

Welcome to the Earth

by

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Production Assistant Intern

Conservative Talk 94.5 (WGTK-FM)

Caron Broadcasting (Salem Radio Network)

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Final Internship Report Paper

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Internships ideally offer a hands-on experience and a hint at whether the job that the intern does would be something that the intern desires to do as a career. In other words, the work brings an intern down to earth, away from having his head somewhere in the clouds. However, for me in my internship, it was a bit different. The Earth came to me.

During my internship at WGTK, Salem Communications was acquiring another local radio station called “The Earth” or “Earth FM.” This acquisition involved the renovation of the station to accommodate the staff from Earth FM. On the positive end, this gave me more people to see and talk to and more photos of the station to take as they did the renovation. On the negative end, several projects took longer time to accomplish than what I had hoped they would take. These projects took longer partly because, in order to accommodate for the access needs of both staff teams, I sometimes had to keep changing where I would work on a project. Some of these access needs concerned voice track recordings, working with the new NexGen Digital™ software, and conference calls. The station also underwent a technological update on database software to WideOrbit™ during my internship; however, I could not get the opportunity to really learn that new software.

However, I did learn something about the media in general from my internship, despite all my previous experience in media from summertime videography, WBJU, and courses at Bob Jones University (BJU). Ultimately, I learned just how a radio station could adapt to multiple changes at one time. The renovation of the station added tools, boxes, and parts to both floors of the station. The placement of such materials was key to minimizing the workplace obstacles that

the renovation produced. (The occasional loud construction sounds presented enough of an obstacle to audio recording.) For the WGTK staff to fully learn and adjust to using the WideOrbit™ software, they took about the whole time of my internship. However, in the meantime, the station did special meet and greets for Prager and Medved; and both Angelo and Joey moved to other office spaces.

In short, I could see the value of flexibility in action in the media environment, as well as the need for quality technicians to install new hardware for new studios. To be successful in a media profession, I will need to better use and demonstrate the academic skill of flexibility. While my education at BJU has helped with this regard, I could certainly improve. Furthermore, if I go into the radio industry, I would likely also need to learn how to use WideOrbit™ and NexGen Digital™ software. These skills I could have learned in an academic setting if I had had the opportunity to do so.

A few other major facets of the media really sunk in my mind during my internship. At a flagship station such as WGTK, a large portion of the daily workload concerns the pricing, paperwork, content creation, and availability for advertising clients. Even with all of the other stuff that the station does, I would conclude that its advertising and promotional campaigns constitute the core work of what the staff does. Another factor included the wide variety of quantity of spots that a client might purchase. Some clients purchased time for the remainder of the year, while others purchased time for commercials airing on only a few days. One client who came in to record commercial spots for his business at the beginning of my internship still had his commercials playing at the finale of my internship on Saturdays during the House Plans program.

Another positive of my internship was the station's culture, which appeared to be sensibly friendly, especially with Dibet and Yoso greeting everyone who arrived. The staff overall strove to remain calm and seek solutions despite feeling frustrated at times due to circumstances such as technological problems, client payment errors, and guests arriving at unexpected times. On one occasion, one of the staff members from Earth FM felt the need to vent a little, but I have seen much worse outside my internship. Much of the staff relied on water and coffee to get through the day.

In several devices and in several ways, I used technology in my internship. First, using my digital SLR camera, I took photos for the station to use for social media. The station used both my photo of Michael Medved as well as pictures from the remote broadcast at Plan First. The remote broadcast became a positive highlight of my internship. I got the opportunity to ride in the station's van, eat breakfast at the destination, and help set up the radio equipment.

Second, I used the station's headphones and Adobe Audition software while I edited full-length shows of Maximized Living and House Plans. The station would acquire these shows via WORD download and then play them a week later, if WORD released the shows. This required breaking the audio into two segments per program, adjusting volume levels, removing discussion of outdated events, and adding that week's commercials. To ensure that I was not overusing commercials, I recorded in my notebook the commercials that I had put in each segment of each program. As I inserted the commercials into the audio, I listened a little to ensure that no announcer performed the voice-overs for two consecutive commercials. I also removed references to "this morning" for the House Plans show, since WGTK would broadcast the show after noon. For the promo and commercial spots, I as needed would search for appropriate SFX,

use Omnimusic to acquire music, apply music as appropriate in multitrack, delete spaces, apply stretch to trim the ad length to thirty seconds, and export the files in Adobe Audition.

Third, I used AV Scheduler software in order to prepare many music logs for the online WMUU radio streaming. The process involved selecting the proper day, opening and transferring clock icons that held orders to play non-music content, opening the proper music list file as well as the music log schedule, checking and adjusting the music content order so that it closely matched the music log schedule, and exporting the finished log to AV Air.

Fourth, I used the station's audio board and microphones in testing the equipment as well as in working with show host Mike Miller and the Saturday prerecorded shows. Sometimes I was responsible for giving countdown cues to the host. I also buzzed in that show host as well as visitors on Saturdays so they could enter the station.

Fifth, at times I used the call screener phone for live Saturday broadcasts of *Talking Money*, which during my internship began broadcasting also in Columbia, SC. WGTK had its share of hang up calls. One time, after the show host had left, a caller called the station back again for more information, and so I had to submit her question and contact information in an email to the show host. The staff from Earth FM used the third line on the call screener phone, so the WGTK staff and I had to ignore the green light on that phone line.

I also assisted in directing traffic into the station's parking lots during part of its meet and greets. During the renovation, occasionally I helped to move boxes and furniture.

My coursework at BJU had helped prepare me for my internship in several fundamental ways. First, by already knowing how to use Adobe Audition, I was able to start editing with minimal technical assistance needed and could tell when I could reasonably use the software to

trim commercials and other content down to the desired lengths. Second, by having classroom experience in writing and testing voice-over copy, I had the ability to make reasonable recommendations and minor adjustments for editing the wording in promos and commercials. Third, my instruction in image composition from photography and video classes enhanced my ability to take quality photos for the station while filtering out poor-quality photos.

Through this internship, I learned that I could get just as frustrated at Adobe Audition CS6 as with other software programs, particularly in editing while listening to content to remove. But on the other side of the coin, I learned that I had the ability and patience to actually edit and piece together hour-long broadcasts. I also learned to just let minor mistakes go, such as Angelo calling me “Josh” and calling Josh by my name.

While at the station, I applied my Biblical worldview by striving as much as possible to live peaceably with all people, in accordance with Romans 12:18. I also strove to make myself available and take advantage of opportunities in a right way to increase in learning, in accordance with Proverbs 9:9. I also expressed thankfulness to the staff and to God for those opportunities, in accordance with 1st Thessalonians 5:18. For example, at the finale of my internship, I typed up a thank you letter, signed it, and left it at the station for the staff to read. I also thanked Angelo for the recommendation letter that he and Yoso worked on for me. The staff at the station certainly seemed to be grateful for my help during their transition period.

In conclusion, I believe that my internship was a worthwhile experience as a sort of last audio class for me. The internship provided quite a bit of material for my electronic portfolio, and I can present my new internship artifacts to potential employers who desire to listen to samples of my work. In the very least, I can look back at all the opportunities as being a gift from God and a highlight of my education at BJU.