



jacobs media

T w e n t y Y e a r s

IT WAS 20 YEARS AGO TODAY...

Jacobs Media Continues To Make A Major Impact On Radio Industry

The broadcasting consulting firm that created the Classic Rock format for radio, championed the growth of Alternative and Active Rock, and today works with clients as diverse as National Public Radio is celebrating its 20th year in business. Jacobs Media, founded by Fred Jacobs in 1983, is respected for its vision and ability to make radio programming dynamic, interesting, and relevant to hundreds of millions of listeners.

"It's in vogue today to bash radio as being corporate, centralized, and lacking the dynamism of years past," said company President Fred Jacobs. "But despite the proliferation of new media and other distractions like cell phones and Mp3 players, radio continues to have enormous reach and power. And companies like Jacobs Media will continue to innovate and push the envelope."

After serving as the head of Radio Research for Frank N. Magid & Associates, and later ABC's Owned FM Stations in the '70s, audience research became a foundation for what Jacobs Media was to become. Later, Jacobs successfully programmed venerable album rocker WRIF in Detroit, and went on to apply his vision entrepreneurially when Jacobs Media was born in 1983. Inspired by the music he grew up with, he formed a radio consulting firm out of his apartment. Armed with business cards, he toured through the National Association of Broadcasters convention in San Francisco, trying to convince the industry's leaders that his Classic Rock concept had value.

These efforts paid off two years later, when Jacobs convinced an AM radio station in Dallas, and then a signal-challenged FM station in Charlotte, Michigan, that playing music for Baby Boomers had a future. From that effort, the most successful format in the past two decades was born – Classic Rock. Today, Classic Rock has become one of the most successful and profitable radio formats, and Jacobs Media is the company behind its growth.

"When you've got a format that isn't based on playing the latest current music like Classic Rock, the secret is keeping it fresh," remarks Jacobs. "Our challenge has been to continue to innovate, attract the best talent for our clients, and create vibrant promotions to make sure these stations are current and relevant for today."

The fact that you now hear Classic Rock in hundreds of TV commercials and movie soundtracks underscores the importance of this music on more than just the Boomer generation. And in an industry famous for two-year formats, Classic Rock's long-term success has provided the foundation for our company's spirit and growth."

In 1989, Jacobs made a left turn and focused on the next wave of music – Alternative Rock. Until that time, Jacobs was the bane of the record industry because his Classic Rock stations didn't play the latest releases. With the creation of "The Edge," the most successful brand name in Alternative radio, the record industry began to re-think its position. And for the second time, Jacobs astounded critics by convincing broadcasters that the "next big thing" was going to be music for the group that *followed* Baby Boomers – Generation X. Once again, his vision was soon to be rewarded, as the Seattle grunge scene exploded with seminal bands like Nirvana, Stone Temple Pilots, and Pearl Jam.

In 2000, Jacobs Media began to apply its expertise by consulting and providing research to National Public Radio and The Corporation For Public Broadcasting. While it would seem unusual for a company that's made its mark with formats focusing on Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, Limp Bizkit, and Creed, working with Public Radio seemed totally natural to Jacobs, "We've built our company on the premise the audience always tells you where you should be. This is where my research background has been so helpful. NPR uses us to research the audience and, combined with our programming acumen, help them reach new audience and improve their existing program lineup."

Today, Jacobs Media is the largest Rock radio consulting firm in America. With clients across America, the firm works for radio companies as diverse as Infinity, Entercom, ABC, Emmis, Cox, Greater Media, Saga, Susquehanna, Journal, Citadel, and many others. The company has offices in Southfield, Michigan and Burbank, California.

Fred Jacobs is regarded as an expert on the radio industry, its challenges, and opportunities. He is a frequent contributor to industry trade publications and is a sought-after speaker at national broadcasting conventions, and is available for interviews on music, radio, and popular culture.

For more information, contact Jacobs Media at (248) 353-9030 or email [Paul Jacobs](#).

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