed by countless fans. Here's former PD Crash Poteet with staff from the USO, which took the poster overseas to present to soldiers.

ACM RADIO WINNERS

**ACM Medium
Market Personality**

Buzz Jackson, KIIM/Tucson

JACKSON'S WHOLE



Be Careful What You Wish For: An area postmaster proves to Buzz Jackson mailing a pumpkin is possible.

PD/PM driver Buzz Jackson discusses taking home his first ACM Award, his Vegas vacation, an ongoing commitment to the community and, yes, properly posted squash.

My wife and I had the second-worst seats in the theater for the premiere of Kenny Chesney's *Summer In 3D* during ACM weekend in Vegas. KSOP/Salt Lake City's Deb Turpin had the worst. I'm not sure how we rated better than Deb, but it was nice to chat with her for a moment. We just watched people come into the theater: Morgan Freeman, Matthew McConaughey, Tim McGraw, Faith Hill, Reba, Dierks Bentley. Then Kenny came out to talk about it for a second. They had a good seat for him. The movie was really good, though. Before I saw it, I didn't know why he was the superstar that he is, but the movie kind of made it so I get it now.

Every year for the past five or six we've been the radio sponsor for the Susan G. Komen Race For The Cure. At the event, I start the one-mile and the morning show starts the 5k. My

wife's family has had two cases of breast cancer in the last couple of years, and my mom had a scare a couple of years ago. If you can give a couple hours of time to a great cause, there's nothing but reward that comes out of that.

Tucson is about a third Hispanic, so over the years we've recognized that to do well overall you need to do well with the Hispanic community. We've always known the lyrics and the music are really compatible with the Hispanic lifestyle, and it's the same hardworking people. We thought if we could get in front of these people more often, then we could get them to listen to the station. The Mariachi Festival in Tucson has gone on for years, but last year was our first involved with it. I went up onstage and alternated with a Mexican station introducing Mariachi groups.

I've had several of those stupid ideas where you think to yourself, "Is it possible to mail somebody a pumpkin?" In early October I speculated about it a couple days in a row on the air. Sure enough, a week later I had a pumpkin that came from the postmaster in a little town north of here. It turns out you can mail a pumpkin just by writing the address and putting the postage on it. It's completely legal.



Indian Giver: Miranda Lambert presents Buzz Jackson with his award, only to have it taken right back! "They aren't engraved yet; I should get it in a few weeks," he clarifies.

**ACM Small
Market Personality**

**Jess Wright,
WFRE/Frederick, MD**

BRINGING "THE GIRLS" TO WORK

A first-time nominee, let alone winner, Jess Wright identifies with Miranda Lambert when she isn't making her staff sort of uncomfortable.

I had two non-industry friends with me, so I got to see our sort of insider stuff from their perspective. They were do-eyed the entire time, and that made it even more fun for me. We went to Toby Keith's I Love This Bar & Grill, and they got to meet Joe Nichols in the VIP room. I said, "Look at you! You're somebody!" They met everyone I came in contact with, but I don't remember who all that was.

The entire weekend, I was thinking, "I can't believe I do this for a living." Sitting at the Awards was surreal. I sat next to Natalie Hemby, who wrote Miranda Lambert's "White Liar" and her husband Mike Wrucke, who produced *Revolution* with Frank Liddell. I actually had to get up to let him accept his ACM during the show. Then Brad Paisley walked passed me as he was going to the back to fall into the pool. I was thinking, "Really? This is my job?"



Three's Company: Miranda Lambert (l) and ACM board President Bill Mayne present Jess Wright her ACM Award.



Over The Hill: WFRE listeners sort through the mountain of bras collected during last year's Bras For The Cause.

I wish I knew [what the ACM saw in my entry] because I don't feel like I do anything more than anybody else in this business. I never thought anyone would even look at it, listen to it, or if they did, that they would be impressed. You always hear, "Well, you never get nominated the first time you submit an entry." And when I did, I heard, "Well, you picked a tough year to get nominated because there is so much talent in that category." Because it was the first time I entered, I kind of felt like Miranda when she walked up to the podium and said, "Are you kidding me?"

As radio people, we have power and reach to do good, and I don't know why you wouldn't use it for that. In 2008 we raised \$4,000 during our first Bras For The Cause for breast cancer awareness, as our sponsor pledged to donate \$1 per bra we received. I don't think our client realized when we do something, we do it big. We had bags of bras all over the studio, and I actually hung some up around the studio, thinking it would be fun to get a reaction out of the guys. They talked about it on the air, and it was hysterically funny. They said, "I'm a little uncomfortable at work right now." Our second year we got another sponsor, and we made it even bigger with a Joey+Rory concert and events all day long with listeners counting the bras. My motto is, "If you have the ability, why not?"

**GWEN
SEBASTIAN**
V.I.P.

The 6 Song EP Release
ON YOUR DESK NOW!

Featuring current hit single
VIP (Barefoot Girl)



ACM RADIO WINNERS

**ACM Large Market
On-Air Personality**

**Gerry House, Mike Bohan, Al Voecks,
Duncan Stewart, Richard Falklen; WSIX/Nashville**

EIGHT IS NEVER ENOUGH

"The House Foundation" needs its own hutch to hold all its ACM trophies – now eight strong. With accolades well-documented on these pages, 2010 Country Music DJ Hall of Fame inductee



True Confez-ons: House Foundation co-host Mike Bohan (l), Taylor Swift and Gerry House ham it up in a Film House TV commercial featuring the singer in the "early days" after her first hit song.

Gerry House shared a bit about serving as a ghost-writer for this year's ACM festivities, losing his longtime newsmen Al Voecks and sports guy Duncan Stewart, and a project or two he has in mind.

I'm thrilled to win this award; winning is the good side of the door to be on. I wasn't able to attend this year, but did write for the show. Reba was fabulous, as always. I thought she and Cher would come out together, and I'd have them introduced as "Cher And Cher Alike," but that didn't happen. Usually they pick the good jokes. I blurted out on the air here the joke about Rascal Flatts'

"Unstoppable" being a tribute to Toyota, and that went into the show. I also had one about wearing rubber boots to the craps table, but that didn't make the cut. I just send jokes to Reba because we're friends. A lot of times I've written the transitional stuff. It's not really comedy, it's just the way Reba talks. I know pretty well how she'd say things, but she's funny in her own right.

The tough part about Al and Duncan was all the time we knew they were leaving, but we still stayed on the air together. We were all like a well-oiled machine – for 25 years everybody had their own role and pre-established characters. But I know why things happen and the way they are. I have no beef with management at all, but it's been difficult.

I took the Country Music Hall of Fame tour the other day with the guys who run it. They'd show me something and I'd say, "This reminds me of a story" – funny stuff I knew about people [as a songwriter and in the music business] apart from radio, as I've worked with Minnie Pearl, Chet Atkins and many others. After about 10 stories, they said, "Why don't you write all this down?" It'd be a different kind of book. And I've written a bunch of songs for a musical, and have the story. I just need to find time to sit down and do it all. So I'll write a little bit, do radio for awhile and see what happens.



Hands-Some Men: In another TV cameo with Mike Bohan and Gerry House, Ronnie Milsap said, "Count me down, boys!" As the cameraperson said, "3-2-1," Milsap gave the duo an unexpected, big-time goose, shown here. "He got us royally," admits House. "We've pulled that on several people since then."

**ACM Major Market
On-Air Personality**

Ben Campbell, Matt McAllister; KNIX/Phoenix

LOVED BY ROBIN LEACH; GREAT AT KEEPING SECRETS

Ben Campbell and Matt McAllister have only been together a little more than two years, but their immediate chemistry has already earned the hardworking, charity-minded duo their first ACM Award.

MM: We got to the ACMs last-minute, and they didn't have tickets for us. They said, "Hey, we mailed your tickets to you," but nobody ever told us. By happenstance, the ticketing lady grew up across the street from our GSM Michael Goldberg and said, "Here you go," and gave us even better seats! But she also said that we weren't supposed to tell anybody that.

BC: We're in Toby Keith's I Love This Bar & Grill, and Robin Leach from *Lifestyles Of The Rich And Famous* walks by. I said to him, "I'm your biggest fan. [Breaking into a perfect R.L. impression], "I want to do my Robin Leach impression to you ... I used to watch your show all the time." He could not have been any *less* friendly. He looked at me like, "I want you to die and leave me alone right now."



Hard Hat And A Hammer: "Charity is what Country is about, and we love that," says Ben Campbell (l). Here are Ben & Matt getting ready to help build a house during a broadcast for Habitat for Humanity while recognizing Women Work Day and Breast Cancer Awareness.



Yes, We Can: Ben & Matt spend most afternoons in November traveling the Valley collecting cans from and thanking area schools and businesses participating in the annual Ben & Matt's Million Can Crusade. In 2009, they collected more than 1.3 million cans of food for area food banks.

MM: So, I said to Robin, "Hey, I'm pretty good friends with your son Greg." Again, it was the death stare of "I don't care. Get away from me."

BC: At the Awards, when you go out to the bathroom, you have to wait in the corridor to get back in. Darius Rucker came up out of the blue and said, "Hey, man, congratulations on your award. That's really cool." For him to do that was *really* cool.

