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Walrus Research

# **Core Values of Jazz Formats**

Abridged Report

Focus Groups  
Spring 2004

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

“Kind of Blue was made in 1951 or something.”  
“58.”  
“It still sells 5,000 copies a month.”  
“I bought it three times.”  
“It stood the test of time for sure.”

--- KJAZZ Listeners

“In the modern world, there’s a lot of things that come and go so quickly, fad-wise. If you can latch on to something that seems to be a tradition you can take with you, it’s healing in sense. It reassures you that the world isn’t just completely flashing by you. Even as you get older and more set in your ways, there are some things you can hold fast.”

--- KCSM Listener

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

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# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## Introduction

This is the third report from our continuing research into the Core Values of public radio programming.

Our first report was the Core Values of Local Information Programs, based on focus groups with NPR news listeners in four markets. For our second report on the Core Values of Classical Music, we conducted focus groups with classical music listeners in six markets.

In spring 2004 we turned to the jazz format. We conducted focus groups with mainstream jazz listeners in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Atlanta and New York

This research is the result of a convergence of priorities between the Station Resource Group and the Public Radio Program Directors. SRG and PRPD articulated three goals with reference to the Core Values of jazz programming:

- To explore how public radio's jazz service can strengthen its value to and connection with listeners
- To increase our understanding of the values and qualities current jazz programming brings to those who like it best
- To create a vocabulary that clearly and concisely articulates those values and qualities

This interpretive report includes verbatims that we collected from jazz listeners in eight focus groups. For additional documentation, PRPD president Marcia Alvar has produced a video of respondents speaking in their own words.

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## ***Credits***

The Station Resource Group (SRG) is an organization of public radio's leading broadcasters. SRG and its members develop strategy and analysis to sharpen their operations and shape their service vision. The SRG website is [www.srg.org](http://www.srg.org).

Public Radio Program Directors (PRPD) is a national association that provides programming leadership on behalf of its 200 stations, networks and producers. The PRPD website is [www.prpd.org](http://www.prpd.org).

The participating stations were KKJZ in Los Angeles, KCSM in San Francisco, WCLK in Atlanta and WBGO in New York.

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting provided support for this research through SRG's Charting the Territory project. Additional support was provided by the members of SRG and PRPD and by the participating stations.

Information about Walrus Research and more research about public radio may be found at [www.walrusresearch.com](http://www.walrusresearch.com).

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## Summary Findings

- Mainstream jazz listeners value authenticity. They appreciate stations that play real jazz. The mainstream stations project integrity because they respect and preserve the true American musical art form.
- Mainstream jazz listeners appreciate historical context. They have a sense that jazz is an important part of the story of America. Several respondents compared jazz radio to the History Channel on cable.
- Mainstream jazz puts listeners into a retrospective state of mind. They think about the days when giants like Monk and Coltrane were in their prime. Many mainstream listeners learned to appreciate jazz in their formative years, often from older generations in their own family.
- Mainstream jazz listeners pay attention to the recordings played and the information given by announcers because they want to continue learning about the music. The station turns them on to artists they might hear in person or recordings they might purchase.
- Because their minds are actively engaged in the music, jazz listeners seldom use the mainstream jazz station just for background sound. Jazz listeners tend to be paying close attention to the intricacies of the music.
- In contrast to classical listeners who often describe their listening experience as soothing or stress-relief, mainstream jazz listeners describe uplifting feelings like joy, energy, motivation and inspiration.
- Mainstream jazz listeners value authoritative air personalities. They look up to jocks that know the music and can explain the significance of each recording. But too much talk—any talking beyond a tidbit of musical information—can cause a tune out.
- The commercial smooth jazz format is perceived as the opposite of mainstream jazz. One is real, while the other is fake. Mainstream jazz engages the mind and energizes the body. Smooth jazz is mindless and quickly becomes boring to mainstream listeners.

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## Design

We began by setting criteria for selecting the jazz stations in our study.

The first criterion was that at least 33 percent of their Listener Hours had to be generated by programming classified as jazz, jazz mix, blues or big band. SRG identified 46 such stations, from all public stations that receive Arbitron data.

SRG used ARA data to segment those stations into three formats:

Mostly Jazz – Jazz generating over 60 percent of Listener Hours

Mixed Music Format – Jazz generating less than 60 percent of LH

Jazz and News – Jazz stations that clear Morning Edition in prime hours

For our previous research into classical music, we had selected stations that broadcast an all-classical format—without NPR news magazines. For this research into jazz, we decided to limit our selection to stations in the “Mostly Jazz” segment.

Thus we eliminated dual format jazz and NPR stations like KPLU in Seattle and WDUQ in Pittsburg, as well as the relatively few mixed music format stations with a strong jazz component like KKFI in Kansas City.

Then we looked at audience impact. For example, the Average Quarter Hour listening audience for KKJZ in Los Angeles is 35 times the size of KCCK in Cedar Rapids. We decided to recruit listeners from jazz stations that serve relatively large audiences.

Finally, we looked at audience composition by race. We selected WBGO in New York and WCLK in Atlanta, knowing that more than 33 percent of their AQH listening audience is African-American. We selected KKJZ in Los Angeles and KCSM in San Francisco, knowing that less than 33 percent of their audience is African-American.

Thus, our selection of the four participating stations was the result of a systematic, rigorous process—grounded in formatics and audience data.

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## ***Four Mostly Jazz Stations***

Classical stations play classical music, but we realized it's not that simple for jazz stations. Consider the four stations that participated in our focus groups:

KKJZ in Los Angeles promotes itself as KJAZZ. The station used to be known as KLON, before the KKJZ call letters became available.

The format is mainstream jazz 24 hours a day Monday through Friday, but on the weekend KKJZ plays 12 hours of blues.

At one time Los Angeles had a commercial station playing mainstream jazz. When it changed format, KKJZ adopted its air personalities.

KCSM in San Francisco plays mainstream jazz and often presents live studio interviews with jazz artists.

The blues programming on KCSM is restricted to 3 hours on Friday night. But there are 4 hours of Latin jazz on Sunday afternoon.

San Francisco lost its commercial mainstream jazz station about 10 years ago, and KCSM took up the format.

WCLK in Atlanta has the most varied schedule, given its close association with Clark University. Respondents said it even carries black college football games.

Mainstream jazz is played in the morning, midday and evening Monday through Friday, but the music played in afternoon drive might be described as contemporary funk, not mainstream jazz.

WCLK listeners who tune in before 7am hear gospel music, not jazz, and gospel music is played for 12 hours on Sunday.

On Saturday there are 3 hours of blues, 3 hours of Latin music and 3 hours of reggae music.

Tavis Smiley's program is heard on WCLK weekdays at 9am.



# Core Values of Jazz Formats

WBGO in New York plays mainstream jazz 22.5 hours per day Monday through Friday.

At 6:30pm weekdays WBGO breaks format for a miscellaneous public affairs strip—Humankind, Latino USA, and so on, different each day.

There's an hour of blues at 3pm weekdays and 3 hours Sunday evening.

On Saturday morning WBGO presents 6 hours of R&B, a nostalgia show hosted by a popular New York personality.

Years ago, WRVR was New York's jazz station before WBGO.

## Station Audiences

All four participating stations attract audiences of similar age, centered on 50-55 year olds. These listeners were young when Miles Davis, Cannonball and Coltrane were in their prime. The R&B oldies played on WBGO also go back to those days.

All four stations compete with a commercial smooth jazz station—KTWV in Los Angeles, KKSF in San Francisco, WJZZ in Atlanta and WQCD in New York. Simplistically, we might note that the smooth jazz format plays music by contemporary artists, while most of the mainstream jazz giants are dead.

While the four participating jazz stations extend their program schedules into blues, gospel and R&B, the commonality across all these genres is music with African-American roots.

The four stations vary by the ethnic composition of their audiences, which may be a function of market demographics. San Francisco has a low percentage of African-Americans when compared to Atlanta.

The four stations are similar in that their audience loyalty is low, relative to the average for public radio. The NPR news stations in these markets achieve loyalty scores that are 4 to 20 points higher than the mainstream jazz station.

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## Respondents

We asked each participating station for a list of current and lapsed contributors, but we recruited no more than 50 percent of respondents from that sampling frame. The field service in each market had to recruit at least 50 percent of respondents from its own database.

Respondents were qualified and recruited by a telephone screener. The critical questions were:

*When you listen to radio at home, at work or in the car, which radio station do you listen to most often for music?*

*Which radio station would be your second preference for music?*

To qualify, respondents had to name the target station on an unaided basis.

Respondents were never informed as to the participating local station or the national sponsors of this research.

In each market we did two groups, one of women and one of men, for a total of eight groups across four markets. We set quotas for African-American respondents to match each station's audience composition. In the last section of this report we provide a copy of the telephone screener for Los Angeles.

In Los Angeles, Atlanta and New York we found ourselves talking with respondents who did not fit the familiar profile of NPR news listeners:

- Many respondents could not identify the NPR news station in town.
- Few respondents tuned regularly to Morning Edition or ATC.
- Most use a commercial AM station as their news choice.

But KCSM listeners in San Francisco were more likely to use NPR (KQED or KALW) along with Pacifica (KPFA) for their news. Because they were more likely to use noncommercial stations for both their music and news listening, our San Francisco respondents better fit the familiar NPR profile.

