

GRAY TV: NO NATIONAL REP, NO PROBLEM

REACHING THE DECISION TO GO IN-HOUSE

When **Gray Television** announced last year that it would cancel its rep contracts and begin 2016 with all national business handled in-house, many people in the industry assumed that Gray was going to build its own rep firm. What actually happened is very different.

Rather than building a traditional rep structure, national business is handled by the National Sales Manager at each station—or, in smaller markets, by the General Manager. These people have always dealt directly with agencies for regional business, Gray Executive Vice President and co-COO **Bob Smith** (pictured) told Spots n Dots, so now they also handle national business directly. In a few cases an additional staffer was added to help with the work load—and travel budgets were increased so the NSMs would have more face time with the agency buyers.

At the corporate level, Gray hired **Becky Meyer**, formerly the Vice President of Sales for **Katz Media Group's Continental Television Sales** division in Chicago, to lead its national sales efforts as Vice President of National Sales. She is in constant communication with the people at the stations by phone and email. She also travels a lot and she and Smith made the rounds of all of the agencies in Q4 ahead of the January change-over. More recently, "Becky and I also got on the road and made calls in New York, Detroit, Chicago—and I was also in DC not long ago visiting some agencies and wanted to follow up with them," Smith said. "Actually, the feedback we got from the agencies has been really good, which was gratifying."

In addition, Gray hired **Mike Jones**, formerly a VP with Continental, as National Director of Political Sales. Smith says Jones knows everyone involved in political buying and is copied on every political buy at Gray stations.

Going rep-free isn't a completely new concept. **WITN** (NBC) Greenville, NC had not had a national rep for eight or nine years and Smith said that had worked very well. "When we asked them if they wanted to go back to the rep firm, they'd say absolutely not," Smith said. And when Gray acquired the former Hoak stations in 2014 it did not assume the rep contracts and took those stations direct. So in 2014 CEO **Hilton Howell**, Smith and fellow EVP/co-COO **Nick Waller** and other Gray executives began discussing whether to take all of the stations direct for national and decided to do so in summer 2015. About the same time, Gray acquired **KCRG** (ABC) Cedar Rapids, IA, which had not had a rep for 12 or 13 years—"they haven't missed any business," Smith said.

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ADVERTISER NEWS

In what might be considered an unlikely pairing, **Anheuser-Busch InBev** and **Starbucks** are teaming for the brewer to produce, bottle and distribute Starbucks' **Teavana** ready-to-drink tea. *The Wall Street Journal* notes Starbucks will be able to broaden its reach beyond coffee and A-B InBev will be able to fill capacity at breweries and give its more than 500 distributors a nonalcoholic beverage to sell.....In a related note, *Bloomberg* says **Justice Department** approval of A-B InBev's merger with



SABMiller is on track for later this month and likely will include some measures to protect craft brewers' ability to bring their brands to market.....*Automotive News* says **Chevrolet** admitted to its dealers that May sales "did not deliver the result we planned for" and its June Truck Month promotion incentives are "our strongest offer yet" on **Silverados**. While GM has been vocal about cutting back fleet sales while touting retail sales growth, a 12-month string of retail sales growth ended in May.....**Subaru** and its 620 U.S. dealers have a

different problem: not enough inventory, with only a 3-week supply on hand (60 days is the usual industry standard). Part of the problem is that Subaru has only one U.S. factory (which it shares with **Toyota**) and still needs to import many of its vehicles from Japan. **Outback** and **Forester** have been Subaru's strongest models.....Japan's **Seven & I Holdings Company**, the parent of **7-Eleven** has denied a report from *Reuters* that it's interested in buying **CST Brands** and its **Corner Store** units, although it is moving ahead with a previous deal to acquire 79 CST units in California and Wyoming. Canada's **Alimentation Couche-Tard** (parent of **Circle K**) is also seen as a possible buyer of CST's 1,000+ c-stores.....**Sears Hometown & Outlet Stores** aren't doing much better than their former parent. Hometown comp-store sales fell by 2.6% with weakness from appliances and lawn & garden while Outlet stores were down 3.1%, also citing weakness in appliances.....New store openings in the last year helped **Conn's** get a 7% gain in total quarterly sales in its first fiscal quarter despite a same-store decrease of 1.3%. The chain added five locations in the past quarter and expects to add another 10-12 in the rest of the fiscal year.....**Ruby Tuesday** has sold off its remaining **Lime Fresh** assets to Rubio's, which will rebrand them as **Rubio's Coastal Grill**. Ruby Tuesday said focusing on its core brand is now in the best interest of shareholders.....**Chipotle** has given up its effort to trademark the phrase "better burger" after a challenge although a future burger concept for the company is still a possibility.

