

MME Record

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Building the research community: Developing partnerships between academia and industry

By Gary Corbitt, Research Director WJXT/Post Newsweek Stations

This article is based on a presentation I did at the August AEJMC Media Management and Economics divisional meeting. I'll review the ways academia and the industry are currently working together to grow the broadcast research profession. The success of this partnership will depend on all research stakeholders, stations, networks, studios, schools, students, vendors and trade associations getting involved. My challenge to you after reading it is to identify ways you'd like to become a part of this initiative.

The Broadcast Research Department

I often term the Research Director as the Chief Information Officer. That department interfaces with all departments to grow sales revenue and build the station's audience. The department's problem solving nature places it at the table when key decisions are made.

The career path options from research include sales, programming, promotions, as well as senior level positions at studios and networks. We're now seeing more General Managers with resumes that include being Research Director. Valari Staab, President/General Manager-WTVD Raleigh; Susan Adam Loyd, Vice President/General Manager WAWS & WTEV Jacksonville; and Jim Berman, General Manager-WETM Elmira; were all Research Directors.

Some Challenges We Face

There is a talent shortage of trained research personnel, reflected in recent graduates and current industry research staff. Students are still oriented to on-air and production positions, so they need to have an understanding of career options that exist with a start in research, sales or news producing. One challenge is getting students and faculty excited about research, so we need to better market this profession.

There are training issues among beginner (1-3 years' experience) researchers, who come to the job with no training. These individuals have difficulty at first with the many job responsibilities. We in the industry and academia can develop local and regional training workshops to correct this issue.

We're building a database of committed professors and industry personnel so we can take the database and match schools with local industry contacts.

Current Activities

Industry and academia have established the following working alliances:

Broadcast Research Initiative (BRI) has a mission to advance the function of the research department in the broadcast industry and maximize station performance by providing managers with highly skilled, trained research personnel

who can address research needs for all facets of station operation. We seek to accomplish this by building regional coalitions of research directors and developing alliances with the academic community. The coalitions conduct meetings designed to educate and train research personnel, teachers and students. The BEA & NAB Research Clearinghouse is also a component.

Broadcast Education Association (BEA) Research Task Force is an alliance between the industry and academia. In conjunction with the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), the Research Clearinghouse, located at <http://www.beaweb.org>, has been established. The site is designed as a resource for academic faculty teaching audience research courses and for professionals who wish to link with schools offering courses in audience research. We're (Research cont. next page)

BEA/NAB Research Clearinghouse



Midwinter abstracts due Dec. 1

by Louisa Ha, Research Competition Chair

Abstracts of papers to be presented at the Midwinter AEJMC Convention to be held at the University of Georgia, Feb. 8-10, 2002, are due Dec. 1.

The convention is sponsored by the Media Management and Economics, Civic Journalism, Comm Tech & Policy, Visual Communication, and Radio and Television Journalism Divisions.

Research papers or works in progress on topics related to the MME division are welcome. We also have a theme session called "Response to Crisis: Media in Times of Terror, War and Disaster" that needs submissions on terrorism's impact on media.

Abstracts should be between 200 to 400 words with sufficient information about the research topic for judges to determine the appropriateness of the research. Include your name, affiliation, e-mail and postal mail contact in the submission. Graduate students and junior faculty members are especially encouraged to submit to this convention as we adopt a more liberal approach in accepting papers for this convention.

We plan to post the abstracts on the division's web site after they

are accepted. People interested in posting the full paper after being accepted should inform the competition chair for arrangement.

Submit your abstract by e-mail to Research Chair Louisa Ha at louisah@bgnet.bgsu.edu.

At least one author must be present at the conference. Details of the conference are listed below:

Preconvention on Feb. 8 will include city tours of Atlanta media corporations such as CNN and the Atlanta Journal Constitution (subject to availability). The convention will start with an evening reception Friday night.

Transportation: We will try to arrange one airport pickup on Friday afternoon, but we can't promise that as yet. Otherwise, convention attendees will be responsible for getting from the Atlanta airport to UGA via the regularly scheduled van service. We will try to make at least two trips back to the airport on Sunday to save people the cost of the commercial van back. Those attendees flying directly to Athens will be picked up at the airport.

Thank you and I look forward to receiving your own or your students' submissions.

Research (Cont. from page 1)

also asking industry practitioners to adopt-a-school and do some of the following each semester: speak to a class, provide internships, mentor students, donate rating books, review curriculum, and add students and professors to the clearinghouse database.

Successful BRI Regional one-day training seminars have been held in Washington, DC, and Tampa. We're looking to expand this concept in 2002.

What You Can Do

Visit the BEA/NAB Research Clearinghouse site. Review its contents and let us know what you'd like to see from the it. Contribute to its contents.

Host a local/regional BRI Training meeting. Establish contacts with Research Directors in your market and region. Identify students with interest in research. We wish to link these students with entry-level research jobs.

