

# Liberty Merchant Handbook

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## ***Introduction***

Congratulations on your decision to become a Liberty Merchant and increase your business and profits, while serving your community, by accepting the Liberty Dollar! Your decision will have far-reaching benefits not only for yourself, your business and your family, but for all of your community and its surrounding area.

The Liberty Dollar, since it is not commonly accepted by banks and large corporate marketers, is a natural tool for building local commerce, and as a Liberty Merchant, you have taken a giant leap towards bringing value back to local shopping! As the Liberty Dollar gains in recognition and grows in circulation, you'll notice other positive effects, such as:

A return of the community spirit,

A growing circle of customers who are also your friends, and

An increased awareness that the local merchant is no longer just one of the businesses in town, but an indispensable part of the community, just as it was before the arrival of the "Super Stores

In short, the honest-value Liberty Dollar, being based on real value in contrast to the country's current debt-based, inflationary, corporate monetary system, brings its merchants and the customers they serve closer, by allowing them to share in the formation of real wealth within their local economy.

## ***1. Who Are the Liberty Merchants?***

Since the introduction of the Liberty Dollar in 1998, there has begun a sort of revolution in the United States... a revolution of businesspeople who are tired of being overrun by great multi-national corporations with thousands of locations, tired of being forced to cut prices and profits to less than minimum in order to barely survive in the local economy. These people are the small-business-folk of America, who have watched as foreign products sold at devastatingly low prices by marketing giants have funneled vast sums of money away from their community. They are Liberty Merchants.

Liberty Merchants have recognized the need for a way to return their communities to a form of value that is superior to low prices at the cost of quality products and services, and the advent of the Liberty Dollar made this possible. By accepting payment in a form of currency that is

backed by a historically-valuable commodity such as silver,  
unacceptable to banks and multi-nationals due to its non-acceptance by the Federal Reserve System,  
destined by its very nature to remain in local circulation only, and  
available to the public at a discount that allows them to actually gain additional spending power each  
time they use it.

These courageous businesspeople have given their communities a reason to come back to values that  
have been lacking for over forty years.

Liberty Merchants are the Mom and Pop stores, the local restaurants, the auto parts shops, the hardware  
stores, the tire stores... Liberty Merchants are the local folk who choose to run their own businesses  
and offer their experience and services to their own communities. Money spent with them stays in the  
local economy, increasing the amount of true wealth that can remain there. Doing business with them  
fosters the old community spirit that has been slowly fading since big business became the common  
place to buy your goods.

Liberty Merchants are the pillars of their community, because they have placed the community above  
themselves. Their dedication to their community is evident in their willingness to endure the occasional  
insult or sarcasm over their acceptance of the Liberty Dollar, as they look forward to the many benefits  
that keeping money in local circulation will bring.

## ***2. Why Should I Become a Liberty Merchant?***

The first and foremost reason why most businesses become Liberty Merchants is simply this: accepting  
the Liberty Dollar will make you more money. Let's take a look at how your profits will increase with  
the Liberty Dollar.

As described in the first chapter, small merchants endure terrible effects because of big, centralized  
companies that invade small town America and put local folks out of business. Unless the merchant can  
actually meet or undercut the low prices made possible by the million-item bulk purchases the big  
companies can make, he can look forward to at best, a mediocre existence and a slowly impoverished  
local economy, as the giants take the hard-earned dollars of the customer far away to some central  
bank, often in another country altogether.

In some communities, however, there is truly an alternative.

In 1998, a small organization launched an alternative to the commonly accepted money issued by the  
government, an alternative called the Liberty Dollar. This is a true form of money even though it is not  
recognized by the government and not accepted by banks; it is intended for local economic growth and  
recovery, since it remains in local circulation at all times.

Businesses that choose to accept the Liberty Dollar do so voluntarily. They are aware that it is not  
accepted by banks, but since that means they must return it to their customers in change, to be spent

again at their establishment or that of one of their fellow Liberty Merchants, then the money keeps coming back, increasing their sales and their profits, and making the community richer as they, in turn, spend the money with other Liberty Merchants in town.

The question of whether to become a Liberty Merchant may seem like an easy yes-or-no decision, but it does require some thought, and in many cases, a small amount of education about money, and about how it can best be used to benefit a community. The next chapter will address those issues, so that the reader can make a truly informed decision.

### **3. Money and the Community**

Money... the one concept that has captivated the interest of virtually every human being since Ogg the caveman first noticed the pretty colors inside a clam shell and swapped it to his cousin Ugg for that funny round thing that rolled on the ground...

The accumulation of money as wealth became a fad somewhere after that point, when it became obvious that simply bartering one's own goods and services for those of another was time consuming and often difficult. Imagine transporting your wares every time you wanted to trade a stone block for a side of beef, or a load of roofing timbers for some foundation stone, and the concept of a medium of exchange becomes sensible. If you carry your load of timbers to the stone quarry and find that they don't need any timbers, then you must find someone who has something the quarry-master needs, and who also needs timbers... or someone who needs timbers who has the thing that this third person needs... or on, and on, ad infinitum, until a simple swap has become a world shattering event!

However, if you can trade some of Ogg's clam shells for the stone, and someone else will give you more of them for your timbers... now, this is a lot simpler! By voluntarily accepting a common medium of exchange, all of the community has come to benefit, since each person can now trade without carrying large quantities of products around unsold, and without trying to find lots of other people to participate in the transaction until you get what you need.

