

Origin of the Bonneville CD Numbers

Courtesy of Walter Powers, Jones Radio Network, Seattle

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To answer other questions, no, there are no music programming "formatics" included within any CD. The way I laid out the CD library, starting with disc #0101, is pretty much alphabetically by artist within group "genre." I know that's ambiguous, but let me try to "back into an answer" for you. (We do that a lot around here these days...)

When the CDs were first developed for this use, in 1988, what we knew is that a station could not play any two selections from the same CD BACK TO BACK. Therefore, I tried to put songs on a CD that we would never WANT TO PLAY back to back. Get it? Things like two BEATLES songs in a row, or two CARPENTERS songs in a row.

Further, the prominent AUTOMATED way to consider playing back the CDs in 1988 was in a little Pioneer CD "jukebox" which held 6 discs. They were less than \$200 and if you purchased 24 of them, you were still under \$5 grand. Hook 'em up to a PC and you were still under \$7K, and that was a lot cheaper than the old Shafer days when it took you about \$30-40 thousand to purchase a good automation system. Of course, you still had to play spots, but Instacarts & carousels were still available, DAT machines could be automated for the job, etc., and hard drive audio storage was beginning to become a reality even then. All these devices could be hooked into and controlled by the PC.

Still with me?

So, we had these little 6-pak CD jukeboxes, and we knew we couldn't play any song from the SAME 6-pak back to back with any OTHER song from that 6-pak. So (you're probably guessing this faster than I'm writing) we put songs on CDs #0101 through #0106 that we wouldn't want to play back to back. Like MALE VOCALS (contained on CDs #0101-0106 and on CDs #0201-0205). Like FEMALE VOCALS (contained on CDs #0301-0306). Like GROUP VOCALS (contained on CDs #0401-0406). All the "hit instrumental" CDs of that day were contained on CD #0206. PIANOS were mostly on #1701-1706. GUITARS were mostly on #1801-1806. LEX was mostly on 2001-2006 AND 2101-2106. PAT VALENTINO was mostly on 2201-2206 AND 2301-2305. It was a bit of a kluge system, but I tried to think loosely in "groups" (genres?) as I laid out that original CD library.

Yes, there were NAC/JAZZ songs clustered on certain CDs. I *THINK* those were around 1602-1604 and 3001, but don't hold me to that. It's been a while since I analyzed anything by simply "CD number."

Somewhere after 3006, we went to 3011 -> 3016, then to 3101 -> 3106, 3201 -> 3206, then to 3301 with no further "breaks" in the numbers, since 6-pak CD automation is hardly ever much of a factor these days. Now [April 2002] we're up to 3330, I think. We're just about ready to issue 3331.

Now, of course, we pretty much just dump the whole she-bang on a computer hard drive and go from there. We can play ANY song back to back with any other, and/or repeat the same song a hundred times in a row, if that's what we deem "good programming."

The way KNCT-FM, and the way a handful of other B/EZ stations are programmed by Jones Radio Networks (formerly BPI) is this: We load ALL the songs the station would need to play on a computer hard drive. This runs about three thousand songs or so. Most stations use digital compression, approximately 4:1, so the whole library fits nicely on about 20 gigabytes. Then, Jones publishes a weekly "music log" that fixes the order in which the songs are scheduled to play. The music log is imported into the digital system, merged with traffic, liners and other local elements, and they're off to the races. Of course, the station has ultimate control. If they wish to insert a song locally, they can. If the station thinks they can sequence songs better than I have (frequently the case, I'm sure!) they can. Where the station needs to delete songs "for time," (network joins, etc.) they can....much like the tape delivery of old.

I hope you'll find the enclosed three or four hours enjoyable as you view them. They're just off the computer "assembly line," no hand editing involved at this point. Can't call it the "best of Bonneville" or anything. It's kinda fun to run through the versions in your mind as you view, but nothing takes the place of "immersing" yourself in that beautiful sound. Something I do far too infrequently these days. Just wishing for a radio station I could hear. Oh well, back to Phil's "Music Choice!"

If I find some of Marlin's old Beautiful Music segments hanging around here, I'll try to scan them in and shoot a couple to you. Those are Beautiful music at its finest.

Best,

Walter