

Norm Winer Bio

For more than forty years, Norm Winer has been one of North America's most respected and celebrated radio programmers and media strategists, including extended stints as director of programming at WXRT Chicago (1979-2016), CBS Radio VP of Rock (2003-2009), and prominent roles at ground breaking legendary FM rock outlets in San Francisco (KSAN 1977-79) and Boston (WBCN 1969-77). Norm has earned numerous industry accolades, including Program Director of the Year and Station of the Year. Despite its relatively unorthodox programming, WXRT was rewarded for its consistent commercial success in the nation's #3 media market by attracting an average weekly audience of one million adult listeners, and gross revenues that frequently ranked among the market's Top 5 or Top 10.

In 2015, Norm was named recipient of Chicago's Fifth Star Award, the first media figure to be so honored, for contributions to the arts and culture of the City of Chicago. Thousands attended the public presentation in Millennium Park, which included personal testimonials from U2's Bono (sharing the revelation that "...if it weren't for Norm Winer, there would be no U2!"), The Smashing Pumpkins' Billy Corgan, and other musicians and members of Chicago's arts community. The official proclamation from Mayor Rahm Emanuel stated: "Norm Winer has been Program Director at WXRT Chicago for 36 years, and few program directors are as closely identified with a major market commercial radio station. WXRT has for decades brought new artists and music to the ears of Chicagoans. While others regularly change format and personnel, 93XRT has remained remarkably consistent while remaining at the forefront of new music in Chicago and the world, and no one is more responsible for this than Norm Winer."

Almost twenty years earlier, Mayor Richard M. Daley declared "Norm Winer Day" on July 4, 1997 in the City of Chicago. That same year, *The Chicago Tribune* named Norm one of the "Chicago 100" most notable contributors to the city's rich tradition of the arts, for his role at WXRT, "...for decades the last bastion of free-form commercial rock radio in the country." Winer was listed alphabetically between Muddy Waters and Frank Lloyd Wright.

Among the many artists whose careers Norm has helped launch are U2, Bruce Springsteen, Tom Petty, Talking Heads, and the Dave Matthews Band, by providing initial exposure and ongoing promotional and airplay support. Norm has also been called upon numerous times as an interviewer/confidant of some of music's best-known performers, e.g., Lennon, McCartney, The Stones, Elton John, Stevie Wonder, Neil Young, Genesis – just to name a few.

As WXRT VP of Programming and brand manager, Norm collaborated with the City of Chicago on multiple high profile events, including over thirty Taste of Chicago concerts (1988-2016), the Chicago Blues Festival (since its inception), XRT Rock & Roll Fireworks (1991-2002), Venetian Night (2003-2008), and the Chicago Jazz Festival.

It was at ChicagoFest on Navy Pier in 1980 that Norm co-produced the recording of the Grammy Award-nominated *Blues Deluxe* album, featuring exclusive live performances by Chicago blues immortals, Muddy Waters, Koko Taylor, Willie Dixon, and others.

Winer also served as Executive Producer of the acclaimed ONXRT charity CDs (1991-2015), with proceeds benefiting local not-for-profit organizations. With Norm at the helm, the station remained committed to a wide range of meaningful causes, most notably the homeless, the environment, arts/music education, and Red Cross disaster funds. He also continually reinforced the station's dominant position as part of Chicago's cultural community, with XRT supporting numerous independently-owned local music venues and concert promoters, serving as the official station of Lollapalooza, the Chicago International Film Festival, Chicago Gourmet, and The Chicago International Music & Movies Festival (CIMMfest), in addition to ongoing involvement with local museums and other institutions.

Norm's personal involvement in crafting the unique brand of WXRT Radio through the years enabled the station to maintain an unprecedented relationship with its listeners, clients, and promotional partners.

In recent years, Norm has become active with some highly respected not-for-profit organizations helping to bring music education into local public schools, currently serving on the Chicago Area Advisory Board of Music Will f/k/a Little Kids Rock. Mr. Winer now devotes most of his time to his role of Founder and Chief Content Curator of Noteworthy, a streaming entertainment network targeting an audience with more adventurous tastes and interests. His goal is to maintain the high standards, sense of ideals, innovation, creativity, and respect for the public that have been the hallmark of his career thus far.