

Haislar's talk show cure for computer blues

By STEVEN GIVENS

It's Saturday morning and you can't figure out how to format your new 65 megabyte hard drive because your brother-in-law stole your manual and then left for a week in the Bahamas. Who ya gonna call?

Thanks to Eastsider Ike Haislar, you can call a computer talk show on WRYT 1080 AM radio and find out just what keys to punch. Haislar and his co-host, Bob Paarlberg, broadcast the show every Saturday morning from 10 to noon. The call-in show, which features industry experts in addition to the two co-hosts, is directed toward business computer users, whether they use the computers at the office or at home. Haislar began the show in July 1988 on a whim, he says.

"I wondered why there wasn't a show on computers out there," Haislar says. "There's a show on everything but computers. When we started the show, there wasn't anything locally or even nationally, to my knowledge."

Haislar says that he is negotiating with Sun Broadcasting to syndicate the show to 165 markets, including Chicago, Los Angeles, Boston and Philadelphia. The syndicated show would be broadcast live via satellite.

An entrepreneur who has been in business for himself for about 30 years in the areas of theatrical and musical productions and computers, Haislar currently owns two companies. HPI, or Haislar Productions, is a theatrical agency that does some private radio production work. The other company, which Haislar plays a much



Computer talk show host Ike Haislar can be heard on WRYT 1080 AM radio at 10 a.m. on Saturdays. (Photo by D. Mickey Howell)

more active role in, is a third-party computer repair and networking service in Edwardsville called Computerease.

The show's audience ranges from single computer-user business professionals to people involved in multi-user networks, according to Haislar. In addition to answering listeners' questions, the show reviews and discusses new trends and products in training, networking, software, hardware and other computer-related areas. Guests have included executives from Toshiba, Hewlett-Packard, AT&T and other local and national computer companies. Haislar feels the show

fills an important niche for a specific audience.

"We have an average of 2,000 to 3,000 people listening to us in any given 15-minute segment, according to the ratings," Haislar says. "It's a very focused market and our advertisers are all computer-based advertisers."

Current advertising rates for the show range between \$45 and \$80 for a show sponsorship with two commercial spots per broadcast.

Although Haislar is happy with his association with WRYT, he admits that he took the idea to other stations before ending up at the 500-watt Edwardsville station.

"I had presented the idea to a number of other radio stations like KMOX and KXOK and they didn't like the idea," Haislar says. "They didn't understand the concept more than anything. WRYT, which was an innovative talk show-type station anyway, said they would take a shot at it. We've been on a year and four months now."

Despite the topic of the show, Haislar and Paarlberg are determined to keep the broadcasts light, fun and "non-techy."

"One thing that we're not allowing this to be — and we'll fight this to the end — is a real stuffed-shirt program," Haislar says. "We laugh, we have fun, and it's enjoyable. We're constantly doing something silly."

Paarlberg, a former minor league base-

