

# Why Programming And Sales Must Be A Team



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In thinking about the current state of business, it's valuable to try to reset the relationship between programming and sales. What is the ultimate win-win? How can better collaboration yield more monetization – without negatively impacting ratings?

Part one of the reset is about creating an internal culture that is obsessed with making clients feel like partners, not just advertisers. This path requires 100% buy-in from a station or cluster, in every department of operation. Every opportunity to document success in the relationship should be maximized, whether it be in audio, video, or written form. There needs to be a newfound internal pride when it comes to sharing these success stories.

In addition, there must be a commitment to making the advertiser feel good by keeping them constantly informed with follow-through and solid collaborative communication.

Make clients feel like they are a part of the station. Find ways to cross-promote them whenever you can, on every platform. Work on understanding their hot buttons.

When working the process of integrating new client partnerships, think NTR, and think about potential opportunities for sales and programming to integrate.

## Makeover Required

The sales and programming relationship in the radio business is in need of a makeover. Stations need to plan ahead further, giving them more time to sell opportunities. Lack of lead time is often a reason that assets are not properly monetized.

Stations need to get creative and set up an environment that encourages new and out-of-the-box thinking.

One starting point could be a structured client solutions meeting. Someone can be assigned to document minutes of the meeting and assign deadlines. The program director and sales manager should evaluate their system of realistic guidelines and action steps.

The PD should be encouraged to update the sales team on changes and tactics for the station and its competitors, and the answer from programming to a request from sales shouldn't be a flat no, but a "let's try this" approach.

The programming and sales teams should discuss what makes a great sponsorship, and by coming to agreement on this important topic, find a synergy between the sponsor product and the radio station.

Programming should have a deep understanding of the needs and wants of the client so that a critical path can be created that is committed to brainstorming, and

committed to greater promotional creativity.

Think about topical opportunities daily. Find ways to set up deals with clients who have a mindset similar to a station's "brand promise." Build personal relationships with clients and their PR companies. Learn everything about their customers and their products. Think about the idea of a "client advisory board" as a way to include clients in your thought process.

The result: programming wins, sales wins, and you deepen loyalty with your existing and new listeners.

## Some final thoughts on monetization:

1. Create a systematic approach, holding revenue-generating sessions with programming and sales leadership every quarter.
2. Lay out priority client targets and create opportunities to fit them.
3. Audit every sponsorable asset to see if it's being sold.
4. Inventory past big sales/programming wins and work on repeating.
5. Evaluate what isn't being sold and figure out a path to success.

Business as usual won't produce enough business. It sounds simple, but it certainly isn't!