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

The following tables show the respondents' preferences for music and news stations, according to our rescreener administered on site before each group.

Keep in mind that we recruited on the basis of listening to the mainstream jazz station, without even asking about news listening in the telephone screener. So the patterns of news listening which appeared later on simply reflect the news listening preferences of jazz listeners.

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## Los Angeles

KKJZ broadcasts from Long Beach, to the south of Los Angeles. We chose a site in Torrance which provided access to listeners in Orange County as well as South Central LA. About 30 percent of KKJZ's listening audience is black.

Market	Sex	News1	News2	Music1	Music2
Los Angeles	Men	KABC	News 98	Power 106	K-JAZZ
		KCRW	KFWB	KCRW	KLON/KJAZZ
		89.9	90.7	88.1	100.3
		KNX	NPR	KMZT	KKJZ
		KNX		88.1	101.1
		1070	KMDC	88.1	94.7
		89.3	89.9	KTWV	KLAC
		KPFK	KJAZZ	KPFK	KJAZZ
		KCRW	KFWB	KCRW	KKJZ
		KCRW	KFI	KJZZ	KLOS
		KFWB	KFI	88.1	105.5
		570 AM	88.1	FM 89.1	FM 94.7
		98	64	88.1	95.5
		All News Radio		88.1	88.5
Los Angeles	Women	KLON	1260 AM	KLON	The Wave
		KNX 980 AM	1100 AM	KJAZZ	Coast FM
		TV or Paper		95.5	88.1
		KCRW	KKJZ	KKJZ	KCRW
		KPFK	KTWV	KTWV	KKJZ
		KNX 1070 AM		KKJZ 88.1	KTWV 94.7
		AM		FM	FM
		KABC	KFI	KKJZ	KUSC
		1070 AM	980 AM	104.3	88.1
		94.7	88.1	94.7	88.1
KPFK	KJAZZ	KPFK	STAR 98.7		

In Los Angeles, 12 of our respondents named KKJZ as their primary music station in the on site rescreener. 9 named KKJZ as their secondary station for music. We also accepted 3 respondents who had named KKJZ in the telephone screener but not in the on site rescreener.

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

Only 7 respondents named KCRW or NPR as their primary or secondary station for news. The commercial news and talk stations were well-represented including KNX, KFWB and KABC.

A few respondents named KKJZ as one of their stations for news, which is telling because KKJZ airs only brief newscasts.

## Interpretation

Note that few of our Los Angeles respondents reported listening to classical music, either on commercial KMZT or public KUSC. That was our first clue that the Core Values of the jazz format would be different from classical music.

When we asked about news listening, most LA respondents thought about the hot clock AM news stations that provide headlines on the 1's and traffic on the 8's. They really do not listen to much news on the radio. Instead they punch the AM stations, seeking useful information while driving.

The majority of LA respondents did not use NPR for in depth news.

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## San Francisco

KCSM broadcasts from San Mateo, which is south of San Francisco. We chose a location in downtown San Francisco which was accessible by bridge to Oakland. Less than 10 percent of KCSM's listening audience is black.

Market	Sex	News1	News2	Music1	Music2
San Francisco	Men	KCBS	KQED	KCSM	KFOG
		KALW	KQED	KCSM	KKHI
				KCSM	
		KCBS		KCSM	KKSF
				KCSM	
		KQED	KPFA	KCMC	KLW
		KALW	KQED	KCSM	KPOO
					101.1
		NPR 88.5 FM	KCBS AM	KCSM	Classical
		KPFA	KCBS	KCSM	KABL
		KGO	740	103.7 FM	91.1 FM
					91.1 FM
		San Francisco	Women	740 AM	88.5 FM
KCBS	KALW			KCSM	KKSF
KPFA	KQED			KCSM	KDFC
KQED	KFOG			KCSM	KFOG
KQED	KFOG 104.5			KFOG 104.5	KJAZZ 91.1
KQED rarely				KCSM	KDFC
KGO	KCBS			KCSM	KFRC
KPFA	89.5 KPOO			91.1	106.1
NPR KQED				KFOG 104.5	KLRC
KPFA 94.1	NPR			105.3	97.3

In San Francisco, nearly all of our respondents used KCSM as their primary station for music. Two were KCSM exclusives. Their secondary music stations included classical KDFC, smooth jazz KKSF and alternative rock KFOG. All of those music formats appeal to educated listeners.

Unlike KKJZ in Los Angeles, we found that the majority of our KCSM jazz respondents used NPR for in depth news. A few others mentioned Pacifica's KPFA. KQED captures a larger audience share in the upscale, liberal San Francisco market than KCRW or KPCC's share in Los Angeles.

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## Interpretation

KCSM is in the same state but a different universe than KKJZ.

KCSM jazz listeners are deeply involved in public radio. They tend to avoid commercial stations for music—except for classical KDFC or hip alternative KFOG—and they use NPR or Pacifica stations for news.

The San Francisco market is highly educated, relative to Los Angeles, and has a lower percentage of African-Americans and Hispanics.

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## Atlanta

WCLK broadcasts from a college district near downtown Atlanta. We chose a site within the city. WCLK's listening audience is about 70 percent black.

Market	Sex	News1	News2	Music1	Music2		
Atlanta	Men	103.3	91.9	107.5	91.9		
		91.9	90.1	91.9	90.1		
		WABE		WABE	WCLK		
		WCLK	WJZZ	WCLK 91.9	WJZZ 107.5		
		WSB	103.7	95	92.9		
		WSB	WCLK	WCLK	102.5		
		91.9	104.1	107.5	91.9		
		91.1 FM	750 AM	98.5 FM	91.9 FM		
		Atlanta	Women	NPR - FM		WCLK 91.9	NPR
				WXLL	V 103	91.9	WXLL
WSB	WABE			107.5	91.9		
107.5				107.5	WCLK		
WSB	WGKA			91.9	90.1		
					WCLK 91.9		
WCLK 91.9	680 AM			107.5 FM	FM		
WSB	91.5			91.5	91.9		
91.9	97.5			91.9	97.5		
91.9	97.5			91.9	98.5		
WGST	WCLK	WCLK 91.9	JZZ				

About half of our Atlanta respondents were primary listeners, the others secondary listeners to WCLK for music. It is important to point out that in addition to jazz, WCLK broadcasts gospel music seven days a week. Gospel had strong appeal for some of our respondents, especially women.

Only four of our respondents used WABE for in depth NPR news. More used the commercial stations for news including the AM dinosaur WSB.

A few mentioned WCLK for news, possibly a reference to the Tavis Smiley show, but WCLK does not carry Morning Edition or ATC.



# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## **Interpretation**

Atlanta is an attractive destination market for college educated African-Americans. Several of our respondents explained that they had grown up listening to jazz stations in Washington, DC, or other northern markets.

WCLK is operated by a black institution. The station features gospel music and Tavis Smiley as well as jazz, blues and Caribbean music. Our respondents perceived a qualitative difference between the gospel music played on WCLK vs the commercial gospel stations, in the same way that they value Tavis Smiley for intelligent coverage of issues.

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## ***New York***

WBGO is located in New Jersey, but has as many listeners in New York. We chose a site in Fort Lee, NJ, right across the bridge from Manhattan. Nearly half of WBGO's listening audience is black.

<b>Market</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>News1</b>	<b>News2</b>	<b>Music1</b>	<b>Music2</b>
New York	Men	93.9 FM	1010 WINS	90.7 FM	88.3 FM
		1010 WINS	880	Jazz 88	Jazz 101.9
		WBGO	NPR	WBGO	93.6
		88.8	1010 WIN	WBGO 88.3	CD 101.9
		101.9	88.3	101.9	88.3
		1010 WINS	WOR	WBGO	CD 101.9
		WCBS	WINS	WBGO	WCBS
		1010	88	WBGO	101.9
		WINS	WABC	WQXR	WGBO
		1010 WINS	WABC Radio	CD 101.9	106.7 Lite FM
				101.9 CD	WBGO 88.3
				FM	FM
				CBS AM 880	1010 WINS
New York	Women			101.9	88.3
		Jazz 88	1010 WINS	Jazz 88	101.1
		WBGO 88.3	1010 AM	WBGO 88.3	Star 99.1
		1010	98.7	101.9	88.3
		1010 WINS		88.3	102.7
		1010 WINS	88 WCBS	WBGO 88.3	101.9
		WINS	WCBS	WBGO	KISS
		WOR	CBS	WBGO	WFUV
		820 AM	1010 WINS	100.5 FM	88.3 FM
		1010 AM	750 AM	101.9	88.9
		1010	88.3	95.5 PLJ	88.3 BGO
		88	77	WBGO 88.3	101.9

About half of our New York respondents were primary listeners to WBGO for music. Smooth jazz WQCD 101.9 was mentioned as a secondary or primary station for music by a majority of respondents.

Commercial AM stations including 1010 WINS and 880 WCBS dominated the news listening. The NPR news station WNYC was known by only a few of our respondents.

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## Interpretation

Like KKJZ in Los Angeles, WBGO presents blues as well as jazz. WBGO ranges further into R&B on the weekend.

Unlike KCSM listeners in San Francisco, WBGO listeners do not use other public radio stations. And they rarely tune to classical music.

WBGO listeners punch to the AM hot clock stations for news on the 1's and traffic on the 8's, as a matter of survival in New York. For news listening, WBGO respondents had a lot in common with KKJZ in Los Angeles.

