## OCTOBER 16, 2014

THE Sands REPORT

## UNIFYING THE ALT COMMUNITY

## "Call-out" is Out: The Changing Face of Research

hen it comes to music research, it's a maze out there. As we saw last week, radio has an abundance of sources to assess a record's success. Tweets. Band likes on Facebook. Streaming stats. Sales. But what about the more traditional forms... like call-out? This time we check in with Coleman Insights President/Chief Operating Officer Warren Kurtzman to find out more about the current state of record research.

Warren, is there anything new in traditional research like call-out or auditorium tests? Or are things done just as they have been the past 30 years? You could probably write a whole article on what's changed! How we produce and deliver our FACT Strategic Music Tests and our Integr8 new music research looks nothing like it did five years ago, let alone thirty years ago!

### Oh man. My space is limited!

OK. In the interest of brevity, I'll focus on three attributes multi-methodological sampling, online data collection, and new measurements.



Warren Kurtzman

### Good. Tell me about sampling.

As consumer tastes and adoption of technology have evolved, we've determined that there's no single "right" way to recruit consumers to participate in music research. Some segments of the population are best reached through calls to their mobile phones, some are best reached online, and some respond to the traditional landline telephone recruitment techniques our industry has used for years. At Coleman Insights, we use all three techniques in appropriate proportions based on the target audience we're trying to recruit. It's more complicated and costly than simply recruiting—for example—online, but this multimethodological approach is the only way to get

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a broad cross-section of a station's target audience to provide accurate music research data.

#### What about online data?

That's another big change. We've moved to online data collection for the vast majority of our music research, which is why the term "call-out" has been dropped from our lexicon. Collecting data online is simply a more efficient approach and with ubiquitous Internet access,

we're able to attract representative samples to complete our studies. A big focal point of our efforts here has been building platforms that work for consumers in every environment—when they're on their PCs, when their on their tablets, and when they're on their smartphones...

#### And last, what about these new measurements?

We're utilizing more measures that go beyond the traditional popularity, familiarity, and burn scores that music research has traditionally provided in an effort to give our clients more insights to drive their music decisions. I won't get into too many specifics here, but two areas we've been focused on are providing insights about where a song is in its life cycle, and a song's appeal within the context of a specific station brand.



What do you advise your clients about reading a record's success on things like YouTube views, tweets, streams, and Shazam... While we're obviously big believers in the insights our music research data provides to our clients, we also believe that other sources of data can be very valuable. In fact, one of the services our Integr8 new music research clients rely on us for is guidance on how to use the data we supply in concert with other data they look at. We like to remind our clients that quality new music

research data can be an outstanding tool for determining why songs are hits with our audience, but it can't tell you which songs will become hits. Many of the tools you mention are great for trying to find "buzz" about songs that can potentially become hits with your audience.

### Any downside from looking at these tools?

Well, keep in mind that Twitter's active user base remains relatively small and is not likely representative of your station's target audience. YouTube is another tool for tracking early buzz on new music, but the challenge here is that many videos burst on the scene because of their visual content and can lead to misleading data on the staying power of the songs featured in those videos...Shazam is getting a lot of attention from programmers these days, but



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## The Changing Face of Research (Con't)

they need to keep in mind that once a listener has used Shazam to identify a song or artist, he or she has little reason to use the app again as it relates to that song, so we have little idea if the initial act of "Shazaming" the song relates to the listeners' interest in hearing the song.

### Thanks so much, Warren. Any final thoughts?

Here's something I'll throw out there. Think of new music as having three phases. Roughly the first eight weeks are the "new and growing" phase, where you're trying to determine whether a song has potential or not, and some of the digital media tools can be helpful. Phase Two is the "big current hit" phase where your own new music research is vital, because it helps you identify which songs have "made it" as hits among your station's audience, tracking how long those songs stay hits, and if the appeal of a song is polarizing or driven by a specific segment of your audience. The trickiest part may be Phase Three, where you're trying to determine which hits listeners still love enough to continue to get heavy exposure on your station. This is where some of the new measures we're working on as part of our Integr8 service is helping clients and which we would be happy to discuss in more detail as we roll them out more extensively.

