

# MCOM 494 Internship Report

Swiftel Directory Sales Representative  
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## Internship Report

The summer of 2019 was an enlightening and compelling duration with Swiftel Communications; drafting up business proposals, engaging in new product launches, establishing relationships with businesses, developing new ideas with my co-workers, and creating various solutions for businesses' needs. It's hard to muster into a couple simple sentences what a typical day was for me because every business had different needs that needed to be catered to with the solutions being diverse and plentiful.

As a sales representative, I researched the client prior to meeting with them and wanted to completely understand the insides and out of their existing contract with Swiftel Communications. Some specifics that I would look at and highlight the most important is if the business had an ongoing 2 or 3 year contract which would enable a discount on their renewal, Google Analytics with the online platform, coupons available via mobile, print or online, any business changes on their website or Facebook platforms (such as a new location, discontinuation of a type of a service, etc.) and lastly a deep look at the copy, design, and placement of their existing advertisements on the various platforms. From this point, it would change from business to business, drafting proposals to cater to their established platforms yet also looking for a way to enhance their presence within the Brookings community and surrounding areas. Depending on the businesses' schedule, I would set up appointments with them or send proposals through email or postal service. In some cases, it was convenient to set up businesses in similar locations on the same days to make travel a little more beneficial. It was somewhat typical too, to go up to Watertown or any surrounding community for a day for an appointment and then prospect for any new cliental for Swiftel Communications. In regards

to a new business, I would research their current advertisements-whether it would be ads in the newspaper or active social media presences (ex: Facebook) and develop a campaign for their platforms that either highlighted their current platforms and/or established a new and different presence for the client with our products and services.

From the start to finish of the summer, customer service was a huge skill set that was needed and addressed when handling businesses on a daily basis. When dealing with different offerings with various price points, clear communication was essential for both parties involved. Active listening and understanding clearly what the business wanted for their marketing and advertising strategy was also critical and in return I devised a plan that fit their needs and budget. Also, it was important to be very thorough and have a broad knowledge of the range of marketing tools Swiftel Communications has to offer such as the mobile app, print directory, online directory, coupons, and Facebook marketing services. Throughout the duration of my time with Swiftel, the mobile coupon, Pass Express, discontinued as time progressed and the introduction of Facebook marketing services was applied to the offerings to businesses. With this, if any clients had Pass Express, I had to notify them of the changes and create a plan that their money wouldn't be wasted with the previous contract. Many of the businesses opted out to placing their coupon on the online directory and Swiftel app instead while some wanted to relocate that money into a different form of advertising with either the print or online platforms. Adapting to these changes was definitely a factor that was managed into the sales season. Effectively adapting to these changes were not only affected to the business' contracts but also to the range of products from the beginning of the summer to the end. This is also highlighted more so when businesses would drop out of a deal and now it's up to the sales

representative team and I to prospect for those openings. In this case, dealing with new leads or prospecting to fill our biggest advertisement space, some key skills are set in play such as dependability, confidence, and willingness to go the extra mile for Swiftel Communications but also for the business itself. When a business is deciding to go forward with a certain product, there are factors that are out of your hands such as when they decide their budget for the upcoming year or even clients that are going out of business. This requires patience and truly signifies the common quote that patience is a virtue, for yourself and the business.

Skills that weren't as emphasized as much was the process with designing the advertisements. As a sales representative it was our job to communicate with our graphic designer what the business was looking for and the budget they have allocated for the upcoming year to create advertisements for our products that was effective for our business and the clients. However, like I noted above it was expected that the design interaction would be limited but it would have been interesting to see first-hand the progression of certain advertisements for the different platforms come to life. Another skill, administration work or account manager for lack of a better titles, would have been productive to learn the process. While the sales representatives would push contracts through and handle the main interactions with businesses, we didn't see much of the process after we sent them forward. Like I mentioned above, this wasn't a learning requirement of the internship, just the finalization of accounts and seeing them represented and how to do that would have been interesting. I can understand why some might view the step-by-step process of the programming would be unproductive, it is just a skill I didn't see represented throughout the duration here.

From previous jobs, internships, and classes dealing with sales and promotions, I think that I had a balanced introduction to this type of job setting. I previously worked for Dining Services through Aramark as a marketing intern from 2018-2019 which entailed promoting, advertising, and selling student's meal plans. However, I think that was a toe in the water in comparison to the daily life of a sales representative. I think that a lot of the skills that were desired or indicated above is something that I realized I had a foundation for, but nothing can truly indulge one's growth in their job position than actually being in your job setting.

