

THE

BEST PROGRAM DIRECTORS IN AMERICA

BY EDITOR-IN-CHIEF ED RYAN

The radio mantra over the past few years has been “It’s all about the content.” Without compelling content, radio, they say, will lose the battle for the ear of the consumer as waves of new content delivery systems nibble away at our TSL and prey upon our revenue supply. That means making every break sound compelling, every voicetracked shift, every newscast, every weather report, and on and on. And, oh yes, let’s not forget fitting that all into a format pleasing to the PPM gods. To make all that happen, you must have a programmer who not only gets all of the above, but can multi-task more than ever before. There’s the

talent to manage, the events to produce, the brand to protect, the digital, social media, texting — you get the picture.

You’ll recognize most of the names on this list: These highly respected individuals continue to program some of the most brilliant-sounding radio stations in America.

Producing this list isn’t easy. It all starts with a nomination, typically from someone who ranks higher in the company than the nominated PD. We go from there, with a questionnaire and a look at ratings, experience, awards, and several other factors. We reach out to programming experts in the industry for

input, in all formats and in all market sizes.

But more important than exactly where each PD ranks on this list is what they can tell us about their jobs, their daily lives, and how they manage to get through their mile-long daily checklists.

We pepper them with questions; this year on whether live and local still matters, what a great-sounding radio station sounds like, and how a young programmer reading this list might wind up in these pages in the years ahead. We’re very excited to present them to our readers: the Best Program Directors in America for 2015.

ANDY BLOOM

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Bloom has been in radio since he was a teenager programming a 10-watt high school station. His first paid programming gig was at WQFM in Milwaukee, starting just months after graduating college. He says



radio stations must take on the personality of their programmers: "That influences the station's sound. Nonetheless, there are qualities successful radio stations have in common. One, they do big things. Two, they are omnipresent and woven into the fabric of the community. Three, listeners are emotionally invested in the success of the station."

Bloom says he's learned to always bet on the people. "To win," he points out, "PDs must be surrounded by great people. Fortunately, I've always had the best people around me, including some of the most talented air personalities and tremendous mentors and bosses. For decades I've had friendships and traded ideas with the brightest programmers, creative people, marketers, and engineers in multiple formats. I've been blessed to have stupendous people close by and success funneling their energies toward the same goals."