MM: We got to spend time with Joe Nichols, who's one of our favorites. And I bought a glass of wine for Crystal from Trailer Choir, which I want mentioned because at the ACMs it cost \$16 a glass. I really want her to know that she owes me one. At a normal bar, she owes me five drinks!

BC: Where will I keep the award? I have a little shelf space in my living room ... what am I *talking* about? I actually have way too *much* shelf space.

MM: Our producer Joe Wallace deserves all the credit in the world. He's the backbone, and to be honest, I probably wouldn't have taken this job unless he was here. I can't say enough about producers in radio. Having been one, I know a good producer is really the difference-maker in a great morning show.

**ACM National
On-Air Personality**

Cody Alan, CMT Radio Live

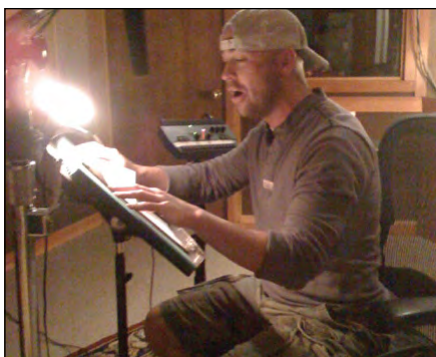
COMMANDER CODY & HIS LOTS OF AIRTIME

When then 23-year-old Cody Alan took a job at KPLX/Dallas, he was already an eight-year radio vet. He jumped from that legendary station to serve as OM/PD/PM driver for KEGA/Salt Lake City, and is now following his dreams with CMT Radio and TV.

I knew exactly what I wanted to be when I was 10 – to be in broadcasting. I even practiced in front of my mom and dad with a Mr. Microphone. It would broadcast right into the FM receiver and I could hear my voice come through the speakers. The range was 25 feet, so I would poke the wire through the window screen in my room and air to the front yard from my parents' car.

At 15, I worked at a pop station for awhile until it went Country. That's when I first started listening to country and, after about a week, loved it. I figured out if I could take a little of that Top 40 style and integrate it into the Country format, that would be a great place to be. To

Sound On: Cody Alan records pre-CMT Music Awards voiceovers in a CMT audio booth in preparation for the telecast.

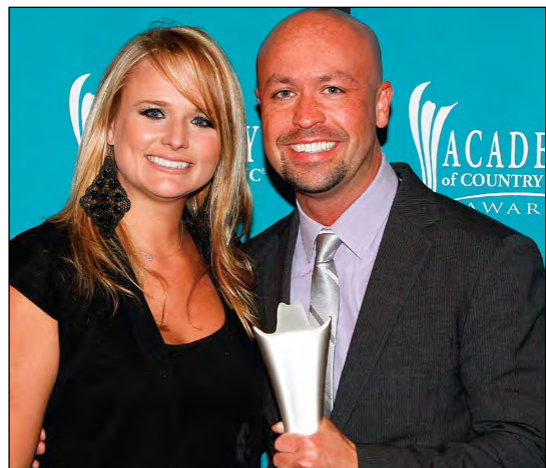


now be at CMT is like all my favorite things in one place.

When I voiced the *CMT Music Awards*, they isolated me. I sat in a brick room that had curtains all around it, a microphone, a Southern Bell telephone from 1981 and a little light over an easel with the script. We had pre-taped the opening sequence, and it was at that moment I thought, "Is this really happening?" I sat there knowing this was being broadcast across the country and that America was watching and hearing my voice. It's something I always dreamed of happening. To have all that collide, in that small room all alone, made me tear up.

The best part of winning the ACM was actually having a decent seat for the show for the first time ever. I've been a few times and had really good seats, but there's nothing like being no more than five rows behind the stars. I could've spit and hit Tim McGraw's hat. And it was so cool to watch all the magic happen. I love media – TV, radio, the web – so to see the angles, cameras, lights and TelePrompTer was all magic to me.

We only had a couple of tickets down there, so I kept walking up to my family. One by one they came down and sat with me. My wife came down for a couple of segments, as did my producer Dingo and my eight-year-old son.



10-4: Columbia's Miranda Lambert presents Cody Alan with his ACM at a private ceremony in Vegas the night before the awards show.

CAC

ACM WEEK WITH... LUKE BRYAN

Being the five-year-old new artist is really okay with me,” **Luke Bryan** says. It’s Saturday, the day before the *45th Annual ACM Awards*, and he’s making the rounds at the Westwood One radio remotes at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. Bryan has a full schedule, a career milestone moment and his first major awards show performance in front of him, but he’s not quite the wide-eyed freshman.

“I keep telling people I’ll be a new artist as long as they’ll have me. The past few years have been a slow ride, but if it had taken 10 to get to this point it would have been worth it. The fans have kept me going.”

Bryan’s riding the crest of his first No. 1, “Do I,” which peaked more than two years after his debut single “All My Friends Say” reached the top 5. Remaining eligible in the new artist categories (he was nominated in 2008) may have given him a leg up in the two-year-old fan-voted format. His viral “Don’t Vote For Luke Bryan” video campaign was a huge hit, propelling his win in the Top New Solo Vocalist category and making him one of three finalists for Top New Artist.

“That’s been fun, and it’s amazing to have some of the stars on there,” Bryan says, noting the concept came from his label. The riotously funny leotard shot was also not his idea. “I didn’t know Capitol was going to do that. That was shot for a Lady A video for CRS. I guess I’ll be talking about that for awhile. That’s okay, I’ve been answering ‘Good Directions’ questions for five years. And I like to talk.”

Across several interviews for this story, Bryan projects cheerfulness over introspection. “A lot of artists try to be overly serious,” he says. “But for me, it’s entertainment. I like putting smiles on peoples’ faces.” But he does turn reflective discussing the career import his ACM performance slot holds. “I’ll be a little amped up, but it feels right,” he says. “This is the next step. If you want to be a superstar you have to do these national TV performances, so I’m ready.”

Pants On The Ground: Rehearsals started Thursday before Bryan jetted to Arizona for a Friday night performance at Country Thunder (see photo). Saturday is heavy with radio and media prior to his performance at the Fremont Street Experience that night. In between, he makes time for hometown family and friends. “About 20 people from Leesburg [GA] flew in,” Bryan explains. “We said a prayer at the table and said a toast for this moment.” Speaking in the media room after his win, he jokes about how his hometown connections keep him grounded. “I’m sure I’ve got some buddies at home going, ‘What the hell kind of pants has Luke got on right there?’”

And speaking of grounded, Bryan sees his only downtime of the week Sunday morning, and puts it to good use. “My wife Caroline and I had two hours today in the hotel,” he says. “That’s the first time we had nothing to do. We just sat there, talked, played video games on our phones and watched *The Wedding Singer* ... in our underwear.”

Quiet soon gave way to mayhem, however. And it started when he and Caroline stepped onto the Orange Carpet. “A few years back, you get out of the car and nobody says anything,” he says. “Now you get out and it’s kinda like, ‘Hey, I get some shouts!’”

Backstage, the mood is ebullient as awards are handed out that will have journalists writing about a sea-change in the format. Lady Antebellum is about to go onstage for their performance as Bryan accepts his award. “You should have seen the victory dance behind the wall as we were about to perform,” Hillary Scott tells the press corps.



Male Bonding: At left, country young guns backstage: Dierks Bentley, Bryan, Charles Kelley and Jason Aldean.

Do I Duet? Luke Bryan sings “Do I” with Lady Antebellum’s Hillary Scott at the ACM All Star Jam (below).

Pool Me Once: At bottom, Lady Antebellum’s Charles Kelley (l) and Luke Bryan (r) celebrate their ACM wins by tossing Capitol chief Mike Dungan into the MGM Grand pool.



A LOT OF ARTISTS TRY
TO BE OVERLY SERIOUS.
BUT FOR ME, IT’S
ENTERTAINMENT.
I LIKE PUTTING SMILES
ON PEOPLES’ FACES

“It’s amazing to watch the progression of the young artists having their day in the sun this weekend,” Bryan says. “It’s such a non-competitive feeling back there. You wouldn’t even know we were country singers. We’re all buddies that sing and we’re all pulling for one another. We’re hitting it on the road hard and run into each other so much at different shows, so it’s fun having a close connection with everybody. That’s the feeling I was getting from Miranda and Lady A, and the feeling was mutual from me. I was jumping up and down at every award that was being called out. It was really an amazing night back there.”

Long Strange Drip: And the fun was just getting started. “All I know is, I’m at the party and hear a big splash,” Luke says of the now notorious Capitol pool party. “Charles [Kelley], in high celebratory fashion, had jumped in the pool. And then there were whispers that he was going to throw me in, too. He comes over and grabs me. I could tell I was going to end up in there, so at some point I quit trying to resist. And then, honestly, it was [Capitol Pres./CEO Mike] Dungan’s turn. We may have started a tradition. Dierks [Bentley] was really influential in getting people in the pool, but he was like, ‘Guys, I’m not a winner. We only throw in winners.’”

Lady A asked Bryan to join them onstage at the ACM All Star Jam, and the next time we hear from him, it’s via Twitter: “OK everyone it’s 6 o’clock in Vegas and I’m going to bed. Thanks for making this the best night of my life. Truly incredible. Love y’all.”