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## Agenda

Since we wanted to compare the Core Values of jazz to classical music, we based our jazz agenda on the previous research. We started with general impressions of each station and moved on to critiques of program examples.

### I. Introduction

First we explained that respondents were selected on the basis of their radio listening. They all listen to similar stations.

The moderator was doing a series of focus groups across the country including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Atlanta, New York.

### II. Perceptions

#### A-Station Identity FLASH CARDS

The moderator displayed flash cards with selected radio stations.

We asked respondents to identify each station and describe its format in their own terms. Is all the programming on the jazz station really jazz?

#### B-Image WRITE DOWN ON PAPER

The moderator pointed to one station at a time and asked respondents to write down their impressions—any images or associations that came to mind.

We also collected images for smooth jazz and classical stations.

#### C-Differentiation

The moderator used an easel to draw a one-dimensional space, positioning stations relative to each other.

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## IV. Benefits of Listening

### A-Discussion

The moderator asked respondents to think about the benefits of listening to stations. What personal needs are satisfied by the jazz format? Are they the same as classical?

### B-Missing the Station

The moderator read a “press release” saying that jazz station was going off the air. What would be their reaction?

## V. Aircheck Examples

### A-Written Verbatims

Respondents listened to airchecks of local and distant stations, writing down their evaluations of music and stopsets.

### B-Discussion

Respondents explained their written verbatims in open discussion.

## V. Cultural Institutions

As a final exercise, the moderator asked respondents to think about the cultural institutions in town.

What are the cultural institutions? What are their characteristics?

Can a radio station be a cultural institution?

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## Image – Mainstream Jazz Format

Early in each group we asked respondents for their impressions of several stations in the market. We focused on the mainstream jazz station, as well as the classical, smooth jazz and NPR news stations.

We also asked respondents to write down their impressions of certain stations.

### **Los Angeles KKJZ**

#### **Women**

Jazz, blues, alternative jazz blues beat, Latin, refreshing, oldies, energizing  
Old jazz, blues, music history, no commercials, fundraisers, big band  
Hip, classy, funky, cool, artsy, swing, dance, Miles Davis, history, big band, 1940s  
Real jazz, all jazz, horns, saxophone, energy! music to work by  
My favorite!, Chuck Niles, great jazz, fun, relaxing, no commercials! Latin jazz, events, jazz caravan events, out from Cal State Long Beach, member supported so very personal, feel a part of the station  
Energized, happy, thoughtful, Chuck Niles, great voice  
Great music, love to be listening right now! great DJs, too far left on the dial, sometimes forgotten  
Big band, time to work things out, old blues, sounds from yester-year  
Bringing it home, Helen Bourges lovely voice, driving, soulful  
Blues, Doug MacLeod, nothing but the blues, variety, Chuck Niles and his amazing fount of knowledge

#### **Men**

Hoppin, fun, energy, beer/wine, happy  
Cool, genuine, noncommercial, plays favorites, mainstream, essential, one of the better things in LA  
Classic, 1950s, Parket, nite radio, cool, calming, easy laid back, historic, Parker, Miles, spoken word, coffee house  
Sun Ra, positive, blue note, Coltrane, napping, relaxing, history  
Genuine jazz, original artists, nothing but jazz, wife's choice  
Bebop Parker, Dizzy, driving rhythms, improvisational spontaneous art

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Cool, sunglasses @ night, Jerry Lewis Rat Pack, Zoot suits  
Smooth, calm, good, weekend great, cory giacci, member  
Sophisticated, membership drives, jazz, blues, real, authentic, no commercials,  
great DJs, weekends, evenings, history of jazz and blues  
Chuck Niles, the best in bebop, blues sometimes too commercial, there aren't  
too many really orig new blues bands  
My father's music, blues that make me think, step sister to KCRW, needs more  
money, excellent 88.1 countdown, concerned, educated about jazz, nice  
memory  
Real jazz, blues, Chuck Niles, mainstream jazz, John Coletrain, Miles, Art  
Blakeley, KJQ, Coleman Hawkins  
Cool jazz, traditional, entertaining, real jazz, educational, fund raising  
Real jazz, Coltrane, Miles, Sonny Rollins, Lee Morgan, Dave Brubeck, strait  
ahead, top and bottom

## Interpretation

Our LA respondents thought of “real jazz” from a previous era and named jazz giants like Miles, Coltrane and Coleman Hawkins. History is a theme that came up in all of our focus groups. Respondents mentioned decades like the 1950's or historical styles like bebop.

“My feeling is when I go there I know that I'm getting the real stuff.”

Chuck Niles popped up as a prominent component of KKJZ's image. He was a long-time jazz presenter who had known all of the musicians back in the day.

“The DJs are really knowledgeable, they know everything that they're playing, they tell you the history.”

“I've been listening to Chuck Niles for 50 years.”

“He knows everybody, he's been everywhere. They've got to digitally sample the guy so after he dies they can keep him going.”

As it happened, Chuck Niles died shortly after our LA focus groups.

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

Among our respondents there was a feeling that the station preserves a musical tradition that has been lost:

“Rare gems, like Billy Holiday or Thelonius Monk.”

“Straight ahead jazz, the old good stuff. They don’t make music like that now.”

The one negative associated with KKJZ was its fund drives:

“They have these fundraising drives, and it seems like it takes a couple weeks. They have these long, well, if they would break up all those things and put them in regular commercials, they’d be just like any other radio station. It’s the one thing that drives me nuts.”



# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## **San Francisco KCSM**

### **Men**

Good DJ in the morning, good Latin jazz, knowledgeable DJ  
Best jazz station in the country, knowledgeable DJs, noted guests, great spectrum of music  
Heart and soul of music, timeless and healing  
KJAZZ library, quality and variety with knowledgeable on air talent, showcases greats and local talent  
Jazzbo  
Awesome, entertaining, great announcer, personable, varied, passionate  
Fantastic, great diversity of traditional jazz  
Herb Kean, wow!, incredible music, incredibly knowledgeable DJs, not afraid to push the envelope, some may scare the horses  
All day, what goes wrong at dinner time? like Sunday morning, on the roof aiming the antenna

### **Women**

Alisa Clancy!! Bob P. KJAZ library happy sound, happy memories, sophistication, Latin jazz! (Dusko Goykovich) learning about new music  
A port in the storm, probly something at least interesting, if not beautiful, I get to study chord structures, improvisation  
Driving to S Cruz, SF Jazz Festival, Shirley, Yvonne and Bob, drive home from night school, interviews w/ artists  
Driving cab; moment to moment synchronicity, flowing in harmony with the traffic  
My mom's house  
Yay! Great music, informative personalities, no commercials, no news, no traffic, just music  
Jazz on the Hill, learning more about jazz and musicians, personal tidbits  
Could listen all day, it's exciting, relaxing, fun, wish they'd get stronger signal  
Only station I listen to, variety of personality of different DJs, they each convey a special mood, love Sonny Buxton! Mal Sharp's funny, Michael Berman extremely informative  
K-Jazz died 1994, jazz after all, decombustion music (ie in my car, end of day as school nurse!) no commercials! yah

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## Interpretation

Many of our San Francisco respondents used to listen to the commercial mainstream jazz station KJAZ, which died ten years ago. These long-time jazz listeners followed the music over to KCSM.

“It was a great tragedy. I have a tribute on my website to KJAZ.”

“KCSM is [now] the only jazz we have. A lot of what they play I am not crazy about, but it’s the only jazz we have. I just rejoined it, I sent them my money.”

Keeping the flame alive is important for mainstream jazz listeners.

“In the modern world, there’s a lot of things that come and go so quickly, fad-wise. If you can latch on to something that seems to be a tradition you can take with you, it’s healing in sense. It reassures you that the world isn’t just completely flashing by you. Even as you get older and more set in your ways, there are some things you can hold fast.”

Respondents mentioned several KCSM personalities who are recognized for their knowledge of jazz:

“He is a jazz authority, he knows the musicians, he has worked with different musicians, he has a club, so not only is he playing the music but he’s telling you stories about the musicians that you hear, and that’s very mainstream jazz that he’s playing. . . . and there’s no commercials.”

“Remarkable ability to bring back music from the 30’s and 40’s, even the 20’s sometimes, and put it in perspective. Some of the programmers will pretty much specialize in a niche time wise and musically, but others will run the gamut of many different ages of jazz music. It’s like this treasure of music.”

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

KCSM does not just play CDs. It also clears network programs like Jazz Set and features live interviews with local musicians.

“I think about driving home from night class and hearing the interviews. They have very educational interview shows, last night an interview with Sarah Vaughn.”

“They not only showcase the greats, they also showcase local talent. It’s brought a lot of groups to my attention that I may not otherwise have seen. Local groups and they get airtime.”

But our respondents made it clear that every element of KCSM’s format should be grounded in music. For example, they do not need news on KCSM.

“It’s incredible music, there’s no advertising, I listen to it exclusively, there’s no other radio station I listen to. The announcers are great, the programming is great, there’s no advertising whatsoever, no news, no interruption, it’s pure music, awesome. No news.”

Perfectly for San Francisco, one woman described KCSM’s music in metaphysical terms.

“I used to drive cab and listen to 91.1 I just reached a level of . . . moment to moment synchronicity, flowing in harmony with traffic. All the stress, there’s just something about the music that put me into the para--whatever it was, and it was total magic, most of the time.”

