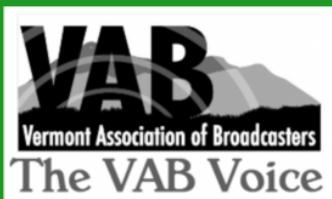


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March,
2015



Localism Honored at SLC



The NAB's State Leadership Conference was held last week in Washington,

drawing nearly 600 radio and TV broadcasters.

New York U.S. Sen. Chuck Schumer addressed the crowd, drawing cheers when he reported he had written FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler in defense of Joint Sales Agreements, especially in small markets. Schumer said he wants waivers to be granted so the JSA's may continue, despite an FCC order to curtail such deals by the end of 2016.

On Capitol Hill, several Congressmen took to the House floor to recognize broadcasters for work they do to improve their communities.

A new version of the Local Radio Freedom Act was also introduced during the event.

Radio Digital Sales to Grow

A new RAB study by Borrell Associates predicts a sharp hike in local radio digital ad sales.

The research group says such revenues are expected to climb 18% from \$494 million in 2014 to \$583 million in 2015. That's up from a 16% increase from 2013 to 2014.

According to the study, 77% of station managers said better training for digital ad sales is their top training priority.

FEW REMAIN NEUTRAL ON NET NEUTRALITY



Last week at a rare open meeting the FCC voted 3-2 in favor of the Net Neutrality bill. The vote was split along party lines, with the three Democratic appointees in favor and the two Republicans strongly opposed.

High-speed broadband providers will now be regulated as a telecommunications public utility, such as telephone service. The 300-plus pages of rules are expected to be released this week. Republican Commissioners Ajit Pai and Michael O'Rielly had asked Chairman Tom Wheeler to release the rules and take comment on them prior to a vote, but their request was rejected.

The new rules will prevent providers from impairing or degrading lawful Internet traffic, preventing them from favoring some content over other traffic in exchange for compensation of any kind.

Opinions of the ruling varied widely. Wheeler defended the vote, saying, "The Internet is the most powerful and pervasive platform on the planet. It is simply too important to be left without rules and without a referee on the field...the Internet is simply too important to allow broadband providers to be the ones making the rules."

Commissioner O'Rielly saw it a bit differently: "I am sorry to the staff members that were forced to prepare a half-baked, illogical, internally inconsistent, and indefensible document. For an institution that prides itself on quality of work and legal and technical expertise, this document is anything but."

Pai took to Twitter to share some of his concerns:



Ajit Pai @AjitPaiFCC · Feb 27

#NN: "Regulations that won't work to solve a problem that doesn't exist using legal authority the FCC doesn't have." go.usa.gov/3ctyT

Most of the rules will become law 60 days after being published.

Commercial of the Year Award entries are due by March 20.

Go to www.vab.org for details on how to enter.



Register for the VAB's 60th Annual Convention

Thursday, May 28 at the Capitol Plaza,
Montpelier

Sales, Copywriting & ABIP Seminars

International broadcast sales coach Pat Bryson and creative copy wizard Jeffrey Hedquist will present their in-demand seminars at this year's VAB Convention.



Pat Bryson is the author of "High Dollar Broadcast Sales" and has 30 years of broadcast experience as a Sales Manager and General Manager. She has coached around the world. Click here to learn more about Pat Bryson.



Award-winning audio creator and producer Jeffrey Hedquist is one of the most sought-after speakers in the country on creativity. He has been creating and producing electronic media for over 30 years, and has won more than 700 advertising awards for agencies and clients in 44 states. His articles on radio have run in magazines and newsletters throughout the county.



2015 is an ABIP year and thanks to our member stations, the VAB is able to offer this program at a tremendous discount.

The Alternative Broadcast Inspection Program is normally \$500 per station. The VAB will pay all but \$50 for ABIP contracts entered into before July 1, 2015 and all but \$100 for contracts after July 1. Our ABIP inspector, **Bob Shotwell**, will help you prepare for your ABIP visit with a special seminar at the convention. Thank you, Bob!

Stay tuned for more seminar news and a full schedule of convention events, including the Commercial of the Year luncheon.

Only \$25 per person.

Click here to register.

VAB COMMENTS ON CONTESTS



The Vermont Association of Broadcasters joined with other state broadcasters associations last month to file comments in favor of updated station-conducted contest rules.

The FCC has issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that would allow broadcasters to post contest rules online rather than broadcast them. The FCC has suggested that instead of reading the contest rules, stations instead could announce the full website address where the rules could be checked. The complete address would have to be announced each time a station contest is discussed on the air.

Currently, stations are required to "fully and accurately disclose the material terms of the contest," and to run the contest as advertised. These disclosure announcements must be broadcast "periodically," but don't have to be aired each time a reference is made to a station contest.

The proposed change would require stations to periodically announce the complete website address where the contest rules could be found. The state broadcasters commended the proposed changes with a couple of caveats.

Asking stations to announce the "complete" web address (e.g. "http://www.wxyz/newcontest.htm") anytime a reference, even passing, is made to a station contest is asking too much. Stations should be able to simply invite listeners to visit their home page ("WXYZ.com") and click on the contest rules link. The broadcasters have also asked the FCC to exempt "passing" on-air references to station contests from the proposed website disclosure rule.

A final order from the FCC is expected soon.

- Jim Condon

Interested in serving on the board of the VAB?

Contact VAB VP Alex Martin at
amartin@wcax.com