



STICKER SHOCK

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When was the last time you saw a bumper sticker on a car? Let me amend that. When was the last time you saw a *radio station* bumper sticker on a car? You youngsters in the audience may not be aware, but there was a time when almost every radio station handed these things out at events and – shocker – people stuck them on their bumpers.

Of course, this was also a time when cars had actual bumpers. Today, the only radio station bumper stickers I see are for the local NPR or Christian station.

The purpose of this blog is not to advocate for their return, at least not in their previous form.

As an industry, we lament our inability to reach the 18-34 demo. They have so many other entertainment choices that we are having difficulty competing. Especially in a short attention span, on-demand world.

Here's a thought – and an exercise. Walk into any local coffee shop. Observe the 18-34's in attendance. What will you see? That almost every one of them has multiple stickers on their laptops and water bottles. It is a thing. You'll also notice that many of those stickers are cool, or make a statement, or support a cause.

Why can't radio do this? Why can't we create cool, meaningful stickers that will fit on an iMac or Yeti? I'm not talking about slogans. No one will use a sticker that promotes frequency and format. However, if the sticker is cool or unique, they just might.

Take this a step further. Partner with that coffee shop. Put a coupon on the back. Promote it on air. Then, randomly show up at said establishment. If ANYONE has your sticker on their computer or water bottle, you announce that the next round of drinks for EVERYONE is on the radio station. I'm pretty sure the patrons will whip out their phones and record this sudden interruption. Who knows, it could go viral.

Look, I've been away from the radio front lines for a bit. I realize marketing budgets are scant. And, maybe, there are stations already doing this.



But, with a small capital investment and a bit of effort this could (possibly) create some buzz for your brand. If we know one thing about the 18-34 crowd, they prize authenticity. This is hype, but in a fun way.

What's the worst thing that could happen? You have to buy someone a cup of coffee.

-Steve Allan, *Programming Research Consultant*

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