

**Radio Reborn**  
Embracing Broadcast In An Interactive Way

by  
Kevin Glennon  
[www.kevinglennon.com](http://www.kevinglennon.com)

# Introduction

A furious debate occurs daily – which is a better medium: broadcast or interactive? Countless hours, calories, and gigabytes of bandwidth are expended along the way.

People get caught up making arguments that one is going to replace the other. They point to innovations like satellite radio, digital television, and the expanding growth of the broadband Internet access market.

This paper doesn't choose sides. Rather, it shows how broadcast radio can be used creatively *as an interactive offering*, and not as something fighting interactive for space. The two media work brilliantly together, and provide a total much greater than the sum of their parts.

If there are any terms or technologies in this paper with which you are not familiar, please read my article “The Top 10 Things To Know In 2005” available for free on my web site, or don't hesitate to contact me personally.

Kevin Glennon  
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kevin@kevinglennon.com  
(617) 413-1124

# In-Game Radio

## OVERVIEW

### Yes, It's Radio In A Game!

You're driving along in the virtual world of *Grand Theft Auto*. The virtual radio station starts playing the same song again for the third time. You get bored, and decide to switch to another station. You've heard everything on that station, too. You see, the games that feature "radio" stations nowadays are simply playing pre-recorded shows. Four months after buying the game, they're the same old recordings.

Checking your watch, you see it's almost 7pm, and realize your friend Sam's radio show is about to begin. You hit a few buttons, and switch over to his In-Game Radio (IGR) station. The music's new, and it's much better there for the mission you're working on in the game, anyway.

## HOW IT WORKS

### The Radio Engine

IGR is a free software download that you install on your computer or gaming system. It runs in the background, and is integrated into the programming of your games.

As a gamer, you simply type in a command or hit a button, and you access the radio control panel. In moments, you change stations, and go back to your game. Where games have already built in station-changing abilities, you simply use those.

### The Web Site

The IGR web site is the place gamers go for the best video game sound in the world. Each gamer logs in to her free account, and sets up her preprogrammed stations. Gamers have the ability to read the play lists

### Yes, Really! Radio IN The Game!

Many games feature original music. Unfortunately, many games also take so long to complete that you end up hearing the same music perhaps too much. You may have liked the original music at first, but now months later, it's driving you nuts.

In-Game Radio offers not just a solution to that problem, but a whole new universe of game music. IGR is literally a series of "radio" stations from which to choose. Whether you're driving along in *Gran Turismo*, or plodding along in your spacesuit in *Halo 2*, you'll have the ability to listen to the *live* music and *new* programming you want to hear.

of radio stations, as well as participate in discussion groups about them.

Best of all, the IGR web site publishes information to help gamers find new stations. Every day, gamers can see stations listed by genre. They can see which stations are getting the most airplay. They can even access a "home page" for every station, where station managers can describe their broadcasts, and say a bit about themselves.

### The Site and the Engine

Gamers have six preprogrammed station slots. They assign each slot to a particular station, and they're done. As soon as they go back to their games, the IGR sees these new changes, and starts playing the selected radio stations immediately.

## THE RADIO STATIONS

### A Radio Explosion

With IGR, anyone with access to a microphone and Internet access can become a radio DJ. Users simply record their show as podcasts, and upload their files to their web site. Using RSS (Real Simple Syndication), these podcasts are found by the IGR music server.

For more aspiring DJ's, shows can be broadcast live using traditional streaming audio technologies. All of

the instructions and software necessary to link up to the IGR music servers will be provided for free.

### Don't Forget About The Big Guys

Of course, the big radio stations will also be included in the IGR system. When having a tough 3 on 3 game in *NBA Street V3*, the boombox on the side of the court isn't just playing good music, it's playing the actual radio station you listen to when on the courts yourself!

## TACKLING TOUGH ISSUES WITH A BREEZE

### Metrics

The wonderful thing about IGR is that every time a show is downloaded or streamed to a game system, it's logged in the database. In real time, media executives can see what programs gamers are listening to, but more importantly, anonymous information about the users.

