

## Radio Equals Relationships

At year's end, I tend to log miles visiting Kelly Music Research client stations. On my tour, if there's a station we're not currently working with, I will attempt to schedule a brief visit.

Recently, I visited with a station I had only spoken to on the phone in the past. The GM and PD responded to my e-mail saying, "...how about 4pm on Thursday?" We sat down in their conference room, and spoke for about 30 minutes. I had no agenda. Once we sat down, the first thing I said was, "I'm here to say thank you. We've been speaking on the phone for the past couple months, you've responded to my e-mails, and you've made time for me today to introduce myself. So, again, thank you."

They shared with me the history of their company, the market, and the newly upgraded facility. It was interesting to hear how much they value the people involved at their stations. Especially in this day and age of downsizing, this company's philosophy was just the opposite. We agreed on how stations running on skeleton crews can sound as soulless as empty hallways. We agreed that listeners can pick up on that missing emotion from a station running on a shoestring budget. This company's stations possessed the lifeblood that makes radio sound "alive." Successful radio stations have strong relationships with their listeners that begin with the people involved on-air, and off-air.

We spoke about sales. "Local versus national? National's been off...our local is strong. We have a loyal client base and our account execs each have strong relationships with the local community of advertisers."

Again, that word...relationships. We spoke very little of research. They have been working with another company, with minimal issues. My purpose, again, was to introduce myself, in hopes of starting a business relationship in the future, should the need arise. When asked about Kelly Music Research, I said we're an independently owned company, operating our own call center in Philadelphia since 1991. Our company conducts local callout and library music testing for stations in all market sizes and formats including WBEB/Philadelphia. If there's something you're not getting from your current provider, or have become unhappy with, let me know. Kelly Music Research may be able to help you. The conversation then turned toward a possible situation where our assistance may be needed. Hopefully this relationship will develop.

Whether it's account exec/local client, Kelly Music Research/radio station, or radio station/listener, it's the strength of the relationship that can help all parties involved move closer to their goals.

One of my goals this year is to help build more relationships for Kelly Music Research. I will be on the phone, e-mailing, and visiting more radio stations just to say hello. I will also share some thoughts from my conversations that may or may not deal with radio. There could be short anecdotes that you may be able to use in your daily radio

experiences. Feel free to provide any feedback, and hopefully you and I will be speaking soon. Happy New Year!