

## **Work Plan: Save the Sales**

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BIA/organization name: Downtown Victoria Business Association

Title of the entry: Save the Sales

Category: Marketing

Timeframe of the project: July – September 2020

Two-sentence summary: The Save the Sales was an 80s-themed summer campaign focused on encouraging Victorians to support downtown businesses through the pandemic. The campaign included an online Support-O-Meter, where anyone could input their purchases from downtown businesses to be entered to win weekly prizes and the final prize of \$5,000, and a 30-minute faux-telethon, complete with 80s-style commercials, guest entertainers (including David Foster!), and appearances from various downtown business owners.

Victory Statement: The Save the Sales campaign offered Victorians an escape from the challenging year of 2020 by transporting them back in time. This 80s-themed campaign included an online Support-O-Meter, where anyone could input their purchases from downtown businesses to be entered to win weekly prizes and the final prize of \$5,000. In addition, the campaign involved a 30-minute faux telethon that aired on CHEK News, complete with 80s-style commercials, guest entertainers (including David Foster!), and appearances from various downtown business owners. The intention of both the website and the telethon was to encourage Victorians to support local downtown businesses through the pandemic.

Supplemental Materials:

- Website:
  - [Savethesales.ca](https://savethesales.ca)
  - [PDF](#)
- YouTube links:
  - [Telethon Commercial](#)
  - [Visit Downtown](#)
  - [Full Telethon](#)
- [Newspaper Ads](#)
- [Article](#)

### **Opportunity/Need:**

The mission of the Downtown Victoria Business Association (DVBA) is to nurture and promote the vitality and vibrancy of downtown Victoria and its business community. As a tourist destination and a provincial capital, downtown businesses relied heavily on tourists and public servants for their patronage before the pandemic. Predicting low tourism and with office workers still working from home, there was immense uncertainty about the business landscape in downtown Victoria leading up to the summer of 2020.

The Downtown Victoria Business Association saw the need to support their member businesses with a vibrant and unique campaign focussed on encouraging people living in the Capital Regional District to support downtown businesses.

The general sentiment was that the public was tired of the unhappy news related to the pandemic. The unique opportunity that came with the Save the Sales concept was offering locals an escape from 2020 by harkening back to the 80s. It was a cheesy campaign with a retro/80s-feel that gave Victorians something to laugh about. It demonstrated the lighthearted of the organization and downtown area while focussing on saving the local economy by supporting local businesses.

Save the Sales had two major components:

1. SavetheSales.ca hosted a Support-O-Meter where people could enter their purchases from downtown businesses and be entered to win the amount back, up to \$100 every week. Every entry offered them an additional chance to win the final prize - \$5,000 cash.
2. A full 30-minute pre-taped 80s-style “telethon” aired on CHEK News. The telethon included special guests – business owners from around downtown demoing their products, a magician, a cameo from David Foster, and a dance performance. It also included 80s-style commercials promoting various businesses downtown. It even had “Body Breathers,” a comical take on the old-school “Body Breaks” with fitness instructors from downtown businesses offer quick exercise tips.

### **Goal/Objectives:**

The overall goal of Save the Sales was to encourage Victorians to support downtown businesses through the challenging times of the pandemic.

Objectives:

1. To encourage \$250,000 of purchases made in downtown Victoria by September 30, 2020.

### **Audience:**

The primary audience for Save the Sales was people living in the Sooke to Sidney region of the Capital Regional District who had disposable income but required motivation to spend it locally. For the most part, the audience worked from home and was tired of the constant negative news. The intention was not to convince people who were wholly unwilling to visit downtown out of fear of the virus.

As our members, downtown business owners were the secondary audience for Save the Sales. The DVBA needs these people to witness the marketing activities being implemented on their behalf and feel supported by the organization.

### **Implementation:**

The DVBA anticipated the need for a major marketing campaign for the summer of 2020, so the organization sought an agency to help with strategy and asset creation. Once the agency was

selected, the idea for Save the Sales was developed. The agency created savethesales.ca, complete with a Support-O-Meter which increased after anyone input a purchase. The local TV station, CHEK, was consulted and they agreed to host the telethon later in the summer. The videographer began filming teasers for the telethon and to promote the Support-O-Meter. With assets on hand, promotion for Save the Sales began. Every week, prize winners were drawn and announced on social media. Commercials promoting the telethon aired on TV and on social media. There were bus shelter and newspaper ads highlighting Save the Sales, and for the length of the campaign, the DVBA social media pages only posted photos that looked like they came from the 1980s. The video ads included three “Have You Seen It?” videos of different businesses downtown, as well as three general videos with the executive director of the DVBA talking about dining, shopping, and visiting downtown.

The budget for Save the Sales was \$80,000. It was significantly more than the usual amount allocated for a single marketing campaign at the DVBA, but the need to heavily promote downtown was irrefutable. Due to the budget, the DVBA board was hesitant about the campaign. The DVBA convinced the board by demonstrating the money was available, and by showing the reach and actionability of the campaign.

### **Results:**

Save the Sales was successful. By September 30<sup>st</sup> when the \$5,000 prize winner was drawn, the Support-O-Meter on savethesales.ca showed that \$336,212 was spent in downtown Victoria. With significant cross-channel promotion, Save the Sales reminded people to support local businesses constantly.