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A Note from Michael C. Keith

When I proposed *The Radio Station* to Focal Press three decades ago, I hoped it would find an appreciative audience. To my delight it far exceeded my expectations. Just a year after its publication, it had become the most widely adopted text on its subject in the country. How did this happen? As a new college teacher—following a dozen years as a radio broadcaster—it struck me that no existing text on the medium accurately or sufficiently conveyed the true nature of the industry. The most widely used book on the subject at the time seemed grossly out of step with the realities of the radio profession. Furthermore, the text failed to include the insights and perspectives of broadcasters or portray the unique visual nature of the audio medium—yes, radio is a visual medium. These were two components that I felt were absolutely necessary in an instructional volume focused on the operations of a modern radio station.

Focal had recently entered the broadcast publications arena in the US, so needless to say it was more than thrilled with the new text’s performance. It is hard for me to believe it is now in its fourth decade of existence. That it has flourished for so long—both nationally and internationally—is attributable to a number of factors, not the least of which are the invaluable contributions of those in both the industry and academia. The input of students and the dedication of Focal Press editors played a central role in the tome’s success and longevity as well.

This legacy text now turns a significant corner in its heralded life with a slightly revamped title (how flattered can an author be to see his name in the marquee of a work he originated?) and an extensively updated and refashioned interior courtesy of its new coauthors. In 2011 Focal Press conducted an extensive search for qualified individuals to assume authorship of the next edition of the volume.
I had produced eight editions over three decades and felt it was time to hand it over to someone else. Quite frankly, I no longer felt up to the task, nor did I feel fully informed of the digital influences that had dramatically transformed the medium.

To be sure it was not an easy decision to turn my "baby" over to others. The next caretakers had to possess a myriad of knowledge, skill, and vision to take on the formidable responsibility. Moreover, the individuals had to have a finite grasp of the volume's essence—what made it so important and irreplaceable to thousands of users worldwide. To my great satisfaction, my good colleagues John Allen Hendricks and Bruce Mims were chosen to reinvigorate the text for the next generation of users, and they have done an extraordinary job their first time out. Based on what they have accomplished in this new incarnation of this landmark publication, I am convinced they will maintain its long tradition of excellence.

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