

Programming

by Mark Schwed

March 17: A Day Of Radio Infamy

*"It's Time To WAKE UP, LA. This Is Free-Form
Rock And Roll Hit Radio For The '90's."*

Welcome To The Jungle

The first shot of Radio War in Los Angeles was fired at 5:03 AM Pacific time, March 17. "Pirate Radio," the latest incarnation of Scott Shannon's patented In-Your-Face-Boogie broadcasts that brought the New York market to its knees in just 74 days, had arrived.

Radio's current *Wunderkind* got where he is by being different, and according to the early returns, he's done it again. After turning Tampa, Florida and New York radio upside down in, if you'll pardon the expression, record time, he is making an attempt to see if Radio lightning strikes thrice. Shannon is going to the mat in the toughest market in America with two of the medium's most muscular heavyweights--KLLS's Rick Dees and Jay Thomas of Power 106. Take your seats, ladies and gentlemen, this is the Main Event.

It would have been so easy for Westwood One to take the money and run, and we're not talking chump change. After plunking down \$50 million for a low-rated soft pop station, KIQQ FM (100.3), its corporate pockets could have jingled to the tune of \$2 million in pure profit each year



Shannon: The Pirate comes ashore in L.A.

without making a single change, without lifting a finger.

"It had a \$3 million cash flow, and with our networks we could have

had a guaranteed \$5 million cash flow in the first year," explained Norm Pattiz, Chairman of the Board and CEO of Westwood One.

Instead, Pattiz and his corporate chieftans sent KIQQ into the ozone, changing the call letters and, they hope, the face of southern California radio. They dumped much of the staff. It is estimated that Shannon cost them an additional \$5 million.

"What he did in New York was legendary," Pattiz said. "There just isn't anyone like him." This is why Shannon's five year contract is so lucrative.

"His deal is a good deal," Pattiz said. "It becomes a great deal if the radio station becomes successful."

Why would Westwood One, a giant corporation that owns Mutual Broadcasting System, NBC Radio Networks, and Westwood One Radio Networks, give a hoot about local radio?

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