

# HISPANIC RADIO'S NEXT BIG SYNDICATED TALENT?

**T**he landscape for Hispanic radio's syndicated morning shows has been a very rocky one over the past year, with some of the most popular names disappearing from the field. It seems the time may be ripe for a new young player to get in the game. And Edgar "Shoboy" Sotelo is a rising star in Hispanic radio. He's one of the hardest-working broadcasters you'll ever meet, very approachable, and focused on giving as much back to the community as he possibly can.

Things have been going great for Sotelo ever since he arrived at CBS Radio's Regional Mexican KMKV (La Grande 107.5) in Dallas in May of 2010. He's worked tirelessly to make an impact on his listening audience — and we're guessing he's gearing up to make a similar impact outside of Texas.

Born in Mexico, Sotelo moved to California with his family at the age of 5. He got his undergraduate degree in psychology from Polytechnic University in Pomona, and a master's degree in organizational leadership from Azusa Pacific University. His radio career began when he was 22, putting stickers on cars as part of the promotions team at KSCA (La Nueva 101.9)/Los Angeles, and his first full-time on-air job was afternoon drive in San Francisco at KFFV (La Kalle, now Latino Mix). That was in 2007, when Sotelo was 25. He was hired by CBS for mornings at KMKV (known as Mega 107.5 at the time) in Dallas at age 28, and now, at the ripe old age of 31, Sotelo is on the fast track to radio stardom.

Weiss Agency EVP Heather Weiss, who represents Sotelo, says he brings magic to his listeners five days a week. "I first became aware of Edgar when he received a Marconi," she says, "and we were thoroughly entertained when he hosted the event the following year. He had the entire room captivated and hanging on his every word. Edgar's star is quickly on the rise, and I am confident there are wonderful things to come. It is a pleasure to represent such a talented broadcaster and a truly fine human being."

Thanks to his community work, Sotelo was named the MillerCoors National Leader of the Year in 2012, and in February of 2014 he interviewed Michelle Obama on key issues affecting the Hispanic community. Sotelo considers his show "entertainment with a purpose, and he has a goal of erasing the line between Hispanic radio and the general market. At the end of the day, he says, "It's just



radio. We are on the radio. We are on the same airwaves. We shouldn't be looked at more or less than any other format in the nation."

## How are things going for you?

I landed here in Dallas at the end of May in 2010. We started off in Spanish Pop — did really well there. Then we found a great opportunity to go into the Regional Mexican arena. We did that flip last July. It's been about 3 1/2 years here in the Dallas area, and it's been an awesome experience. It's going really well. Most importantly, we have been able to impact our community in a positive way, through education and scholarship programs. It's been a blast.

## Can you tell us about how you give back to the community?

One of the things I love to do, and I've been doing this since I was in college, is speak at schools. I have an outreach program where I do motivational speaking at schools. I will visit Stanford University, the University of Texas, even elementary schools. I tell them my family's story, how we immigrated to this country from Mexico. Through comedy, I try to inspire them and empower them to be the solution and not the problem in the society — to be able to conquer, to prosper.



Sotelo shows off a Shoboy bumper sticker



A visit to the Children's Medical Center of Dallas



With actor and comedian George Lopez



With the crowd at a station event



Sotelo (2nd from l) at an event with the Dallas Cowboys' Tyron Smith (2nd from r) (second from r)



Visiting a local high school



With NFL great Emmitt Smith (2nd from l)



Cheering kids on at a back-to-school event



Showboy surfs the crowd

Also, establishing our scholarship program, La Beca de Shoboy, which means "Shoboy Scholarship." I believe education is a solution for our community to continue to do well in the country, and to make a name for themselves in a positive light.

### What impact does being on the radio have in the community?

The fact that we're doing the morning show here on La Grande 107.5 has a huge impact, because for those students and parents that listen to us in the morning, they already have a relationship with us, even though we haven't met them in person. They are more open to what we have to say, and more open to our making an impact in their lives. That's a really awesome connection.

The relationship in radio is like no other. You can't compare it to TV. You can't compare it to any other media, online, or anything like that. It's a connection where you can really impact and change behavior. Hopefully for the better, right? It is very powerful.

### What is your personal goal when you flip the mic on every morning?

First and foremost, to put a smile on our listeners' faces, regardless of what they're going through. To have a different outlook on their day. To know that the best is yet to come in their lives and that we're going to be here with them through the ride — informing them, making them laugh, making them cry, and just being their friend. We are literally next to them, as a friend, just chatting about life. It is reality radio.

### How have digital and social media played a role in your show, in your communication with listeners?

It's tremendous. When we flipped from Spanish Pop to Regional Mexican, my fan page went from 18,000 followers to over 55,000 followers. The Latino community loves Facebook, they love social media. They love to be connected and like to be heard and interact. It's that family sense that the Latino community has. Social media gives us that opportunity to keep and build that family opportunity. We grab a lot of our content from there: stories, people needing help, people going through drama.

One of the most impactful stories that we recently had was about a gentleman we found on social media. His house burned down. He lost his job. Within an hour, we had listeners taking jackets to his kids. We found him a job. We found him a place to live. That was all

because of the movement within the family, and the listenership of *Shoboy en la Mañana* through social media and on air. It's that connection that makes it awesome.

### Are there things you try to avoid on social media?

That is a great question. I think it's important to be open. It's important to allow people in your life — on air, especially. In social media, I really don't try to bombard people with tons of stuff. I try to pick and choose the most exciting things that happened in my day and share that with them, whether it's information, a video, something they've commented on that made me laugh or smile. It has to make an impact. I don't just post to post.

### Hispanic morning radio has been somewhat crazy over the last year. What do you think about all that drama?

That just tells you the nature of our business. It's one of the most rewarding, most exciting businesses to be in, morning radio. At the same time, it's one of the most vulnerable. Things can change within the minute. What that tells you, in my perspective, is that you've got to thank God for the opportunity you have right now, and do the best to take care of your job. One day it's here, and one day it's not.

Your identity has to be grounded. Your identity has to be that you are here on a mission — to be a light, help people, have a good time, and enjoy every minute of it. You never know when it can change, for the better or for worse. There have been a lot of good changes for people who have gone on to better things. It is exciting. It really is. Any time there is a shift, it is exciting.

Some people don't like change. But I think with change, opportunity comes. That is what I believe CBS Radio and La Grande have been able to do, is move in on that change because we see the opportunity there.

### Do you want to be heard all over the country?

Our goal is to get out there to as many households, in as many vehicles, in front of as many people as we can across the nation. We are just beginning on that journey. We have 3 1/2 years in morning radio. We have been tremendously blessed — things have gone so well. But all in time. I can't say much at this time, but the idea is to be heard, soon, across the nation. It takes time, a lot of hard work, and I have to put my time in, just like everybody else did. 🇲🇽