

# Broadcast account executives

## have a free franchise

BY WAYNE ENS

Does your sales staff fully appreciate their FREE franchise? Think about it, what do typical franchisees receive when they invest their life's savings in a franchise?

Franchisees pay for the rights and privileges of using a recognized name and trade mark. Your station name and logo provide a strong brand for your sales people to represent.

Typical franchises offer protected territories as long as the franchisees meet agreed-to quotas. Most broadcast organizations offer their "sales franchisees" similarly-protected account lists.

Franchisors continuously improve their products and services. Broadcasters too are constantly improving programming to grow audiences.

Franchisees rely on the training provided in their franchise agreements. Successful broadcasters continually contract professional training for their sales executives.

Franchisees utilize proven systems and procedures. Broadcast account executives utilize the broadcaster's traffic, accounting, ordering and billing systems.

Franchisors advertise to enhance the value of their brand. Stations advertise and promote on-air and in other media to keep their brands current.

Franchisors invest in market research for their franchisees, just as broadcasters invest in research like Nielsen, BBM, TOMA and various other research and marketing tools.

Last, but not least, franchisee remuneration is directly proportionate to the success of their franchise. Commissioned broadcast account executives earn incomes directly proportionate to their success.

I have had the opportunity to consult several national franchise organizations and their franchisees. Many franchisees pay \$50,000 to \$100,000 or more just to buy the franchise. They also pay for real-estate, equipment, support staff and ongoing royalties. In spite of their large investment, typical franchisees will earn LESS than the top biller at your station!

One of the benefits franchisors promote is "being in business for yourself but not by yourself". In most broadcast sales departments, professional sales people are given the latitude to manage their time and their accounts and account strategies, but they have good management supporting and coaching them each step of the way.

Telling your staff about their free franchise can inspire a commissioned sales person to be more passionate and professional about managing their franchise.

I have learned, however, that not all franchisees experience the same degree of success. More importantly, I've discovered that it is the franchisee who makes the franchise succeed above and beyond expectations, NOT the franchisor.

Here's what I've discovered your account executives can learn from the more successful franchisees in other fields across North America.

When a franchisor introduces new products, ideas or changes it is because they are committed to improving results for the franchisee...and the success of the franchisor is directly dependant upon the success of its franchisees.

Your station's success is also dependant upon the success of its sales people. When management introduces change it is because they are convinced it will make their salespeople, and themselves, more successful. The most successful franchisees always give change a chance.

In franchising, there is a thing called "The Franchisee Dependency Curve". When a new franchisee comes on board they are initially delighted, learning new things every day, managing their own business, and appreciating what the franchisor brings to the table.

But some franchisees become complacent. As their learning curve flattens they begin to begrudge the royalties they are sending the franchisor. These franchisees begin to fail when they say "But my market is different" or "I know better than head office".

Your account executives' fates are no different. When an A.E. says "but my account list is different" or "I know better than management" they begin to lose the benefits of their franchise.

The most successful franchisees I've met actually go beyond what the franchisor expects.

If, for example, the franchisor expects them to participate in one local charity for publicity and networking, the most successful franchisees will get involved with two or three charities.

The most successful franchisees actually improve upon and build upon management initiatives and volunteer to sit on franchisee project committees.

And when they do find an improvement that works for them, they enthusiastically share it with the franchisor for the benefit of all franchisees. They recognize that a stronger team benefits their individual franchise.

These same three keys will maximize the success of each of your sales people's franchises; one, embrace change; two, support the brand; and three, go above and beyond the minimum expectations management sets.

