



New Orleans' WWL on Full Alert with BE Messagecasting



It's hurricane season once again and WWL 105.3 FM in New Orleans is on full alert, this time with a new text capability that will give local listeners yet another information lifeline should disaster strike.

WWL 105.3 FM, which is owned and operated by Entercom, is using BE Messagecasting from The Radio Experience to broadcast emergency text readouts along with regular audio announcements. As EAS activations from the weather bureau occur and evacuation updates from civil authorities develop, relevant text messages scroll across the face of RDS text-enabled receivers as a critical source

of information. "This is the kind of thing that really makes local radio useful. While EAS tends to be used for warning about transitory events like tornados, explosions and civil emergencies, putting the EAS text up on WWL-FM's RDS display gives us a way to communicate with the community 24/7, even with the radio's volume turned down," says Joe Pollet, Director of Engineering for Entercom's New Orleans stations.

EAS/RDS texting is a new function of TRE Message Manager, which Entercom originally installed on WWL 105.3 FM to manage song title and artist text. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, BE added an upgrade to the system based on emergency triggers and EAS codes established by authorities. Text readouts of these messages instantaneously appear on the face of HD Radio or RDS tuners in place of the song title and artist name during an emergency.

With this new function, available to all TRE Message Manager customers, WWL 105.3 FM is able to notify listeners of shelter locations and update the public on safety issues and health conditions.

WWL-AM is the designated Louisiana LP1 and EAS Primary Entry Point (PEP) for the southeastern region of the state. Listeners here haven't forgotten how WWL provided comfort and information as Hurricane Katrina slammed the Gulf Coast last year, unleashing a torrent of water and setting off a series of events that proved catastrophic to the city and its residents. New Orleans' oldest radio station continued coverage throughout the ordeal, despite the lack of power and telephone communication, and was recognized with nine regional Edward R. Murrow awards for its coverage and reporting during the hurricane. **BE**