



BERKOWITZ BROADCAST CONSULTING

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AC Programming Today Feature Story: The lost art of air checking

If you are a regular reader of these newsletters, there's one thing you know for sure, I believe in being "Brilliant with the Basics." One of the most basic (and important) jobs a PD can do is critique talent. But with today's busy PD schedules, this often gets ignored. So now that you've been reminded, set up an aircheck session today and to help, here's a rundown of important areas to review.

MORNING SHOWS

1. **Trying too hard to be funny.** There is a difference between "fun" and "funny". Being fun is important and much easier to do.
2. **Not enough time checks.** Too much time in-between time checks.
3. **Not enough benefit driven re-cycle mentions to "listen at work".** Use the morning show to get them into listening during the most important daypart, at work.
4. **Being an "Island" from the rest of the station.** Not promoting what will happen later in the day on the station.
5. **Laughing at everything said.** Laughing when it is not funny. Nervous laughter (especially with sidekicks).
6. **Bits that go too long.** In focus groups, most listeners "zone out" after about 20 seconds (unless it is really good).
7. **If you're still doing news.** Stories that have no interest whatsoever to the target listener. Use of words like "officials" and "authorities".
8. **No promotion of what is coming up next.** No appointment setting.
9. **Weather teases** that give away the forecast.

10. **Talk** for talk sake. Music is still a very important reason that people listen in the morning.
11. Failing to sound warm and friendly.
12. **Weak or old fashioned benchmarks.** Drop the weakest one.
13. **Too much reliance on pop culture, show business, entertainment “blocks”.** Most AC listeners rate this very low in importance.
14. **Companionship.** Are you good companions for your listeners?

OTHER DAYPARTS

1. Jocks who sound stiff/formal and un-natural.
2. Not promoting the stations unique benefits enough.
3. “SAYING” liners versus “SELLING” them.
4. Not promoting tomorrow’s morning show.
5. Sounding bored and un-interested.
6. Failing to realize that you are their workday companion.
7. Use of DJ Crutches such as:
 - Good Afternoon
 - Good Evening
 - With You
 - Thanks for listening “Everybody”
 - On a (day of week)
 - “Everybody”
 - Hump Day (if your jocks use this PLEASE eliminate)
 - Saying goodbye at the end of the shift

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