

INSIDE RADIO QUESTION OF THE WEEK:

"Do you think the radio Industry is headed in the right direction?"

24% YES: The industry is making necessary changes to ensure its survival.

76% NO: The industry has the same problems as it did a year ago and our leaders aren't taking us in the right direction.

Below are comments supplied by some of those who participated in the survey:

More consolidation only compounds the problem that faces our industry and Cumulus appears to be taking the lead on the downfall!

This is a joke question,, right?? i mean 30 plus years ago, radio was considered part of entertainment -- now they want to dismiss that theory that worked and was the correct thing. make it back the way it was in the 60s-80s and we can talk

Wall Street destroyed a great business. Its now a commodity they have milked to nothing.

Firing talent and removing local content is going to be a fatal move to the operators who "follow the leader".

We like LIVE talent on the radio.

It's irrefutably a slippery slope into oblivion and it's not going to take long.

We must be local and serve our communities daily. Leaders in the industry have no idea how to serve a community through local radio. Spend their time with P, debt service and cutting staff!!!

The only way to improve radio is to replace poor 'business managers' with actual broadcasters if there are any left.

We need to get back to the basics. I can tell you I know of companies that don't care about their own product, people or their affiliates. This needs to change if radio is going to survive.

Bad programming same songs repeated endlessly and limited format choices equal tune out. Carl David Farley, owner, JAZZRADIOdc.com, Burke VA

Radio has gone so much more cookie cutter with more and more sounding generic. I'm a lifer radio guy and used to have the freedom to do what I wished as long as the ratings were good. I KILLED in ratings doing my own thing. Now its rules rules rules.

The Big C. Companies are only focused on Wall street not main street and the listeners who live there.

Less is More killed our industry. Short length is a disaster.

AM band all but forgotten, Station groups in bankruptcy court a big negative for employees

Radio hasn't made all the changes it needs to yet but, make no mistake, it will never die!

We need to be speeding with new digital items, we need to be more local not less,

Growing further and further away from what it's always done best and that's serving local communities.

No it isn't moving in the right direction. "Happy talk" by the trade press about "recovery." This is a much over-hyped "feel good" that is only hopeful. Stations and groups are still cutting back. And "nationalism" of programming is less local.

Getting worse now that Cumulus is buying stations and they are the worst when it comes to employee relations.

It's time for the major companies to understand that radio is a sales driven business. Reducing the sales staff by the percentage that they have will only keep the revenue from growing. Ira Rosenblatt, President/CEO WS Media

Costs have been cut to the point where the customer both advertisers and audiences have been thrown under the bus of the biggest groups. The industry needs new, fearless , entrepreneurial, leadership in every market.

Get out of the dark ages and move to this century!!

As long as the big corporations, which caused all the problems to begin with, are in charge, nothing will change.

Stations have no personality and don't know how to make local-too much automation

And more moves with the likes of Lew Dickey (who, along with Clear Channel) have single-handedly destroyed the traditional radio business model for long-time broadcasters like us. Lew's "new" investment scheme will kill any delicate radio recovery. :-(

Once Ryan Seacrest and most of the mediocre syndic programming is off the air, and the local talent is restored, then we're heading in the right direction. Sadly, I don't think that is EVER going to happen

On the capital structure side all the right moves are in process. As to adapting to the challenges of the digital age, it is another matter.

YES, BUT SLOWLY. KEEP OUR DAY JOB ON THE IR AND ENJOY SIDE SOURCES IFO INCOME, THEY ARE FASS AND WILL DRIFT AWAY

The economy is improving that is helping the overall value of the radio industry.

You can't solve problems with the same minds that created them. There is no forward movement in this industry and philosophies and strategies are very outdated. That is why I left the business and will never return

It is a dreadful shame that local radio does not own the local internet scene and it's sad they've lost the local connection on the airwaves.

Only a few companies are truly making a meaningful commitment to the digital future. Most are still cutting back on new initiatives and expenses, losing their futures to save the current quarter.

Radio has downsized its way to insignificance. Newer generations have by passed the medium completely and receive their entertainment and music via the internet.

Just at a time when competition dictates that radio should be more live and local than ever before, stations (groups) are canning the long time (highly paid) talent and replacing them with network, syndicated or voice-tracked programming.

This is not a yes or no answer. It depends on the operator.

No. I see mgmt., higher than the local level, making decisions on things they know nothing about. Frankly, it is disturbing. I've worked on air & in mgmt. for over 30+ years. Radio barely resembles what it looked like. It's not even the same job anymore.

Ad pricing is stabilizing with the economy, also.

No real commitment to getting results for clients.

Performance Royalty Fees, Internet Fees for broadcasters, not having enough room on the FM for both regular FM and LPFM broadcasters. The FCC needs to address these issues and not allow Federal candidates FREE commercial airtime as they have talked about.

The focus needs to be on the core business of delivering local content to our listeners, and not letting the latest "fade" take us one direction and then another.

