

"REASON CAN ANSWER QUESTIONS, BUT IMAGINATION HAS TO ASK THEM"

...RALPH W GERARD



BROADCAST PROGRAMMING & RESEARCH

BP&R E-NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2007

GETTING TO KNOW BP&R...  
ANDY BEAUBIEN



Prior to joining BP&R in 1997, Andy Beaubien spent 17 years as a successful Program Director in American radio markets such as Houston, Los Angeles, Boston and Washington, DC.

Andy was one of the first programmers in America to use call-out research in a private radio application. Since joining BP&R Andy has worked extensively in Europe in such markets as Poland, Hungary, Russia, Finland, Germany United Kingdom, Sweden, Austria, Slovenia, Bulgaria Ukraine and Denmark. Andy Beaubien specialises in combining practical radio programming experience with modern research techniques to deliver practical strategic solutions to clients in a variety of markets and formats. Andy is particularly experienced in alternative music formats and Eastern Europe

In our next Newsletter The A-Z of Music Research

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## BP&R Congratulates!



### European Radio Station Of The Year 2007

*This year witnessed the presentation of the first pan European Radio Awards (ERA) as part of the European NAB radio conference held in Barcelona earlier this month. The primary aim of the ERA is to celebrate excellence within*

*the radio industry, rewarding stations, teams and individuals. In the premiere category of European Radio Station of the Year with a service area of more than 1 million people, the winner was Relax FM, Moscow.*

*BP&R is proud to be the strategic research and consultancy company behind Relax FM and in this month's newsletter we interview CEO, Mikhail Eidelman about the success of his station...*

### "We had a vision for something very European"



*Q. Did you have an idea of the format direction of the station from the very beginning or was it defined by market research?*

I definitely had a gut feeling that some new combination of music genres, which I knew well and happened (thankfully) to personally like; might be suitable for an audience in Moscow. Putting it simply I could "hear" a station playing the type of music I had in mind.

I saw a lot of indications that music styles like melodic "lounge" and "ambient" music, smooth electro-jazz and especially acts like Sade and "Cafe Del Mar" were really popular in Moscow. I also had a "vision" of the potential audience a station like this might attract and it was clear they did not have a

station they could call "home" in Moscow. I'd like to point out that we had a vision for something very European – not American "sweetie" stuff like Kenny G.

The market research we conducted with BPR confirmed my feelings and clarified the music "picture". Andy Beaubien our consultant was able to identify the "centre" of the future format plus the demographic target and most importantly the relative proportion of the different music styles to be played. I would say that my gut feel had been 80% correct.

Do you have some news, a tip, suggestion or question?

Email [wayne.clouten@bprworld.com](mailto:wayne.clouten@bprworld.com)

## “One of the interesting lessons is that our audience is much more active than we predicted”

*Q. Talking about the music what sort of playlist size do you have?*

We started with around 400 songs in the active library. Now believe it or not we have more than 1000 brilliant tracks and at least a third of these have come from listeners mentioning songs and artists they would like to hear. So, we have the greatest music advisor in the world – our listener's!

*Q. With Relax FM you have changed the paradigm of what a radio station can be...have you faced challenges in finding staff to support a new way of looking at radio?*

No, we had no problems at all once we had a clear understanding of what the format was about. Following a brainstorming session with Wayne Clouten from BP&R we realised that the idea and brand potential of Relax FM was much wider and bigger than just the music. From that point all uncertainty about what we had to do was removed within our team. Everything became clear and simple.

*Q. What have you learnt about audiences and programming and marketing tactics as a result of the Relax FM experience?*

One of the interesting lessons is that our audience is much more active than we predicted. They contribute a lot of feedback on the music and seize upon any opportunity to interactive with us. Our strategy is to acknowledge them at every opportunity - on air, on our web-site, and in personal e-mails.

*Q. What has been the reaction to the station by advertisers and advertising agencies?*

Let me say they were VERY careful at the beginning. Some agency executives even said that our audience will "sleep" listening to the station and clients will never get any results from us. After proving ourselves with some effective campaigns agencies started to think about us much more positively. One of the advantages we have is that our listeners tend to be upper socio-economic.

*Q. If you don't mind me asking what sort of clients have had success with advertising on Relax FM?*

Real estate, car dealers, travel agencies and especially new music releases.

*Q. What role do you think ultra niche stations play in the radio industry and for radio listeners?*

A good [ultra niche] station means 4 things in my view. The station has to be precisely targeted, well branded and have a well defined listener community and content. It also has to be operating in a market big enough to develop a critical mass of listeners. It is still unclear if ultra niche stations are a strategy for surviving and developing radio in a "new media era". The key is not so much the ability for us to design engaging radio stations, the bigger problem is moving the radio business model from the old share of market approach to a new share of wallet

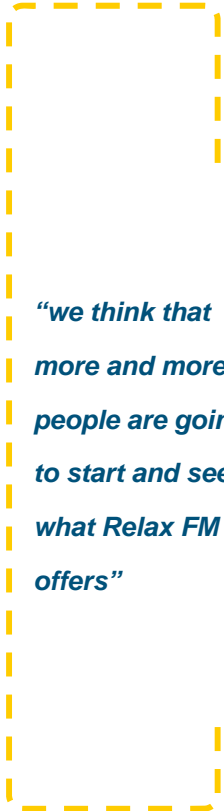
model...but we are working on it!