We want this message to reach all professors who teach broadcast audience research. If you teach the subject, please let us know. Let's join together to grow the broadcast research industry.

Contact: David Gunzerath, dgunzerath@nab.org; Alan Albarran, albarran@unt.edu; or Gary Corbitt, gary@wjxt.com.

For directions to submit a paper or be a judge for the Media Management and Economics Division at the AEJMC Convention in Miami in August, 2002, check out the Call for Papers and Judges on the web site, <http://www.miami.edu/com/mme/index.htm>

Top Ten web sites for your management and economics courses

By Randal A. Beam, Indiana University

It's convenient. It's easy to use. And it's essentially free.

Those are three reasons to point your students toward the Web when they need information about management or economics for their course assignments.



The biggest problem with the Web, of course, is separating the electronic wheat from the chaff. I recently asked MM&E Division members to help me do that. I asked for suggestions about Web sites that were particularly useful for teaching or research on media management and economics.

Here are 10 sites that you may want to bookmark on your Web browser. All provide free information that was found helpful with courses or research.

Advice for managers

The first three sites are for managers. But in them, you can find raw materials for class discussions or help the student-media manager who comes to you for advice on personnel problems at the campus newspaper.

Of these, my favorite is Edward Miller's "Reflections on Leadership" site (www.newsroomleadership.com). Miller has been an editor, publisher and media-management coach. At his site, he has archived his weekly "e-essays," which have explored virtually every topic of interest to a media manager. These 1,000-word essays blend management theory with clear, practical advice. Each essay includes references to additional readings on the topic du jour.

The Poynter Institute's site (www.poynter.org) provides a stream of material from its highly regarded leadership and management faculty. The offerings are essays, advice or summaries of faculty research projects. From the home page, select the most recent faculty commentary in the Leadership category. If that doesn't meet your needs, click through to the Archives page. You'll find a listing of essays going back several months.

For a change of scenery, visit the Web site of Interiors & Sources magazine. Yes, it's an unlikely management resource, but in these archives are arti-

cles on business practices. They have nothing to do with the media but everything to do with being an effective manager of a small business. From the ISdesignet homepage (www.isdesignet.com), add this to the URL to get to the business-practices collection: `/magazine/ArticleIndex/buspract.html`

Collections of business information

What if your students need basic information about business or economics for reporting assignments or course projects?

Jerry Condra says his students at Oswego State University of New York make good use of The New York Times Glossary of Financial and Business Terms (www.nytimes.com/library/financial/glossary/bfglosa.htm). The site is essentially a dictionary of terms related to management, economics and commerce. The definitions keep jargon to a minimum. One of the site's best features: If the definition you're reading uses another business term, you can click through directly to a definition of that second



term. Should you find the URL to this site tough to manage, go to your favorite search engine and type in "New York Times Glossary of Financial and Business Terms." That site should be one of the first links you see.

Another key site for business information is operated by the Securities and Exchange Commission (www.sec.gov). If you want information about publicly held companies – annual reports, ownership data, financial-disclosure filings – the SEC site is where you can find it. The site's search tool, EDGAR, is fussy. Tell students to do the Quick Tutorial before digging into the site.

Some commercial sites provide reliable financial data about companies. The library at Report Gallery (www.reportgallery.com) has a free listing of company annual reports. Some of the Hoover's site (www.hoovers.com) provides business information, but it may be restricted to subscribers.

Finally, if your course involves a business project, Quicken provides a "help site" for small businesses that students might find useful. It offers advice on starting a business, managing finances, finding

(Top Ten cont. next page)



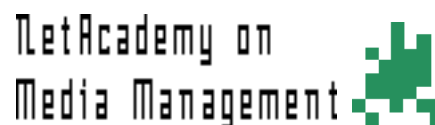
Top Ten (Cont.)

customers and running the office. From the home page (www.quicken.com), select the Small Business tab.

Academic resources

For those who study management and economics, Bozena Izabela Mierzejewska suggests the related homepages of the International Journal of Media Management (www.mediajournal.org) and the Academy on Media Management (www.mediamanagement.org). The academy's site provides links to a variety of management-related resources. The journal's site houses a searchable database of research papers.

Mierzejewska, who is executive editor of the journal, invites comments about that site. Send them to: izabella.mierzejewska@unisg.ch.



The focus of CommerceNet (www.commerce.net) is electronic commerce, which is a growing part of many media organizations. The purpose of CommerceNet is to bring together "leading business, government, technology and academic minds" to advance e-commerce. It publishes research reports and policy papers, some with a bent toward management and economics. If you want to see the holdings, select "Research/Resources" from the homepage. You'll need to register to see the reports.

Finally, don't forget the online resources of our own division. Michel Dupagne has links to materials for research and teaching at the MME division's homepage: (www.miami.edu/com/mme). Once you're there, click on "Resources."

That's my "10 Best" list. Do you have others to recommend? Send them to me at rabeam@indiana.edu. If I get more, I'll update the list in an upcoming MME newsletter.