“It was actually 6:10,” Bryan admits, “but I rounded down.”

And about those intervening hours? “It was a pretty crazy night,” he admits. “We went out with some buddies and had a great time. Caroline is pregnant, but she trusts me with my buddies, so she said, ‘Go out and make the most of it.’” He did. And if past performance is any indication of future success ... he will. **CAC**

BIGGER PICTURE

Wide-Angle Artistry

They're the company behind the Zac Brown Band phenomenon. They helped establish Gloriana. They've worked recent music from Uncle Kracker, Alan Jackson, Tim McGraw and Martina McBride. And yet **Bigger Picture** remains largely a mystery. No company in recent country music history has accomplished so much, so quickly with so little fanfare. That may partly be by design, but it's also the product of a furiously fast and, in a sense false, start.

The genesis, of course, was Live Nation and its universe-altering plan to enter into multiple-rights deals with top artists – Madonna, U2 and Jay-Z among them. Helming Live Nation Recordings was Canadian-born producer **Bob Ezrin** (Alice Cooper, Kiss, Pink Floyd), aided by GM **Bill Hein** and sales and marketing guru **Bob Cahill**.

Desiring a Nashville connection, Ezrin was in talks with acclaimed producer and songwriter **Keith Stegall** (Alan Jackson) and his partner in publishing and production company Big Picture Entertainment, **Alan Kates**. Stegall, meanwhile, was producing a regionally successful Georgia group, the Zac Brown Band, who became the first new artist signed to Live Nation. Stegall and Kates called **Michael Powers**, who in turn brought in **Jeff Solima**, to secure radio promotion.

In May 2008, ZBB's "Chicken Fried" was delivered to Country radio. By July, Live Nation was backing out of its plans to be a music company, but BPE had already spawned Bigger Picture Promotions, the single was moving at radio, Atlantic was angling for a deal with Zac and the former Live Nation team was deciding just how strongly they believed in their model. The Bigger Picture Group partnership was cemented in January 2009 and since then, the company has added **Dale Manning's** Idea Den web marketing firm and continues to work with **Rob Dalton** and the New Revolution promotion staff in a strategic partnership. **Country Aircheck** spoke with the Bigger Picture team at their office in Nashville's Berry Hill to get the full story on their tumultuous start, their unique and varied relationships with artists and their still-somewhat-mysterious plans to bring more artists into the fold.

How fast did you decide to move forward?

Michael Powers: Jeff and I were told to start our own company and that when everything was in order we'd all join together. So we opened Bigger Picture Promotion to work Zac Brown Band, and immediately Stroudavarious and several other clients came to us. It was a blessing and it enabled us to go build a powerful staff.

Keith Stegall: BPP was a piece of what it would eventually be. They were already doing it while we were trying to figure out what was going to happen.

Jeff Solima: For a year-and-a-half before all of this I had been calling Michael and telling him to come out of retirement so we could put a company together. The last time he said, "Funny you called."

You got a lot of great promotion people from other major labels. Didn't they originally come in because they thought they were joining Live Nation?

Powers: Keith and Alan asked me to get on the horn with the Live Nation guys. I proposed a budget, they approved it. We met for breakfast a week later and, yes, with all good intentions we were moving forward as Live Nation. When that blew up, we were already ass-deep in the creek. People were coming and the record was blowing up and we said, "Who cares? Let's do it ourselves. Live Nation or no Live Nation."

Take me through this decision, Bill.

Bill Hein: In July 2008 Live Nation decided they didn't need my services. That office was shut down very rapidly. I had barely unpacked in Miami. Frankly, after meeting Alan, Keith, working with Michael and seeing the whole Zac Brown thing, I thought, rather impulsively, I'd rather be in Nashville so I'm just going to move there. Let's just do the business plan we have without Live Nation. People are surprised I just picked up and moved here. Alan and Keith certainly had a surprise when I walked in their office and said, "You have a desk for me?"

And for the Bobs ... what were your decisions like in coming to Nashville from Live Nation?

Bob Cahill: Zac was proof point. I'm a guy who loves a good data point and everything I'd seen said this model did work in a fluid marketplace. So there was never any doubt in my mind I wanted to be involved. The moving process wasn't quite as impulsive as Bill's. I commuted back and forth quite a bit. The decision was instant, the execution took a little bit longer.

Bob Ezrin: We rented a place in January last year. We've now bought some land and are building a house. My wife and I absolutely love Nashville. It's the greatest music community on earth. I don't know what took me so long.

Where does the funding come from?

(All assembled start pulling out wallets and putting them on the table.)

Alan Kates: Keith had made a serious commitment to Zac, and vice versa. They believed in each other. We made serious commitments to Bob and Bill and Bob. We'd brought Michael and Jeff into our world. Peoples' lives were on the line.

Powers: We were all out there.

Stegall: But we had a hit record and a hit artist that was exploding.

Ezrin: The idea was to partner with Alan and Keith to have a country presence and carry forward that concept of partnering with artists and their careers in a holistic fashion. Zac just happened to be the first. And what a great way to start.



Bob Ezrin

Where does Atlantic enter the picture with Zac?

Stegall: "Chicken Fried" was around No. 15 and I got a call one afternoon from a consultant with Atlantic who had talked to Zac. And Zac told him to call me. I was asked to take a meeting in New York with [Atlantic co-chair] Craig Kallman. I brought [Kates] with me and within two or three hours figured out a way to do business together.

Powers: And once that deal was done, Atlantic is back in the country music business, so we worked out a deal to be their promotion team in Nashville on behalf of Zac. And we have to thank Bernie Cahill [no relation] and the team at Roar Management for being adamant about keeping us on the team as Zac migrated to Atlantic. But what if there was more? Uncle Kracker, Jesse Lee, all kinds of things came out of that. Carrying their flag gave us call backs and muscle instead of just being some new guy in a little house in Berry Hill.

If you felt so strongly about Zac and the team, why bring in a partner?

Kates: On some levels it wasn't just our decision. We're happy to be partners, but Zac owns his music and brand. So it was a collective decision of which Zac was the most important part.

Stegall: There were already ongoing conversations. They were courting him.

Ezrin: A number of major labels were going after Zac and Live Nation was actually the last to talk to him. He walked away from those deals for Live Nation, but when things started to fall apart and he was already making a name for himself, there was kind of a mad scramble to fill in the blanks. Atlantic made an offer he couldn't refuse. All of us are still part of Team Zac. It was the best of all possible worlds. We have the extra muscle of a major label and everybody has stayed friends and collaborators.

In addition to Atlantic, getting established major label regionals also made a statement.

Solima: We weren't in a situation where we could train anybody, either. We needed professionals in a very tough environment to work an artist that wasn't easy. We didn't have time for a learning curve. Everyone at this table worked for free and made sure our people were paid.

Now that Warner Music Nashville has ramped up, will the relationship with Bigger Picture and Zac Brown change?



Howdy Partners: Bill Hein, Dale Manning, Keith Stegall, Jeff Solima, Bob Cahill, Michael Powers and Alan Kates (l-r).

Powers: It already is changing. Jeff and I and Rob Dalton at New Revolution had been working with Emblem, which is Matt and Dean Serletic and Gloriana. They cut a deal with Warner Bros. and we remained on that team. Now you’ve got John Esposito coming in and my good friend Chris Stacey. We can kind of carry that flag, too. We’re on that team and proud to be.

Hein: We did our distribution deal with John Esposito, so we have a great relationship. It’s wonderful that he came to Nashville because it put our friend at Warner’s that much closer.

You seem to have a unique relationship with each artist you work with. For Zac, it’s one thing. For Tim McGraw, something else. And different again for the Harters or Christian Kane. What is the menu?

Ezrin: We do basically everything under our roof with the exception of concert promotion. We have publishing, management, web services, digital marketing, sales and marketing, the best radio promotion in town and production. It’s a unique thing. You’ve got producers who have made a few records in our careers and know how that’s done. We’re also developing some young producers to work with under our direction, so we can keep production as the spark that starts off a relationship, then matriculate them up into the rest of the company and launch their career. In those projects, we actually become partners.

We also realized we can function a little bit like a merchant bank. We can provide some of these services separately to important, quality artists and projects. It helps them get to know us on one level, and they may be available when it’s time to evaluate their relationships and the way they’re running their career. We’re also starting to have some conversations with artists about taking care of their business on multiple levels. A combination package. That would be the third leg of the stool.

What’s the pitch to artists?

Cahill: One single agenda. It’s really that simple. In a normal pie there are a lot of little pieces carved out. Those agendas very rarely match up. In our case, it’s all about making the pie bigger. It doesn’t matter which area grows at what rate at what time. There’s only, “Are the Harters bigger this month than they were last month?”

Powers: Also, when we want to have a talk with our artists, we call a meeting like this. We sit around this table and management, publishing and producer are all there. They’re the same guys. And they’re also the record guys.

Cahill: Say we want to prime the pump and give away 100,000 tracks. We don’t have to go ask permission from the publishers. Just do it. We’re fluid because the marketplace is fluid. A publisher doesn’t want to give up its 9.5 cents in order to sell a t-shirt. We just want to sell something and make the artist bigger.

