

We encourage clients to involve their consultants in brainstorming sessions with their creative team on a regular basis. We realize that it's getting more difficult for PDs and promotions directors to come up with good ideas inside the building, as various team members rush off to voice track and keep up with their daily production loads. Off-site planning sessions, whether by the fire at a ski lodge or over pizza and brews at the sports bar, are the best way to get your programming and promotional planners relaxed and thinking creatively. Bring along the most recent *Maxim*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *Rolling Stone*, *USA Today*, etc. and planning calendars that look ahead through at least the next quarter.

Look for upcoming holidays and special occasions, like major movie premiers and local sporting events that the station can be tied into. For annual events, review how you've approached the event in previous years and consider ways to one-up yourselves this time around. Skim the periodicals for developing trends in pop culture that you can bandwagon, such as last fall's explosion of *Queer Eye* parodies. Put everyone's thoughts on paper initially – there are no bad ideas in a brainstorming session. Then review back at the station, make your choices, and pull together your plan.