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HOT COMPANY

The Right Stuff

Local TV meteorologists Brad Perry, Sean McLaughlin and Dave Munsey might be popular, but they're not always right. And the watchful eye of one man and his scrutinizing weather watcher sits poised to either rain on their parade or shower them with praise.

Tired of every station claiming to be the best around, meteorologist Bruce Fixman founded WeatheRate in 2003. The Phoenix-based business proclaims itself the country's only independent weather forecast verification company. Every day Fixman's company performs the daunting task of gathering data from 200 local TV stations in 50 major markets. Four-day forecasts along with local observed weather data is fed into WeatheRate's patented WeatherTracker II software, which mathematically calculates the accuracy of each station's forecast.

Twice per year (March and September), the company crowns one local meteorologist the most reliable of them all based on accuracy of temperatures, precipitation, wind and fog, among others, as well as severe weather conditions and the timing of precipitation. The March results announced KPHO's Mike Harvey as the reigning king of weather here.

Having no affiliation with any TV stations, the company keeps its ratings unbiased. Revenue comes from partnerships—the winning stations receive permission to use WeatheRate's name, logo and exclusive seal of approval in their own advertising and marketing campaigns. So far, participating stations include those in Kansas City, MO; Cleveland; St. Louis; and Greenville, SC. "Getting the stations to believe we were for real took a little bit to get going," says Fixman. "Now we're at the end of our second WeatheRating period and we've had some success with our clients from the first time around, so there's more interest." For more information: weatherate.com —HK