Kates: It’s not a pitch, it’s a philosophy. There are those who will embrace it and those who won’t.

Stegall: We empower the artists to be partners with us. Not to be our minions and slaves until they become famous, turn on us and bite us. All we’re doing is helping people who are smart enough to have figured out how to get where they’re trying to go using the old pieces of the model

that still are a part of the business.

Ezrin: We’ve modeled it, and the artist gets more of the pie. They end up with a bigger piece than when they parse out their rights to a bunch of different people. And the pie itself gets bigger when you have control over all of this stuff. You get one hand to hold or one throat to choke depending upon how you’re feeling and, with our WEA distribution, you have the power of a major label in the back room.

What is the relationship with other promotion teams when you take on a major label client?

Solima: Rob Dalton and I started this a long time ago with New Revolution. This is a model built on learning from a lot of mistakes on that end. So, we didn’t come into this blindly. Part of the success is based on getting a No. 1 record at Midas with Emerson Drive.

Powers: Adrian Michaels is an absolute brother and a partner. So to work alongside him, Redlight and Coran Capshaw on behalf of his biggest artist has us all pulling together. As long as we are respectful of Curb and that Adrian is running the show, we are an aid, an extra ninja, an extra breeze in the sail. We weren’t going to be fighting anybody. That doesn’t help Tim McGraw at all, and that relationship would have lasted about five minutes.

Do you foresee a time in the near future where a superstar act might leave their label and bring their recording business to you?

Powers: It seems the absolutely logical next step. (extended pause)

Solima: We’re counting on it. (laughs)

Anyone you’d like to announce?

All: No!

What is the arrangement with New Revolution?

Solima: We want the best players on the field, and by bringing these companies together we’ll get the best regionals available.

Powers: We have already utilized each other’s staffs. One of the magical moments with Zac Brown was when we got Dave Kirth and Tony Morreale involved from New Rev. We put everybody into the stove to get it hot enough. Everybody who knew how to work a record was beating the street. It worked. We liked having a double-down option.

Dalton: We saw that this could work in another level kind of way, being able to pick from a large group of promotion people who have different relationships.

Powers: Sometimes sharing each other’s promotion staffs helps us make sure we have the right people in the right places at radio, and that helps our artists.

What else do you have on the horizon?

Solima: New Revolution will be coming out with the new Bomshel. It’s on Curb, but it will only be our promotion staff working it. We’ll have a series of [similar] partnerships with major labels.

So you’re not a supplement to a label’s promotion efforts, you’re it. That’s never been done.

Solima: The biggest problem a record label has is that they can’t get enough product into the system. As you know, we used to get four singles per year [on the charts]. Now we get two.

What is the digital services component?

Dale Manning: Idea Den has been around for eight years, and my focus was on Christian music. I have most of the top acts from Nashville’s other music industry – from Casting Crowns and Third Day to Switchfoot. Taking a very like-minded business and adding it as a kind of missing piece of the pie was a can’t-miss situation. When you’re sitting with the artist, being able to determine the visuals and how to pull it through online is a perfect match to what promotion, sales and marketing are doing. From photography to packaging to building the website and running the social networks, we fill in the picture. We’re largely in music, but we also have Bill Frist, Mandy Moore, TV shows and athletes as clients.

Where does the business model go from here? Do you want to grow BPG Records?

Ezrin: We’re very high on country, we also believe strongly in Christian. We also know in the world of rock and pop there are some very interesting opportunities. They’re all just other ways of proving out the model.

Hein: You referenced Bigger Picture Records. There’s no such thing. We use the names Bigger Picture and Bigger Picture Group as the brand. We don’t add “records” to it because that kind of suggests label. We go out of our way not to think like a label. We’re probably closer to an artist manager where they’re looking at the whole career. If you call it “records” you’re taking a narrower view.

You all were part of the old model in various ways, but it’s interesting that you’re getting rid of some of that thinking.

Cahill: It’s really about paying attention and knowing what’s broken and what’s not. Radio is still central. Why? It still works. A lot of other things do not anymore. In a changing marketplace, it’s about being adaptive, figuring out what still works and applying that. Newcomers usually come in and throw it all out and say, “It’s all f---ed.” Well, that’s not true.

Hein: We sat down with a blank piece of paper two years ago. We designed a company from scratch; there was no legacy entity we needed to re-engineer. The idea was never to build a record label for the 21st century.

Powers: Jeff and I have been doing promotion our whole careers, but here I also get to sit in and talk about creative ways to do merchandise or grow in other aspects. We’re all getting to be a part of that bigger vision.

CAC



COUNTRY'S TOP

RATINGS & REVENUE

COMPANIES

Seventeen companies made \$10 million or more from their Country outlets in 2009, one fewer than in 2008. Clear Channel is far and away the leader, producing close to \$300 million in Country revenues. With an audience of more than 13 million consumers, Clear Channel also is No. 1 in listeners, attracting more than twice as many as its nearest challenger, CBS Radio.

Country Aircheck’s overview of Country’s top revenue and audience companies features year-to-year trends in both categories, plus ratings comparisons from Fall ’08 to Fall ’09 for every Country station owned by the top operators. The rankings of the top 10

companies remained mostly unchanged, with Regent (now Townsquare Media) rising from No. 8 to No. 7, moving ahead of Beasley, which shifted from 7-8.

Owing to the difficult economy, none of the 17 groups experienced an increase in revenues in 2009 from 2008, although the majority did see higher cume totals in ’09 than in ’08, thanks in part to a change in audience measurement methodology to PPM. It’s impossible to present all 2,000+ Country stations in the USA, so this list is confined to companies with at least \$10 million in revenue from their Country outlets. If your company or station has inadvertently been omitted, please let us know.

COUNTRY COMPANIES
REVENUE RANKER

Here’s how the companies listed on these pages rank by 2009 Country revenue (in millions of dollars). The data is compiled from individual station revenues for each year as provided by BIA. For comparison purposes, previous years’ total company revenues and revenue rankings follow, with each company’s rank for that year following the revenue figure.

Owner	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2003	1996
1 Clear Channel	\$287.7	\$376.8/1	\$365.6/1	\$466.0/1	\$440.6/1	\$412.3/1	\$76.4
2 CBS Radio	\$114.6	\$151.8/2	\$172.0/2	\$224.8/2	\$218.7/2	\$225.0/2	\$167.0/1
3 Citadel	\$103.5	\$138.1/3	\$167.0/3	\$111.4/3	\$104.2/3	\$88.8/3	\$32.2/7
4 Cumulus	\$84.2	\$107.0/4	\$112.6/4	\$111.4/4	\$66.9/5	\$62.3/5	...
5 Cox	\$56.4	\$71.3/5	\$71.6/5	\$69.1/5	\$70.1/4	\$68.4/4	\$35.5/6
6 Entercom	\$30.3	\$37.7/6	\$39.9/8	\$37.8/8	\$22.5/12	\$20.7/12	...
7 Regent	\$25.8	\$32.0/8	\$33.1/9	\$27.4/10	\$26.1/11	\$31.4/9	...
8 Beasley	\$25.3	\$35.0/7	\$40.1/7	\$39.9/7	\$37.6/8	\$28.6/10	\$21.8/11
9 Lincoln Financial Media	\$19.7	\$27.8/9	\$30.7/10	\$30.9/9	\$33.1/10	35.3/8	...
10 Gap	\$18.8	\$22.8/10	\$24.2/12	...	...	...	...
11 Bonneville	\$18.1	\$22.1/11	\$24.4/11	...	...	...	...
12 Wilks	\$14.7	\$15.6/12	\$18.1/13	...	...	...	...
13 Journal	\$13.4	\$15.0/13	\$16.2/14	\$17.6/11	\$16.4/13	\$16.0/14	...
14 Three Eagles	\$11.8	\$13.8/16	...	...	...	...	...
15 Saga	\$11.7	\$14.1/15	\$14.2/17	\$13.7/13	\$13.1/15	\$9.9/17	...
16 Hall	\$11.6	\$14.4/14	\$15.9/15	\$14.5/12	\$14.4/14	\$11.2/15	...
17 Max Media	\$10.9	\$13.1/17	\$14.3/16	\$12.7	\$12.9/16	...	...