The IGR site will show executives what stations are most popular with men making \$100k or more, and women who live in urban environments. Unlike traditional radio, where there isn't an exact figure to show how many listeners actually had their radio stations tuned to a certain frequency at a certain time, IGR shows precisely who listened to what programming.

### Opening New Markets

As soon as IGR is installed, whole markets are instantly opened up. Studies have been showing that people most frequently listen to the radio in the car. For those who use public transportation, radio is not something they listen to often.

By putting radio in the games, these consumers are reconnected with radio. In reality, it gives broadcasters and advertisers more time with the consumer. In addition, it opens up new markets, and creates new media opportunities, as there will be more "radio stations" upon which to advertise.

### Copyright and Content Woes





Protecting the copyrights of owners and artists is a big issue in the modern interactive arena. That an Average Joe can download a free program and start broadcasting songs without compensation to the artist or publisher frightens many interactive executives.

The IGR site offers multiple "filters" for participating game companies. This means that game companies can choose to allow only radio stations that have valid Performing Rights Organization (PRO) licenses. They may choose to block any stations that include adult content.

The IGR web site will have information for all users on how to obtain Interactive Licenses from PRO's. It also

makes very clear in the Usage Agreement that users are responsible for policing the content of their stations. Users who do not follow the User Agreement will be barred from the site, and thus barred from playing their stations on any games.

Please order your stations by changing their selection numbers to the right:

	9015: Zoo Philly Radio The best hardcore driving music, but still captures the essence of the Philly blues scene.	1
	0056: Steve-O's Live Fire Techno & Acid in full-clips!	?
	5157: The Total Shred Station Guitar wanks, bends, and shreds from the sk8ter punks of the Mean Streets of Atlanta.	3
	2843: Rocketscream Radio Death metal. 'Nuff said.	4

This screen shot from a part of the IGR web site shows how it is easy to use, and ordering selected stations is a snap!

### About PRO's

Performing Rights Organizations (PRO's) represent hundreds of thousands of music artists and professionals worldwide. The appropriate license through a PRO allows radio and interactive producers the ability to legally play copyrighted music. For more information on PRO's, please visit their respective web sites at:

The American Society for Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP):

[www.ascap.com](http://www.ascap.com)

Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI):

[www.bmi.com](http://www.bmi.com)

Society of European Stage Authors and Composers, Inc. (SESAC):

[www.sesac.com](http://www.sesac.com)

# Seeing These Technologies In Action: IGR

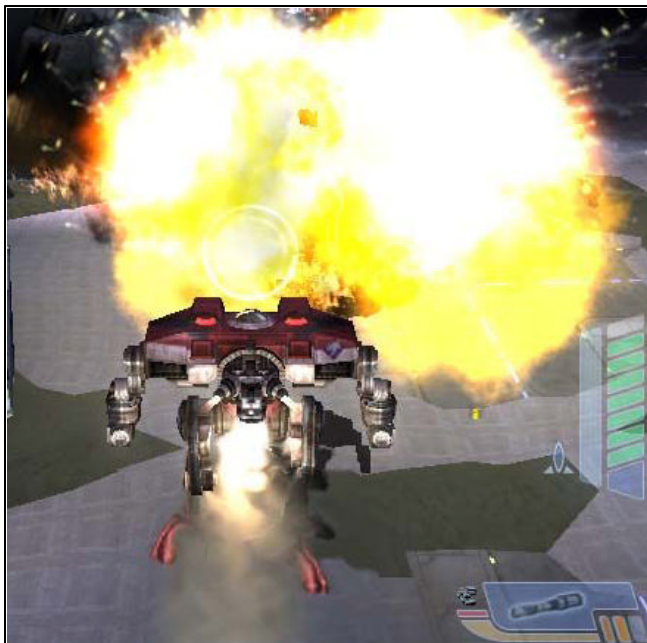
## IN-GAME RADIO (IGR) AND CUSTOMIZEABLE CULTURE

### True Interaction

Jane is playing *Mech Assault II: Lone Wolf*, one of her favorite games for the X-Box. She enjoys the virtual world where she pilots a 30-meter-tall robotic tank that she's named "Angry Jane." Currently, Jane is online through X-Box Live, playing other gamers over the Internet.