The product has been whored out & dumbed down so much, is it really a shock listeners are leaving?!?

Too much consolidation means near-monopolies in each city, which means not enough competition between stations, which in turn means bad music for the listeners.

Wasting their time with HD (Radio), while the web passes them by!!!!

Must engage new media and treat radio as a content distributor.

As long as radio stations continue to consolidate and cut staff, it is a self-fulfilling prophesy, that the industry will eventually die.

Need to change focus from selling spots to creating solutions.

Yes, not everyone, not every station in every market, and not on every level..but definitely yes overall, and now we're beginning to get on a roll so it's not just survival we will be talking about but thriving.

Radio will never be the same. Budget cuts and trimmed employees and their salaries have made radio a sad industry.

Let's get back to local and regional ownership.

Although some progress has been made, the industry is aging and more youth must be promoted before the really fundamental changes needed will be allowed to take place.

Does anybody remember that one time radio used to care about our listeners? And what leaders are there anymore in radio?

The product is what we sell to create revenue, but the area with the lowest priority. Short staffs, no research, no marketing. Everyone in programming is so leveraged with multi tasking, there is very little time to be creative anymore.

The problem is the lack of radio people (programmers) running stations. Account Executives who become GMs think it's all about sales and are clueless about air talent and programming needs!

We've fallen and we can't get up and it's our own damned fault.

But it needs to advance from a technology standpoint. AM & FM HD radio needs to be taken more seriously, especially for AM (IBOC). European stations are utilizing DRM. Maybe it needs consideration here. There is a lot of competition from other outlets now.

Station staff has been reduced to the point that we can't produce compelling programming.

The industry is way too slow to pick up and adopt.

Ever since deregulation, we've created a centralized entertainment industry where mega monster companies run things & pay no attention to the "reason" for holding a license. To serve the public interest of their local communities. Can you say monopoly?

I don't see any radical changes.

No real changes, except less people around to maintain the status quo.

There have been some improvements; however the radio survey's and most of the data is based on less than 1% of the population, making it impossible to predict any advertising results.

There are some positive steps being taken, but I don't believe most changes are not radical enough to advance the business faster than the rate of decline. Eventually, there has to be a price to pay.

We've lost 18% audience 12-24 in five years. No new customers, we are NOT on the right track!

I worked in New York for 27 years, ratings second to none, cannot get arrested, they are just putting garbage on the air, forgetting what got the biz to where it was.

Digital media will continue to overtake traditional radio unless they figure a major way to change what they do! Why listen to 20+ minutes per hour of ads when listeners can pick and choose what they listen to.

Music playlists are too narrow, and talk radio is too safe and uninspired.

Radio is a case study in the self-fulfilling prophesy. Owners who embrace technology that adds to and extends their broadcast brands and services, and whose content is live, local and relevant to their communities will thrive. Others will die-simple choice.

Changes? What changes? Leaders? What leaders? Do you call "Less is More" leadership?

For a number of reasons, mainly the attitude and complacency of people in radio as well as our changing culture, radio has ceased to be a significant thing in the average person's life.

Get rid of the suit and tie geeks and those who feel radio is all about sales rather entertainment. Or else say hello to nothing but Ipod.

Radio's leaders need to believe in RADIO and stop trying to replace it. Radio is the most powerful medium there is and will be for the foreseeable future. But we have to meet the needs and WANTS of our listeners or other mediums will take them from us.

With ratings comes revenue. Work on fixing the CONTENT. Get listeners back.

Cumulus getting larger? OMG

The turnover rates for station sales staffs are embarrassing and the training for new sellers is minimal leading to an ever increasing pool of former prospects saying, "I tried radio and it didn't work". Can we please grow up and act like a real industry?

Too much cutting of those things that make us unique to the listener (promos, DJs, "all live & local). If we become a jukebox then there's nothing to separate us from Pandora! Or an iPod.

Get rid of the bean counter mentality, and sue them if they don't pay clowns. Go back to when radio was all about the entertainment first, and that will bring clients to the table who want to be a part of something great, Say goodbye to the suits!

Only the small/mid size groups want to invest & innovate. CC, Cumulus, Citadel refuse to lead.

You don't fire people in a recession! It's like pouring gas on a fire! Cut their pay if you have to, but don't fire them. You only make matters worse by doing so, anyone with any common sense knows this! However, the powers that be don't have any common sense

They don't take their own advice. They tell potential advertisers that long term consistency is the key to growth, yet they don't market themselves except on their own air or with trade with other media. What's good for the goose is good for the gander.

Too much voice tracking, & not enough live jocks

Qualified yes- some radio companies operate strategically and plan for the long term. Many are still tactical and continue the same bad habits. Positive changes are being made but at a pace that is too slow.

The radio industry isn't moving at all. But the rest of the world keeps rushing by.

Big Box Radio did not work , Voice tracking only took the local DJ out of the mix, "One Day Sales" have only devalued Radio advertising in the eyes of the advertisers. As long as CPA's and Attorneys are running the show ,Radio will not be competitive.