COUNTRY COMPANIES
AUDIENCE RANKER

Here’s how the companies listed on these pages rank by 2009 metro weekly Country cume audience, according to BIA and Arbitron. Previous years’ cume and cume rankings follow, with the company’s rank for that year following the cume figure. Please note that share and cume figures for metros marked with an asterisk (*) are based on PPM data, 6+

Owner	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2003	1997
1 Clear Channel	13,083,700	11,078,700	9,258,500/1	11,231,455/1	10,917,900/1	10,156,500/1	2,796,800/3
2 CBS Radio	6,373,100	5,044,100/2	4,213,400/2	4,982,300/2	5,035,900/2	4,976,300/2	5,226,600/1
3 Citadel	4,196,900	3,399,900/3	3,846,500/3	2,585,900/3	2,466,400/3	1,998,900/3	961,800/10
4 Cox	3,466,200	2,924,700/5	2,871,100/4	1,905,800/5	1,854,900/4	1,798,400/4	989,100/7
5 Cumulus	2,989,700	3,196,700/4	2,397,400/5	2,488,700/4	1,565,800/6	1,660,800/5	983,900/8
6 Entercom	2,104,500	1,642,600/6	1,444,170/7	1,208,500/7	733,400/10	697,300/10	...
7 Beasley	1,539,600	1,255,900/7	1,384,100/8	934,800/8	1,039,300/8	791,800/8	761,700/11
8 Bonneville	1,211,200	705,700/9	765,700/9	...	...	581,200/13	...
9 Wilks	1,151,200	536,900/12	635,700/11	...	...	...	...
10 Lincoln Financial Media	924,400	564,300/11	545,500/12	571,400/10	625,300/11	631,800/12	755,400/12
11 Regent	689,700	703,600/10	730,100/10	646,300/9	580,100/12	687,600/11	...
12 Gap	516,500	495,600/13	534,600/13	...	...	...	...
13 Journal	467,200	415,100/15	429,900/15	404,200/12	470,100/13	391,800/15	...
14 Hall	414,600	448,300/14	424,400/16	444,600/11	414,300/14	382,800/16	...
15 Max Media	236,900	243,100/17	260,200/18	281,700/14	259,400/15	...	...
16 Saga	156,100	159,100/18	151,100/19	154,000/16	163,400/17	133,800/18	...
17 Three Eagles	87,900	66,500/na	...	...	...	...	...

LEGEND: Following each station’s call letters and market are its Arbitron 12+ shares from Fall 2009 and Fall 2008. Next comes the station’s Fall ’09 Arbitron metro cume, followed by its Fall ’07 figures. After that are the station’s 2009 and 2008 revenues, listed in millions, except in “Totals,” where actual figures for cume and revenue are shown.

Note that share and cume figures for metros marked with an asterisk (*) are based on PPM data, 6+. A designation of “na” means a figure was either not available or not applicable. A “+” indicates a Classic Country outlet.

BIA is the source for all revenue and ownership data; all ratings information comes from Arbitron. The first set of figures under “Totals” shows the number of Country stations owned by the operator at the end of 2009. All totals for previous years also came from BIA and represent the totals for the stations owned that year. Some previous-year revenue figures have been adjusted to match updates made by BIA.

Calls/City	12+ Share		Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
Beasley	Fa '09	Fa '08	Fa '09	Fa '08	2009	2008
WKXC/Augusta, GA	8.5	7.4	862	716	\$2.2	\$2.4
WKML/Fayetteville, NC	10.6	8.2	797	714	\$3.2	\$4.4
KCYE/Las Vegas*	2.9	2.6	2,361	1,235	\$2.2	\$3.0
WKIS/Miami*	3.4	2.4	4,675	2,819	\$7.9	\$10.5
WXTU/Philadelphia*	4.0	3.9	6,701	6,895	\$9.8	\$14.6
TOTALS:	Year	No. Stations	Fall 12+ Shares	Cume	Revenue	
	2009*	5	29.4	1,539,600	\$25,300,000	
	2008*	6	25.1	1,255,600	\$35,000,000	
	2007*	5	30.0	1,384,100	\$40,100,000	

*2009 share and cume figures for Las Vegas and Miami are based on Nov. 2009 PPM data, 6+. 2009, 2008 and 2007 share and cume figures for Philadelphia are based on Nov. 2009, 2008 and 2007 PPM data, 6+.

Calls/City	12+ Share		Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
Bonneville	Fa '09	Fa '08	Fa '09	Fa '08	2009	2008
WUBE/Cincinnati*	7.4	7.1	4,598	2,963	\$10.4	\$12.4
WYGY/Cincinnati*	1.7	1.2	1,743	1,036	\$1.0	\$1.0
WIL/St. Louis*	6.1	5.2	5,771	3,548	\$6.7	\$8.6
TOTALS:	Year	No. Stations	Fall 12+ Shares	Cume	Revenue	
	2009*	3	15.2	1,211,200	\$18,075,000	
	2008	3	13.5	705,700	\$22,050,000	
	2007	3	15.6	765,700	\$24,400,000	

*2009 share and cume figures for Cincinnati and St. Louis are based on Nov. 2009 PPM data, 6+.

Calls/City	12+ Share		Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
CBS	Fa '09	Fa '08	Fa '09	Fa '08	2009	2008
WSOC/Charlotte	6.5	5.3	2,811	2,532	\$5.8	\$8.2
WUSN/Chicago*	4.2	4.0	11,891	10,946	\$22.0	\$23.0
WYCD/Detroit*	6.1	4.8	9,118	8,175	\$7.8	\$9.9
KILT-FM/Houston*	3.5	2.9	9,223	8,337	\$19.4	\$23.9
KMLE/Phoenix*	2.9	2.4	6,142	2,748	\$11.2	\$14.3
WDSY/Pittsburgh*	7.0	5.4	5,288	2,686	\$6.6	\$7.9
KFRG/Riverside*	3.7	4.0	3,294	2,748	\$7.7	\$9.9
KNCI/Sacramento*	4.7	3.7	3,350	1,821	\$5.6	\$7.6
KMPS/Seattle*	4.4	3.7	5,807	3,417	\$13.5	\$17.2
WQYK-FM/Tampa*	6.9	4.2	5,683	2,622	\$9.4	\$13.2
KVFG/Victor Valley, CA	2.3	2.5	227	206	\$0.4	\$0.5
WIRK/West Palm Beach	4.1	4.0	897	966	\$5.2	\$6.5
TOTALS:	Year	No. Stations	Fall 12+ Shares	Cume	Revenue	
	2009*	13	56.3	6,373,100	\$114,575,000	
	2008*	15	52.8	5,044,100	\$151,825,000	
	2007*	15	55.5	4,213,400	\$172,025,000	

*2009 share and cume figures for Phoenix, Pittsburgh, Sacramento, Seattle and Tampa are based on Nov. 2009 PPM data, 6+. 2009 and 2008 share and cume figures for Chicago, Detroit and Riverside are based on Nov. 2009 and 2008 PPM data, 6+. 2009, 2008 and 2007 share and cume figures for Houston are based on Nov. 2009, 2008 and 2007 PPM data, 6+.

In addition to the 12 stations listed above, CBS Radio also owns one Country station in a non-rated market, according to BIA data. The station contributed to station totals, but not to ratings or revenue totals.

Calls/City	12+ Share		Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
Citadel	Fa '09	Fa '08	Fa '09	Fa '08	2009	2008
KRST/Albuquerque	4.0	3.1	892	824	\$2.5	\$3.5
WCTO/Allentown	10.9	12.1	1,421	1,559	\$4.2	\$5.3
WKHX/Atlanta*	5.7	5.9	7,876	7,343	\$12.7	\$16.9
WEBB/Augusta, ME	8.3	6.9	198	166	\$0.7	\$0.7
WHWK/Binghamton, NY	11.5	15.0	462	536	\$1.7	\$2.0
KQFC/Boise	3.8	4.7	566	424	\$1.3	\$1.6
KIZN/Boise	5.2	5.4	548	490	\$2.1	\$2.9
WIWF/Charleston, SC	3.7	3.3	602	529	\$1.0	\$1.2
WOGT/Chattanooga, TN	2.5	2.1	377	292	\$0.6	\$0.8
KATC/Colorado Springs	4.4	4.7	640	574	\$1.2	\$1.7
WPKQ/Concord, NH	1.8	1.4	98	97	\$0.7	\$1.0
KSCS/Dallas*	4.0	4.0	8,028	9,417	\$12.0	\$14.2
KHKI/Des Moines	4.4	5.4	667	636	\$2.0	\$2.1
KJYY/Des Moines	5.0	4.5	625	512	\$1.9	\$2.4
WXTA/Erie	4.6	6.0	300	372	\$0.8	\$1.1
WFBE/Flint, MI	6.4	4.3	451	420	\$1.1	\$1.4
WTNR/Grand Rapids	3.3	2.4	741	542	\$1.4	\$1.7
WCAT/Harrisburg	2.6	2.6	343	352	\$1.1	\$1.4
WIVK/Knoxville	18.3	22.9	2,317	2,591	\$1.0	\$11.3
KXKC/Lafayette, LA	5.4	3.7	660	659	\$1.5	\$2.4
WIOV-FM/Lancaster, PA	8.9	6.5	726	697	\$3.4	\$4.4
WITL/Lansing, MI	11.2	12.0	826	773	\$2.6	\$3.1
WGKX/Memphis	5.2	6.0	1,527	1,498	\$4.1	\$5.3
KATM/Modesto, CA	9.1	10.5	679	859	\$5.3	\$6.0
WMDH/Muncie, IN	11.9	8.9	394	326	\$1.0	\$1.5
WLAW/Muskegon, MI	3.4	4.1	111	98	\$0.3	\$0.4
WKDF/Nashville	4.9	4.8	2,153	2,178	\$5.9	\$7.3
WOKQ/Portsmouth, NH	13.1	7.2	852	680	\$5.0	\$5.9
KBUL/Reno, NV	5.4	5.0	561	521	\$1.2	\$2.0
KUBL/Salt Lake City*	5.6	4.1	4,291	2,007	\$4.2	\$5.3
KIIM/Tucson	9.2	7.7	1,436	1,495	\$6.0	\$7.1
WFFN/Tuscaloosa, AL	4.0	3.2	183	159	\$0.2	\$0.3
WSJR/Wilkes Barre	2.8	3.1	418	431	\$0.7	\$0.9

TOTALS:	Year	No. Stations	Fall 12+ Shares	Cume	Revenue	
	2009*	36	210.5	4,196,900	\$103,460,000	
	2008*	37	206.0	3,399,900	\$138,075,000	
	2007*	41	219.1	3,846,500	\$167,030,000	

*2009 share and cume figures for Salt Lake City are based on Nov. 2009 PPM data 6+. 2009 and 2008 share and cume figures for Atlanta and Dallas are based on Nov. 2009 and 2008 PPM data, 6+.