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## More on Reading A Record's Success

I'm a baseball fan, and I'm fascinated by the statistical revolution that's changed our understanding of that sport, You see data changing politics, and social policy, and helping us find the best burrito in America (shout out to LaTaqueria in SF!). So, while we have more information now, and while I'm excited to see that new information, at the end of day there's still three to seven real hits at any one time, and they still seem to find a way to rise to the top. I'm not sure that ever changes, no matter how much we think we know." —Derek Madden Cumulus Corporate Programmer/KLOS PD





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## Added/New in the Top 50

WRDA-Atlanta No adds X107.1-Atlanta No adds **KROX-Austin** Jack White WBOS-Boston No adds WEND-Charlotte U2 WKQX-Chicago No adds CD102.5-Columbus Dotan. Chvrches, Jungle **KDGE-Dallas** No adds **KTCL-Denver** New Politics 89X-Detroit No adds **KTBZ-Houston U2** Alt 103.3-Indianapolis New Politics WXXJ-Jacksonville No adds KRBZ-Kansas City Hooray for Earth **KXTE-Las Vegas** Airborne Toxic Event, Bleachers, Twin Atlantic KROQ-L.A. No adds

Alt 98.7-L.A. No adds

WLUM-Milwaukee Andrew McMahon in the Wilderness

KCMP-Minneapolis Cage The

Elephant, Chet Faker, Hozier, New Pornographers, Perfume Genius, Phox, Stars, Trampled By Turtles

Music Choice Crosses, Mike Doughty, Andrew McMahon In The Wilderness, Mikky Ekko

WBUZ-Nashville Chevelle

WROX-Norfolk Meg Myers

WJRR-Orlando Bush, Three Days Grace

WRFF-Philadelphia Cold War Kids

ALT AZ 93-3-Phoenix Royal Blood, U2

WXDX-Pittsburgh No adds

KNRK-Portland No adds

**Premium Choice** Banks ("On The Verge" program)

WBRU-Providence No adds

KKDO-Sacramento No adds

X96-Salt Lake City Billy Idol

KHTB-Salt Lake City No adds

KBZT-San Diego No adds

91X-San Diego No adds

Live 105-SF Royal Blood



The End-Seattle Bear Hands

KPNT-St. Louis No adds

Sirius/XM Alt Nation No adds

97X-Tampa No adds

DC-101-DC Catfish/the Bottlemen

Adds in selected other markets: WLKK-Buffalo George Ezra, Jungle, Lorde

KJEE-Santa Barbara Arctic Monkeys, Royal Blood

Send your station's playlist to: adds@thesandsreport.com



## **Thursday Music Meeting &** Three Dot Lounge

id you see **Hozier** on SNL this past weekend? Amazing. Apparently I wasn't the only one who thought so. On Soundscan, he was #2 with over 58,000 copies sold of the self-titled album!...Todd Violette at WOLT told me that I could list the Foo Fighters as an add this week, if "you want to ruffle some feathers"—ha. Pretty funny because it wasn't even out yet. But that'll be remedied today (Thursday) when you have "Something From Nothing" and you can add it immediately, too. The "residency" on Letterman all this week is blowing up, with dozens of my Facebook friends sharing the previous night's appearance. More RCA: Dennis Blair and Jeff Gillis have Walk The Moon on fire. And Bleachers has a huge buzz. "Rollercoaster" is poised to be as big as "I Wanna Get Better." Let's not forget Cage The Elephant, which is about to enter the Top 15...Lorde is the #1 biggest gainer as you might expect. Ron Cerrito and Amanda Walk have also put the pedal down on Fall Out Boy. The anthemic "Centuries" is Top 10. MisterWives is showing great sales potential...Nick Petropoulos snuck me a listen to the brand new Robert DeLong before anyone else had heard it. So good! Meanwhile, Panama Wedding continues to grow. About to go Top 30...Don't sleep on the Kooks. "Bad Habits" is getting back great research. One of the most added this week, too!...Mike DePippa (who is coming off a strong fantasy baseball season), Darice Lee, and all the Columbians have something with **George Ezra**. Tied for most added this week, with adds at WLKK, WZNE, and KPOI...Finally, congrats to the lad Michael Halloran, who earned the nod as the new PD at 91X...Hey, I gotta go. Thanks for stopping by today! - Richard Sands

# The Big List

**CLICK AND LISTEN:** 

• Banks "Beggin For Thread" http://bit.ly/1tnKgOZ • Bleachers "Rollercoaster" http://bit.ly/1lwggaH • Cage The Elephant "Cigarette Daydreams" http://bit.ly/1jXDx38 • Facebook Page for breaking news www.facebook.com/thesandsreport • Follow on Twitter @thesandsreport • Fall Out Boy "Centuries" http://bit.ly/1qFeL9E • Hozier "Take Me To Church" (live on SNL) http://bit.ly/1Dd4GW0 • Kooks "Bad Habit" http://bit.ly/1xTtzTJ • Lorde "Yellow Flicker Beat" http://bit.ly/1q0D940 • MisterWives "Reflections" http://bit.ly/1ujlYfF • Panama Wedding "All of the People" http://bit.ly/1n7q9Yy • Twin Atlantic "Heart and Soul" http://bit.ly/1hX206i • Walk The Moon "Shut Up and Dance" http://bit.ly/1DkYZq2

#### **IMPACTING SOON:**

Robert DeLong "Long Way Down" (Glassnote) Foo Fighters "Something From Nothing" (RCA) Rise Against "Tragedy+Time" (Interscope)

Send dates to richard@thesandsreport.com

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