

Thursday, December 21th, 2006  
New Orleans, Louisiana

### TALK RADIO MAKES A BIG COMEBACK

Just a few years ago, talk radio held a small niche of the listening public both in Louisiana and throughout the Deep South. Here in the Bayou State, only a handful of stations even carried talk radio shows. Several New Orleans stations had fairly strong signals that could be heard with some clarity a little south of Baton Rouge. But the number of listeners lagged significantly behind the music stations.

What little talk radio available was on the AM dial. So the signal range never went too far. FM had been the preference for a variety of music stations, and public radio has generally been available at the low end of the FM band.

But all this has dramatically changed post-Katrina. Talk radio has become the fastest growing medium with a significant number of new listeners picking up both local and national shows. Rush Limbaugh and Sean Hannity lead the national list with a posse of challengers like Glenn Beck and Dr. Laura not too far behind. But the largest number of listeners has gravitated to local talk shows.

There are a number of talk show hosts who cover the waterfront of political and social issues each day, and gab the hours away with local listeners. I'm making a point here. More radio stations are offering a variety of talk formats, and the number of listeners are growing dramatically. I've dealt primarily with Louisiana, but the same pattern seems to be taking place in the other Deep South states from Texas, Mississippi, and across the Gulf Coast.

Talk radio seems to be where the action is. And get ready for some big changes. FM talk radio is about to come on like gang busters. It shouldn't be any surprise to those who have observed the media scene. With the popular advent of IPODs, there are just not as many people listening to music stations that have dominated FM radio. And the FM signals are much stronger, allowing more listeners over a much greater distance. Simply put, FM radio is the wave of the future for talk radio listeners.

Now some of you who have been reading my columns over the last four years may be thinking, "Hey, this is all interesting general information, but where is Brown going with all of this?" Well, let me hit you with a surprise. Yours truly is jumping head first into the challenging waters of talk radio. That's right. If you're reading this column on a weekday morning between 8:00 AM and 11:00 AM, flip your dial to 99.5 FM just about anywhere in the State of Louisiana and along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. You will find me pontificating, as I often do, on any number of subjects in this new format that began just a few weeks ago.

For years, 995 has been the old WRNO, the rock of New Orleans, with one of the strongest signals in the south. One hundred thousand watts booming from the Texas border and across the Mississippi gulf coast. The **NEW** 995FM.com is a Clear Channel station, and part of the largest radio syndicate in the country. You simply cannot ask for a better team to join up with.

. Yours truly takes over at the 8:00 AM slot, three hours a day, Monday through Friday. "The Jim Brown Program" is also available on the worldwide web, so friends throughout the country can listen in by going to the station website at [www.theNew995FM.com](http://www.theNew995FM.com) or over my website at [www.jimbrownla.com](http://www.jimbrownla.com). We will be archiving previous shows in case there is anything of interest you missed.

Program content? You know me. My columns run the gamut of state, national, and international issues. The radio show will do the same. There will of course be heavy emphasis on the whole post-Katrina recovery effort. I'm not interested in second guessing "what could have been" or who is to blame. I'm much more focused in talking to those who have both the authority and the ability to do their best in getting life back to normal again.

The new station could be the only radio venue in the country that has ".com" as part of its name. Check out the website and you will be surprised at how interactive the combination of radio and the web work together. I write a daily Blog after getting off the show each weekday, along with my regular column that I have been writing for the past few years. You can read my daily comments and see pictures of my guests on our site at <http://www.thenew995fmlcom>.

So that's the big change in my life. I'll be broadcasting out of the Clear Channel Studios on Howard Avenue directly across the street from WDSU Channel 6 Television. You will be able to call in, and I certainly hope a lot of you will. In addition, I would certainly like to have any suggestions by email on program content, or any other advice you might be able to give me.

I hope you will start tuning in, either on FM or over the web. It's The Jim Brown Program on Clear Channel's thenew995FM.com every weekday, 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM central time. I look forward to talking with you.

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*"I just wished Katrina had only hit the United Nations building, nothing else,  
just had flooded them out, and I wouldn't have rescued them."*

*--FOX News' **Bill O'Reilly***

Peace and justice.

Jim Brown

Jim Brown's weekly column appears each Thursday at Politicsla.com, and in a number of newspapers throughout the State of Louisiana. You can read Jim's Blog, and take his weekly poll, plus read his columns going back to the fall of 2002 by going to his own website at <http://www.jimbrownla.com>.

P.S.: Visit Jim Brown's website at [www.jimbrownla.com](http://www.jimbrownla.com).