

RADIO

New York will import 'music that matters' from Seattle

WNYE-FM, the pubradio station still owned by the New York City government, on March 24 begins simulcasting *John in the Morning*, a popular morning music program on Seattle's KEXP.

The bicoastal partnership, part of a larger overhaul of the municipal station's schedule, adds about 14 million New Yorkers to the potential audience for Seattle deejay John Richards.

KEXP will create three additional programs for WNYE, including a new nightly world music show. The partners have dubbed the new line-up "Radio Liberation."

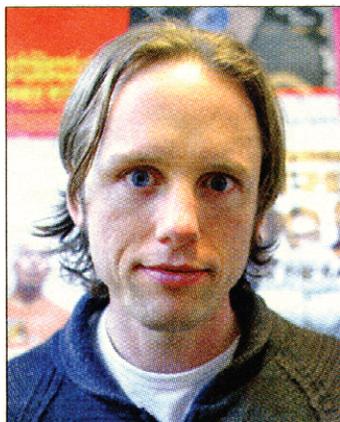
The schedule revamp is the first big push by the city's NYC Media Group to build listenership for WNYE, which now airs a mix of syndicated pubradio fare and foreign-language news programs.

In Arbitron's fall 2007 ratings period, WNYE booked an average weekly cume of nearly 115,000 listeners, roughly one-third the cume of WFUV, which airs a mix of folk and rock-flavored Triple A music from Fordham University in the Bronx.

When then-Mayor Rudy Giuliani sold off WNYC-TV to commercial broadcasters and WNYC-FM/AM to its present nonprofit owner in 1995, the city school board still had WNYE-FM and TV in its back pocket. Since 2005, they and the city's cable access channels have been managed by NYC Media Group, part of the city's Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications.

"This tremendous asset that's in our hands is, frankly, underutilized," said group General Manager Arick Wierson, referring to the FM channel. "We are trying to do something that is similarly innovative to the TV plan."

During its 2005 overhaul, NYC TV launched original primetime programs tailored to the lifestyle interests of the "hip,



Richards' bicoastal split: 70/30%.

younger-skewing, urban market," he said. The media group set out to create something complementary for radio listeners.

KEXP already has a sizable online audience of New Yorkers through KEXP.org. Webtrends counted webstream plays by more than 65,000 New Yorkers from Sept. 1 to Nov. 30, 2007, according to the Seattle station.

"This partnership will not only give greater voice to artists from the Northwest, New York and around the world, it will bring music that matters into the lives of more listeners than ever before," said Tom Mara, KEXP executive director.

To bring local flair for Seattle and New York listeners to his morning broadcast, KEXP's Richards will keep a home in Seattle and spend about 30 percent of his time in New York, according to Matthew Tolin, c.f.o. and radio manager for NYC Media. *John in the Morning* will keep its blend of indie artists and add Richards' take on the Seattle and New York music scenes. Tolin looks to hire a radio producer to create localized breaks for the 9 a.m. to noon simulcast slot.

A WNYE-produced drivetime lead-in to *John in the Morning*, featuring eclectic music and newscasts, is in the works.

WNYE is talking with other pubradio outlets about sharing additional music programming. "Partnerships are the easiest way for us, because we don't have a robust staff," Tolin said. "We want to have some local production and, luckily, radio is cheap," especially when compared to the cost of making TV.

—Karen Everhart