

# Hablando For The Masses

Spanish News/Talk stations balance longevity with current trends and interests

By Adam Jacobson and Anthony Acampora  
R&R Staff Writers

Some of America's first Spanish-language radio successes balanced music with political talk, news, sports, and information. Call it Full-Service Spanish radio. And like their English-language relatives, many Full-Service Spanish AMs have evolved into full-time News/Talkers.

## AM Radio's New Reality

Hefel has already seen the power Spanish-language music stations possess on the FM dial in Los Angeles with its Spanish AC KLVE and Regional Mexican KSCA. Now, its focus is on the continued development of Spanish News/Talk **KTNQ-AM (Ten-Q)**. Launched on April 11, 1996, it segued to continuous spoken-word programming following 18 years as a Spanish-language entity (Ten-Q had been Top 40 until August 1979).

KTNQ is the only 24-hour live, local News/Talk station — in any language — in L.A. Hefel AM Programming Specialist and KTNQ PD **David Gleason** notes that, "We see very minimal sharing with English Talk stations," in regard to listener preferences. "It's a little bit higher with News stations, but still single-digit sharing." KTNQ joins **KKJH-AM (Radio Alegria)** and **KWKW-AM (La Mexicana)** as stations airing some sort of Spanish News/Talk programming.

of sports talk, the Internet program. We're also considering soccer games. According to Gleason, KTNQ's core is "Spanish dominant and looking for something that is both linguistically and culturally more in tune with his or her lifestyle. For example, the stations that carry Rush Limbaugh are not going to have a great deal of appeal for somebody who's been in the U.S. or Los Angeles for six or seven years."

## Ratings Roundup

Here's a look at how KTNQ/LA. performed versus its English-language Talk counterparts in Los Angeles, according to Arbitron Spring '97 results. Rank is in parentheses, ties denoted by an asterisk.

City	25-34	35-44
<b>KFI-AM</b>	3.4 (#7*)	4.9 (#3)
<b>KTNQ-AM</b>	3.0 (#13)	2.9 (#10)
<b>KLAX-FM</b>	2.6 (#17)	2.1 (#17)
<b>KABC-AM</b>	1.7 (#20)	3.0 (#9)
<b>KTZN-AM</b>	0.6 (#35)	0.9 (#30)

KTNQ competes better in the 25-34 demo than among 35-64s with its English-language counterparts (see sidebar). Gleason explains, "If you look at the demographic curve of Hispanics in Los Angeles — and almost everywhere in the U.S., with the exception of New York and Miami — the bulk of the audience is under 45."

Mornings at KTNQ are hosted by market legend Humberto Luna. Luna has been at the station since it's been Spanish. Gleason says about Luna, "He's an example of someone who's adapted to the new reality of AM radio."

Following Luna from 10am-1pm is a lifestyle talk show; issue-oriented talk shows run from 1-5pm. KTNQ's market-leading sports show "Hablado de Deportes" runs from 5-9pm. As far as play-by-play *en español* is concerned, Gleason notes, "We've found there are three sports that Hispanics here like: soccer, soccer, and soccer. Baseball is only played in two or three states in Mexico and minimally in

Central America. There aren't a bunch of other sports that are prevalent among Hispanics."

The station runs a humor-based issues show from 9-11pm and a sex and relationship show from 11pm-1am. In overnights, KTNQ airs a general-interest talk show. While most Talk stations only keep about 50%-80% of their audience share on the weekend, KTNQ holds around 90%. Gleason remarks, "We run all-sports on Sunday and a variety of things on Saturday, including a swap-shop that pulls the highest numbers on the station."

What helped make the decision to flip KTNQ to News/Talk? "There was nothing else that we tried that would work. We had some of the market's best talent, but we figured out that the listeners didn't want to hear that talent playing music on AM. They wanted to hear them do a good, contemporary, young-adult-driven Talk format. We finally said to all the songs, 'go away!'"

# Ratings Roundup

Here's a look at how KTNQ/L.A. performed versus its English-language Talk counterparts in Los Angeles, according to Arbitron Spring '97 results. Rank is in parentheses, ties denoted by an asterisk.

Calls	25-54	35-64
KFI-AM	3.4 (#7*)	4.9 (#3)
KTNQ-AM	3.0 (#13)	2.9 (#10)
KLSX-FM	2.6 (#17)	2.1 (#17)
KABC-AM	1.7 (#20)	3.0 (#9)
KTZN-AM	0.6 (#34)	0.9 (#30)

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The station runs a humor-based issues show from 9-11pm and a sex and relationship show from 11pm-1am. In overnights, KTNQ airs a general-interest talk show. While most Talk stations only keep about 50%-60% of their audience share on the weekend, KTNQ holds around 90%. Gleason remarks, "We run all-sports on Sunday and a variety of things on Saturday, including a swap-shop that pulls the highest numbers on the station."

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In the Big Apple, Heftel-owned heritage News/Talker WADO-AM finally dropped all its music to concentrate on what it does best. "Our strong points really are News/Talk and Sports," WADO GM Carlos Rubio says. "We have two FMs in the market that are really strong, and what we really should be is the place for News

and Talk for Hispanic New York."

WADO and brokered WPAT-AM (it broadcasts the Yankees in Spanish) are Heftel's two New York properties. Although SBS beat out Heftel in the quest for ownership of WPAT-FM, Rubio says Heftel is still very much interested in purchasing an FM station in market No. 1. Among definite plans Heftel has made is the further development of Spanish News/Talk in other markets. It operates KLAT/Houston, and is in the process of converting WIND-AM/Chicago and KESS/Dallas to Spanish News/Talk. Working with the stations is consultant Valerie Geller — who is involved primarily with talent development at the station.

Meanwhile, WADO — which has aired Spanish-language programming for 38 years — is preparing for a power increase to 50,000 watts during the day. It is currently building two more towers next to its single stick in East Rutherford, NJ. And while stations in other markets create niche formats targeting Hispanics from different regions of the hemisphere, WADO doesn't mind catering to them all.

"From 5-9am, we're like News/Talk 1010 WINS in Spanish," Rubio says. "In the afternoon, we have a show called 'De Todo Un Poco,' featuring a Dominican guy and a Cuban woman with interviews and talk topics, WADO is not a Puerto Rican, Cuban, Dominican, or Central American station — it's a *Hispanic* station for New Yorkers. Period. It's a place that people tune in to to get their information from. The FMs just play music."