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## 97X Web station returns, thanks to pair of investors

### Future of Rock and Roll will be back online in 2 weeks

By John Eckberg  
The Cincinnati Enquirer

The Web radio station 97X "The Future of Rock and Roll" has risen from its cyber-ashes and will return to Web-broadcasting modern rock within two weeks.

Two anonymous investors have saved the Web signal at www.woxy.com for tens of thousands of devoted listeners worldwide and for the eight people to be employed at the cyberstation, which will remain in Oxford.

The investors contacted Doug and Linda Balogh on May 13, the morning after the alternative rock station's cyber-signal went silent because of a lack of funding, said Doug Balogh, 97X founder.

"An emissary asked two questions: How much would it cost to continue 97X, and how soon could we get started," said Doug Balogh. "It was like one of those magical experiences - an amazing thing."

The Baloghs sold the terrestrial signal at 97.7 FM to Dallas-based First Broadcasting earlier this year for \$5.6 million.

But the husband-and-wife founders of the critically acclaimed station hung onto an 11,000-disc library of music and the 97X and "Future of Rock and Roll" brand with plans to continue broadcasting over the Web.

Royalty and broadband costs mounted, however, and the Baloghs were soon forced to close down the station, even though it was the top commercial Web broadcaster and one of the top 15 Web radio broadcasters in the world, according to Arbitron.

At the time of the closure, Balogh estimated that \$1.8 million was needed to keep the station alive on the Web for the next three years.

"We now have patient and passionate investors," Balogh said.

The Web station will be live from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. on weekdays and will initially be largely free of commercials, Balogh said.

The last 30 hours of operation, more than 750,000 page views were made at the Web site, and 50,000 unique listeners tuned in during its last month of life.

The operating plan does not require a subscription.

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"Awesome," said Jim Blase, a co-owner of Shake It Records in Northside. "As a store that sells that kind of music and a listener, it's very exciting news.

"It won't be exactly the same, but they're such a great resource. I had underestimated the reaction. There were meetings about it. Fans were concerned and were looking for alternatives.

"It really hit people at a personal level."

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