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Weird Internet stations snag radio awards

Dear Readers, Radio Babe's column is switched around and a bit lopsided this week to focus on Internet radio's People's Voice Award winner in "Radio" from the eighth annual Webby Awards (www.webbyawards.com) -- specifically, Live365, www.live365.com.

Also called "The World's Largest Internet Radio Network" (because it likely is), Live365 offers more than 20,000 separate stations encompassing 60-odd genres, which are accessed via whatever media player one might have installed on a computer (Real Player, Windows Media, i-Tunes, etc.) or, alternately, through its own "Player365."

It also features the brand-new "Radio 365" player (\$14.95) that isn't connected to Live365's actual Web site, so it doesn't come attached to any of its pop-up ads, yet still delivers access to the CD-quality streams.

One can still listen free (if occasional voice ads and said pop-ups aren't too intrusive) to 5,000 channels. Or, at relatively inexpensive rates varying from \$5.95 monthly and \$3.65 each month for a two-year term, the paid packages open access to an additional 15,000 commercial-free broadcasts.

Recently, individual stations won Live365's annual Mikey Awards (so-named because listeners picked 'em) in a range of unusual topics. Here's a sampling:

The "Best Station Overall" was '80s-'90s rock and pop Planet Zeb; "Best New Station" was downtempo/ambient electronica station Voyager Radio; "Most Idiosyncratic," experimental and independent NeverEndingWonder Radio; "Most Unlikely to Hear on AM/FM Radio," fluffertraX, which plays pornographic movie soundtracks!

"Best Alternative Station Under 10K" was theESTROGENzone ("Real music by real women"); "Best Blues Station," Blue Icewater Radio; "Best Classical Station Over 10K," classicalguitar.cc; "Best Classical Station Under 10K," Classical Archives.

"Best Comedy Station," oddly, was Celtic Pub Radio; "Best Country Station Over 10K," Country Girls Only; "Best Country Station Under 10K," Frank's Americana; "Best Easy Listening," Lovin' An Elevator; "Best Oldies Station Over 10K," Living in the Past (isn't that an apt name!)

"Best Electronica Under 10K" was '80s Obsession; "Best Folk," radiowayne; "Best Hip Hop," OldSchoolLive.com; "Best International," Brasil Internet Radio; "Best Jazz Station Over 10K," aTTeNTioN sPaN raDIO; "Best Metal," Tundra Trash Radio; and "Best Political Station," Good Politics Radio.

The nod for "Best On-Air Personality" went to Fergus MacCool of Celtic Pub, and Live365 listeners named Zebby from Planet Zeb "Broadcaster of the Year."

The 5-year-old Live365 boasts millions of listeners in 150 countries, and is a wonderfully entertaining and educational spot to suit nearly every mood -- even options completely outside everyday realms.

In fact, Live365 also offers the choice of becoming a broadcaster by making use of free software applications that will aid in "live" or taped takes, which are then aired so any of the 3 million listeners can click in for a listen.

NEW BUBBA -- Many of you were disappointed when Orlando's "Monsters of the Midday" dropped off the area's formerly prevalent "Real Radio" stations.

Rumors pointed toward their reappearing on Tampa's WXTB (97.9 FM), "98Rock," shortly after the fiasco with former morning show personality Bubba the Love Sponge, who was fired amid enormous hoopla regarding "obscenity."

(It ended in a record-breaking Federal Communications Commission fine, which Clear Channel just settled for \$1.75 million and the admission of indecency law violations).

Russ Rollins, Dirty Jim, the Sexy Savannah, Jeff Howell, Daniel Dennis, Blackbean and Bubba WhoopA-- Wilson -- the "Monsters" cast (as they're now called, leaving off "of the Midday" from the name), are re-introduced 6 to 10 a.m. on WXTB and on the other Clear Channels station left empty with BTLS's firing, WPLA 93.3 FM in Jacksonville.

Direct queries and comments to Radio Babe c/o the Sarasota Herald-Tribune, P.O. Drawer 1719, Sarasota 34230, or e-mail dawnzig@hotmail.com. Answers will appear in this forum only. Radio station listings appear in the Herald-Tribune's Sunday Click TVGuide publication.
