

ERIC WEISS

Founder & President of the Weiss Agency

Helping protect the interests of some of the broadcast industry's top on-air personalities, such as Casey Kasem, Montel Williams and Stephen A Smith, Eric Weiss has successfully established himself as one of the industry's leading talent reps.

Here, Eric shares how he got started and what a typical day is like when you represent high profile clients.

IAE: Can you please tell us where you're from and what inspired you to pursue a career in entertainment?

EW: I grew up in Southern New Jersey, outside of Philadelphia (Pennsylvania). I loved music and listening to the great Philly radio stations while growing up there. So upon entering college and law school, I was very focused on doing as many internships as possible in the broadcast and music industries.

IAE: What was your first job and how did that come about?

EW: I graduated from George Washington law school. I refused to go on any interviews with big law firms as I always knew I wanted to work in the music or broadcasting business and didn't want to be detoured into a typical law career. Luckily a position in the legal department of Mutual Broadcasting System in Washington, DC became available and I got the job.

IAE: Please share some of your career highlights with us.

EW: Spending 10 years at Westwood One Radio as an Executive Officer and helping the management team grow the company from a \$25 million to a \$250 million Dollar Company; joining Premier Radio Networks when it was a publicly held company as Vice Chairman of the Board and a consultant to them; being part of an investor group as well as the Chief Operating Officer of a New York Stock Exchange company that specialized in direct response television marketing. Leaving corporate life behind to start the Weiss Agency and work with talent and producers to directly

build their careers and businesses... that has been the most satisfying.

IAE: When did you decide to start the Weiss Agency and explain what your company does?

EW: I started the Weiss agency in 2001. We primarily represent on-air broadcast personalities and program producers on both the local and national level. We also serve as an advertising agency and a consultancy.

IAE: What is a typical day like for you?

EW: It's a long day, filled with telephone calls, e-mails, negotiations meetings, listening to demo tapes and my clients' programs.

IAE: What accomplishments have you and your agency attained in the last 5 years?

EW: We opened a New York office headed by Heather Cohen and that's and she's been a great addition. She brought an added dimension with her background in production and programming and having both coasts covered gives geographic diversity as well as the ability to both work on super serving clients. We also had some clients reach some really big milestones. Casey Kasem in reaching 40 years as host of American Top 40, and Bob Coburn's Rockline and Bob Kingsley's Country Countdown both reaching their 30 year anniversary on air have all been great milestones.

IAE: What specific qualities to you



look for when deciding to take on a new client?

EW: The two most important qualities we look for are originality and a great work ethic. If you have both of those you should be on track to a promising career.

IAE: What are your thoughts on on-line broadcasters and has the Weiss Agency considered branching out into that medium?

EW: We see it as a fertile ground for finding and developing talent, particularly given that traditional broadcaster's are not as focused as in the past on developing young talent.

IAE: What challenges are radio broadcasters facing and in your opinion what do you think the solution is?

EW: Clearly audience fragmentation continues to be a major problem with so many other options beyond terrestrial radio including online radio, satellite radio, social media and games. Being a jukebox isn't the solution as that's just too easy to duplicate. The answer lies in finding creative personalities who can bring something distinctive and original to terrestrial radio. Those types of personalities have always won. For radio to continue to distinguish itself and draw listeners the focus needs to be on finding, developing and rewarding on air talent whom connect with listeners. 🎵