Division Head report by Ann Hollifield, University of Georgia

I hope this finds you well in what has been a difficult autumn for all of us. I am happy to report that Al Greco, immediate past division head of MME, and Phil Napoli, our division research chair, both checked in all right after the terrible events of Sept. 11. As you probably know, they are both on the faculty at Fordham University in New York City. Al, who lives in New Jersey, had an extremely long and difficult day that Tuesday, as he tried to move away from the disaster and find a way of getting back across the river to home. He eventually made it, but not easily. I only hope that none of our other division members were more closely touched by losses from the tragedy.

It has been a busy semester for the division executive board as we plan both the program for the 2002 convention in Miami and the midwinter convention in February, and work on building the division's membership.

On February 8-10, MME will host a Midwinter Conference at the University of Georgia in Athens, along with the Visual Communication, Radio-Television Journalism, Communication Technology and Policy, and Civic Journalism divisions.

The theme of the conference is "Response to

Crisis: Media in Times of Terror, War, and Disaster." A special panel session will be organized on that topic, and research submissions appropriate to the theme are encouraged. However, research on all topics relevant to Media Management and Economics is welcome, without regard to the conference theme.

Works in progress are welcome. However, studies should be relatively close to completion by February. Presenting at the Midwinter does not prevent authors from resubmitting to the national conference in August. Those whose papers are accepted will be notified in early January. At least one author of the accepted paper must be present at the conference to present.

In addition to the theme session and research paper sessions, the Midwinter conference will include a special panel discussion of the challenges of developing curricula to prepare students to work in the converged media industry. Different viewpoints and options will be offered on this controversial topic.

Finally, we also hope to be able to offer optional pre-convention tours of media outlets such as the
(**Division Head** cont. next page)

Division Head (cont.)

Atlanta Journal Constitution and CNN for Friday, February 8. Whether that will be possible is not yet certain as CNN and many other media companies have closed their newsroom operations to non-employees as a result of recent events.

A variety of housing options will be available for those attending the Midwinter conference, including hotels, university convention housing, and option of staying in private homes.

For those who might be working on papers appropriate to one of our co-sponsoring divisions, the guidelines for submissions are the same. Abstracts should be submitted to the following contacts: CT&P: Connie Davis, davisc1@ohio.edu; RTVJ: Kathy Bradshaw, kabrads@bgnet.bgsu.edu; Civic Journalism: Michael McDevitt, Michael.McDevitt@Colorado.edu; Viscom: Kimberly Sultze, ksultze@smcvt.edu.

For more information on the MME part of the conference, refer to Page 2 of this newsletter.

Sylvia Chan-Olmsted, Vice Head and Program Chair; Randy Beam, Vice Program and Teaching Chair; and I traveled to Dallas on Nov. 30 for the AEJMC Chip Auction. We had 17 panel proposals submitted this year. When several that were very closely related were combined, all 15 of the remaining panels were forwarded to the other divisions for review. Sylvia will head our negotiating efforts in Dallas to determine the shape of our final program in Miami.

AEJMC has proposed changing the program schedule for Miami. Among the changes that have been proposed would be not to allow panels or research sessions to be scheduled before 8 am. or after 6 p.m. Panels would be scheduled in blocks and research sessions would be scheduled in blocks. Business and Executive meetings would not be scheduled during prime time but only in the pre-8 a.m., post-6 p.m. slots.

If the Council of Divisions approves these changes for Miami, it would guarantee that every panel session and research session would be in prime time. That, in turn, would make it easier for divisions to have sole-sponsored sessions if there were a panel that a division really wanted but for which no co-sponsor could be found. Under the current programming schedule, sole-sponsored panels are scheduled last, almost guaranteeing them late night and last day times that make it difficult to draw an audience.

The disadvantage of the proposal is that it would mean research panels would be running simultaneously against each other in all the divisions, limiting the ability to go to a great number of them, although there would be several blocks of research panels. The same would be the case for panel sessions. This might also make it a bit harder on those who want to present several papers, but those challenges could almost certainly be worked out.

If the changes are approved by the Council, they will be implemented as an experiment in Miami. If they create unanticipated problems, the association would revisit the issue next year.

Dane Claussen, our division Membership Chair, has developed a recruitment flyer for the division. We will be posting it to the division Web site, and I would encourage division members to support our recruiting efforts by distributing copies to graduate students and at conferences and other events.

Also this fall, the division has been approached by the International Journal on Media Management about the possibility of sponsoring a divisional award. Dan Shaver, our Named Awards Chair, will be working with Bozena Mierzejewska, editor of the Journal, to explore that possibility and develop guidelines for such an award. We appreciate the Journal's interest in and support of our division.

Please be in touch if the division executive board can be of any help at all to you during the course of the year. We hope to see you in Athens in February.

Wishing you and yours peace in the upcoming holiday season and all the best for the new year.

Happy Holidays!