

# Powerful Programming Ideas to help you...



## Welcome to the 2007 NAB European Radio Conference

I hope you'll keep and enjoy this document, provided to you by Steve Casey Research. It is *fully loaded* with programming wisdom. We searched our archives and tapped the wisdom of programming experts. The result is this set of extremely useful ideas, tips, techniques and best practices. Just as what you learn here in Barcelona will stay with you, these ideas will be a programming resource for years to come. — Steve Casey

Ideas to help you...

### Conduct an AMT

#### Library Music Test

1. Hold the test on a weekday evening, at a hotel meeting room.
2. Use a simple form to record the music opinions, not a computer OMR form or a "dial".
3. Introduce each hook with a number, and place that number on the form.
4. Break up the answer form into 5 song groups, 25 songs on a page, and write the opinion above each column.
5. Break the test halfway through, and provide a cold buffet.

Ideas to help you...

### Design a Music Test Sample

1. The sample size should be at least 120 people. If you have more than 3 demo groups, increase to 40 respondents per group.
2. Half of the sample should be people who say they listen most to your station.
3. Everybody should have listened to your station in the previous week.

4. Those who did not listen to you most should have listened most to one of your two closest competitors.
5. Make sure that you ask about which stations they listen to for music, specifically, to try to reduce the influence of the morning show and news.

Ideas to help you...

### Learn Listeners' Music Opinions

1. Allow the music test respondents to rate the music with words rather than numbers (like 1-10) or a "dial".
2. The most commonly used answer scale in the world is: I'm unfamiliar with the song, I don't like it and never did, I used to like but am tired of it, I have no opinion either way, I like it, It is one of my favorite songs. *We advise you to use this scale.*
3. To evaluate the overall popularity of a song, create a Popularity Index from 1-150. Basically, the Popularity Index is the percent of people who liked the song, but weighted.
4. Give extra credit (the industry standard is 150%) for "favorite". And give half credit for "no opinion" since it is neutral.

5. Give no credit for "don't like", "tired of" and "unfamiliar". None of those indicate a positive opinion about the song at the time of the survey. But do a second calculation of popularity, based only on the people who were familiar with the song. This is your "Potential Index".

Ideas to help you...

### Build a Music Test 'Hook' Tape

1. Prepare the hooks in groups of 100 songs.
2. Don't try to teach people the songs. Hooks that are too long will create boredom and a less attentive group.
3. Hooks should average about 7 seconds. A block of 100 hooks should play back in 13-15 minutes.
4. Create the hooks this way: voice the number of the hook, play the hook, and leave a 1/2 second pause. Don't repeat numbers. For a 600 title AMT, number the hooks from 1 to 600.
5. If you have your hooks professionally produced, we have been very satisfied with the work done by Hooks Unlimited. [www.Hooks.com](http://www.Hooks.com)

Ideas to help you...

## Learn if your Listeners are Passionate about your Music

1. When you complete a music test, create a chart to show you how many songs received a high test score.
2. What constitutes a high scoring song? Most radio programmers use a Popularity Index of 80%. If you use an unusual answer scale, ask the opinion of your research company (and shame on you :-))
3. Tabulate the number of songs with a high score for the total sample, your station's P1 listeners, your competitors' P1 listeners, each demographic group you created, and if you have our analysis tools, the Core 85% and Pure Core Format Fans.
4. The Total Sample should normally find 80-100 or more songs to be excited about. If fewer, your sample lacked focus.
5. Your own P1s should show more passion for the music than any other station's. If not, you're in trouble. Either your test design was bad, or your station is far off track. Ideally, you'll see 1.5 to 2 times as many high testing songs with your "Most" listeners than for the total sample.

Ideas to help you...

## Stay in Touch with your Listeners

1. Do 3 library music tests (AMTs) every year, 1 to 2 if you are a youth (under 25 years old) station.
2. Do telephone-based callout music research at least every other week, or weekly if you are a youth station.
3. Keep a diary of programming concerns and questions. Keep adding to it.

4. When you do music testing, investigate some of these issues as well. Add well designed questions to your AMTs and callout.
5. Not all research has to be "formal". Talk to the listeners. Meet them at station events. Take their phone calls. Do semi-format research like focus groups and listener advisory panels

Ideas to help you...

## Work with your Programming Consultant

1. Decide what type of help your station needs. Research? Music scheduling expertise? Promotions idea? Talent coaching? That will help you hire a consultant with the right set of skills.
2. Invest time in educating your consultant. No matter how strong their skills, your situation is unique.
3. Communicate quickly and thoroughly. Consultants ask lots of questions, and it helps them understand your unique problems.
4. Establish exactly how they will influence the station's programming. Will they offer suggestions? Will they make firm decisions?
5. Decide how much they "do", versus how much they "teach". "Do" can make things go faster, while "Teach" might build long term success.

Ideas to help you...

## Improve your Air Talent

1. Coach your on-air people to speak about the station with passion.
2. They should speak like real people, when they are confident, passionate and excited about their topic.

3. Schedule constructive one-on-one critiques of each air talent.
4. When the air talent adds his/her content, it should enhance the bond between the listener and either the music or the station. Does it?
5. Work toward technical excellence: Levels are correct. Songs are not cut short. There are no pauses and "uh..."s. Delivery is polished and compelling.

## Get more free stuff!

### 1. Free Guide to Music Testing

Get your own copy of radio's best guide to music testing. It is free! To get your copy, email us your request with your name, station and position:

scasey@upYourRatings.com

### 2. Free Monthly Newsletter

Receive the Steve Casey Research monthly radio programming and research newsletter "Up Your Ratings" for free. Email us your request with your name, station and position:

scasey@upyourratings.com

### 3. Read the details in our blog!

We'll be expanding the ideas in a series of blogs. Please feel to subscribe—and even contribute. The Up Your Ratings blog is at:

www.UpYourRatings.blogspot.com

### 4. Talk with Steve Casey about your needs.

If you have any listeners, or are considering adding some, let us be your partner. We'll give you the tools, ideas and expertise to do a professional job of understanding your listeners, and adjusting your programming so increase your ratings.

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