



Business Outreach Talking Points

Here are some quick tips on how to reach out to local business owners.

On average, about ¼ of the businesses that you ask will participate in this campaign—if you speak to 20 business owners, expect that only 5 will sign on. Set a realistic goal for your team, and don't get discouraged if the first few owners aren't interested. Statistically, the more you ask, the more success you'll have.

Tip: Keep the conversation short and simple—try not to overwhelm the business owner with too many details or statistics. Personalize the interaction: use your own experiences and energy to convince the owner to sign on.

Introduction:

Hi, my name is _____. I live here in the area and am a big supporter of local business, in part because I think supporting the local economy is great way to grapple climate change. I'm volunteering with a national effort to expose the activities that the U.S. Chamber of Commerce carries out in the name of small businesses.

Problem:

The U.S. Chamber spends hundreds of millions of dollars lobbying every year to stifle clean energy innovation and climate policy in favor of higher profits for a few multinational corporations, and they do it in the name of your small business, whether you want them to or not.

Solution:

That's why small businesses and local chambers across the country are declaring "The US Chamber Doesn't Speak for Me." By compiling thousands of declarations, we're building a critical mass representing the true voice of business, and when we're finished, dirty money from the U.S. Chamber will become as toxic to politicians as Big Tobacco money is today.

Strategy/Ask:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has proven over and over again that it isn't acting in the best interests of your business or our community. Will you join thousands of other small businesses and local chambers in declaring "The US Chamber Doesn't Speak for Me"?

**Make sure to log all the results at
<http://chamber.350.org/declaration> so we can keep track of
how many businesses have signed the declaration.**

Some additional talking points:

- The US Chamber of Commerce claims to speak for 3 million members—average Americans running small and large businesses alike—but in truth they only represent 300,000, and just 16 companies comprised 55% of their revenue in 2009.
- The U.S. Chamber has lost its credibility and has come under scrutiny for a variety of unethical and unjust business practices: defending the Wall street pay practices that contributed to the financial crisis, running false ads on health care/financial reform/lawsuit abuse, and spending obscene amounts of money to deregulate federal environmental protections and question well-established climate science, all in the name of huge profits for its biggest contributors.
- Many large businesses, like Apple, Nike and PG&E, have already quit the chamber, and many local chambers have already distanced themselves from the U.S. Chamber as well because of their inflated membership numbers, extreme right-wing rhetoric and anti-climate policies. The CEO of the Greater New York Chamber of Commerce has stated: “They don’t represent me.”

Here are a few ways to sweeten the deal when speaking to your local businesses:

- + Suggest to the owner that you want this campaign to be beneficial for their business, and that you can organize your local group to specifically patronize the first businesses to sign the declaration. You can use the Carrotmob approach—one we’ve found to be particularly useful: <http://www.carrotmob.org/>
- + Offer them a window cling for their storefront (similar to a Yelp sticker). If you need window clings, send an e-mail to chamber@350.org with your address and we’ll put some in the mail for you right away.
- + Tell the owner that we can put his or her business on the front page our Chamber campaign website—we want to show the faces of this movement, and for them it will double as free advertising! All they need to do is send us their photo and quote. Additional instructions here: <http://chamber.350.org/add-your-photo/>

If the business owner agrees to join the campaign, ask them to do the following:

- + Sign on to our nationwide declaration that “The U.S. Chamber Doesn’t Speak for Me.”
- + See if they’ll agree to recruit five other local business owners to declare “The U.S. Chamber Doesn’t Speak for Me.”
- + Suggest that they join the sustainable business movement. Additional information can be found here: <http://www.350.org/sustainablebiz/>

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