Yet KCSM’s fund drives change everything.

“I never listen during pledge week. I turn it off completely, I can’t stand it, it’s horrible. I would rather have commercials, the begging. Because I always give them money, it’s horrible. I turn it on and I don’t hear music, I hear all that crying, I just figure a week’s gone.”

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## **Atlanta WCLK**

### **Women**

Esther Caspino, fun, Ken Hot Ice Beatty, jamming, traffic check, gospel, inspiration, informative, ole school funk, Marcus Miller, Stanley Clark, Saturday Gospel Hour of Power

Rythym, dance, youthfulness, Ken Badie, energy, old memories, informative medical show

Law firm music, everyone asking what station, casual Friday, hip music, artistic dance music, fun happy yet relaxed music, my favorite music station of all time  
Soothing, innovative, jazz, creativity, sweetheart from school, late night memory

Black station, great jazz, Deb Moore, Tavis Smiley, best station in Atlanta  
Peace, love, calm, growth, true attempt to spread God's spirit, information  
Informative, inspirational, Tavis Smiley

College, cool disc jockeys, different, variety

Clark Atl Univ, fun, good music, great jazz

Wow, jazz, salsa, gospel (good), satisfaction, comfort, NPR news

### **Men**

Great jazz, history of jazz

Good jazz as it should be, carib, fusion, gospel, pipeline into the black community

Reggae Power, music and news from the Carribbean Diaspora, Glen Simmons a voice of the Carib community

Versatile music/variety, fun, interesting, real jazz

Different, Nadeen, mainstream

Jazz, first stop on the dial, different types of music, reggae, Latin, blues, not the canned music of other stations, news/music with different perspective, information

Real deal jazz

Variety, progressive, underground

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## Interpretation

WCLK listeners are well aware of its association with a black college, which is a plus for educated adults in Atlanta. The variety of gospel music, contemporary funk and Tavis Smiley, along with mainstream jazz on WCLK, has a perceived commonality in the station's African-American heritage.

“They do gospel in the morning. They have the best gospel, things that you have not heard, they don't play repeats, like 97.5.”

“During the football season they are the only station that carries black college football games.”

“Tavis is very knowledgeable and in tune with what's going on in America.”

“They know their audience. They know that we don't want the same old commercial stuff.”

“Variety, because they play all kinds of stuff. They don't just stick to one kind of music or one kind of talk, they are like everywhere. That's a positive, definitely.”

“I think of them as having a great focus, on a particular type of music. I know exactly what I can expect from them. I know that they're going to play the jazz greats.”

As we heard in other markets, WCLK listeners value mainstream jazz because it is an authentic African-American art form.

“Great jazz and the history of jazz, because Deb Moore gives quite a bit of background on many of the jazz greats. I love history, and I think that jazz is possibly, to me, the greatest music that was ever put on this earth. I just think that the other music we hear, jazz is in that music. So jazz has made a wonderful statement in America, possibly in the world.”

“That's real jazz, Louie Armstrong.”

“Deb Moore has this beautiful voice and plays what I call real jazz.”

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

But mainstream jazz listeners are challenged by a contemporary music program called “Hot Ice” that WCLK has scheduled in prime afternoon drive hours.

“Between the hours of like 2:30 to 6, they play a lot of music that you are not going to hear anywhere. It’s kind of like, well it’s not canned jazz, it’s kind of like music that’s eclectic, import music.”

“I like a station that’s not going to feed me the same stuff over and over again, even if I don’t especially like the song that’s playing. It’s something that I’m not going to hear anywhere else, and the next song may be something that I want to hear.”

“They use too many of the computer generated rhythm sections and I hate that. There’s not somebody on the drums, there’s a computer on the drums, there’s a computer on the bass, and that’s not music, that just sucks.”

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## **Newark WBGO**

### **Men**

Pre synthesizer jazz, Etta James, Chet Baker, Dave Brubeck, hot jazz, blues jazz  
History, soul, feeling, deep love, blues and more blues  
Real jazz, old school, John Coletrain, Aderly, Ella, Miles  
The station for me, good tuneage, the real deal  
Kick ass jazz, real musicians, improvisation, blues on weekends, it's the shit!  
(sorry) commercial free!  
Authentic, diversified, mind music, great examples, iconic  
Smooth, music with feeling, imaginative, original jazz, intellectual, classy  
Official music, real deal, unique  
Blues, old jazz, jazz music of the past  
The master station, all the old masters, DJs have all the info, notifys you of  
happenings (concerts, etc)  
Chill, relax, oldies, jazz, laid back

### **Women**

Change of style, jazz, scat, country, oldies, always change of style which is good  
for non-boring atmosphere, learning history is channel for know difference of  
styles  
Good listening, easy, smooth  
Wonderful music and soothing DJ voices to wake up to every morning (give  
me the time and weather for informative about the day along with the news),  
the musicians, the best real jazz station in NYC, gives me the old memories  
from the early 80s, going to jazz clubs in the village (Greenwich Village) with  
my old boyfriend, also makes me feel like I'm in New Orleans  
Pleasant companion, humor and pathos in the blues hour, share the pain, cool  
wash, can have it on and not be distracted  
Reminds me of a little girl, time with mom and friends, party, singing, good  
times  
Live music memories, informative, different, great driving and group music  
My childhood, my parents and grand parents, feel good, jazz diversity, blues  
hour  
Fabulous jazz, sexy, rhythm revue, Muddy Waters, great interviews, very  
personal music  
Real jazz, memories of the 60s 70s, jazz concerts

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

Great jazz, good selections of songs, memories of concerts, great artists, awakening music AM, not grating, soothing DJs, listen weekends and riding in cars

Soothing yet upbeat, variety, informative, driving to work after the kids get out, nice change from my kids music

Can't stop moving, quick, great beat, puts me in great mood, great artists, in the groove, from all decades, from swing to big bands

## Interpretation

WBGO's image is retrospective. Our respondents thought of "old memories" and "jazz music of the past." Everything about the station brings back dreams of old boyfriends, parents and even grandparents.

"It reminds me of 20 years ago, when I used to go into the city and go down into Little Italy to the jazz clubs."

"My husband used to laugh at me, because I had a whole lot of country things, because my mother was born in the country, it takes you back to people with the banjos, and if you go further, my father, we grew up with Thelonius Monk, so it really has that scat, scat, if you want to say jazz, if you know Hank Ballard, you know all those people who started back then, and that's how my home was. You had to listen to it, because that's all my father played."

"It's sexy, you could think about a couple, kind of for a minute you could actually think about back in the day when you had a romance."

"I grew with jazz, real jazz, my father and my uncle, Stanley Turrentine, Cannonball Adderly, Mongo Santamaria, going way back. Strictly jazz."

Yet the appeal is more than nostalgia. WBGO listeners value the station for how it respects history. They use the station to continue learning about jazz.

"It is history, jazz and blues, the good old jazz, the good old blues, that's history. And plus they go into some of the artists and give you a feel to what was going on. It's history, and we tend to forget that nowadays."



## Core Values of Jazz Formats

“I try to catch the biographies on the different artists. It educates me. I like jazz, and it educates me on their background. You get a lot of the very early stuff, a wide variety of different artists. And it turns me on to certain people, and then I’ll go out and buy.”

“The disc jockeys seem to be very knowledgeable about what they’re playing. Whether it’s jazz or it’s blues, I developed a profound appreciation for blues, whereas when I was growing up I wouldn’t listen to blues. Now I see where Jimi Hendrix was coming from. They will tell you who played on that album, and nobody else does that. Who played drums, who played sax and all that.”

The values of authenticity, integrity and originality mean a lot to WBGO listeners.

“Gives you a chance to hear real music, for a change, instead of synthesized.”

“In the world of jazz there are and always will be the icons, Adderly and people like that, Ella Fitzgerald, and when I listen to jazz, I listen to rock, folk, classical music, African and Asian music, I always try to find out and stick with those people who have defined this thing the way it will never change. In rock music, you’re talking about the Jerry Garcias of the world, and you get into American folk, you go back to those people that Alan Lomax found in the South in the 30s and 40s, the Huddy Ledbetters and Doc Watsons. And then you get into classical music, who are the great icons, forget going back to Beethoven and Bach, you talk about the one who brought them to us, the Leonard Bernsteins, people like that. And I get that from this station.”

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## Image – Smooth Jazz

Our respondents did not associate the values of authenticity, integrity and originality with commercial radio's smooth jazz format. In many ways, they perceive the smooth jazz format as the opposite of mainstream jazz.

Thus it is critical that we understand their negative perceptions of the commercial smooth jazz stations.

## *Los Angeles KTWW*

### Women

Too mellow, elevator music, but relaxing at times, smooth, a couple of songs it's nice but then gets old

Mellow, Xmas music, elevator music, relaxing, boring, Kenny G (yuk)

Smooth listen, easy, mellow sound, time to relax, its Miller Time!