Throughout the summer, I did find things challenging, I always thought I was a patient person but I did find myself taking a couple extra deep breaths each day-especially when the deadline date was fast approaching. I think a common challenge I faced was businesses that were initially not drawn to starting or continuing their advertisements with the Swiftel Directory which in return, I would schedule multiple meetings and develop different campaigns and thoroughly explain the cost of investment with Swiftel. Another challenge I faced was obtaining new businesses, while I would find leads that were initially interested and invested, I saw many ultimately decide to allocate their advertising budget elsewhere or decide for lower cost campaign. However, instead of beating myself up I grew into the idea that learning from ineffective situations is just as important as the successful ones. To overcome these challenges, I reviewed situations with my coworkers where I realized it wasn't just me experiencing difficulties with the same thing. I am thankful for my sales representative teams and how we worked together to make the best of our situations and at the end of the day, a sale is a sale. There were definitely aspects that I grew into and some skills that were adjusted. I think from previous jobs, although not as glamorous, as a server/bartender prepared me for establishing

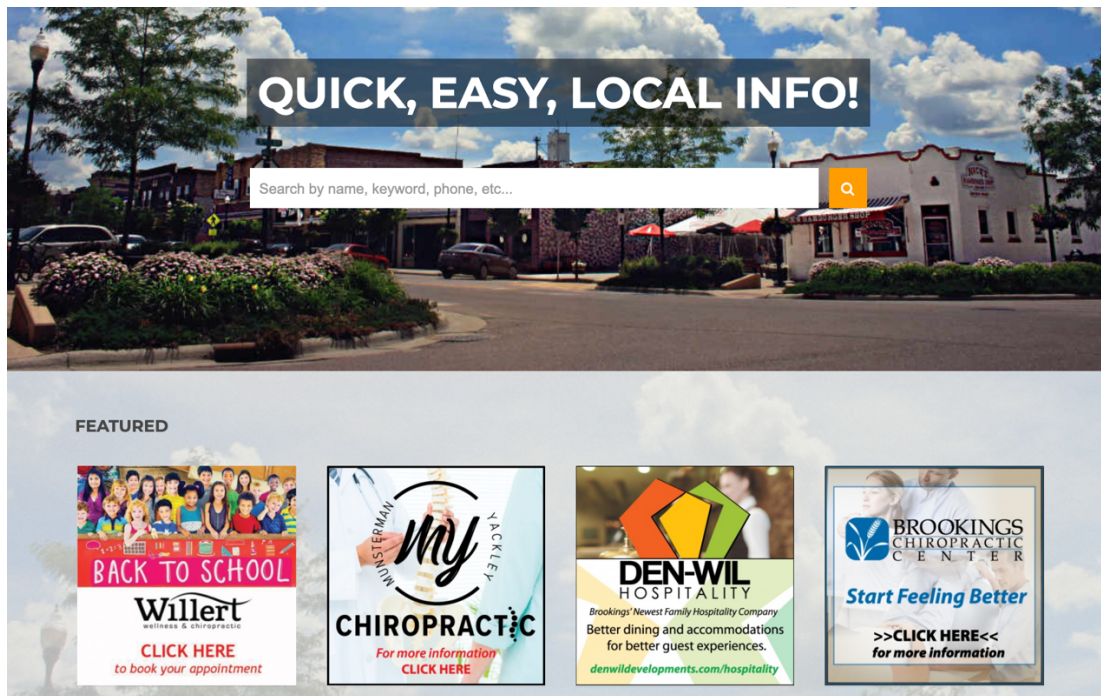
an appealing customer service approach-especially in regard to active listening and building solutions for scenarios that rise up last minute. From my previous classes, I had knowledge in creating different campaigns for specific clients (whether fabricated or authentic) that truly represented the dedication one needs to have to each and every business. However, some things are truly out of your control and crises do occur, it all just really matters on how you handle it going forward and what you can do as a representative for a company to make the ends meet.

Overall, I did see my work as a vital contribution to the overall operations of the Swiftel Directory. While I experienced bumps in the road, at the end of the day my work with Swiftel was substantial in the current climate and products they offer. I think that the renewal of contracts will be interesting in the upcoming years and for the faith in the phone book is dwindling in the Brookings community and surrounding areas. It was very informative to see the development of the Facebook Marketing services and with some improvement I think it would be very effective for local businesses. As well as improvement with certain services, attaching coupons to the calendar or establishing a coupon product outside of the phone book, would also attract more businesses. In previous classes, we have learned the importance of a digital presence and the development of social media is not going away and now more than ever I see that coming to light and effecting local businesses advertisements and the services Swiftel offers. With Swiftel, I think the knowledge and experience of seeing the transition from print to online has been very educational. However, I also think that I learned that this factor of digital media and online presence doesn't have to demean the original product (the phone book) but adjust to the current market climate and adapt to what the businesses are seeking.

Overall, I think that my knowledge from previous classes, jobs, and internships was a glimmer into how the operation of sales is with a city owned company. I have developed better skill sets, learned how to hear the word “no” and not take it personally, and lastly adapt to the current market and advertisement world with products and services.



