

# On The Air

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Newsroom

Brandon Stout Special to the Jewish News

## Jewish-owned New Radio Media offers streaming to local community.

When local Jewish entrepreneur Paul Bensman's radio show "Bensman's Biz" was bumped from ESPN Detroit, he had a choice to make. Pay more money for airtime or stop broadcasting altogether. Luckily for him, his son, Ian Bensman, knew exactly what to do.

Ian, who works in film and video production, found a third option. He says his dad "was going to pay to go get more airtime for a station I could barely reach in the parking lot. So, I told him 'just do a podcast.'"

Ian's idea for a podcast quickly grew from there and, four years later, the streaming company New Radio Media was born. Launched last year with Paul, Ian and Peter Perlman at the head, New Radio Media is a streaming company whose shows mostly resemble talk radio, available 24/7 through the company's website or its app, NRMStreamz.

Ian says that streaming companies like New Radio Media are the future. "Regular TV and radio are going to eventually fade because people want to have everything right here on their iPad or phone," he said.

Paul adds that "last year, digital ad revenue beat all TV ad revenue."

At New Radio Media, this growth is easy to see.

In fact, growth has been so fast Paul didn't even notice when Ian installed a second studio in their Farmington Hills office and production space. "All of a sudden I saw stuff being carried in and when I went back there to look there's a new studio," he said.



Ian and Paul Bensman

One of the main reasons streaming companies like New Radio Media have become so popular is because of lower overhead than traditional media, according to Ian. “We’re giving an average person a platform. You can’t do that with the big networks.”

Paul adds that New Radio Media has “bigger talent coming in” to improve content as well. Since its launch, the company has expanded from 10 shows to 22. Almost all the shows are targeted toward local audiences in Metro Detroit, such as Rabbi Tzvi Jacobson’s “Let’s Talk Torah,” which airs 3 p.m. Thursdays.

Jacobson is the director of development at Yeshivas Darchei Torah. He says the program is exclusively to help the Southfield school and he doesn’t get paid for the show. The program is “fun, light and educational,” he says, and usually involves him and a guest talking about different Jewish topics.

“I have students in college who are listening, and I have acquaintances in their 60s who are listening, so the audience is pretty broad,” Jacobson said.

Discounted channel pricing for nonprofits is one of the ways the Bensmans try to give back to the community.

Paul and Ian, who are members of Temple Israel, say that working on New Radio Media together has been an unforgettable experience. Paul loves working at the company with his son. “We have our disputes, but we come out stronger,” he said. “We respect each other. He’s my idol.”

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