Jazz, Hawaii win a trip to Hawaii call in daily, the booklet I receive 1-2 x'yr highlighting their format, DJs, promos, etc

Smile, relaxed, boring

Trip a day context, smooth jazz, fun, relaxing, the voice of the evening DJ I think his name is Laurence Tanter—smooth and relaxing

Smooth jazz, not real jazz but okay, Kenny Gee, relaxing, Aretha Franklin, nice blend

Mellow, smooth jazz, sax, Sunday afternoons, relaxation, brunch, ocean, soothing

Trip a day, smooth jazz, easy listening, news updates, Dave Koz, Pat Prescott

Slow mellow music, adult tunes, talk free, jazz, elevator

### Men

Mellow, older, recliner, nap

Smooth jazz, mellow, bland, boring, extremely commercial, women, promotions, repetitive

Improved format, growing and changing, Kenny, sax, office music

Relaxing on the beach, nice sunny day

Smooth jazz, familiar, stable, mellow people, warm feelings

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

Music that is meant to be in the background in which its purpose is to eliminate silence

Kenny G, wedding reception, dated, sleepy

Easy, elevator, calm

Nighttime, cool, cheesy, saxophone, romance (cheesy romance), gold necklace on a dude, relaxing

Smooth, light, easy groove, too much of the same style, makes me want more intense

Ocean, peace, palm tree, boring, slow, asleep jazz, no imagination, relaxing, old Ocean, soft, romance, relax

Muzak, brain numbing, easy listening, background music, changing profile

Ocean, water, smooth music, nice name, relaxation, trips

## Interpretation

KKJZ listeners do listen to The Wave sometimes for relaxation, but it is elevator music—relaxing for a while, and then boring.

“The only thing that bothers me about The Wave, it seems like they don’t change up enough. I know almost exactly what they’re going to play, at what time of the day.”

“They play too much elevator music.”

“It’s soothing and then it annoys me.”

It becomes boring precisely because it is not real jazz.

“It’s really not a jazz station.”

“It’s more or less commercialized jazz.”

“It’s the Kenny G station.”

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## ***San Francisco KKSF***

### **Men**

Never heard it  
Smooth jazz crap  
Blandness that makes me feel edgie  
Easy listening, office music, Muzakesque, numbing  
Smooth jazz isn't jazz  
Wallpaper jazz  
New Age jazz, nice for background music  
Smooth jazz, bland, boring, time to meditate  
Awful, elevator music, painful after 20 minutes, just wrong

### **Women**

Sleazy saxophones, picnic, my boyfriend Peter, my first client  
Al, my ex-husband, I think this is the station he likes, so it makes me slightly  
nauseous  
Beauty salon, produce store, corp bus ride from corp headquarters to San  
Bruno  
Soft rock, emotional security, comfort  
Cooking, drinking wine  
It all sounds alike  
Riding in the car, background music—doesn't take much concentration  
Reminds me of acid rock station in the 1970s  
Wouldn't listen to it anymore, used to have fair jazz late in PMs  
Win a trip, go away; beaches, warm H2O and palm trees

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## Interpretation

KCSM listeners have a low regard for San Francisco's smooth jazz station.

"That's the soft jazz, smooth jazz. Used to listen to it quite bit, but found it to be repetitive, after a while you heard the same three songs all the time, and I don't listen to it anymore."

"They play a lot of saxophone music and it all has that same sleazy sound."

"It's incredibly annoying."

"That's insipid, it's a watered down. Kind of New Age jazz, yuppie jazz, it's awful."

"Wallpaper jazz, dentist jazz."

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## **Atlanta WJZZ**

### **Women**

Soft mellow music, music that my adult children and I can collectively listen and enjoy

Oldies? Don't listen

Peace, serenity, soothing, mellow, repetitive

Soft, relaxing, mellow

Cool, old times, an old life, fun times, 4<sup>th</sup> of July

Don't listen

Country music, hillbilly

Mellow jazz, driving in car at night

Mellow, clear, nondescript, background music

Smooth, EZ, mood set, relaxing, breeze, mellow

### **Men**

Easy music, so-called jazz, commercialism

Soft jazz, sleep music

#1 serenity, I am at total control of my thoughts when I am listening, Seal is also played

Quiet, background music, boring

Commercial, soft

Elevator music, "jazz", occasionally is ok

Date background music

Smooth, light jazz, calm

### **Interpretation**

WCLK listeners were less critical of smooth jazz than KCSM listeners. They sometimes use the Atlanta smooth jazz station as relaxing background music.

"Mellow jazz, Sade, I think they play too much of Kenny G."

"It's soothing, very relaxing."

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

“It sets a mood for me.”

“It gets kind of monotonous after a while.”

In contrast to real jazz, the smooth jazz on commercial stations does not require active mental involvement.

“I don’t have to think about it. You know, some music takes me there and then I have to get into it. This I can just have it on. There’s music in the air but I don’t have to tune into it.”

“It’s just kind of soft jazz, subliminal kind of music. It’s not really that deep. It’s three clicks better than elevator music. It’s passive listening jazz vs active listening jazz.”

“It’s not going to disturb you, it’s not going to take your thoughts away. Like if you’re driving and listening to WCLK and Sonny Stitt comes on, you’re, whoa, that’s got you, and you’re thinking along those lines, and your train of thought might be interrupted or completely blocked.”

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## **Newark WQCD**

### **Men**

Easy listening, smooth, relaxing, sensual, having candlelight dinner pub bistros  
Love music, relaxing, caring  
Smooth jazz, soft jazz  
Schlocky wannabe jazz, puts me in a coma  
Sugary sweet, synthetic, soulless music, typical slap bass sound, boring rhythms,  
Muzak  
Bland, predictable, elevator  
Boney James, the Rippington, lite jazz, pseudo jazz, good but a bit redundant,  
commercial  
Sade, Al Jareau, dentist office, soothing easy listening, road trip  
Good sounds for the mind  
Modern music, listenable, danceable, paper jazz  
Chill music, relax, laid back

### **Women**

Jazz concerts, of lights which make you feel I shouldn't do any but go, don't  
think of final result  
Listening for pleasure, Pat Prescott DJ  
Relaxing, vacation, the beach, the islands, romantic  
Some old songs, not too many from early 60's  
Mellow music makes me relax, calming  
Smooth  
Fun, smooth, Patti Austin, Gerald Albright, Will Downing, clear sound  
Light jazz, Najee  
Easy listening jazz, going to the beach  
Mellow oldies, relaxing, listening  
Nothing! Do not listen  
Soothing and uplifting, sexy, enjoyable, brings back lots of memories



# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## Interpretation

WBGO's mainstream jazz listeners may use WQCD for passive background listening, but it is not perceived as any more valuable than, say, soft rock.

“Not real serious jazz, kind of in between.”

“Some of the music they play is not real jazz. Sort of jazzy, but not.”

“It's not heavy jazz, but sometimes you want something between the jazz and the light.”

“It tends to be redundant; they play the same playlist over and over again.”

“It's soothing. You know the songs, you can hum along, it's nice background music.”

“Just good soothing, do what you're doing, with that in the background.”

Because smooth jazz plays contemporary artists, it lacks the historical value of mainstream jazz.

“Jazz tends to get me thinking about the old times a lot. This doesn't take me as far back.”

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## Image – Classical Music

We tried, but in most of our mainstream jazz focus groups we could not gather useful images of the classical music station. Too many of our jazz respondents had minimal awareness of the classical station in their market.

The relatively few respondents who did cross over to classical music expressed verbatims that fit with our previous findings about Classical Core Values.

First, they used the classical station to relieve stress.

“It relieves the stress of the driving situation, of the traffic and everything, and refocuses you to a more serene kind of thing. Kind of a place in your mind.”

“Classical music that I turn on when I need to relax and not hear anybody talk. When I’m in the car and stressed out or whatever, I have it programmed to de-stress.”

“Very soothing, when you are driving through the rush hour. Just makes it easier, the people who cut you off.”

“I gotta be really stressed out. If I am really stressed out, I automatically turn to that.”

Second, they found that classical music can help to focus the mind on a task.

“That’s definitely what I listen to when I need to soothe me and to think.”

“I study to classical music, something about that background music helps me to concentrate. I love it for that.”

“I use it for deep thinking. Either it puts me to sleep or it makes me think.”

“To me it totally relaxes a part of my mind.”

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## The Emotions of Jazz

In our classical Core Values focus groups, listeners told us that they use the classical station primarily for stress relief. The one verbatim that we heard over and over again, across six markets, was “soothing.”

Keep in mind that our classical respondents were not using that term to describe a musicological category.