In addition to the 33 stations listed above, Citadel also owns three Country stations in non-rated markets, according to BIA data. Those stations contribute to station and revenue totals, but not to ratings totals.

2896

**2009 share and cume figures for Kansas City, Portland and Seattle are based on Nov. PPM data, 6+. 2009 and 2008 share and cume figures for San Francisco are based on the Nov. 2009 and 2008 PPM data, 6+.*

RATINGS & REVENUE

Calls/City	12+ Share		Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '09	Fa '08	Fa '09	Fa '08	2009	2008
Gap						
KEAN/Abilene, TX	10.6	9.6	284	270	\$0.8	\$1.1
KYYW/Abilene, TX	2.4	2.3	74	81	\$0.1	\$0.1
KATP/Amarillo, TX	5.2	4.1	245	233	\$0.2	\$0.3
KCTR/Billings, MT	13.9	15.2	294	321	\$1.5	\$1.8
KWYY/Casper, WY	17.1	8.6	159	112	\$0.5	\$0.4
KLEN/Cheyenne, WY	5.8	5.1	66	69	\$0.2	\$0.2
KCGY/Cheyenne, WY	1.0	1.0	21	25	\$0.3	\$0.4
KKCB/Duluth, MN-WI	7.6	9.1	349	363	\$0.8	\$0.8
KNGT/Lake Charles, LA	6.0	6.0	257	216	\$1.1	\$1.4
KLAW/Lawton, OK	14.9	17.6	240	256	\$1.0	\$1.4
KQBR/Lubbock, TX	4.4	4.4	319	268	\$0.7	\$0.8
KYKS/Lufkin, TX	17.9	17.3	379	377	\$1.5	\$1.8
KORD/Richland, WA	8.0	7.5	332	282	\$1.3	\$1.6
KXKS-FM/Shreveport, LA	4.0	3.9	359	400	\$1.4	\$1.7
KWHK-AM/Shreveport, LA+	1.8	1.8	158	168	\$0.2	\$0.3
KKYR/Texarkana, TX-AR	14.3	17.2	344	370	\$1.5	\$1.9
KEZJ/Twin Falls, ID	9.5	8.0	237	222	\$0.5	\$0.6
KNUE/Tyler, TX	7.5	7.0	512	507	\$1.6	\$2.0
KWFS/Wichita Falls, TX	7.4	6.1	194	161	\$0.3	\$0.4
KUTI/Yakima, WA	3.4	2.5	117	100	\$0.1	\$0.1
KDBL/Yakima, WA	3.4	4.9	225	224	\$0.5	\$0.4
TOTALS:	Year	No. Stations	Fall 12+ Shares	Cume	Revenue	
	2009	26	166.1	516,500	\$18,790,000	
	2008	25	154.1	495,600	\$22,800,000	
	2007	26	161.6	534,600	\$24,180,000	

In addition to the 21 stations listed above, Gap also owns five Country stations in non-rated markets, according to BIA data. Those stations contribute to station and revenue totals, but not to ratings totals.

Calls/City	12+ Share		Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '09	Fa '08	Fa '09	Fa '08	2009	2008
Hall						
WOKO/Burlington, VT-NY	17.6	16.4	838	856	\$3.0	\$3.7
WPCV/Lakeland	11.4	13.4	1,069	1,136	\$3.6	\$4.6
WCTY/New London, CT	11.3	10.7	457	527	\$2.0	\$2.2
WCTK/Providence	5.6	6.4	1,782	1,964	\$3.1	\$3.9
TOTALS:	Year	No. Stations	Fall 12+ Shares	Cume	Revenue	
	2009	4	45.9	414,600	\$11,625,000	
	2008	4	46.9	448,300	\$14,400,000	
	2007	4	49.1	424,400	\$15,925,000	

Calls/City	12+ Share		Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '09	Fa '08	Fa '09	Fa '08	2009	2008
Journal						
WCYQ/Knoxville	2.6	1.5	581	460	\$1.1	\$1.4
KTTS/Springfield, MO	11.3	13.8	866	927	\$2.8	\$3.8
KVOO/Tulsa	6.3	6.7	1,140	1,036	\$3.2	\$3.6
KXBL/Tulsa	3.4	4.0	659	653	\$1.6	\$1.9
KFDI/Wichita	11.4	8.9	878	978	\$3.4	\$4.1
KFTI-AM/Wichita	2.5	3.0	315	249	\$1.0	\$1.2
KFTI-FM/Wichita	1.8	2.7	233	308	\$3.3	\$0.4
TOTALS:	Year	No. Stations	Fall 12+ Shares	Cume	Revenue	
	2009	7	39.3	467,200	\$13,375,000	
	2008	6	39.1	415,100	\$15,000,000	
	2007	6	43.7	429,900	\$16,155,000	

Calls/City	12+ Share		Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '09	Fa '08	Fa '09	Fa '08	2009	2008
Lincoln Financial						
KYGO/Denver*	5.5	4.7	4,574	2,959	\$12.1	\$18.0
KSON/San Diego*	4.0	4.6	4,670	2,695	\$7.6	\$9.8
KSOQ/San Diego*	0	0	0	0	\$0.0	\$0.0
TOTALS:	Year	No. Stations	Fall 12+ Shares	Cume	Revenue	
	2009*	3	9.5	924,400	\$19,675,000	
	2008	3	9.3	564,300	\$27,800,000	
	2007	3	10.6	545,500	\$30,675,000	

*2009 cume and share figures are based on Nov. PPM data, 6+.

Calls/City	12+ Share		Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '09	Fa '08	Fa '09	Fa '08	2009	2008
Max Media						
WOOZ/Marion, IL	11.9	10.4	311	318	\$1.0	\$1.2
WGH-FM/Norfolk	4.7	5.5	1,724	1,757	\$5.8	\$7.1
WWBE/Sunbury, PA	11.8	11.4	334	356	\$0.5	\$0.6
WYGL/Sunbury, PA	0	0	0	0	\$0.0	\$0.0
WLGL/Sunbury, PA	0	0	0	0	\$0.0	\$0.0

Max Media (continued)					
TOTALS:	Year	No. Stations	Fall 12+ Shares	Cume	Revenue
	2009	11	28.4	236,900	\$10,935,000
	2008	11	27.3	243,100	\$13,060,000
	2007	12	29.4	260,200	\$14,250,000

In addition to the five stations listed above, Max Media also owns six Country stations in non-rated markets, according to BIA data. Those stations contribute to station and revenue totals, but not to ratings totals.

Calls/City	12+ Share		Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '09	Fa '08	Fa '09	Fa '08	2009	2008
Regent						
WGNA/Albany, NY	10.1	9.8	1,401	1,459	\$5.0	\$6.5
WBWN/Bloomington, IL	9.9	10.3	309	297	\$1.4	\$2.4
WYRK/Buffalo	8.1	9.9	1,651	1,865	\$7.5	\$8.7
WKDQ/Evansville, IN	13.9	10.6	614	542	\$2.1	\$2.4
KUAD/Ft. Collins, CO	5.7	7.6	598	633	\$3.4	\$3.9
KMDL/Lafayette, LA	6.3	6.4	870	809	\$2.0	\$3.1
WFYR/Peoria, IL	3.8	6.1	378	435	\$1.1	\$1.3
WWJO/St. Cloud, MN	7.7	7.8	373	357	\$1.5	\$1.6
WFRG/Utica, NY	13.7	12.2	703	639	\$1.8	\$2.1

TOTALS:	Year	No. Stations	Fall 12+ Shares	Cume	Revenue
	2009	10	79.2	689,700	\$25,750,000
	2008	10	80.7	703,600	\$32,000,000
	2007	10	83.7	730,100	\$33,100,000

In addition to the nine stations listed above, Regent also owns one Country station in a non-rated market, according to BIA data. That station contributes to station totals, but not to ratings or revenue totals for 2009.

Calls/City	12+ Share		Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '09	Fa '08	Fa '09	Fa '08	2009	2008
Saga						
WIXY/Champaign, IL	9.2	8.6	335	343	\$1.9	\$2.5
WVVR/Clarksville, TN-KY	8.6	12.3	344	421	\$1.7	\$2.0
WQNY/Ithaca, NY	15.1	14.7	212	213	\$1.3	\$1.6
KDXY/Jonesboro, AR	18.9	14.6	229	237	\$1.3	\$1.6
WPOR/Portland, ME	6.9	4.7	360	310	\$1.7	\$2.4
WNAX/Sioux City, IA	3.1	1.6	81	67	\$0.4	\$0.5

TOTALS:	Year	No. Stations	Fall 12+ Shares	Cume	Revenue
	2009	10	61.8	156,100	\$11,700,000
	2008	10	56.5	159,100	\$14,100,000
	2007	10	65.4	151,100	\$14,175,000

In addition to the six stations listed above, Saga also owns four Country stations in non-rated markets, according to BIA data. Those stations contribute to station and revenue totals, but not to ratings totals.

