



NAFB Webinar Summary Report

June 4, 2026

Farm radio continues to be one of the most trusted and effective ways to reach agricultural audiences, but successfully selling ag radio requires more than simply presenting advertising opportunities. During the NAFB webinar, *Selling Ag Radio at the Local Level*, a panel of experienced sales professionals and broadcasters shared insights into how they build client relationships, prepare for sales calls, position radio within the broader media landscape, and demonstrate value to advertisers.

Panelists included Jeff Reese of Ohio Ag Net, Katie Kaliff-Jagels of KRVN Radio and the Rural Radio Network of Nebraska, Amelia Siroky of Northern Broadcasting and Northern Ag Network, and Brian Winnekins, owner and farm news director of WRDN Radio in Wisconsin.

Relationships Remain the Foundation

One of the strongest themes throughout the discussion was the importance of relationships in agricultural sales. While media platforms and marketing tactics continue to evolve, the panelists agreed that trust and personal connections remain the most valuable assets a salesperson can develop.

Jeff Reese shared how his previous experience working as a grain originator and transportation specialist at a local cooperative provided firsthand experience working with producers. Those years helped him develop an understanding of producers' needs and challenges while building relationships that continue to serve him today. His background gives him credibility when speaking with both farmers and agribusiness clients because he understands their businesses from the inside.

Amelia Siroky echoed the importance of relationship-building, noting that much of her success comes from maintaining a visible presence throughout the agricultural community. Whether attending trade shows, commodity meetings, livestock events, or local agricultural gatherings, she views every interaction as an opportunity to strengthen relationships and learn more about her clients' businesses.

The panel emphasized that many successful sales calls are the result of relationships built long before a proposal is ever presented. Clients want to work with people they trust, and trust is earned through consistency, reliability, and genuine interest in helping their businesses succeed.

Preparation Creates Better Conversations

Jeff Reese discussed the importance of preparation before every sales call. Rather than approaching clients with a generic advertising package, he spends time researching their businesses, understanding their markets, and identifying opportunities where farm radio can help them reach potential customers.

Panelists noted that today's advertisers expect strategic thinking from media partners. Sales professionals who understand a client's goals, seasonal priorities, customer base, and competitive environment are better positioned to create meaningful marketing solutions.

The group encouraged salespeople to ask questions and spend more time listening than talking. Understanding a customer's business objectives often uncovers opportunities that would otherwise be missed.

Understanding Agriculture Matters

Katie Kaliff-Jagels highlighted the value of having a strong agricultural background. Growing up in agriculture and spending time in seed sales before entering broadcasting provided her with a practical understanding of how producers make decisions and how agricultural businesses market their products and services.

She explained that Nebraska's diverse agricultural landscape requires an understanding of multiple sectors, including row crops, livestock, wheat, sorghum, and sugarbeets. Advertisers often need targeted solutions that reach specific segments of the agricultural community, making market knowledge a critical part of the sales process.

The panel stressed that while not everyone enters ag broadcasting from a farming background, successful salespeople make the effort to continually learn about agriculture. Understanding production practices, commodity markets, seasonal trends, and producer

concerns helps sales representatives communicate more effectively with clients and position radio as a valuable marketing tool.

Selling Coverage and Audience Access

Katie also discussed the advantages of offering advertisers broad market coverage through KRVN and the Rural Radio Network. With stations reaching producers across Nebraska and neighboring regions, she can help clients efficiently connect with multiple commodity groups and geographic markets.

The discussion highlighted how radio provides advertisers with access to audiences that are often difficult to reach through other channels. Producers spend significant time in vehicles, equipment, and rural locations where radio remains a trusted source of information and news.

Panelists encouraged sales teams to become experts in their audience data and coverage areas. Being able to clearly explain who listens, where they are located, and how they engage with content strengthens sales presentations and helps clients understand the return on their investment.

Events Create Opportunities

Amelia Siroky shared how she leverages agricultural events and industry gatherings to strengthen client relationships and generate new business opportunities. Shows, conferences, livestock events, and commodity meetings provide opportunities to connect with current clients while meeting potential advertisers in a more relaxed setting.

She noted that these interactions often lead to conversations about future marketing plans, emerging challenges, and new business opportunities. Rather than relying solely on traditional sales calls, she views event participation as an extension of relationship management.

The panel agreed that being present where agriculture happens is an important part of local sales success. Clients appreciate seeing broadcasters and sales representatives actively involved in the communities they serve.

The Importance of Research

Brian Winnekins provided the perspective of a station owner and broadcaster who depends on strong sales professionals to grow revenue. He emphasized that successful salespeople understand the value of audience research and use data to support their recommendations.

Research continues to demonstrate the effectiveness of farm radio, particularly in terms of trust, listener engagement, and audience reach. Brian encouraged sales professionals to utilize research resources available through NAFB and other industry studies to strengthen client presentations and support advertising recommendations.

He noted that advertisers increasingly want evidence that their marketing investments are reaching the right audience. Research provides an important foundation for those conversations and helps differentiate farm radio from competing media options.

Farm Broadcasters Bring Unique Value

A recurring theme throughout the webinar was the unique relationship farm broadcasters have with their audiences. Unlike many forms of media, farm broadcasters often become trusted advisors and daily companions to producers.

Brian explained that this trust creates significant value for advertisers. When broadcasters consistently deliver reliable information and build credibility with listeners, advertisers benefit from the positive relationship that already exists between the broadcaster and the audience.

The panel agreed that the credibility of farm broadcasters remains one of the industry's greatest strengths and a powerful selling point when discussing advertising opportunities.

Multi-Media is No Longer Optional

While radio remains the foundation of many advertising campaigns, panelists acknowledged that today's clients increasingly seek integrated marketing solutions.

Brian stressed that salespeople need to understand how radio works alongside digital advertising, social media, video, websites, and email marketing. Clients want partners who can help them navigate a complex media environment rather than simply sell airtime.

The discussion emphasized that broadcasters should position themselves as marketing consultants capable of building comprehensive campaigns that combine the strengths of multiple platforms.

Rather than viewing digital media as competition, the panel encouraged stations to embrace multi-media opportunities that complement and enhance traditional radio advertising.

Advice for New Sales Professionals

When asked what contributes most to long-term success, panelists pointed to several common characteristics:

- Develop authentic relationships and nurture them over time.
- Learn as much as possible about agriculture and the customers you serve.
- Prepare thoroughly before every client interaction.
- Focus on solving business problems rather than selling products.
- Utilize research and audience data to support recommendations.
- Be visible in the agricultural community.
- Understand the full range of media options available to clients.
- Maintain a service-oriented mindset.

Conclusion

The webinar reinforced that while technology and media consumption habits continue to evolve, the fundamentals of successful ag radio sales remain remarkably consistent. Relationships, credibility, preparation, and agricultural knowledge continue to drive success.

The panelists demonstrated that effective sales professionals serve as trusted advisors to their clients, helping them connect with agricultural audiences through strategic marketing solutions. By combining the traditional strengths of farm broadcasting with modern marketing approaches and data-driven insights, ag radio continues to provide significant value to advertisers and remains an essential component of the agricultural communications landscape.