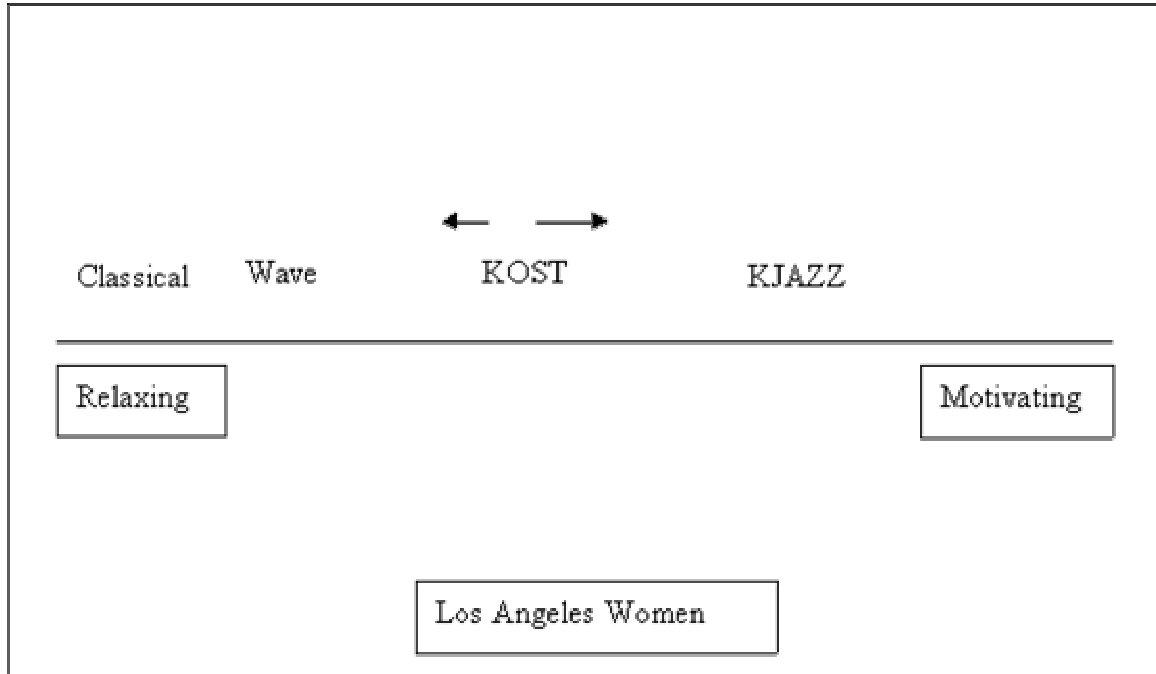
They did not mean that some classical pieces are loud vs soft, slow vs fast, harmonic vs dissonant.

Instead they were explaining the therapeutic effect of classical music on their mind and body.

Going into the jazz groups, we wanted to determine where jazz listeners would position jazz stations on a dimension from soothing to stressful. The following drawings illustrate how our respondents tried to explain the relative positioning of their jazz station.

Basically, we found that drawing a chart of the soothing dimension—a focus group exercise that worked so well for classical respondents—did not work in our focus groups with jazz listeners.

## Core Values of Jazz Formats

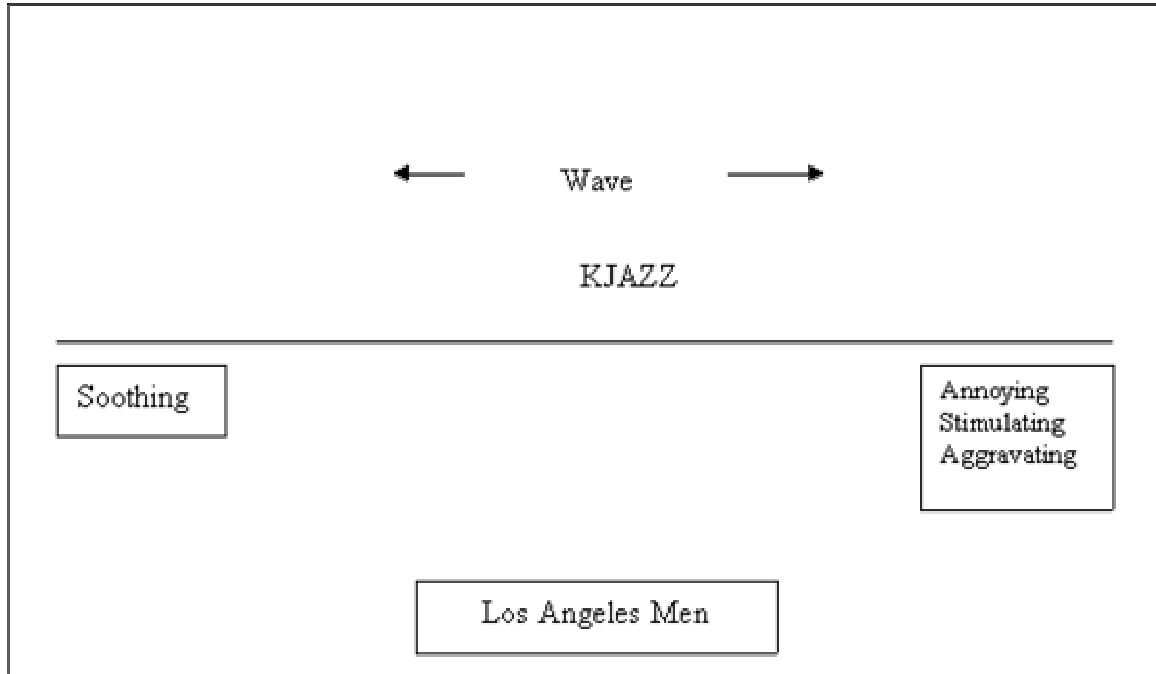


In our first focus group, with women in Los Angeles, the respondents wanted to locate stations on a dimension of relaxing to motivating, which is quite different from a dimension of soothing to stressful.

They put classical music on the relaxing side, even more relaxing than smooth jazz on The Wave. After some discussion, they decided to locate KJAZZ more on the motivating side.

Note that both ends of their scale were positive. Sometimes music can get you motivated. For example, several women said that they turn on KJAZZ when they need to clean the house.

# Core Values of Jazz Formats



The men in Los Angeles expressed ambivalence about the opposite of soothing. The opposite could be annoying, which is negative, or it could be stimulating, which is positive.

The Wave could be soothing, sometimes, and then annoying other times.

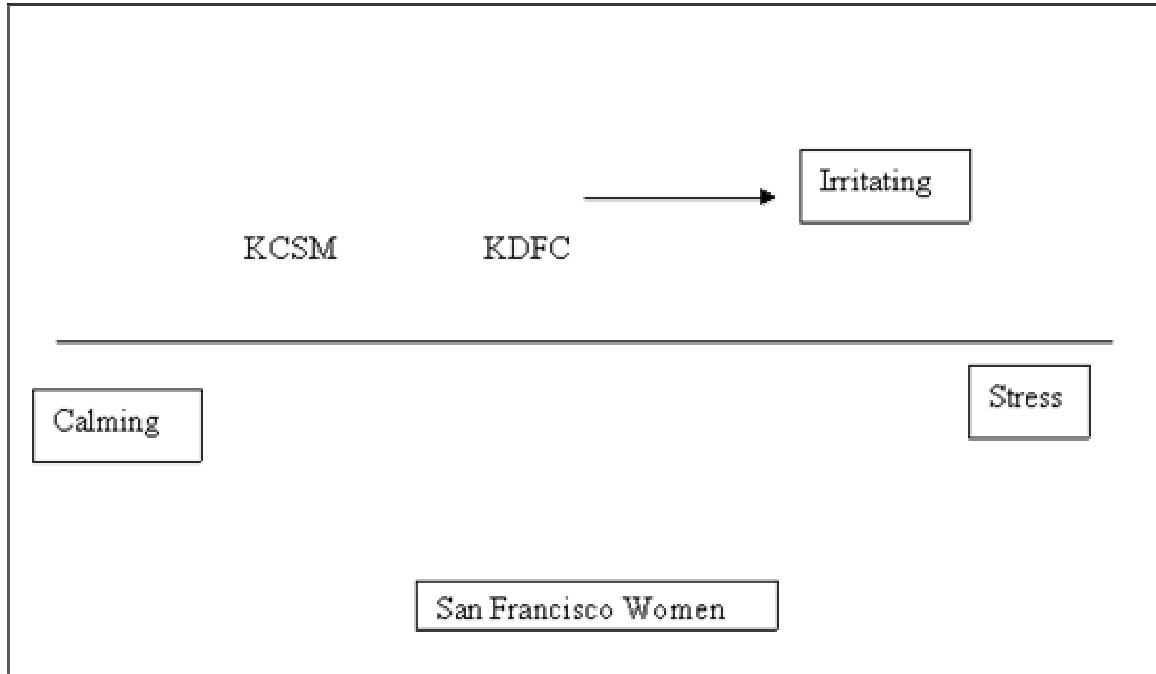
They located KJAZZ in the middle, indicating that the station was not consistently soothing or consistently stimulating.

“It doesn’t put you to sleep but it doesn’t drive you nuts with over stimulation.”

“It’s only annoying during the drives.”

“It makes me think, I have to pay attention, figure out who it is, have I heard this before and if I haven’t heard this before, can I find it. I sort of participate with the music while it’s happening.”

# Core Values of Jazz Formats



Women in San Francisco accepted the dimension of calming to stress. They located KCSM on the calming side, with reservations.

“Some of the music I could get up and dance to, so it’s not calming.”

“No matter what you’re doing it fits. I clean to it. Saturday morning, doing the laundry, vacuuming.”

