

## **My Selling During a Pandemic Idea #1** by Chris Lytle

I have written before that there are no “sales training emergencies.” Training and advertising are usually first to go when businesses are forced to cut back. I sat down yesterday and imagined what I might do if I were a Radio manager now.

Please read this and improve upon it. I’ve run it by one state association exec who asked me what I would recommend doing. He gave me positive feedback, but no ideas to improve it.

As I shelter in place in Chattanooga, I can see trucks climbing up Missionary Ridge on I-24. Lots of them. There are trains moving goods through town. I visited Food City yesterday and bought gas for \$1.69 a gallon and the attendant who usually takes money in her glassed-in kiosk was disinfecting the pumps every 30 minutes. So, life goes on.

**What’s required of Radio now is to take massive action.** Everybody participates: Salespeople, on-air talent, management, office manager and receptionist. Create a business directory with a 30 to 50-word message for every business in town that wants one. Call current advertisers (first), recent advertisers (second), prospects (third) and people you’ve been unsuccessful at selling for years (fourth). Then drive around and look for businesses you’ve never noticed before.

Telephone script: “I’m calling because we are launching a free searchable online business directory. You can list your business under two categories at no charge. Like *Car Dealer* or *Free Delivery Offered*. Then, we will promote this directory every hour.

“Our listeners want to know who’s open. Who’s closed? Who’s hiring? Who’s delivering. Our listeners want to know which businesses have special hours for or free delivery to seniors? It’s on the WXXX Business Directory webpage. Link to it on your WXXX.com site right now.

“So, my question is, do you want to participate? And if so, what do you want people to know about your business right now. You can tell me right now and I’ll write it up and send it to you for your approval. Or you can email me later today.”

“We will also mention your business in the promos for the site. “XYZ Ford wants you to know that they will drop off a car for you to test drive at your office or

home.” You’ll get one of those 8 to 10 second shout outs every three or four days at first. As the directory grows, you will get fewer.”

This will generate more conversations and goodwill than your salespeople have had in weeks. By having non-salespeople participate, they will get the opportunity to get involved in a big station product and get their minds off their own worries.

After next week, we can announce that you can open businesses can buy “ Our Local Businesses Want you to Know 10 Second ads for \$20 per ad. (Pick a price and inform advertisers that they may be placed with two other non-competing businesses in the ad.)

Yesterday morning, Sarah and I picked up some meds for Tattoo, our 20-year old Abyssinian cat. When we pulled into the parking lot, there was a sign that said. “Don’t worry. We’re open. But we’re helping pets and keeping our distance from their moms and dads. Call the front desk from your car and we will come out and meet you in the fresh air and take your dog or cat into the facility.”

I think a lot of pet owners in Chattanooga would like to know. do that with Radio.

Blast from the past: My first Radio job was selling WCLT’s Service Directory of the Air in Newark, OH. I went through Yellow Pages and sold service businesses 17 each and and put three non-competitors in the spot with a quick open and close.

So, here’s a potential donut for businesses operating in a COVID 19 reality.

Local Businesses Want You to Know this Now: ABC Ford is open. And our salespeople will bring a car to your home or office to test drive. ABC Ford.com has all the details. Chai Holistic Pet Hospital is open. Call us from your car in the parking lot and we’ll come out and meet you and your pet. We love your pet. We’re keeping our distance from you though. The Flying Squirrel is offering take out only, but you know that our takeout is going to be way better than any drive thru. Place your order online at FlyingSquirl.com. Big Yum. Find out what hundreds more businesses want you to know at WXXX.com business directory.

Working remotely and available to talk at 773-501-7008.

Chris