

A Radio Guy's Take on Troy Warren's Plan to Change the Radio Landscape



From the desk of 35 year radio vet, Michael J

The state of terrestrial radio in 2018 is tenuous, at best. With mega radio conglomerates iHeart and Cumulus filing various forms of bankruptcy, it's clear that terrestrial radio has not only changed, it's 60 plus years removed from its golden age.

So, what can be done with a medium that still has tremendous power to reach millions of consumers but is currently on the short list of things in which people are losing interest? Unlike print media, the radio station signal is still out there, as long as the electricity is on.

Troy Warren has come up with an interesting and innovative concept, one that will not necessarily bring the golden age of radio back, but will "turn the electricity back on" for the benefit of the station owner, its employees and more importantly, the station's advertisers and listeners.

We are no longer talking about the old familiar programming recipe that is leading to the current demise of a once powerful industry. Playing the same top 200 songs of now or then or whenever, over and over and over again, ad nauseam. In fact, we're not even talking typical 30 or 60 second ads repeating to "see-what-sticks" to reach the bottom line – the consumer. No! We are taking something that we all do, every single day, three hundred and sixty-five days of every year, whether you are rich or poor or somewhere in between, and leveraging it in a way that has, until now, never been done.

And exactly what is this something?

I won't hold you in suspense any longer. That something is...

eating!

And not just any eating, but specifically dining out. Statistics now show that people are spending more money eating out than they ever have in history. In fact, we spend more eating out than we do at the grocery store, by over two billion dollars annually and that number is increasing every single year!

So, it stands to reason, EVERY single citizen of these United States WANTS deals on food! NO EXCEPTIONS! Why pay twenty-five dollars or more for a delicious steak dinner when you can get the same thing for five or ten dollars? Or why pay a buck for a taco if you can get the same taco for a dime or quarter? A person's income bracket makes no difference. We ALL want deals on food.

What's all this have to do with the future of radio?

The answer my friend, in my experienced guesstimate and analysis, is nothing short of brilliant and consists of a new programming strategy.

The center of this new strategy is information, specifically information that is essential to everyday life. Minus the politics. Politics will always be politics and in the news, but we all need to exist beyond politics.

So, science, technology, health and living are the main "program" offerings. Why is program in quotes? Because the surrounding elements that used to contain the components of a business trying to sell you THEIR goods or services, in the form of advertising, will now come under the heading of promotion. And, promotion is NOT the old radio conflict of trying to balance

program content with advertisers. Promotion SUPPORTS programming and thus becomes part of the “program” content.

How?

One word...and you probably guessed it...

food!

Restaurants already offer deals to their consumers and restaurant owners have to pay someone to distribute their deals. Not only that, restaurants also take a big profit hit when they have to offer a discount on their prices. Plus, they get hit on the discount and then get hit again on the price of distributing that discount. Ouch!

That’s where we come in.

We eliminate the cost of distribution to the restaurant, as they will no longer pay for an entity to distribute their deal to potential customers. The restaurant benefits because now they are working with a larger profit on each and every deal they offer.

So, if restaurants are no longer paying someone to distribute their deals, how do they get the word out to the public?

Through DiningOutVIP.com.

DiningOutVIP.com (DOVIP) is a website that lists thousands of restaurant deals that consumers can access by purchasing the discount...

but get this...

not with U.S. Dollars, but with...

Dining Credit.

So exactly how does the public acquire these Dining Credits?

The answer is simple...

through Sponsors and Local businesses of all kinds. Think furniture and appliance stores, car washes, chiropractors, beauty salons, home services, car dealers, tire stores, oil change services and more who will distribute Dining Credit.

It works like this: when a customer purchases a product or service from a Sponsor (which they were going to buy anyway) that customer receives a matching amount of Dining Credit, one Dining Credit for every dollar spent at the business. Buy a thousand dollar couch from a furniture store and receive a thousand dollars of Dining Credit. Buy a twenty dollar car wash, receive twenty dollars in Dining Credit. Or go to a realtor's open house and receive twenty-five dollars in Dining Credit.

The point is this...by shopping at local businesses where most likely these consumers already shop, they are banking Dining Credits, which can then be used to UNLOCK valuable Restaurant, eCommerce and Travel DEALS. So, the consumer who needed that couch, or a set of tires, or a haircut and who was already going to buy that good or service anyway now gets the added benefit of discounted food at thousands of restaurants or deep discounts in eCommerce and travel.

The additional benefit is now saving them MORE money for a product or service they were going to purchase anyhow. So, how much did that set of tires, or car wash, or whatever *really* cost them?

It Didn't Cost – It PAID!!!

When they use their Dining Credit, the product or service they bought to receive their Dining Credit is NOW paying them to buy.

So far, the restaurant wins and there's a huge consumer benefit. What about the Sponsor?

The Sponsor wins as well. Here's how:

Each Sponsor pays a nominal fee for the opportunity to be an exclusive (non-competitive) category distributor of Dining Credit. In other words, one tire store to an area, one beauty salon, one pet store, one veterinarian, and so on.

Why would a business want to be a Sponsor?

Well, if Jane wants to buy a new couch or Joe wants a new set of tires, we know they have choices on where to buy. You can get pretty much the same product anywhere. However, if it's a choice between purchasing from Business A who bonuses the purchase with an equal amount of Dining

Credit versus Business B who JUST offers the product, *where would you buy?*

The result is the Sponsor attracting more traffic to their business because of the generous benefit of Dining Credit. This becomes a win for the Sponsor now, as well.

And what about the radio station?

Well, the main programming content is designed to be helpful to people. Information has always been the key to success and knowing what to do with the information advances that success. So the programming content, while important, becomes not as important as the PROMOTIONAL content. Why? Because as useful as the programming content is, the promotional content gives the listeners the key to unlocking valuable Dining Credit – and if it has value, there WILL be a demand for it!

The bulk of the promotional content will be directing listeners to WHERE they can acquire Dining Credit and relieves the radio station from running what commonly led to “changing-the- dial” advertising campaigns.

The radio station no longer has to worry about running thirty or sixty second competing campaigns. There can be hundreds of Sponsors who will have area specific non-competitive positions. The “shows” will be made up of information casts or “infocasts” that its presenters also pay to have aired who also receive Dining Credit for their listeners and participation. The radio station revenue streams increase because of the number of Sponsors increases and essentially becomes a community of Sponsors, programs and listeners that ALL receive a huge benefit and are pulling in the same direction linked to the Dining Credit.

This is a quadruple win: for the radio station, the programming, the Sponsor and the listener. Because ultimately we are ALL consumers.