

# JIM RUSSELL PRODUCTIONS

"THE PROGRAM DOCTOR IS IN!"



**L**ocal program production is too difficult and expensive to be allowed to fail. But, the truth is very few local programs deliver a sustainable return on investment: *Audience 2010* said “the audience outcomes of local production are often cruel, and the economics are always brutal.” The answer is – **Get it right!** Design a program *strategically as well as creatively*. Design it to succeed!

Perfecting an existing local show or creating a new program isn't *just* a matter of luck. Nor is it *merely* creative inspiration. Instead, creating a successful program is a complex combination of:

- A great idea.
- Angels to support you.
- A reasonable & do-able strategic business plan.
- A terrific staff
- And, yes, a lot of luck.



**Jim Russell ought to know.** He's had more than his share of successes over his 40+ year career in broadcasting. Part of the team that created *All Things Considered* under inventor Bill Siemering, Jim went on to produce and executive produce *ATC* and he did the early work on "visioning" *Morning Edition*. In 1988, Jim was asked to create what became the nation's most successful business program, *Marketplace*. He also developed the concept for PRI's *The World*. His most recent creation was APM's *Weekend America*.

Now Jim works as a consultant to program producers and broadcast stations. "The Program Doctor" helps stations and producers create new shows and improve existing programs. He has developed and refined a 2½-day "Intensive" which leads producers through the steps in logical order ... to help them create both a great program concept and a smart business plan. He's done his Intensives at dozens of stations around the country and even overseas! Subjects included in the Intensive are:

Day 0	Day 1	Day 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Why – do you want to produce this program?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Concept and the Team</li> <li>▪ Mission</li> <li>▪ Target Audience</li> <li>▪ The Competition</li> <li>▪ Differentiators – what makes it different from every other program?</li> <li>▪ The Bible – what each show needs to be "on mission" and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Branding</li> <li>▪ Signature Segments</li> <li>▪ Resources</li> <li>▪ Specific plan and strategies</li> <li>▪ Timetable</li> <li>▪ Underwriting and Sponsorship</li> <li>▪ Format</li> <li>▪ Next Steps</li> </ul>

Jim usually goes to stations or production houses to conduct these Intensives. But now, he is trying a new approach – *to bring the cost down and extend the value of these Intensives to more producers.*

#### **A NEW APPROACH:**



Twice a year, Jim plans to conduct his Intensives as a “fly-in” in a central location. Attendees will travel to a convenient central location. Up to two participants (Producer and PD or Producer and Host?) will come from each station or production company. They’ll spend 2½-days in fast-moving workshops learning the process Jim uses and applying it to their programs. They’ll learn from Jim *but also from their fellow producers who have probably faced the same challenges* – in formal workshops and free-wheeling evening get-togethers. The attendees will have the opportunity to create common solutions to common problems. At the conclusion of the workshop, they’ll take the program development process home with them, to lead their own staffs in analyzing and creating a solid plan to improve or create a new program.

Following the Intensive, Jim will provide additional follow-up consulting with the producers, by conference call, as well as auditioning and critiquing of work. And, of course, each of the participants will have their own consulting team in the future – their fellow participants at the Intensive.

#### **COST:**

The usual cost for Jim to bring his Intensive to a station or producer is approximately \$7,500 plus travel expenses. But, by turning the tables and having producers come to a central location, Jim believes he can reduce the cost by nearly two-thirds!

Tuition for the Workshop will be \$2,500 for up to 2 people from the station or producing company. Each participant will pay his/her own travel expenses. The first Intensive is planned for Fall of 2013.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

Audience guru David Giovannoni said “local programming suffers a double whammy – relatively high cost with relatively small public-service and financial returns.” And Audience 2010 agreed: “Stations are now tending to commit to local showcases that are not listener-sustainable...” The logical conclusion is that the only way to save local programming is ...

**... to make it better.**

#### **CONTACT:**

If the Intensive in North Carolina interests you, for more information, please be in touch with:



Jim Russell  
[jim@programdoctor.com](mailto:jim@programdoctor.com)  
(919) 942-6950

or



Joan Siefert Rose  
[joan@programdoctor.com](mailto:joan@programdoctor.com)  
(919) 633-7052