The way to build listener income for classical music stations is to build public service – extending the reach of the station while maintaining the relatively strong core composition of their audience.

Individual giving is the largest single source of support for most public radio stations. Individual giving provides a larger share of revenue for public radio’s music stations than for news stations and news/music stations.

Multiple studies have documented the basic equation of listener support:
- Giving begins with listening – regular use of the service.
- The importance of the programming to the listener comes next.
- Then, is it clear that the station needs support, that a personal gift will make a difference?
- Lastly, the listener needs to have some money to give.

SRG and Walrus Research took a close look at the relationship between audience and giving in the 2008 report Individual Giving to Public Radio. www.srg.org/funding/Giving.html This report updates that analysis, looking at the giving relationship between 10 classical music stations and their audiences in markets measured by Personal People Meters as of Summer 2010.

All reports examining the performance of classical music stations are available on the GROW THE AUDIENCE web site: www.srg.org/GTA

Tom Thomas & Terry Clifford
Station Resource Group

George Bailey
Walrus Research
LISTENER INCOME: AQH and Listener Hours

AQH audience is a powerful predictor of listener income for classical stations.

It explains 95 percent of the differences among classical stations in individual giving.

Because Listener Hours are a function of AQH, a Listener Hours chart would look exactly the same.

For classical music stations, the amount of public service – as measured by AQH or Listener Hours – strongly explains the amount of listener support.

We included total audience, beyond the metro, since the station pitches to all of its listeners.

Note: This analysis includes only the 10 classical stations that report their income to CPB and, in the case of co-licensed stations, account separately for listener support of the classical service.

X axis is the station’s total Average Quarter Hour listening audience

Y axis is annual income from listeners per CPB FY 2009
LISTENER INCOME: Core Cume Listeners

The number of core listeners is also an excellent predictor of listener income. It explains 93 percent of the differences among public radio classical stations.

AQH listening and the number of core cume listeners exhibit a near identical pattern with respect to listener support for two reasons:

Core listeners are those who make the station their first choice – they listen to it more than any other station. They tune in more often, listen longer, and thus account for a large portion of AQH listening.

Core listeners, because of their close relationship with the station, are more likely to give.

Stations will build listener income by increasing the number of their core listeners.

X axis is number of weekly cume listeners who are Core
Y axis is annual income from listeners per CPB in FY 2009
METHODOLOGY

For this analysis we identified classical stations that met the following criteria:

- Programming a classical music schedule on weekdays 6am-7pm.
- Home to a PPM market as of Summer 2010
- At least a 0.5 PPM share in its home market

We measured the Performance of each station in terms of audience variables related to public service.

For metro estimates such as AQH share and cume rating, we used PPM data for July-December 2010.

For total audience estimates such as AQH persons and cume persons, as well as loyalty and core composition, we used AudiGraphics data for Spring 2010/Fall 2010.

Commercial classical stations, which we included in our report focused on audience performance, are not included here. Even though some commercial stations accept donations, we do not have their financial data. We also excluded public classical stations that are co-licensed with other public radio stations that provide a different program service and do not report their classical financial data separately.

CPB provided listener support figures for FY2009.

The stations included in the giving analysis are:

- KBAQ, Phoenix
- KMFA, Austin
- KUSC, Los Angeles
- KXPR, Sacramento
- WBJC, Baltimore
- WQED, Pittsburgh
- WRTI, Philadelphia

We used SPSS to run partial correlations and linear regression.

Over 50 percent of the variance in station performance can be predicted by the market’s composition of college graduates.

Both the number of core listeners generated by each station and the size of each station’s AQH predict over 90 percent of the variance in annual listener support.