Calls/City	12+ Share		Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '09	Fa '08	Fa '09	Fa '08	2009	2008
Three Eagles						
KZKX/Lincoln, NE	9.9	4.1	505	303	\$1.3	\$2.1
KYSM-FM/Mankato, MN	8.8	8.0	211	204	\$1.1	\$1.3
KIAI/Mason City, IA	12.6	10.9	163	158	\$0.7	\$0.9

TOTALS:	Year	No. Stations	Fall 12+ Shares	Cume	Revenue
	2009	14	31.3	87,900	\$11,845,000
	2008	14	23.0	66,500	\$13,830,000

In addition to the three stations listed above, Three Eagles also owns 11 Country stations in unrated markets, according to BIA data. Those stations contribute to station and revenue totals, but not to ratings totals.

Calls/City	12+ Share		Cume (00)		Revenue (in millions)	
	Fa '09	Fa '08	Fa '09	Fa '08	2009	2008
Wilks						
WHOK/Columbus, OH	4.3	3.0	1,393	1,169	\$1.4	\$1.8
WNKK/Columbus, OH	1.2	0.7	705	410	\$0.4	\$0.4
KWOF/Denver*	2.1	1.7	2,332	1,301	\$2.0	\$2.4
KBEQ/Kansas City*	4.3	4.3	3,477	1,706	\$3.8	\$4.5
KFKF/Kansas City*	4.7	4.1	3,100	1,613	\$5.5	\$7.0
KLLL/Lubbock, TX	10.4	9.3	505	471	\$1.7	\$1.9

TOTALS:	Year	No. Stations	Fall 12+ Shares	Cume	Revenue
	2009	6	27.0	1,151,200	\$14,725,000
	2008	5	21.4	536,900	\$15,600,000
	2007	5	23.9	635,700	\$18,100,000

*2009 share and cume figures for Kansas City are based on Nov. PPM data, 6+.

AMERICA'S

OPRY

WEEKEND

Country Music's Biggest Hits

From Country Music's Most Famous Stage.

Live cuts, studio recordings, plus backstage stories and headlines from Carrie Underwood, Brad Paisley, Lady Antebellum, and more every week.

Here's what PDs are saying about America's Opry Weekend:

"In Knoxville on Sunday night, there is a huge clicking sound of people turning their radios to WIVK to listen to the Opry. The show is great and fits perfectly with our format strategy."

- Mike Hammond, WIVK-FM Knoxville

"The Opry show is a wonderful way to combine the past and the present in an entertaining way that has our listeners waiting for Sunday nights!"

- Tonya Campos, KKGO-FM Los Angeles

Give your listeners a ticket, contact:

Sue Falco at Westwood One

sue_falco@westwoodone.com

212.641.2012

WESTWOOD ONE

BRIAN PHILIPS

Building A Brand On Country

When KPLX (The Wolf)/Dallas and Susquehanna exec Brian Philips was named Senior VP/GM of CMT in 2001, the network was in 33 million households and “country” still required a good bit of explaining – even within parent company MTV Networks. When he was promoted to CMT President in March 2009, times had changed. And Philips deserves much of the credit for CMT’s undeniable growth, as well as the extent to which the genre is better understood in the television and advertising worlds. Country Aircheck spoke to Philips after Nashville floods shuttered the network’s downtown offices for several days and as the countdown to CMT’s single biggest annual event – the *CMT Music Awards* – began in earnest.

CA: Let’s begin with an overview of the current state of CMT: homes, ratings, making money.

Brian Philips: We’re at 90 million homes. 2009 was our best year ever: best fourth quarter, best prime time and best 18-49. Last year was the kind of run-up where you ask, “How do we sustain this? Will the music keep coming? What do we have to do? How good do the *CMT Awards* have to be this year? What movies are we going to make? What are we going to do for an additional night of programming?” Candidly, we’ve got one eye on the music business, wondering, “How reliable is this stream of content for CMT? Is it going to cough up another Taylor Swift and carry us all to glory? Or is it some combination of a new generation that seems to be emerging?” We’re always reading those signs.

As for CMT’s fate, the really good periods for this channel always coincide with music heat. You can mark the day when we started romping back in 2004, when “Redneck Woman” and “Save A Horse (Ride A Cowboy)” showed up about the same time. And we were saying, “Whoo-hoo!” All of a sudden, ratings in music hours are doubling, and you’ve got telegenic people who are colorful characters. And it’s as if they were made for TV. And they’re so much fun ... Taylor Swift is certainly telegenic. Right now is a great time.

Nashville.” I thought, “Well, if that’s true, that’s a theme.” I hope that plays through, and obviously, it has for Jamey. But we do need a theme – to change out our backdrop and our characters from time to time. Like a movie, we need conflict, tension and drama. A little competitive spirit ... artists grinding against each other a little bit. It’s complex, but this feels like a good year.

In the scheme of CMT as a whole, how important are the *CMT Awards*?

It’s the biggest night of the year for us, for a number of reasons. It ties together everything that we do. It’s also a chance to bring a lot of people together: artists, characters and people who surprise the audience by their presence. And this year will be no exception. It gets classified as “one of the award shows,” which it certainly is. But by definition, it’s a party. It’s meant to be funny and memorable, with great music performances. Like any great party, you want to have something to talk about the next day. As long as no one gets hurt ... (laughs).

The openings the last few years have become legendary. Actually, that’s a blessing and a curse. How do you top Obama’s appearance or Taylor with T-Pain last year?

You’d be surprised. Once you get a reputation for being willing to take crazy risks with that open and spending a lot of time and energy

There’s an identifiable subset of people who just love award shows – the fashion, the live-ness and the unpredictability. It’s crazy. These people will watch everything from the *MTV Movie Awards* to the *Oscars* to the *Westminster Dog Show* – anything where somebody gets a trophy. So awards shows are probably our biggest opportunity for outreach beyond the country music core. But *Crossroads* is the signature show that everybody remembers. It’s what comes up over and over again in research. When you go to see – name any client – they ask about *Crossroads*, how it came together and who’s going to do it next. Everybody’s got a pairing in their head that they wish could get made. So *Crossroads* is our defining series and the awards show is the defining night of the year.

Who is CMT’s target audience?

Persons 18-49 with a slight skew toward women. There will be an

each clip generates over time. That’s a painstaking, mind-boggling research effort, but it’s important. Never having completely trusted callout or being overly reliant on it as a radio guy, I think maybe [I’m] a little more prepared [to use it] for television. We research shows, we pilot-test things. It’s not like we don’t have a tremendous research effort going on here at MTV Networks and at CMT. But there’s still that openness of spirit here where Jay can come up to my office with something that he’s found, and we can just look at it and say, “Gotta put that on. Just go do it.” I may change a couple of things that don’t look quite right for us. But it probably goes back to my radio sensibility, which differed slightly, perhaps, from others in the Country format. I was always looking for reasons to include things. I thought that improved our chances of being bigger, as opposed to establishing a filter that excluded or pushed things aside. I just think you lessen the odds that lightning will strike if you say, “Well, let’s just put that aside for awhile and see if anything comes of it.” We don’t do that here.

Based on your experiences in radio and here, which audience gives you that “early warning” of a hit sooner?

TV is fantastic, and also by having Jay Frank paying attention to results on a daily basis, you get a really quick read. TV is the equivalent of Top 40 radio, where the phones blow up. And you say, “Well, there’s no question about *that* song.” Maybe it’s a little polarizing, but nonetheless it’s in touch. I think with TV, especially when you’re talking about country music, perhaps because of the visual component, you know much more quickly what you have. And it’s apparent to more people because pictures are married to sound. People say, “I love the song and the look and feel of it.” It just adds one more level of engagement.

What did you learn as one of the original architects at KPLX (the Wolf)/Dallas that has made its way onto the CMT airwaves?

CMT’s sense of bold pride in the music it chooses, whether it’s the awards show performances or people for *Crossroads*, is probably rooted in the way we felt for the things we learned at the Wolf. In Texas, country has no self-esteem problem. It’s more mainstream than anything else on the dial, and it’s stadium-filling music that everybody listens to. Rather than a utilitarian thing that plays music from Nashville – where you don’t get too imaginative with the marketing, the talent or the things that you do – [we believed in] aggressively pushing it forward. It never occurred to us in Texas to make a generic station. We talked to too many people in Dallas/Ft. Worth and thought they had a different expectation, a higher standard than an outsider might expect of country music listeners. I think that’s probably the only real link that I can see between the Wolf and CMT.

People say CMT doesn’t play as many videos as it used to. Is it hard to play videos when people no longer have to wait to see their favorite because they can just go online?

Right. And that’s a big part of the reason CMT.com has become the No. 1 country music website in the world. That also speaks to your question, “How fast do you know something is a hit?” As

CMT’S AUDIENCE EXPECTS TO SEE SHOWS THAT GO BEYOND THE REALM OF MUSIC, BUT WHERE THERE’S AN UNDERTONE THAT FITS CMT’S BRAND AND THE VALUES, STORIES, CHARACTERS AND THE TRUTHS THAT THEY HEAR IN THE SONGS.