*Q. What about Relax FM; will it be a viable businesses in the longer term?*

For us the future is clear. Moscow is a huge and growing city, people are busy and there is a lot of stress as a result. We think that more and more people are going to start and seek what Relax FM offers.

*Q. Finally, what would you consider is going to be the critical step in the development of Relax FM?*

In my view, the main and most dangerous point for any successful niche station is the decision about growing beyond your niche and trying to appeal to a more universal audience. It is a great temptation but can also be a tragic mistake if not managed very carefully. Hopefully we'll have BP&R around to help us navigate that problem when it arrives #.

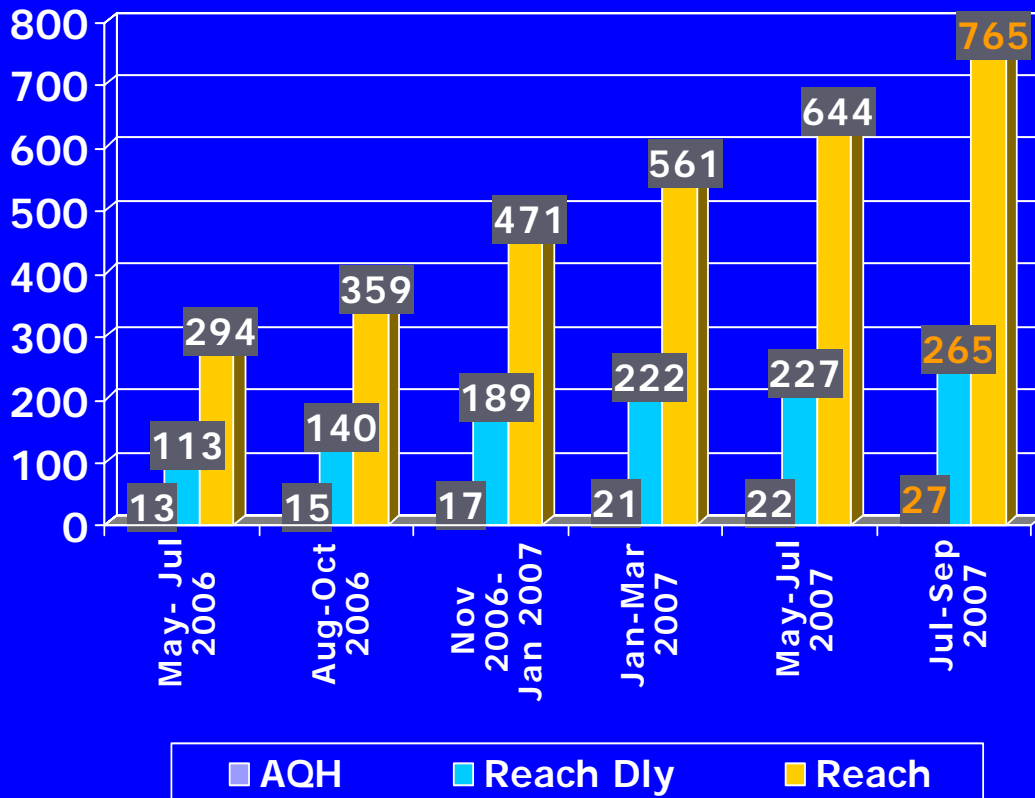


***“we think that more and more people are going to start and seek what Relax FM offers”***

*BP&R would like to thank Mikhail Eidelman for sharing his views with us and we wish him and his team every success for the future. Pictured below is the Relax FM team receiving their award for European Radio Station of the Year in Barcelona.*



## The Relax FM Success Story



summer... cocktail... relax...

Conceived with vision, shaped by research, implemented with passion...

Since launching at the end of 2005, Relax FM has been able to carve itself a share of one of Europe's most competitive markets by identifying and precisely targeting a new, under-served market.

Consistent, high quality brand values underpin the station's growing position. The format promise of Relax FM is consistent, both audibly and visually.

Station staff have a very clear understanding of their mission and the Relax FM strategy is measured and refreshed as required by BP&R conducting regular perceptual market studies. BP&R's Andy Beaubien applies his considerably knowledge and experience in Eastern Europe to ensuring Mikhail Eidelman has at his fingertips everything he needs to know about his stations performance, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It's a relationship BP&R is proud to have.