NETWORK NEWS

College football returns this fall with **CBS** airing the **SEC Game of the Week**, declaring that the **SEC on CBS** has been the highest-rated regular-season college football package on any network for seven consecutive seasons. Beginning Saturday, September 3 with UCLA at Texas A&M, the schedule features a total of 17 games, including two doubleheaders and the SEC Championship on Saturday, December 3.....Game 4 of the **Stanley Cup Finals** airs tonight on **NBC** at 8:00 pm (ET). The San Jose Sharks got their first win of the series on Saturday night in overtime and again play for the home crowd tonight, trailing the Pittsburgh Penguins 2-1. There will be at least a fifth game, so the Stanley Cup Finals returns to Pittsburgh on Thursday night, with the faceoff on NBC again at 8:00 pm (ET). If needed, Game 6 will be Sunday, June 12 and Game 7 Wednesday, June 15.....**Lexus** has signed on in a special partnership with **Univision Deportes** to deliver for the first time ever in the U.S. in depth, comprehensive soccer analyses.

The sponsorship includes a dedicated **Copa America Centenario** section on **UnivisionDeportes.com** which will host sophisticated and detailed **Lexus Power Rankings** of all teams and players in the tournament and additional content including comprehensive performance and trend analysis by **Zona Técnica**. Copa America Centenario matches are currently airing across multiple Univision broadcast and cable networks.

WEEKEND RATINGS

Dateline led **NBC** to the Friday night win in the 18-49 demo, as **CBS**, with cop show reruns, had the most viewers. According to the **Nielsen** overnights, NBC had an average 1.0 rating in Adults 18-49 and an average audience of 4.86 million. **ABC**, with a new **Beyond the Tank** leading into a **Shark Tank** rerun, 0.8 18-49 and 3.92 million; CBS 0.7 18-49 and 5.37 million; **FOX** 0.5 18-49 and 1.38 million; and **The CW** 0.3 18-49 and 1.15 million.

NBC also won the demo on Saturday night and **CBS** again won for viewers. NBC, led by **Dateline Saturday Mystery**, was at 0.6 18-49 and 2.96 million; CBS, with **48 Hours**, 0.5 18-49 and 2.99 million; **FOX**, with **Major League Baseball** 0.5 18-49 and 2.27 million; and **ABC**, with **20/20**, 0.5 18-49 and 2.21 million.

CBS SHINES IN DAYTIME

The Eye Network announced that **CBS Daytime** delivered its most-watched regular season (4.22 million) since 2006-07 and most-watched May sweep (3.99 million) since 2007. **The Talk** and **Let's Make A Deal** delivered their most-watched seasons ever.

The Talk averaged 2.79 million viewers, up 3% over last year. Let's Make A Deal 1 averaged 3.20 million, up 3%, and Let's Make A Deal 2 3.67 million, up 2%. **The Price Is Right 1** averaged 5.09 million, up 4% from last year and its most-watched season since 2001-02. The Price Is Right 2, daytime's most-watched program, averaged 5.84 million, up 3% from a year ago and most-watched since 2006-07. **The Young and the Restless**, averaged 5.27 million, up 1%.

AVAILS

KDFW in Dallas is seeking an **Account Executive**. The successful AE must be able to identify qualified targets, use strong communication and presentation skills throughout the sales process and maintain a high closing ratio. We are looking for someone that can bring together all our resources (Top Rated Local News, FOX Network, FOX Sports, My Network TV, Digital Sponsorships and Promotions) in a creative manner to achieve a high level of results. Qualified candidates must **CLICK HERE** to submit resume & cover letter online. No calls please. EOE M/F/D/V

Spectrum Reach in Santa Barbara, CA seeks a **Local Sales Manager**. The LSM must provide first line supervision to ensure individual sales reps achieve assigned sales objectives and budgets and contribute to the company vision of being the industry leader in customer service through quality, commitment, courtesy and teamwork. 5 years media sales experience and 1-2 years team leader or supervisory experience preferred. Spectrum Reach is the

advertising sales division of Charter Communication, with offices in 26 states. Apply at <http://spectrumreachjobs.com>. Equal Opportunity Employer.

NCC Media Boston is currently seeking an **Account Executive**. In this challenging position, your responsibilities will include calling directly on agency personnel to represent NCC Media affiliates in the sale of cable advertising time to the national clients, calling on agencies in order to generate greater spot cable sales. Candidates should possess experience in media sales/media management with previous cable and/or electronic media experience strongly preferred. If this sounds like the opportunity you've been looking for, email your resume and cover letter to boston.resumes@nccmedia.com. EOE.

Business Development AE: WPLG-TV Miami seeks an aggressive sales professional to work primarily in developing new business for television, digital and special initiatives. This position requires someone who has the ability to cold call, identify prospects not using television, make appointments with decision makers and make the sale. The ideal candidate should be a self-starter and a motivated individual who has knowledge of media and Digital Advertising sales. Send resume to: Alex Price, Local Sales Manager aprice@wplg.com. No phone calls please. EOE.

KCLO-TV in Rapid City, SD has an opening for an **Account Executive**. The successful candidate will be an aggressive, self-starter with excellent communication skills, solid presentations skills; the ability to close sales and have a winning attitude. Must be creative and demonstrate enthusiastic sales attitude for "getting the job done".