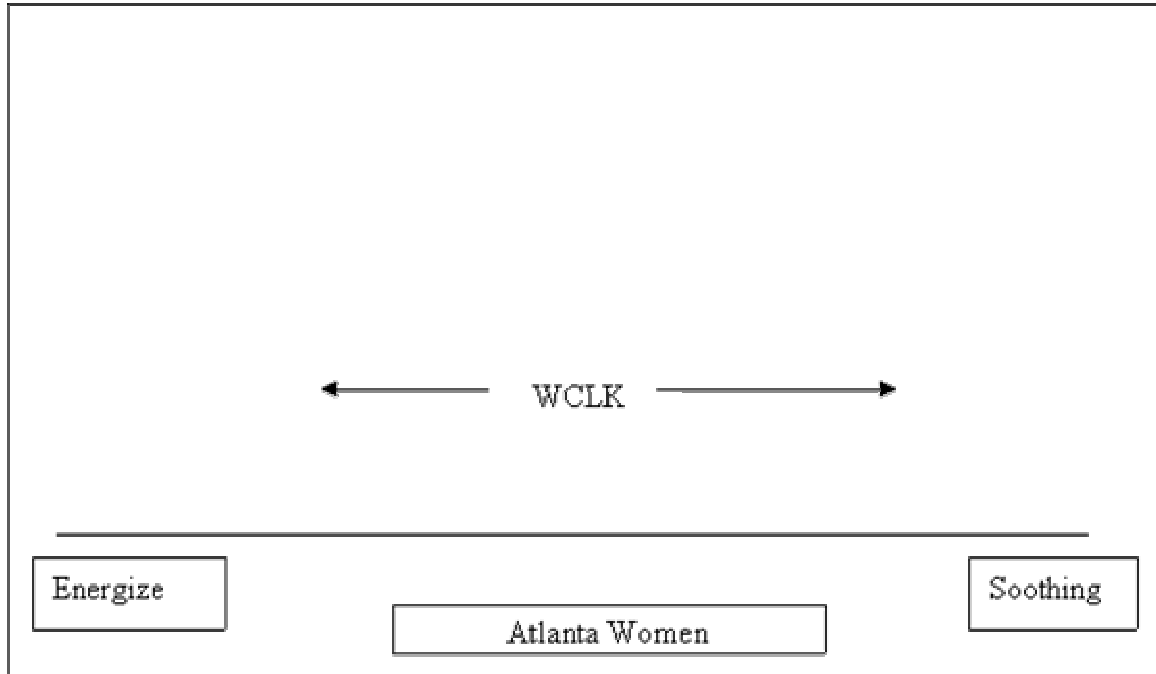
“It makes boring activities tolerable. It’s educational, inspiring.”

Classical KDFC could become irritating to these public radio listeners because of its commercials.

“They got sold, and before they got sold they played longer pieces, now they play real short little bits of pieces and they have tons of commercials.”

“I listen to it before I go to a symphony or after, because I’m in that mood, but there’s too many commercials.”

# Core Values of Jazz Formats



They explained that WCLK could be energizing, which was good, and could be soothing, which was also good. The station, partly because of its varied format, can range across the emotional dimension.

“Going to work in the morning, it [gospel] just soothes me. Gives me peace of mind, just gets me ready to face the day.”

“I play it at the law firm on Fridays instead of public radio, because it’s soothing and energizing. It’s really weird.”

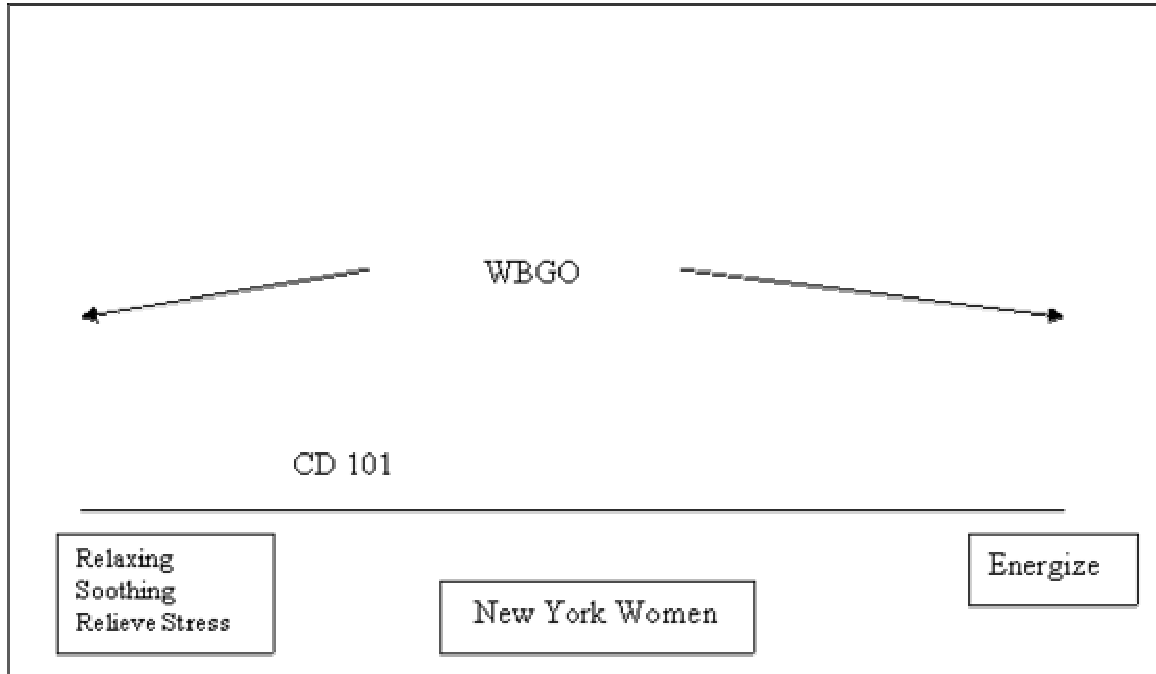
“WCLK could encompass the whole spectrum.”

“It can be both at the same time. It’s always fortifying. It fills you up and makes you happy.”

Here is how one man in Atlanta explained the emotional impact of jazz.

“WCLK is all over. You might listen to one cut, it might be John Coltrane from the album John Coltrane plays for lovers, something real light like “Everytime We Say Goodbye”, the next time might be Pharaoh Sanders kicking on something. Or you might hear Oscar Peterson, and Oscar Peterson is not serene, he assaults pianos.”

# Core Values of Jazz Formats



Women in New York also gave us a dimension with two positive poles.

They said that WBGO could be relaxing, soothing, stress relieving or it could be energizing.

“I turn it up and I’m vacuuming, scrubbing the tub.”

“Depends on the time of the day. In the middle because it’s both.”

## Interpretation

Although we heard the word “fortifying” from a single respondent, that one verbatim seemed to constitute a break-through.

Fortifying means refreshing, healthy, invigorating and restorative. That’s how mainstream jazz can be both relaxing and energizing to its listeners.



# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## **The Benefits of Mainstream Jazz**

Following the agenda, we asked respondents to think about the benefits they receive from mainstream jazz stations. One way to think about that—suppose the station went away. What would be missing from your life?

In this section we organized the verbatims by benefits received:

### **Pleasure**

Positive Emotions  
Active Involvement

### **Knowledge**

Sense of History  
Learning More About Jazz

### **Integrity**

Authenticity of Music  
Community Institution

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## ***Positive Emotions***

“You just get this sense of everything’s okay. It just puts me in this state, that’s really a good place. It can be relaxing, it can be motivating. You know, a good beer, vacuum, jazz, blues.”

“When you get up in the morning and you gotta clean, you put that on, and you can clean. Go right on through the house, clean! Before you know it, you’re done.”

“When you are happy with the station, the music, the format it offers, you kind of like need it as a part of your day, to kind of uplift you, transform you, with that music.”

“It reminds me of old times. If I’m down it picks up my spirits, it’s just good times all around.”

“Joy, just the passion of the announcers and the passion of the music. It gives me tremendous joy. It speaks to your soul.”

“When I was 14 years old, this was in 1958 maybe, and my brother who is much older than me had a Chet Baker and Gerry Mulligan album, and here I am, this is Elvis Presley and everything else going on, this noise and bang, bang, bang, and he plays this Gerry Mulligan Chet Baker album, maybe everybody knows this tune, Bernie’s Tune. I’m just a kid and I hear Gerry Mulligan play baritone saxophone, and I just stopped. Wow, listen to that. 14 years old. It was just making sense.”

## **Interpretation**

Mainstream jazz can boost the spirit. Several respondents told us about joyful emotions resulting from listening to these stations. Even the blues can be uplifting, transforming and joyful.

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## ***Active Involvement***

“They might play about six songs in a row, without running down the agenda, the artist, and then you know, I’ll be like, damn, who the hell is that? So you have to stay, I want to know who it is.”

“Jazz is so unlimited. You can listen to maybe Beethoven’s 3<sup>rd</sup>, and there are 20 different conductors, but it’s the same. But you can take a Fats Waller song, Honeysuckle Rose, and 20 or 25 people play it 20 or 25 different ways. And that’s so exciting.”

“Autumn Leaves! How many different versions!”

“To me it’s not calming. I’m listening to a sequence of chords and how a soloist will use a chord structure to create a melody on the spot. It’s fascinating, it’s wonderful.”

## **Interpretation**

Mainstream jazz listeners are actively involved in the music. Their minds are following the intricate patterns of chords, melody, harmony, rhythm and instrumentation. They know that the soloist is improvising and that each performance is unique.

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## ***Sense of History***

“I think because jazz is an American art form. It’s so historical to me that I really love to listen to all the different formats they have. You’re learning, you’re not only listening to music, but you’re learning about history. Their formats for the different shows—it’s all jazz but the whole spectrum of jazz.”

“They play so many different styles of music, not in a set mode, you have to be changeable, the blues, the scat, you go back to explain something way back in 1920 something. You can sit down and tell your kids, your kids can’t get a history with the rap. This is what granddaddy had. This is how it went. Just like you have the History Channel, which is visible to us, when it came down to radio, radio does not have a History Channel. When you take this away, you take a History Channel away.”

