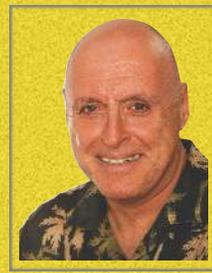


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



566 How is the Retail Business Likely to Change?

Guam will see so-called non-essential businesses open beginning Sunday, assuming there is no reason the government decides against moving to stage two of its recovery plan. I'm Jerry Roberts and today, let's discuss potential changes we may see in the retail industry, next on The Extra Point.

Retail could be in for changes but Guam is not alone in that. Several states are loosening their grip on lockdowns and allowing workplaces to reopen, and the same issues will face people in Georgia, Texas, California, and elsewhere.

We've seen stories of retail chains redesigning their stores and reimagining the shopping experience. It's quite possible some of your favorite stores won't look exactly like they looked the last time you visited.

Will things be moved around to accommodate distancing factors? Some operators say they plan to reduce the number of products displayed to allow for the maximum number of properly distanced customers.

Stores and malls have traditionally been places where people go to linger and socialize. How about now? Will customers still want to spend hours, just walking store to store? Retailers hope that's the case, but they're playing the "what if" game. What if more people want to get in, get what they want, and then leave, seeing the average visit time plunge?

Back to the issue of fewer people in stores and distancing, how long will you stand outside and wait to get into Micronesia Mall, GPO, the Agana Shopping Center, and your other favorite places to shop?

First things first, will it be a mandatory mask environment — no mask, no entry? Will a sales associate or security guard take your temperature at the door? Will they also ask you a series of health questions?

What message will stores send as to the level of sanitation they've established to protect customers? It may seem unnecessary to some people, but I'd do a one-page writeup on how your team is approaching the virus situation and the steps you've taken to ensure a safe shopping environment.

Will people toss it away? Yes, they will. However, the fact you spent time to develop it will register with your buyers. They may just scan it. That's fine. Tell your story. Retail experts strongly believe the perception of safety is going to be a key differentiator in terms of where people want to work and shop.

Will all customers want to come into the store? A number of Guam companies have been offering curbside delivery to people who want to remain in their car. What if some of those buyers still want that?

How will telephone support figure in? People who decide to make fewer trips to stores may want to connect with someone to find out if certain items are in stock before they visit.

Could companies update their Facebook page to indicate how many people are in the store and the potential wait involved?

Finally, some stores will not open again. Those that were barely getting by before, or may have been losing money, will now give up. That will also be a part of the new retail landscape, set to display, in Guam, in the next few days.

That's The Extra Point. Stay home and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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