## Portfolio



Above is a screen shot of the online directory homepage. Listed above are two clients that I worked with that had modifications to their current portal page ad and one client (not listed above) that decided to change their current contract with Swiftel Directory and have a portal page ad. Client A was a client that in the process of the current 2019 contract, signed for the portal page advertisement yet didn't have their advertisement uploaded when I started working. From there, I worked with the Client A directly to ensure that their advertisements, weblink button, and email was the proper information needed. Client B is undergoing a revamp of their logo and website, therefore I worked directly with them to ensure the proper listings were correct and reflected in both the online and print directories. The new logo and weblink will be running once the 2020 contract goes into effect. However, since the online directory is able to be updated within the contract period, the revamp is ready to be published online when the business gives the directory the green light. For Client C, the businesses decided that the

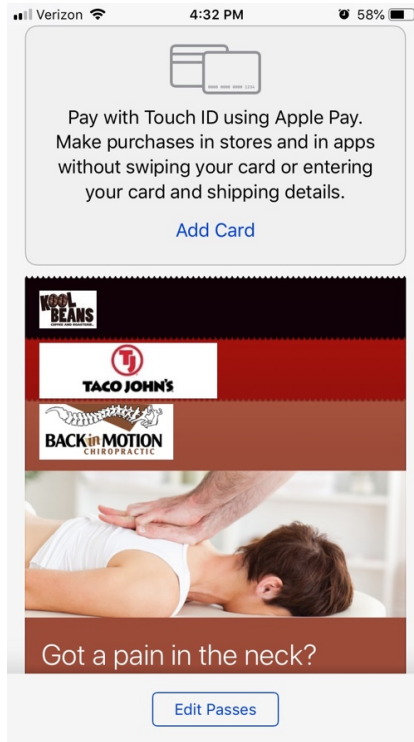
Google Analytics was not supportive of their previous current online advertisement, a category advertisement on the online directory, and after multiple meetings with them and analysis of their Google Analytics, for the year 2020 they redirected their budget for a portal page advertisement instead. This platform increases consumer's interaction with the business on the online directory because it's a direct link to their information page and will rotate throughout the businesses that are signed for the portal page ads.

LISTINGS		
STC20 - SWIFTEL DIRECTORY		
<b>Housing</b>		
BLN		\$17.50/i
ELWP		\$10/i
<b>Real Estate</b>		
TQCWC		\$219.50/i
ABL.N.H		<del>\$17.50/i</del> \$8.75/i
ELWPR		\$10/i
<b>Real Estate Commercial</b>		
BLN		\$17.50/i
ELWP		\$10/i

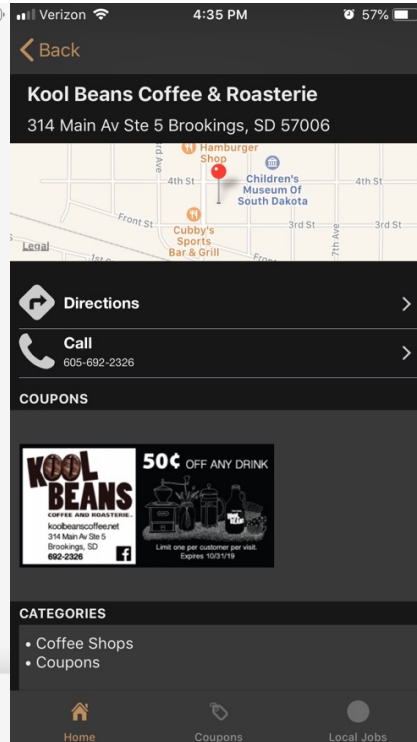
Listed above is an example that the business wanted to add their website listing to their multiple listings. After deliberations with the business, we decided that an addition to all the listing would be beneficial. Along with this decision, we also added the website URL to their three-column advertisement (TQCWC) to optimize their exposure. Instead of budgeting towards the online directory, this business spent their money in the print directory. However,

they still wanted to accomplish a consumer direction towards their website which I developed for them.

A



B



Item A reflects the Pass Express product that Swiftel discontinued throughout the summer. Due to this, I worked with businesses to add additional coupons to the coupon presence on the online directory which is reflected in Item B. Some clients didn't want a coupon on the online directory therefore I adjusted 2020's contract to reflect that dollar amount that was lost for the business. However, some opted to have two coupons featuring different promotions on the online directory. For the year 2020, if a business only had representation on the Pass Express product, I either established a contract for the coupon to be printed, showcased online, or both. In this case, I listened to the business and where they felt they wanted to have exposure since the current product was discontinued. If someone was uneasy about either option, my

supervisor allowed us to give the two options as a bundle and sell for a buy one get one free promotion to adjust the ending of the product, which many of my clients were interested in. This adaptation from different products was overall successful in my opinion and at the end of the day, businesses were still pleased with their investment with the Swiftel Directory.