We are moving in the right direction, but nowhere near fast enough. We need a more definite plan and the realization that we are soon to be an industry of websites and Wi-Max, not AM/FM transmitters.

need more non Clear Channel broadcasters to take an Industry lead

No! we've gotten away from personality, localization, information and community service.

In fact it is a decades old problem. The radio industry is slow to adapt, and oftentimes clings to methods of the past with diminishing returns. In short, radio continues to shoot itself in the foot then wonder why it limps and bleeds. (NH, Virginia)

Until the consolidators learn that radio advertising isn't just another commodity like a can of beans, the overall state of our industry will not get well.

There needs to be more job opportunities in the industry for displaced air talent. Too bad the Telecommunications Act can't be repealed, as that could be a start.

Radio is not a Wall Street business!! Decisions must be locally focused to be successful. It's sort of like raising 8 kids-they all cry sometimes, but the reasons are vastly different!! And you must spend time talking/listening to them to reach solutions.

Our industry leaders, association leaders, owners and station managers are clueless and out of touch with the marketplace and the opportunities are realities of the new marketplace. How can so many smart people get it so wrong.

Radio's best competitive advantage over other media is its ability to locally connect, which is the exact opposite of where McRadio has been heading. Ray Schilens CEO/Radio Lounge-Houston www.radioloungeusa.com

Radio offers advertisers an amazing reach platform, applicable to target markets well beyond standard demographics and CPP's. We need to market our medium for its strengths. Mark Steinmetz, Pres/COO, Gross Communications Corp.

I think SMALL MARKET operators have and are making the right decisions. Being truly local and serving local customers. As for the publicly traded companies they run them into bankruptcy and get rewarded. Our industry leader? They are in small markets!

If Cumulus is allowed to buy more stations, it's over.

Radio will never die. In all aspects of living-it's ever-changing (there is no such thing as permanence), the choices are ever expanding. We are lucky consumers!

The need to "consolidate" has taken the artistic out and the corporate in.

There's no answer to cell phone drive time usage, iPods, Pandora, etc.

No--Radio is more threatened by more things than at any time. Yet radio groups are blissfully operating like it was '85. We are in danger of being an out-of-style appliance with 3rd rate programming in a high tech world w demoralized sales staffs.

The industry needs to continue growing and evolving to encompass all forms of constant interaction with the local listeners.

The stations need to go back to be individualized to the community/listeners STOP being the same as every other station throughout the city & country. Work with the reps, not against them. Get back to keeping good experienced reps!

radio is heading down the toilet!

I'm encouraged by the bullish moves of Cumulus. They're saying to the industry that that radio is not dying. We'll invest a billion dollars to nip that perception right now.

Stations need more content from local producers -- stations are competing with mp3 players with thousands of songs, but no weather or local info.

Deregulation killed us, it made a very few very rich, and destroyed the industry & thousands of lives. Amarillo, TX

Radio needs to realize that it needs to embrace digital and internet NOW.

They have cut too many people and the ones left are very over worked

They may be making changes in an effort to get back on track but the world as we know it has changed and is changing faster than radio can keep up.

Radio is forfeiting its local franchise and is becoming less relevant to its communities every day.

The automated radio station sounds more and more mechanical, every day. Eliminate the jocks and you kill off the breeding and training ground for new sales people. This, in my opinion, is why it is so hard to find good sales people.

We have to start selling our medium differently, selling radios reach within specific target buyer groups and move beyond CPP's.

Let's get back to nurturing talent, being an entertaining media and staying competitive.

No company has an expressed vision or is expressing any interest beyond the next quarter. What's happened to the RAB? It has/had an opportunity to lead but has become virtually irrelevant.

needs much more creativity with the air

Too much emphasis on large groups' bankers and backers and not enough on getting the business in touch with the audience. First comes audience, THEN comes revenue. You can't do it the other way.

Yes, in the right direction especially in smaller markets, but not fast enough.

run by idiots chasing immediate profits

Cumulus with all that money is going to hurt radio even more. I'm getting out.

Just the car business is coming back,

Radio is so boring and controlled by corporate that innovation has dried up

I got into radio because I grew up listening to radio. I no longer listen to radio. Boring, ad crazy, lazy, uncreative, not interesting. It aims for the lowest common denominator and is winning that demo. But that's not where the world is going.

If the industry was a car, on each fill up of gas, the owner would put a dime less gas in the tank and expect more mileage. Less is not more, just look at YouTube and Google. What is radio bringing to the content table and what is radio investing in for

Radio managers/corporate just "don't get it" that sales materials cannot be constructed by managers, reps, and near minimum wage sales assistants. If your sales materials look cheap, it makes radio "feel cheap" to business owners.

In particular, National sales - a one rep firm system is not in everyone's best interest, unless you are owned by CC.

It is all UP UP and AWAY

It's about live local connection to the community!

** For the record, 1,022 hit the survey page, and 854 completed the survey.**

INSIDE RADIO®