She's currently practicing, because she belongs to a "clan," or a group of players who have teamed up online and play other teams. Her clan, the Nuclear Rockettes, have a match in three hours, and Jane's trying to practice a bit, and learn some new moves.

To do this, Jane switches the game's music over to her clan station, "Nuclear Rockette Radio," produced by their clan musician, Devastashana. The original music on the station is the type of harder rock Jane likes. More importantly, however, in-between songs are short tutorials on some of the harder maneuvers of the game. Jane listens to the instructions for how to perform a complicated move, and then practices it for ten minutes while she listens to the cool music created by one of her teammates.



When Angry Jane gets angry, things explode online – and her clan radio only helps her get better!

### Music as "Skins"

Anyone who's used popular music programs such as WinAmp are familiar with "skins" – user-made modifications to the art design of the application. For example, the default installation of the WinAmp application has a black background with green lettering. Users of WinAmp have the option to visit the WinAmp site and download "skins" made by other users, which change the background colors, images, font styles, colors, and more of the application.

IGR is the evolution of "skins" for the video game market. By adding customized music to popular video titles, gamers will be able to make the game more personal and aligned with their tastes. When a new video game is released, many different companies could all create music stations: each with their own branding, programming, and advertising.

What makes them so valuable is that they're opt-in offerings, so users are not forced to listen to them. The users who want them voluntarily choose them. It's then up to the advertiser to create quality content for their music stations, and keep the gamers listening to them.

## THE MILLIONS OF USES OF IGR

The introduction of IGR into the gaming business itself creates countless new uses for the technology. In addition to the uses mentioned above, there are many more that will revolutionize gaming.

To get a copy of this "Expansion Article" from Kevin, send him an email at [kevin@kevinglennon.com](mailto:kevin@kevinglennon.com). Send him a few words about your thoughts on this article and a little about yourself, and he'll be happy to mail you a copy of the Expansion Article free of charge!

# Hold Radio

## OVERVIEW

### Trapped On Hold

Unfortunately, there are aspects of corporate customer service that require customers to wait on hold when calling for help. It's not uncommon for technical support calls to include ten to twenty minute hold times.

All along, these consumers must listen to your hold messages and music. These may sound great for the first thirty seconds or so, but after that, they become an annoyance. After ten minutes, even a catchy jingle drives somebody crazy, and the "your call is important to us" message gets customers ready to yell at the first friendly voice they hear.

### Empowering The Consumer

If you know your customers are going to be on hold, then Hold Radio is the solution for you. Hold Radio is a telephone-based system that allows your customers to change the music they hear while on hold. Tired of the country station? Switch it to classic rock.

Your customers are already having problems with your products and services. That's why they're calling. Hold Radio is a way to make them feel more in control of their situation, and help them relax so they're in a better mood when they speak with your employees.

## PAYING OFF WITH PARTNERSHIPS

### Partnering Expense Away

By partnering with other popular web sites, such as AllMusic.com, or even Amazon.com, your Hold Radio investment can be paid off in no time. Consumers hear a song on Hold Radio, and switch over to your web site to learn more about it. There, through a partnership with AllMusic.com, they can find out more about the song and the artist.

Then, they can click on the "purchase now" link, which opens up a window to cdnow.com (the music site for Amazon.com). While waiting on hold at your company, they're happily listening to music of interest to them, and purchasing it from your partner sites. Your company receives a small commission, and your consumer appreciates your keeping them truly

### Giving Them More Interesting Content

No matter how many times an automated voice reminds a customer on hold that your corporate web site may have the answers they're calling for, customers simply don't look at it. Odds are, they've already searched your web site, and didn't find the answers they need. Or, they simply used the web site to find the main phone number.

Hold Radio gives you a second chance to drive these people to your web site. As soon as they go on hold, an announcer tells them that they're about to listen to Hold Radio. It explains quickly that they can change stations, and that information about Hold Radio can be found on your web site.

