



# THE LUND CONSULTANTS

TO BROADCAST MANAGEMENT, INC.

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## Lund Top Ten Vol. 5 – Connecting With Listeners

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### ...And You Thought It Was Just The Music.

Why do listeners choose your station over another, especially when both stations have similar musical products or offerings? The Lund Consultants rank the reasons listeners make those choices. It's time to take a giant step back from your computer and get the big picture.

- 1 **It's Not the Library, It's the Experience.** Sure, playing the right songs is smart programming, but listeners choose their favorite station based on the total experience. Why do trendy young adults and teens (and their parents) shop at Abercrombie & Fitch or Hollister? Why not Burlington or a chain department store? A&F and Hollister create an atmosphere with sight and sound. They stimulate the shopper and make them want to fit in. It's the retail version of the best fraternity or sorority on campus.
- 2 **Create Buy-In.** We've all heard the stations that play the right songs, use the right phrases, play a lot of music and don't talk too much, BUT their morning show is polite, faux-friendly, and coated in Teflon. They are rarely the top-rated station. There may be so much Teflon that even listeners don't stick to it! The real winners relate to their audience and make them a part of the feeling. It's emotional buy-in. How do you measure that? Do people sing along with your station in the car? Do they freely call or email some of your DJs? Those are signs of buying in. Yes, your music is also an emotional tool, and research shows listeners react strongly to their most liked or hated music types.



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- 3 **Sell Usage.** Do your liners and promos reflect the listener and how they use your station? If not, you're on the road to nowhere. Do you move beyond memorized lines to talents who can telegraph the same message because they understand the core listener?
- 4 **Understand Use Patterns.** Here's the part that separates brilliant programmers from the rest of the pack. Do you really know how your listeners use you? When do they wake up, make the first flush, drive to work or school? Even more basic: do you realize that radio is a part of what they do, and that they don't hang on your every word? Do you fit their needs, but also break through and connect? Or are you just white noise in the background?
- 5 **Reach Across Platforms.** Is your webpage truly interactive with your audience? Can listeners directly contact the voice they hear? Are you part of the social networking of Facebook and other communities? Are you involved in your community, or merely a button on the car radio?
- 6 **Sound Very Local.** Do you reflect where your listeners choose to live? Hopefully you're not one of the thousands of radio stations in the US that have no geographic identity and could easily come from another state. That's the role of satellite or internet streams. Your local franchise is a key asset, but one that is all-too-often squandered.
- 7 **Tug the Heartstrings.** Humans have compassion, and that comes to the forefront when stories of child or animal abuse, natural disasters or senseless tragedies take center stage. It can even be as simple as a pet adoption segment on your morning show. It's talking about local heroes and the "good news" in your area. It's also being the catalyst for fixing problems or helping the family whose home was just consumed in a fire or flood. To be a friend to your listener, you have to be the kind of friend they would want. Heartstrings issues are a measurement of that.
- 8 **Understand Purse-Strings.** If you listen to some of the radio network talk shows, it's clear they don't understand the problem of gas prices. You have to know listeners' issues and how it affects them. The answer may be in your method of contesting (paying someone's bills or doing free or reduced price gas promotions). Are there major layoffs in your town? How about a job link on your website or a job matching service?



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- 9 **Radio is an Entertainment Medium.** While information is often a key ingredient, people choose a station because they get some entertainment or enjoyment from listening to it. Does your station sound like a lively and interesting friend?
  
- 10 **Companionship is the Unspoken Mission of Radio.** It's a key factor in choosing a morning show. Radio may be the first "voice" for most people each morning. It's the person in the car when traffic is not moving. It's the noise at work that helps drown out the obnoxious coworker or irate boss or customer. It's the place to get local weather at predictable times, or breaking news. It's the contest a listener can play along with, but never have to actually enter. It's the source of information that makes the listener smarter when he or she talks to people throughout the day.