

## The Cost of Not Being a Member

By Julie Koehn, WLEN-FM (Adrian) and Michigan Representative to NAB



The broadcast industry has seen some turbulent times over the last 5 years or so, more turbulent than any that I've seen in my 25 years in broadcasting. The DTV transition, performance tax issues, SHVERA, changes in Congress, the White House and the FCC. For all of these reasons and many more, the cost of not being a member of the NAB -- Your National Broadcast Association -- is now greater than ever.

As an NAB Board member, I've seen first-hand the dedication and hard work that is being put forth by our superb NAB team to protect the interests of television stations in the SHVERA fight (both on the retransmission consent front and extending local-to-local TV coverage to all television markets). I've also witnessed a coordinated NAB strategy to defeat the performance tax, uniting the advocacy efforts of state broadcast associations and individual broadcasters to block legislation that could force every music-playing radio station in the United States to pay at least 5 percent of gross revenue to the foreign-based record labels.

These fights are not over, they are still on the front burner and we must remain vigilant in building support for broadcasters in both the House and Senate. But I urge you to consider the notion that 5 percent of your gross revenue would go to the record labels, or that our TV station colleagues could lose valuable retransmission consent revenue paid by satellite and cable companies. My guess is that your NAB dues pale by comparison, which is why membership in NAB is so critical.

This is not the time to suggest that someone else is responsible for carrying the water for broadcasters across the country. I know times are hard, for us at WLEN, and for broadcasters in large and small markets across the country, times are hard. But things could be worse if we are not successful in the performance tax and SHVERA fights.

Most of you will begin your budget process for next year in the coming weeks. I cannot stress to you the importance of including NAB membership in that budget. There is power in an organization's numbers. It's time to step up to the plate and carry some of the water for yourself and your industry.

To all of you who are NAB members, I THANK YOU! Your support will help keep our industry strong. To those of you who were members and are no longer, I would ask you to consider coming back. You can pay NAB dues today, or you may end up paying the foreign record labels or our cable and satellite TV competitors a lot more tomorrow. To those of you who have never been members, I would ask that you consider what the NAB does for you every day to protect your interests in Washington. Don't hesitate to call me and allow me to explain the importance of your NAB membership. It does pay.

As always, at your service,

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