

THE

BEST PROGRAM DIRECTORS IN AMERICA

BY EDITOR IN CHIEF ED RYAN

PROGRAM DIRECTORS

today do everything radio programmers have always done. They manage the on-air product, they manage and develop talent, they listen to the music, they work with the general manager and the sales manager, and they watch the ratings like a hawk, constantly interpreting, adapting, and adjusting to keep the numbers up and the revenue flowing. And many PDs these days are doing all that for two stations or more.

It adds up to a more than full-time job — but a PD in 2014 is responsible for all that and a lot more.

Today a PD's duties extend to the Web and streaming, social media, videos,

podcasts, apps, everywhere the brand is heard, seen, and enjoyed today and everywhere it's likely to be delivered in the future.

So much goes into being a great programmer today that we can't simply look at the ratings and revenue and declare who's best by the numbers. We consider those things, but we also ask our readers to nominate the PDs they think are consistently doing the best job at the myriad duties of a programmer today. Those nominations and readers' comments and recommendations are a key part of the process of creating this list.

We also consult with a trusted list of industry experts, talk to the nominees'

bosses, and dig out information about their performance and the way they work. Once all nominations are in, we ask the nominees to answer a few questions, to find out their thinking and how they talk about their job, the people they work with, and the future of the industry.

Our list of the best PDs in America is broken out by market size — major, large, medium, and small. In the pages that follow, these top PDs will tell you why they believe they've been successful, and what it takes to be a great programmer in the constantly changing business of audio entertainment today.

ANDY BLOOM**CBS Radio/
Philadelphia**

andy.bloom@cbsradio.com

Andy Bloom and U.S. Sen.
Marco Rubio

"The job of program director is more complex than ever before," notes Bloom. "Program directors have always had their fingers in everything, but those prospering today are expert multi-taskers. The primary focus remains on making good radio come out of the speakers, but in 2014, the technological challenges facing the industry are more complex than ever and have to be accounted for in every decision.

"Programmers must also invest the necessary time to understand and follow new regulatory and legal issues. Additionally, any programmer who doesn't understand the importance of their role in sales, and how powerful they can be helping the station achieve its revenue goals in addition to its ratings goals, doesn't see the big picture. Also, a great support staff is critical, which I'm blessed to have at WIP and WPHT."

Bloom also points to the importance of "having, finding, and motivating great talent, then having those personalities become great storytellers and opinion leaders." He goes on, "Radio and television are less and less about providing information. People get the information they want pushed to them instantly on their cell phones. What they need is strong opinions and great storytellers who can help them understand *what* and *why*. Personalities who can tell them how they should feel about it or reaffirm what they already believe.

"The Sports format is men's equivalent of soap operas for women. WIP plays into the drama and finds the storyline that the audience cares about. WPHT goes beyond the headlines and helps frame the stories in a way that enables listeners to understand how to process the news. This is done on both stations, with compelling and interesting personalities."