

The Future of Amateur Radio and the Future of the Radio Amateurs of Canada

DX Forum, Halifax

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Social Radio Revolution

- For most of the history of radio only specially trained people could use a radio
- CW, complex operation of equipment,
- Ships, planes, land stations had dedicated radio operators,
- Amateur radio operators were specialists and the only non-commercial, non-military users
- What happened?

Social Radio Revolution

- From a few specialized users to **everyone being a user**,
- Reduced the special role of radio operators and radio amateurs in society,
- In the developing world wireless is bypassing wired communication,
- We all have radios. We all have access to the internet.

Rodney Dangerfield Effect

- “I don’t get no respect”
- In times of the Egyptian Pharaohs only a few specialized workers could write [“scribes”] ...and as a result they were part of the royal court,
- “Nothin” special when we can all do it ...

Rodney Dangerfield Effect

- What does this mean to us?
- No recognition from the public: we are quaint and obsolete
- Can't win for losin: cell phone texting vs. CW on TV
- Politicians can ignore us: antenna laws, distracted driving legislation, spectrum protection - so we have to fight to keep what we regard as "ours"

Social Trends

- The growth of one technological revolution has resulted in abdication of talent from a previous technological revolution,
- Young Geeks are attracted to computer technologies,
- For the Young Geeks DX radio communication has been replaced by internet communication, radio experimentation replaced by computer experimentation,
- Radio is not “cool”,

Results – Current State

- Less people want to become amateur radio operators,
- Less people join clubs, groups and national organizations such as RAC,
- The public has less respect for amateur radio,
- Politicians ignore AR needs,
- Only ARRL bucking the trend [AR licensing, membership up]

Trends

Everyone wants the same service in wireless as they get in wired service.

- This will result in continued pressure on uhf/ microwave frequencies.
- Everything will talk to everything.
- AR will continue to look like an aging male activity.
- Continued regulated pressure on AR activities

Trends

- Will we be regulated the same way?
CRTC or IC? .. Britain and New Zealand.
- Big players no longer commercial radio
and television [will TV even be a broadcast
service?]
- Broad band phone the big player
- The village common continues or
spectrum ownership?

Radio Amateurs of Canada

- What is going right?
- International profile and contribution,
- The Canadian Amateur,
- Our Contests
- QSL Bureaus
- Insurance
- Field Services
- The Blog, Social Networking

Radio Amateurs of Canada

- What do we need to work on?
- International profile and contribution,
- The Canadian Amateur,
- Our Contests
- QSL Bureaus
- Insurance
- Field Services
- The Blog, Social Networking

What is Wrong Then?

- Failure to engage amateur radio operators across Canada, [inc. clubs, associations],
- Failure to demonstrate value to members,
- Failure to attract talent Directors by acclamation, little uptake on “job ads”, [symptom – people want to work for and in a credible, successful organization],

A communication process among clubs ...

What is Wrong Then?

- Failure of RAC to work as a team,
- Outdated Governance Model,
- Scar Tissue from old battles,
- No policy development or coordination,
- Lack of stability. “Who’s in charge this week?”

What is Wrong Then?

- Lack of efforts to influence public opinion; “old man’s quaint hobby”..
- An image to members of an “old boy’s club”..
- An image of “lack of transparency” to members..
- Failure to have an articulated vision..

What we need to do

- Articulate a vision for the future.
- Stabilize and build capacity.
- Capacity building means adding more talented amateur volunteers to key functions, attracting talent.
- Build a RAC Team,
- Address basic management issues

What we need to do

- Address financial issues; revenues, legacies, examine options: virtualize office, eliminate paper version of TCA
- Improve internal AR communications,
- Change public opinion regarding AR.
- Develop a policy capacity.

What we need to do

- Revisit governance model
- Gain respect of amateur operators as the go-to organization for amateur radio
- Ensure we have the respect of our regulator
- Build membership.

Elements

- Vision
- Mission
- Objectives
- Targets
- Strategy
- Tactics
- Execution
- Results Review
- Repeat

Questions