There, on the site, are the directions for how to change stations. There is also information on each station, and possibly even play lists. Interspersed in this information are links and "quick fixes" for common problems for which customers often call for support. Basically, the Hold Radio section of your web site becomes a customer support FAQ sheet that's mixed in with Hold Radio information.

entertained and interested during their waiting time. And the whole thing pays itself off in a short time, and remains a revenue-generating aspect of your business that you didn't have before.

### Making The Offer Sweeter

Hold Radio is an even better investment for a company like Amazon.com or BMG Music. The first of these companies to develop the software could offer it to companies for free, in return for a commission on sales. What better way to market than to a captive audience, while still empowering them so that they're not forced to listen to only one message or stream of content?

# Seeing These Technologies In Action: Hold Radio

BLAH BLAH

## The 2am Turnaround

It's 2am, and Sam still can't move the photos from his digital camera to his computer. He's been at it for hours, and is so frustrated he's getting angry. He calls the 24-hour customer support number for Doll Computers, the company that sold him the digital camera with the computer.

Sam hits a few numbers on his phone to navigate his way to customer support, where he's put on hold. A voice comes on to tell him how sorry Doll Computers is that he has to wait, and that his business is appreciated. It then says that he is in the queue, and the expected wait time is going to be 25 minutes.

Sam almost throws the phone against the wall, when suddenly -- the voice surprises him! It says that, to make his wait better for him, Hold Radio has been installed for his pleasure. Never having heard of it before, Sam's curiosity is instantly piqued, and he finds himself wanting to know more.

## It's Not "Hold"

Sam doesn't believe his ears at first. Sure enough, after the music starts playing, he hits the number two on his phone, and the station switches to country music. He hits three, and it's rock n' roll. Four, five, and six bring classical, jazz, and Help Radio, respectively. He switches between the six stations a few times in wonder, thinking this is the coolest thing he's discovered in a while, when he starts paying attention to station six: Help Radio.

The DJ on Help Radio *also* has a sub-menu that Sam can use! Sam's instructed to hit the pound (#) symbol on the phone, and it brings up *another menu of stations!* Sam listens to the menu, and sure enough, there's a radio station specifically for people having digital camera trouble. He hits the appropriate number, and he listens to a podcast that explains how to properly set up the camera, and how to load photos from the camera to the computer. They even give a URL to a web page that walks through this process with the podcast step by step.

Sam goes to the help page as he listens, and in a few minutes, he's got his wife's birthday pictures on his computer! Happy with his new discovery, he then switches over to a couple of other help radio stations to learn more about changing the resolution of the photos, and how to print them in color on his printer.



Small cracks and abrasions form of the face of a cordless phone when it is hung up in a smashing action.

# Community Radio Studio

## OVERVIEW

### Radio Producer For Dummies

Community Radio Studio (CRS) is a free software package that allows users to produce professional-level radio broadcasts. With simple menus, CRS empowers users to concept, record, produce, and deliver both streaming and podcast radio productions.

There are a few things that set this application apart from previous applications.

### Full Studio Production

The first aspect of CRS is that it is a full virtual studio of production tools. The user/producer has the ability to cut to pre-made commercials, run the show on a time delay (and “bleep” out inappropriate content), play full music shows, control multiple inputs (for interviewing multiple subjects), and more.

All of the tools come preset with “point and click” simplicity. The application even comes with a free tutorial “walk through,” to give even novice broadcasters the ability to be up and running in no time.

### Guest Over IP (GOIP) Interviewing Suite

The CRS application utilizes Guest Over IP, or GOIP. This means that guests do not have to be sitting in the CRS producer’s home studio. Rather, producers can invite guests from all over the world, and have the conversation held over IP. The GOIP system allows

producers to have conversations with people in different countries in real time.

In addition, the GOIP system gives producers tools to screen their guests, and expand the suite to allow listeners to “call in.” Listeners with microphone chat applications at home can “call in” to the producer’s station, just like with regular broadcast radio. The CRS application also has a regular Instant Messaging system built-in, so that producers can type-chat with these callers instead of speaking with them, should they not be able to do both at the same time (for example, if they’re deejaying *and* producing the show at the same time).

