103.5 begins life on the EDGE

by Jonathan Weber

On May 22, a radio sound-quake rumbled through the Vegas Valley with enough seismic turbulence to carve a jagged new Edge into the radioscape. After the dust cleared, KEDG, The Edge emerged on FM 103.5 with a new type of progressive radio format.

"It's been a focused delivery since the day we went on the air," Dax Tobin, General Manager of The Edge, said. "We knew exactly what we wanted-everything was researched." This researched transition from the now defunct KMMK to KEDG was more than a change in format; it was a major overhaul of personnel and resources.

"Everything was packed up and put in storage," tion," Tobin said. "We don't consider it an 'alternative' to anything. For the people who like this kind of music, it's not an alternative. It's their music, it's cutting-edge rock."

While rejecting the "alternative" label, Tobin embraces the concept of "focus" as the driving force

Nirvana, Jesus Jones, R.E.M., U2. You're not going to hear any jazz on The Edge. You're not going to hear any banjo picking..."

So what took so long for a progressive-rock station to finally hit Las Vegas? According to Tobin, Las Vegas "really wasn't ready for it until a few years ago. I can't say that everyone wasn't ready for it, but that it couldn't have survived."

A southern Californian native, Tobin witnessed the L.A. progressive-rock evolution first-hand. Tobin has since kept track of a more recent, yet similar scene steadily developing in Las Vegas. "There's always a core of listeners who love this kind of music, who wouldn't listen to anything else," Tobin said. "(They) bought CD's and tapes because there was no station

er, include screaming DJ's or other wacky radio personalities as a listener hook. Given the fact The Edge's is a brand new station, Tobin isn't worried about following the more forceful approach used by other station personalities. "It takes a while for the personalities to develop a following- we're only two months old," Tobin said. "We're not out to be the funniest radio station in Las Vegas. We're here to compliment the music."

KEDG is enjoying record-breaking attendance sponorsoring Edge nights at different clubs around town including Sunday nights at the Shark Club and Wednedays at Fuddy Duddy's. Tobin emphasizes an extended level of service from The Edge. "It's more than just the

remotes where people can attend, bringing concerts into town for them, getting them special clothing and club discounts with Edge V.I.P. cards, which will be good for a lot of different things."

Beyond tangible promotion goodies, Tobin's recipe for success calls for a dedicated relationship between The Edge and it's listeners. "They're not just the public, they're Edgeheads," Tobin said. "We want to make them happy. We want them to be part of the station- not just we're here, they're there, and it's separate."

Tobin recognizes the mainstay audience at UNLV and plans for increased campus involvement in the near future. "We view UNLV as one of our most important audi-

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Tobin said. "We brought in a whole new air staff- a whole new programming staff." The result was a long-awaited alternative which now offers a steady format of progressive rock from sun-up to sun-down. But don't call it an "alternative" station; Tobin hates that.

"We prefer not to call it an 'alternative' sta-

behind The Edge. "We are a focused radio station," Tobin explained. "We deliver what we promise to deliver. Our listener knows that they're not going to hear Madonna, Hammer, or anything like that. It's a progressive rock radio station...it's

to serve them. We are going to super-serve these people."

The Edge's super-service doesn't, howev-

music you play," Tobin said, "it's being able to do

ence," Tobin said. "We want to do everything we can to serve them- making sure (they're aware of) everything coming through Ham Hall, addressing public service needs...I want to become more involved with UNLV."