That’s not unlike Country radio, where fortunes rise and fall with the music.

Absolutely. The two are just so enmeshed. But with television, when the music gets hot, the halo effect affects all the other programming you make. In putting together this awards show, we’re all feeling this is a watershed moment for country. A new generation has presented itself in a lot of interesting but not predictable forms. You could not have predicted the Zac Brown Band, Lady Antebellum, Jason Aldean or many of today’s hot new stars – they’re *gigantic* for us.

I recently saw a *Rolling Stone* article called, “40 Reasons To Still Care About Music,” which has a great photo spread on Jamey Johnson. It said, “Bad-ass country is back in

on getting the open exactly right, people start bringing you good ideas and celebrities who might not have been accessible to you before. Writers and creators are submitting ideas, and there’s also a huge amount of internal imagination at CMT, as our in-house people are always trying to one-up what they’ve done before. And that’s the way people here think. Having those early examples sets a high standard, but that’s the fun part. It’s great when copy rolls off the fax machine out there, and you look at it and start laughing. So it’s easier than you might think.

Which show gets more of the non-core Country audience in to sample your network -- the *CMT Awards* or *Crossroads*?

occasional hit show or movie that will skew a little more male, but in general, when you look over the long haul, it’s 65% female among 18-49s.

Do you research the non-country core to see what they want so that you can try to get them to watch CMT? What are the differences?

That’s such a complicated question. (CMT SVP/Music Strategy) Jay Frank could explain the Vulcan algorithms that he’s worked up. We literally know what rating



soon as you see those streaming totals, bang! Long ago, the people at MTV were prescient enough to realize that just putting end-to-end music videos on day and night was just not a long-term play to keep viewership high. Videos were a terrific novelty at MTV's inception, a place you could go to see what all these bands look like, and a whole new generation of that was born. What a fantastic way to start, but not a practical long-term idea in an online universe and in a 300-channel cable universe. Times change.

You're doing some original programming that isn't music-oriented, but lifestyle-oriented.

Yeah. It's television. It's a completely different medium.

But you place much of your brand and your brand's importance on country. I'm not saying you're moving away from the music, but it seems to be becoming less a part of the totality of original programming.

It's because the audience demands that. And the audience also gives us the permission, or we wouldn't do it.

The channel retains a really strong music image, thanks to our music franchises like *Crossroads*, *Invitation Only*, the *CMT Awards*, our video blocks, CMT.com and a couple of other new things we're doing this year. But there's also an expectation within that audience that you're a television channel, and they want something more to hold onto from you. As with radio, comedy works. CMT's audience loves comedy, loves to laugh. That parallels a great Country radio morning show. They expect to see shows that go beyond the realm of music, but where there's an undertone that fits CMT's brand and the values, stories, characters and the truths that they hear in the songs. People really cheer you on when you show them something great. It only benefits us to keep those music connections deep and permanent. We have so many franchises here that are reliant on great relations with superstars, up-and-coming artists, independent labels, agents and managers. We'll put you on an awards show, but we could put you in a movie, too. By the way, if you have an idea for an original scripted comedy, that might be a pilot for us, and *that* could become a series. So it's just more opportunity ... a bigger canvas.

CMT Radio was primarily a show-prep and audio service until just over a year ago when you launched CMT Radio Live with Cody Alan, who recently won the ACM Award as National Personality of the Year. Has the nighttime show performed as well as you had hoped?

Absolutely. And not only is it a great venture for all the parties involved, but in markets where the show is heard, CMT channel ratings



of information. But people still like to get a well-edited, digest version with some audio clips that are relevant. If I were still a morning guy, I can't think how many different sources I would use for show prep. But I certainly see the merits of CMT's and having those audio clips and inside knowledge. Those stars come through our building and do a media day. They touch all the bases: they do a Top 20 appearance on *Insider*, they do CMT.com stuff, CMT Radio with Cody – every medium that falls under the CMT banner. It's a very efficient day for a superstar to not have to leave the compound of the building and be able to do all that promotion.

What's next under the CMT Radio banner – other dayparts?

CMT Radio is a fast-growing business. It's always going to keep mutating and finding new ways to serve radio stations. As for other

this Doppler map here, and you can see these storm cells building to the north." No, I'm sorry, ma'am, I *can't* see the Doppler because I'm listening to the radio!

At the Wolf, I guess I was part of the last era where there actually were hardcore "go out and get the story, and get the story right!" news guys. That's one thing I miss on radio. You talk of the intentions and maybe the ultimate win for local radio – *to be local*. I think that makes sense, and I just wish for more of it. And I say that as a guy who provides syndicated programming to a lot of radio stations. But radio might take a lesson from CNN, which has somebody standing by when a story breaks. You've got to scramble a little bit, but you can't let the story go untold.

In my lifetime, radio has been pronounced dead at least seven times. Are you concerned about the future of music radio?

sold a lot of these, but honestly, you're the first person who's ever asked how the FM radio worked."

What's the future for CMT?

Cable has outshone broadcast television the last couple of years in its gains. There's room for a lot of premium programming on cable. TBS, TNT and USA once were sort of "afterthought" networks. They're now creating terrific original programming, and I think that's cable's model for the future. So it's a great business, and that's where CMT intends to be. CMT will always have music as its backbone, and in a 300-channel universe, it's such a great differentiator to have country music. There's an alphabet soup of channels out there, but country music sets us apart. It's part of our brand. And if you can be known for this one thing that helps people put a handle on who you are, what values you speak to and generally what content can be

“THIS IS THE MOST TUMULTUOUS TIME EVER [FOR RADIO], JUST BECAUSE THEY DON'T KNOW WHERE THE NEXT THREAT IS COMING FROM.”

are up wholesale. If you take all the markets, I think the last number I saw was, on average, up 15-18%. So the two work really well together.

Obviously, part of the plan was to build the CMT brand.

Of course! Plus, it was great fun getting Cody and [producer] Dingo back in again, along with the people around them. To have CMT Radio come from a sort of DNA connection with the people and the spirit that formed the Wolf on its launch in Dallas makes it very special to me. I don't get involved with it at all, but there are nights when I'll stop off on the second floor, sit back with Cody for a couple of hours and think, "Aaah!" It's a very comfortable place for me, to be back in a radio studio. Especially because they know how to run it and I don't!

How about the prep service and what it's delivering for you right now?

People really like it. I have to admit I was concerned that prep services wouldn't survive the Internet, what with its wealth

dayparts, why not? You've seen the facilities – it certainly has better equipment than you or I ever worked with – so you know it's wide open for that. We wanted to get our footing in nights because there seemed to be a real appetite for that already, and it's proven to be true. But sure, more dayparts.

What do you think of the current state of radio in general, and Country radio in particular?

(Long pause.) When the floods hit Nashville, I was driving and tuning around as the problem crept up. It went from heavy rains to flooding, to potentially life-threatening danger in a very short time. And I'm punching around on the radio, trying to find somebody who has specific useful information. [Looking back,] I certainly did plenty of deals with local TV stations to have great meteorologists provide weather information to my radio station. But I think it's a little bit disturbing that they're listening to the audio track of a telecast. You're listening to one of the top five radio stations in Nashville taking the audio feed off TV. The television meteorologist says, "Now, let's move over to

This is the most tumultuous time ever, just because we don't know where the next threat is coming from. Each new thing tends to have a name we didn't know a year ago. It's like you're fighting for relevance with something that somebody invented today and that will be here by Christmas. It's not like radio's legendary back-and-forth with television, where the battle played out over a couple of decades before people figured out radio is a good medium for music, news and talk, and television should be a long-form thing. Long-form drama is probably not radio's strength. That was a long, protracted battle. It's a treacherous time.

The only thing that scared me out of my wits was test-driving a car recently in Nashville. The car happened to have Sirius XM, an iPod connection, USB – every option imaginable – in [some kind of] touch-screen display. The salesperson was a 28-year-old woman. I said, "Well, we don't have any CDs and the Sirius XM isn't hooked up yet, but I need to know how the car's audio system sounds. Can you put on a radio station?" She couldn't figure out how to do it. Nor could I! She was a little embarrassed and said, "I've

found on the channel – what their expectation will be – it sets you apart. And we're so well served by country music.

It's so much easier now than it was a decade ago, when you'd have to go into agencies in New York, Chicago, Detroit and Los Angeles and do this sort of tutorial on the meaning of this mass-appeal, well-written, well-sung, well-performed music that happens to be the dominant adult pop music form in America. It was just so rough to have to go in and explain it over and over. Now, in a Viacom board meeting in the heart of Manhattan on the 52nd floor of 1515 Broadway, you can start a spirited discussion about country music and its relevance on television, and people around the room have opinions about Lady Antebellum and Taylor Swift: "Isn't she something? What a juggernaut that is." Years ago, I would've had to show slides that proved that these people were really as popular as we were telling them. It's as if it's worked its way into the zeitgeist in those big markets in a way that makes our job easier. I hope great Country radio stations are feeling the same things in their markets.

CAC