

D A V I D T Y L E R  
*PRESENTS*

# 5 WAYS TO INSTANTLY IMPROVE



## YOUR RADIO STATION'S IMAGING

written by DAVID TYLER

**THINK OF RADIO IMAGING** as the packaging around your radio station. Imagine for a minute a box of Tide, Coca Cola or Wheaties sitting on the shelf in a plain brown package with black crayon lettering and drawings to describe what's inside: soap, soda, cereal. These companies put a lot of money, time and research into their products, why would they *give up* when it came to creating it's distinctive packaging? Why should you...? Here are 5 ways to instantly improve your radio station's imaging:

## 1. Pick One Clear Message

Your positioning statement should be simple, clear and repeated often both on the air and off. But first things first, you need to decide what that message is. The best way to start your search for a positioning statement is by understanding how your station is perceived or consumed by your audience.

Call in a group of your biggest fans, but please, don't call it a "focus group" because then they'll only say the things that they think you want to hear. Call it a small 'thank you' reception...it needs to be informal. Talk with them. More important is listen to them. Listen for what they say about your station and take notes.

I guarantee you 100% that they won't say: "You're the rock station that really rocks!" or "You're the station that plays the best MIX of music from the 70's, 80's, 90's and today!" or my personal favorite "You're the station with 50,000 Watts of power!" Nope. They're more likely to say something like, "You make me feel normal" or maybe, "Your station fits my life-style" or how about, "When I finally get time to myself, I listen to you".

As you get your brand new positioning diamond out of the rough make sure to craft it into something that is multi faceted, that can be used through all of your imaging. Think about how you're going to promote programing highlights with it.



Meet Your Listeners



Pick Your Direction and Stay On Course



Expect Growth

## 2. Talk to the Listener

A simple technique to use when constructing your key marketing message is to talk to your audience from *their* point of view. The quick and easy way to do this is to incorporate the word 'you' or 'your'...or to at least imply 'you' or 'your'. Better still get the listener to do it for you in their own voice.

When I was the imaging director for Q92 in Montréal I started the campaign "Q92 is MY station..." Every listener who called in was asked to briefly introduce themselves and then say "...and Q92 is MY station". The campaign was supported by having our image announcer say on other liners that, "Q92 is YOUR station for..." and inserted the various features of the station we wanted to highlight, for example, the music, a contest, a host.

Nobody cares how many thousands of watts your transmitter is or that your music library is packed with 4 decades of great songs. Tell them something that's important to them.

## 3. Be Relevant

If there's snow on the ground that should be a part of your imaging. If it's apple picking season, that should be a part of your imaging. If the potholes in your market are big enough to swallow up an Austin Mini that should also be a part of your imaging. Your imaging should reflect the world that your listeners are living in, gone are the days of radio stations being God-like living high above us mere mortals, up there lounging in togas, snacking on grapes while playing golden harps.

In your weekly writing meeting you should spend some time discussing how you can relate what's going on in the lives of your listeners to what you're doing on the radio station.

I still receive inquiries about what I've dubbed "Instant Imaging" which is another way to be relevant. Here's an example of what I mean by Instant Imaging: if there's a local breaking news story about a truck full of chickens that spilled over on the local highway, get your writers together for a quick meeting and write up 5 liners that use that *visually interesting* story to help image your station. Mind you, those are the liners that have the shortest shelf life, be aware of that and pull them BEFORE they burn out.

By making your imaging relevant, you become relevant in the listeners mind.

## 4. Get to the Point

As much as you may think it, your listeners are not as into your radio station as you are...and unlike most of us radio people they actually have a life. Don't waste their time with a long winded message. And that's all I have to say about that!

## 5. Produce to Support the Message

Too often I hear liners that are absolute production masterpieces. I can just imagine the bleary eyed producer who spent the night digging up and/or creating new awesome sounds he could incorporate into the liner, morphing the announcers voice like Jim Carey manipulates his face in such a way to create something that warrants my attention because of it's "totally awesomeness"...but unfortunately it gets in the way of the message (see step 1).

Now, I'm not talking about the production elements that are too loud or EQed misaligned into the sonic range of the voice, I mean production elements that are doing nothing to support the message. It doesn't matter what format we're talking about, though CHR and Rock formats are the most guilty.

Think of imaging production as a way of **bolding**, underlining, *italicizing*, adding "punctuation" to what your announcer is saying. In some instances it can even be a character that plays off of the announcer. As a last thought your imaging producer needs to understand what they are producing so it helps to have them in on your writing meeting.

So there you have it, 5 ways to instantly improve your radio station's imaging. If you're ready to start strengthening your radio station's market position through compelling radio imaging or if you just want a consultation call me at one of the numbers below. I look forward to helping you and appreciate your feedback!



**David Tyler** has been a broadcaster for 20+ years and has helped radio stations around the world improve the way they image themselves for over 12 of those years, both as a consultant and as a *signature voice talent*.

He can be contacted by phone toll free in North America at 1.888.432.8438, worldwide at +1.450.435.4970 or by email at [david@davidtyler.com](mailto:david@davidtyler.com)

Subscribe to his blog "The Art of Communicating Ideas" at: [www.davidtyler.com/blog](http://www.davidtyler.com/blog)