### User Radio Window

Listeners can access a CRS station by downloading a free application. In addition, they can download free plug-ins for popular music programs such as iTunes and WinAmp.

### Built-In Partnerships

Station producers are instantly given access to partnerships with companies such as Apple, Amazon, and other participants. Users who click through links in the User Radio Window will be able to purchase products and services from participating companies, and a small portion of every sale is credited to the station producer.

## WHY HOME RADIO AGAIN?

### The Previous Attempts

There have been efforts in the past, such as ShoutCast, to create home Internet radio stations. Unfortunately, these software programs made most waves for their illegal broadcasting of protected music. CRS significantly improves on this in two ways.

### Enter Talk Radio

CRS not only allows talk radio, in *encourages* it. The application suite is geared to make it easy and fun for station producers to put together talk radio shows. Unlike applications like ShoutCast, CRS is a *live* radio station that is best used by producers interacting with listeners in real time.

### Instant-PRO Tool

Another advantage of the CRS application is that it has a built-in Performing Rights Organization (PRO) compliance feature. When station producers receive their license from a PRO, they will enter a special unique code into the CRS application that identifies their station as a legal station.

This licensing will be encouraged because most companies will only advertise on legal sites. Station producers who play music won’t be able to access the included revenue-generating partner agreements and tools without getting PRO approval first.

# Seeing These Technologies In Action: CRS

## CRS AS A COMMUNITY REVOLUTION

### It's 2a.m.

Officer Greg Belcher of the Newport, RI police department comes home from a long night on the job. He's in his first year of being a cop, and will be pulling late-night shifts for quite some time. He goes downstairs to the computer and logs on to Yahoo to check up on his fantasy baseball team.

He also turns on his CRS radio receiver application to tune in to "Rookie Chat," a late-night CRS radio program broadcast out of Springfield, MA by a Springfield police officer. Rookie Chat is a popular program in New England (with a surprising number of listeners from other parts of the country) which focuses on issues faced by first-year, or "rookie," police officers.

While changing his fantasy pitching lineup for the next day, and reading up on the injury news for his players, Greg's ears perk up as the conversation for the night focuses on tax issues for police officers. A caller just IP'ed in with a question about legal expenses cops can write off their taxes. The guest is a tax accountant from Massachusetts who informs the "caller" that there are many things most cops don't

write off, such as books, continuing education classes, magazines, and even the type of boots Greg's been looking to purchase!

### Fished In

Greg's now very excited to learn more about the discussion. He closes out of fantasy baseball and goes over to the Rookie Chat web site. Right on the main page is a list of interesting information they're covering in tonight's show. Greg continues to listen while he reads about a tax credit he'd never heard about before.

After reading the information, he has a question about one of the tax recommendations. It's written for Massachusetts cops, so he's not sure if it applies to him. Going to the "call in chat" window on the site, he types in a question asking the guest to clarify that information. About a minute later, the host of the show reads Greg's question, and the guest responds to Greg "over the air."

### Next Steps

The sponsor for that night's show is H&R Block. Greg sees they're running a special for listeners of that show. On the Rookie Chat web page, there's a form he can fill out giving him half-off the fee for H&R Block's tax services for that year. He fills out the form, and is informed a representative will call him in the next few days.

Also listed on the site are other specials for cops and listeners of the show. By following one of these links, Greg not only finds the special boots he's been looking for, but he's going to get them at 10% off because of a special deal through the CRS radio station.

As the show closes down for the night, it's 4am, and Greg's tired, but happy. He shuts down the machine, and his only regret on his way to bed is that he may not be able to listen to tomorrow night's show, because he'll be working a double shift.



## About The Author



Kevin Glennon is a creative technologist who has been consulting for agencies for many years. He writes bi-monthly articles about aspects of the advertising industry, especially if it involves interactive efforts, and is a frequent contributor on web sites such as Adrants.com and Adholes.com.

Kevin has consulted on projects for such clients as Royal Caribbean, Guinness, TheTruth.com, Subaru, Give Us Your Poor, Boston Public Schools, and many others. He's always interested in hearing about new projects, and loves when people offer him great money to help them build compelling and mind-blasting projects.