

Airwaves and Cyberspace Carry Gospel to Latin America From Miami

Voz Cristiana, a high-power Christian radio station is reaching the Caribbean and Central and South America

A listener in Mexico City tunes across the shortwave bands and hears a station broadcasting the gospel with a signal that seems to be as strong as a local station.

In Argentina, Venezuela and Cuba other listeners do the same, tuning into Voz Cristiana (Christian Voice), radio's newcomer in Latin America that is making an impact across the continent.

Voz Cristiana broadcasts in Spanish throughout the Americas from studios in Miami and a large shortwave transmitting station in Chile. Its programming is also heard on several dozen local AM and FM stations throughout the region, delivered there by an extensive satellite system. The shortwave outlet will begin broadcasting in Portuguese to Brazil later this year.

The station's parent company is Christian Vision, established 11 years ago by businessman Bob Edmiston, a member of the Assemblies of God in England.

"Christian Vision was founded as a charitable trust focused on

evangelism and helping already-existing Christian ministries," explains Juan Mark Gallardo, Voz Cristiana's general manager. The organization is funded by profits from Edmiston's business activities.

After several years of providing grants to ministries, Edmiston had a dream in which he saw fruit trees with harvesters picking the crops. In his dream, the Lord told Edmiston to shake the tree, which he did, causing all of the fruit to drop off at once.

Gallardo said that the founder interpreted the dream as a message from God that he had been helping others to harvest, but now it was time for him to be involved in direct ministry of "sowing for the worldwide harvest," in the words of the organization's slogan. The result has been the development of the Christian Vision network of radio stations and satellite affiliates carrying Christian programming.

"We are serving a combination of people," Gallardo said. "We reach non-Christians who are seekers at the same time that we are helping people who are Christians to deepen their faith."

Gallardo explained that many listeners throughout Latin America have grown up in a Catholic background and have some knowledge of Christianity even if they have not made a personal profession of faith in Jesus Christ.

"We are reaching them with a professional style of broadcasting that includes music, news, sports, a total blessing without preaching at them," he said.

The station's daily schedule involves a wake-up program in the

morning, youth-oriented shows, a program for men and several shows for women, including The Woman of Today, hosted by Norma Pinzón.

“The program serves to build the basis of the family that the Lord established in His Word,” Pinzón said. “We demonstrate that with Jesus, we are able to have a happy home.”

Pinzón was an actress and radio personality in Colombia and Miami before beginning work at Voz Cristiana when it went on the air three years ago. Today, the response is enormous.

“We are receiving around 500 letters a month here, mostly in response to our shortwave broadcasts and the streaming audio on the Internet,” Gallardo said.

Christian Vision also operates a shortwave radio station in Zambia and is developing a large station in Australia that will reach all of Asia and the Pacific.