“The music is the music that I came up with, back in the 60s, when we were going to the jazz clubs and jazz concerts, recordings from back in those days.”

“He’s commentating, his voice is soothing, they’re giving you the history, when this person was doing such and such a time, this was going on. It’s not just the music, it’s what was going on then compared to now.”

## **Interpretation**

Mainstream jazz originated in America in the 1940’s or 50’s, which is not so long ago. When mature adults listen to mainstream jazz, they may think back over their lifetime or the time of their parents. They may feel a closer, more personal connection to the music than classical listeners who could have an intellectual appreciation for what was going on in the 1700’s or 1800’s.

Mainstream jazz stations attract listeners with a median age of about 50-55 years old. Apparently most of them have been listening to jazz for many years, regardless of how they first discovered the music.

Yet, as younger generations replace the aging Boomers, mainstream jazz stations must find a way to thrive as radio stations rather than museums.

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## ***Learning More about Jazz***

“He’ll always let you know who he played, sometimes he’ll let you know what year it was made, for me that’s important. Other radio stations, they just might play the music, they might not tell you who the artist is. It is important to me because I read the jacket covers.”

“You can play CDs but it’s still not the same. Part of what we said about KCSM is the educational aspect, hearing the DJs and the talks they have on there. God knows I’ve got the CDs at home, my husband collects record albums, I could take it to the car, but that’s not the same as hearing all these other stories and hearing some of the new artists, and that encourages you to go out and buy the music.”

“It would be an extraordinarily sad day. I have enough records to start my own little station, and even at that there are time that I don’t know what I want to hear and I’ll turn on KCSM, and be exposed to something I didn’t know existed.”

## **Interpretation**

By the selection of tunes to play, as well as the nuggets of information they announce, mainstream jazz personalities provide continuing education to their listeners. This is tricky, of course. The listeners want to hear the music. It’s supposed to be a radio format, not a college lecture. But an important benefit is learning about the music.

That’s why a jazz radio station is better than a stack of CD’s. Our respondents explained that they appreciate the air personalities—if they are authoritative, informative, organized and respectful of their listeners.

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## ***Authenticity***

“I’m so angry at the big conglomerate radio crap that’s happening right now. It’s such a haven to go there or KCRW and just not have to deal with the commercials and repetition and what not. Stuff happens and radio stations leave, and I get angry.”

“We’ve already been through this with KJAZ, which was a wonderful jazz station, great variety and educational, we sent them some money to try to keep them going, we came out for their fundraising events, and they still went under. And so to lose KCSM, we don’t have any other decent jazz, KKSF doesn’t begin to compare, it’s not a real jazz station.”

“Kind of Blue was made in 1951 or something”

“58”

“It still sells 5,000 copies a month”

“I bought it three times”

“It stood the test of time for sure”

## **Interpretation**

Mainstream jazz is real. It is authentic, original, not the commercial imitation.

For mature listeners who are not so thrilled about how things are going, the mainstream jazz station can be one of the few remaining bastions of integrity.

This finding parallels what we heard from classical listeners in our Classical Core Values focus groups. One of our findings was that “classical music radio provides an escape from our rotten contemporary culture, which target listeners perceive as decadent and ugly. The classical format serves as a refuge that preserves the beauty and majesty of a better time.”

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## ***A Community Institution***

“I think one of the main benefits of the total experience of the station is the sense of community that I get from listening to it. It makes me feel, because I am a member and I contribute, my daughter goes to Cal State Long Beach, it makes you feel not just connected to the people at the radio station and care about the person that’s speaking and sharing things with you, but it gets you sort of into that world, in general. I used to be married to a jazz musician when I was young, so it takes me back there.”

“WCLK has been around for a long time. It’s just the greatest station.”

“It’s like an institution. It’s been around so long, it has a large audience. People look for that, they want to hear it.”

“The personalities that they hire are also like a part of the community, they are institutions, not just somebody who came in from another market.”

“This is an important station, because it’s different. It respects its audience. It is not afraid to try something different.”

“Imagine tearing down Yankee Stadium. It’s been there, it’s always been there, you expect it to always be there for you. There’s history associated with it, a lot of nostalgia.”

“It’s an institution. It was the only one that was there playing that type of music when it first came on the air.”

“It is an institution. But it’s more than an institution. If that press release came out, it would be another sad day for someone who’s lived through seeing public stations and publicly funded stations, and libraries and everything else suffer as a result of a couple things—crass commercialism, which has just swept us, politicians who don’t care about it and cut down assistance to the arts, education and things like that. I would be very very sad about that, because it’s just another indictment of, unfortunately, where our society is headed.”

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## Interpretation

In our classical Core Values focus groups, we asked respondents about the institutions in their community and no one named the classical station. The moderator probed. Classical listeners explained that an institution had to be a physical place, like a museum. A radio station is everywhere and nowhere.

In addition, classical listeners pointed out that most people in their market did not listen to the classical station, so it could hardly be an institution.

But in several of our jazz Core Values groups, the idea of the station as institution came up without prompting from the moderator. This idea came up even though, like a classical station, the jazz station is not a physical place and most people in the market do not listen.

We need to better understand how some public radio stations might take on some of the attributes of a community institution.

It is possible that WCLK has an advantage in that it is closely associated with a real institution—a black college in Atlanta, helping to build an educated middle class African-American community.

It is also possible that when Los Angeles listeners were thinking of KKJZ as an institution, they were including its predecessor—the commercial mainstream jazz station whose jocks were adopted by KLON. The same sense of history could apply in San Francisco for KCSM and its commercial predecessor KJAZ, and in New York for WBGO and its commercial predecessor WRVR.

Finally, there may be a relationship between the station and the legacy of jazz in its local market. New York was the home base of East Coast jazz giants who could be seen in local clubs when they were not on the road.

In this speculation about radio stations as community institutions we must keep in mind the findings of large-scale quantitative studies like Audience 98 and the Public Radio Tracking Study. Mainstream jazz stations still fall behind classical music stations and even further behind NPR news stations on critical measures of listening (public service) and giving (public support).

Fundraising for mainstream jazz stations might be improved if development activities were designed to resonate with the Core Values of mainstream jazz.



# Core Values of Jazz Formats

## Telephone Screener – Los Angeles

0) Indicate the sampling frame for this respondent:

/\_\_\_/ Client List [QUOTA 15]  
/\_\_\_/ Database [QUOTA 15]

1) Hello, I'm \_\_\_\_\_ calling from \_\_\_\_\_. This is a legitimate market research study. We are not trying to sell you anything, and we are not asking for money. We are interested in your evaluation of radio programming, including the news, information and music programming on radio. We have a brief survey that will take only a few minutes.

2) For this study we need to talk to an adult in this household. I'm going to start with some age categories. Please tell me which category matches your age:

[READ]

24 years or younger /\_\_\_/ [ASK FOR ADULT 25-64]  
25 to 64 years old /\_\_\_/ [CONTINUE]  
65 years or older /\_\_\_/ [ASK FOR ADULT 25-64]

3) By chance does anyone in your household or in your family work in the radio business? How about in television or newspapers or advertising?

/\_\_\_/ Yes [DISQUALIFY – THANK YOU AND TERMINATE]  
/\_\_\_/ No [CONTINUE]

## Core Values of Jazz Formats

4) When you listen to radio at home, at work or in the car, which radio station to you listen to most often for music?

**[DO NOT READ – UNAIDED RESPONSE]**

KKJZ 88.1 FM “KJAZZ”	/__/	[CONTINUE]
Any Other Station	/__/	[CONTINUE]

5) Which radio station would be your second preference for music?

**[DO NOT READ – UNAIDED RESPONSE]**

KKJZ 88.1 FM “KJAZZ”	/__/
Any Other Station	/__/

[IF “KKJZ” IN EITHER Q4 OR Q5, CONTINUE.]

[OTHERWISE, THANK YOU AND TERMINATE]

6) I’m going to read a list of ethnic categories. Please tell me how you might identify yourself from this list:

**[READ CATEGORIES]**

Black or African-American	/__/	<b>[QUOTA 9 of 30]</b>
Hispanic or Latino	/__/	
White or Caucasian	/__/	
Asian or Pacific Islander	/__/	
Some other ethnic category	/__/	

# Core Values of Jazz Formats

7) Research companies like ours may invite consumers to participate in a focus group discussion for market research purposes. In the last 12 months, have you participated in a focus group conducted by any market research company?

/\_\_\_/ Yes [DISQUALIFY – THANK YOU AND TERMINATE]  
/\_\_\_/ No [RECRUIT]

8) DO NOT ASK: RECORD SEX

/\_\_\_/ Woman [QUOTA 15]  
/\_\_\_/ Man [QUOTA 15]

9) RECRUITING POINTS:

- We value your opinion about radio programming.
- We would like you to participate in a focus group discussion.
- You will be in a group with people who share your interests.
- This is legitimate market research. No one will try to sell you anything.
- We will pay you \$100 for your participation.
- The discussion will last 90 minutes.
- The location is \_\_\_\_\_

	Tuesday March 9
6pm	Women
8pm	Men

QUOTAS:

Sex	15 Women	15 Men
Sample	15 Client List	15 Database
Ethnic	9 Black	21 Non-Black