



ROBERT A. "BOBBY" LIKIS
"10 Questions" Interview by AllAccess

NAME: Bobby Likis

TITLE: "Chief Cheerleader" & Car Clinic Host

STATION: To my knowledge, the most extensive privately held car-talk network with 110 affiliates, including terrestrial broadcast, CarClinicNetwork.com (audiocast live, videocast live & libaried), PalTalk (Saturday morning chat room), podcast on assorted outlets (including iTunes & iPhone), globalcast on multiple Internet stations, and CelleCast (on all cell phones, regardless of brand or service provider). Also live videocast directly from the Car Clinic Studios on Saturdays, 10a-12n ET.

MARKET: Newest terrestrial markets are Boston, Chicago & NYC

COMPANY: "Bobby Likis Car Clinic" and "Car Clinic Service/PreRepair®"

BORN: Birmingham, AL

RAISED: Birmingham & Chicago

BRIEF CAREER SYNOPSIS: Worn every hat in automotive industry: technician, race car driver & pit crew, automotive service center owner, industry consultant, and radio & TV talk-show host. Began driving on my father's knee when a driver's license was just a gleam in my eye and knew I'd found my passion. For 35 years, owned & operated Car Clinic Service/PreRepair® (full-service automotive facility), which serves as my real-life proving ground for the consumer challenges and the product / service solutions that we talk about on "Bobby Likis Car Clinic" radio. Published in *Motor Age*, *BE Radio* & *AutoInc*; produce a monthly e-newsletter of automotive advice, trends, tips & technology; author a weekly newspaper article; broadcast "Bobby Likis Car Clinic" live from our all-digital studio inside Car Clinic Service and from car-enthusiast meccas like Daytona, Charlotte & Saratoga race tracks, Consumer Electronics Show, Concours d'Elegance, Automotive Aftermarket Industry Week, Woodward Ave Dream Cruise & Corvette's 50th Anniversary Celebration. Fortunate to serve or have served on boards like United Cerebral Palsy, Manna Food Bank, WSRE TV (PBS affiliate), NAPA's National AutoCare Advisory Board, Daytona's Advanced Technical Center Board, and Pensacola State College's Automotive Service Management Technology Advisory Committee.

1. You were a car guy practically since birth, but how did you get into radio?

Second only to my love for cars is my love for talking to people about cars, so ironically, I backed into radio. In 1986, a Car Clinic Service customer--and station owner for a local cable TV station--talked me into doing a regional show. Because I had so many physician customers at the time, he suggested I call it, what else, "Bobby Likis Car Clinic." In 1991, Car Clinic TV moved to the Gulf Coast's ABC affiliate, and we launched Car Clinic Radio on 4 stations in 2 states.

2. About what are you most passionate these days?

It's hard for a fiery Greek like me to reduce passion to a few words, but I'll give it a shot: Technology and its automotive applications (you ain't seen nothin' yet!); Empowering Consumers with what they need to delight in their vehicles (I've trademarked it Pre-Repair®); a Desire to Elevate Automotive Service (and the true professionals there) to a higher level of respect; an Eat-My-Dust Red Wine like Godsend; and Two Special Sets of Twins.

3. Your show is everywhere - terrestrial, internet, American Forces radio, and PalTalk. You also write and appear on TV and at conventions. What drives you to do all that? What makes you put your show and yourself out there in so many venues?

Perhaps I'm addicted to challenges. I certainly invite change. That's lucky for me, I guess, because radio is changing, morphing, transforming. Michael Harrison's recent "Media Station" article is spot on. Car Clinic Network has evolved from a ½-hr, local car-talk show on local cable television to the "model of a Media Station." You probably won't find that term in Wikipedia yet, but you will. A Media Station is all about putting what we call "Info-Tainment" in the hands, ears & eyes of the consumer...whenever and however they want it.

My shorter answer is "I still haven't reached my final destination"...but I'm driven to find some road-kickin' spots along the way.

4. If you had to choose one car to drive, period, which one would it be and why?

I love the idea of classic cars. But after restoring several (including my gorgeous, 1980, Schwartz metallic Weissach Porsche), I've learned that each vehicle ultimately drives only as well as its model year's technology. So for me, classics are "better seen than heard." Since I never was much of a spectator, I'd now like to get my hands around the steering wheel of the Mercedes SV12 S Biturbo Coupe, the fastest street legal car in the world. Twin-Turbo V12, 380ci, 730hp and 974 lb-ft torque. 0 to 60mph in 3.8 seconds / top speed 211 mph (electronically limited). Plus its traction control, anti-lock brakes and dynamic stability control allow a few mistakes without crashing & burning. And I'll take all the help I can get.

5. Look ten years into the future: do you see Americans moving in mass numbers into alternative fuel and hybrid cars, or will we still mostly be driving gas-powered internal combustion engine cars? Can the mass car-buying public be convinced to go with something different?

Ah, now you've gone & hit my hot button. Optimistically in 10 years, I see hybrid cars as 15% of America's vehicles. That's approximately 2.25 million new hybrids per year. However, I believe the technology that's required to make alternative-powered vehicles a reality still lies in front of us, undiscovered or underdiscovered. I believe we must go through this "which-way-do-we-go confusion" if the necessary evolution is to succeed. And while I'm fairly certain that alternative power can significantly reduce our long-term addiction to oil, I am thoroughly convinced that we'll need transitional plug-and-play, electric cars that consumers will buy in the short term.

I am also certain that diesel-powered vehicles will play an even larger part in our future than most Americans realize. But car makers will have to retrain car buyers. GM's mid-70's gas-to-diesel engine soured many car owners. Too many people bought diesel cars that were noisy, stinky, low powered and worthless at trade-in time. However, given today's "clean-tech" diesel engines that deliver tremendous mpg, low emissions & high performance, diesels are here to stay. No doubt, a 3-cylinder

diesel hybrid would be my choice for "next generation" vehicles that would also help OEMs meet 54.5 CAFE standards.

6. Who are your heroes?

Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, Mike Yager...each carved his own destiny from limited financial resources and unlimited imagination, motivation and execution. On a closer, more personal plane, I have ultimate respect for my teammates who continue to inspire me, energize each other and work darn hard to make Car Clinic successful.

7. Of what are you most proud?

Passing the man-in-the-mirror test.

8. What is the most-asked question you get about cars?

After all is said, the question is usually 2-seconds short: Should I fix it...or trade it? The answer is the making of 20 years of Car Clinic Radio!

9. Fill in the blank: can't make it through the day without _____.

Leaving my sweetheart a note to tell her how important she is to me. Making an effort to make a positive difference in someone's life.

10. What's the best advice you've ever gotten? The worst?

Best: Love what you do.

Worst: Long forgotten.