Experience in television or other media is preferred, but not necessary. **CLICK HERE** for details or to apply now. Background check and drug screen required.

British researchers are warning that one-fifth of the world's plant species are at risk of extinction. Even worse, kale is expected to survive.

Jimmy Fallon



KcLo
RAPID CITY 15

CPAs MORE UPBEAT ON THE U.S. ECONOMY

Business executives are feeling more confident about the U.S. economy's prospects than last quarter, but remain more guarded in outlook than they were a year ago, according to the second quarter **AICPA Economic Outlook Survey**, which polls CPAs who are CEOs, CFOs, controllers and other high-level executives at U.S. companies.

The survey by **AICPA** (American Institute of Certified Public Accountants) found 37% of survey takers expressed optimism about the U.S. economy over the next 12 months, up from a three-year low of 28% last quarter. That measure stood as high as 68% in the first quarter of 2015, however. Profit and revenue expectations also improved in the quarter, but remain below projected growth rates from a year ago.

One bright spot in the survey this quarter was the hiring outlook—although the survey was conducted before Friday's report from the **Labor Department** that the U.S. added only 38,000 jobs in May, which was the weakest performance since September 2010. In the AICPA survey, some 19% of business executives said their organizations were ready to hire immediately, up from 15% last quarter. The percentage of executives who said their company needs employees but are reluctant to hire also increased from 16% last quarter to 18%.

"The good news is the slide in sentiment about the U.S. economy has reversed course and key performance indicators are pointing back up," said AICPA SVP **Arleen Thomas**. "But there's a long way to go to get back to the levels of optimism we saw in late 2014 and early 2015. On top of that, the presidential election and global economic uncertainty add some wild cards going forward."

ANA SAID TO FIND WIDESPREAD REBATING

A report from the **Association of National of Advertisers** (ANA) is apparently due out any day now with findings from its eight-month probe of ad agency practices. **The Wall Street Journal** says the ANA investigation found that many ad agencies in the U.S. are accepting rebates from media companies.

ANA reportedly found that media companies are using rebates to reward ad agencies for buying a certain amount of advertising time or space on behalf of their clients. The ANA found that the practice was widespread within the sample it studied. Some ANA members have already been briefed on the findings, with the public release of the report expected soon.

THIS AND THAT

The rapidly growing ride-sharing industry has brought changes not only to the taxi business, but to insurance as well. **GEICO** announced that it now offers ride-sharing policies in 24 states to provide comprehensive coverage to serve **Uber**, **Lyft**, **Split** and other on-demand service drivers. Otherwise, they need to have two policies (at least in theory).....**Gray Television** is picking up two stations being divested from the pending **Nexstar** acquisition of **Media General**. Gray will pay \$270 million for **WBAY** (ABC) Green Bay, WI, and **KWQC** (NBC) Quad Cities, IA-IL.

AVAILS

WMC-TV, the Raycom owned NBC affiliate in **Memphis, TN** seeks a dynamic **General Sales Manager**.

This individual will have experience coaching, training and leading team members to consistently grow market share and revenue. A successful track record driving local revenue, selling creative solutions and creating revenue projects is required. We need an expert in pricing/inventory control, strategic planning, managing multiple sales projects, motivating and leading local AEs and developing new business. Five years television management and a college degree preferred. To apply **CLICK HERE** and attach a cover letter/resume. EOE.



A new study suggests that a chemical released when a person is hungry can lead to poor decision-making. It's what Taco Bell calls 'our entire business model.'

Seth Meyers

NCC Media (NYC) is currently seeking an Analyst to join their Advanced Analytics team. In this challenging position, your responsibilities will include

procuring TV programming data as well as various audience datasets, analysis, modeling, and positioning key insights. Candidates should possess a strong knowledge of television programming, above average Excel experience (Pivots, VLookUps) with some SQL experience preferred. **MORE DETAILS**. If this sounds like the opportunity you've been looking for, email your resume and cover letter to: researchjobs@nccmedia.com. EOE



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Place a classified, email: ads@spotsndots.com

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What about new accounts? Is he concerned about missing new business? "We were well positioned to do this. We've picked up our 51st market. We made the decision when we were at 50 markets with 41 number one stations—and the rest were number two basically and even the number two were close to being number one," Smith said. "The stations are strong in their respective markets and they're not going to get bought around."

For groups considering a similar move, Smith says your stations have to be well positioned to be able to take national in-house. And he says it would be tougher without **Nielsen** ratings, since all of the major agencies use Nielsen. But there is definitely interest, since many people at the **NAB Show** in Las Vegas were anxious to talk to Gray executives about how things were going since the change.

Smith says the feedback from the agencies has been positive. Without the middle person, business can be handled faster and it is quicker to deal with discrepancies. "It's a fast way of doing business," he noted.

A few months in, the new approach to national is working well. "No regrets on our decision. It was the right one for us. And the feedback from the agency community is that it is working real well," Smith concluded.