But then, clam shells can be picked up off the beach by anyone industrious enough to go down there and spend a day looking around, making their value somewhat questionable. So a medium of exchange had to be found that a) everyone could agree on, b) was sufficiently uniform in the value its users perceived to make it stable as a means of conducting commerce, and c) was not so plentiful as to make its value decline from ease of acquisition. Certain metals, worked into shapes that were pleasing to both eye and hand, filled the bill nicely, and the most common of these was gold and silver. The beautiful colors of the metal objects that came to be known as "coins" or "money", when stamped in specific sizes, became standard units of exchange, taking the place of the items that had previously been bartered directly. A transaction came to be the exchange of your goods or services for a certain amount of one of these metals, in various shapes and sizes to make up the total "value" you would accept in "payment".

This new system worked because both Ogg and Ugg and everyone else in town would accept the coins from you, and from anyone else, in exchange for their own goods or services... and finance was born.

Today, money is most commonly thought of as the "bills" and "coins" issued by the government of whatever nation a person lives in, and while many people do trade in the money of other lands, most people are only familiar with the money they have always known... in the US, that would be the

Federal Reserve Notes that we call "dollars".

The money the Federal Reserve issues is known as "fiat" money, meaning that it is only worth anything because the government says it is! It is subject to inflation, can be completely devalued by its issuer, or by circumstance, at any time without warning, and is regarded as having value only so long as its issuer can be trusted to accept it back for some other form of value. If it is backed by nothing, however, then the only value it can be certain of in exchange is payment of debts to the issuer... and if the businesses who sell goods and services to the people ever find that it is no longer acceptable to pay any debt other than taxes, then it will be utterly worthless.

The unfortunate reality is that the Federal Reserve issues its money only in exchange for interest-bearing U.S. Treasury bonds. That means that in order to get more money, we have to go deeper into debt. The Federal debt is \$7 trillion and climbing, and even issuing the money we'd use to pay it off would generate more debt. The only way to paying off the debt (besides issuing more money) is to take \$7 trillion out of circulation, which would be tough to do since there's only about \$700 billion (1/10th that amount) in circulation in the first place.

With a stable government, this is not a worry to most businesspeople, and that is normal. However, no government which issues money without a value-backed reserve can ever be considered stable, since its power in the world is measured entirely by the strength of its money against the money of other nations, and so every dollar issued, every dollar we spend, is every day at risk of suddenly being absolutely worthless!

To combat this risk, many communities have created local currencies, a form of money that is accepted in a certain area only, and which is backed by something that they can reasonably expect to collect if they ever needed to. One of the most prominent of these is the Ithaca, NY, HOURS, based on human labor at a rate of \$10 per hour. Many local Ithaca businesses accept them in payment for their products and services, simply because they know that they can spend them with many other businesses! Many companies pay their employees partly in US Dollars, and partly in Ithaca HOURS, because the employees know they can use the Hours to buy groceries, or gasoline, or pay rent, or just about anything else except pay taxes or fines, or make purchases from outside the area.

Local currencies have improved the economic stability of many areas of the nation, since the money naturally stays mostly within the region where it is acceptable as a medium of exchange. In addition, there are often ways of acquiring the local currencies at some discount, so the spending power of the consumer is increased, while the profits of the merchants are protected.

The Liberty Dollar organization has grown to be one of the most stable and trustworthy issuers of money worldwide, since its Liberty Dollars are backed entirely by Silver! At any time, any person may redeem their Liberty Dollars for the actual silver that backs them, in the form of beautiful coin-like pieces that can be carried and spent directly. The silver pieces, called Silver Libertys, are \$10 pieces made of one ounce of .999 fine silver, and have captured the attention of many businesses across the nation.

Acceptance of the Liberty Dollar is voluntary, and it is important to know that most banks will not accept it for deposit at all at this time. It cannot be used to pay any debt or taxes to the government. However, it is perfectly legal as a medium of exchange for any other purpose, it is known to build customer loyalty, and since it is available at a discount to the consumer, it will always increase the profits of those businesses which accept it.

This is because money that can be spent only at local merchants inevitably will be spent there... just as a coupon that is only accepted at certain stores will bring customers to that store to get the savings it represents. In the same way, since most Liberty Associates will sell Silver Libertys at a discount to the consumer, the consumer will buy them and shop where they can be spent in order to realize an increase in his spending power.

Local businesses who accept the Liberty Dollar are assured of a customer base that is destined to grow as more and more Liberty Dollars become available in the local economy. The number of Liberty Dollars in circulation locally grows in three ways:

Through the sale of Liberty Dollars into circulation by Liberty Associates,

Through merchants who purchase additional Liberty Dollars at discount to use in making change,

Through programs instituted by Liberty Associates and/or Liberty Merchants to use Liberty Dollars as awards or prizes in promotions.

In these ways, the amount of Liberty Dollars grows, and as it grows, so grow the sales and profits of those Merchants who accept them.

#### ***4. Accepting the Liberty Dollar***

Now that you understand how money works in the community, you need to know how to use Liberty Dollars in your business. The following simple rules will work with any business when properly employed in the sale of quality merchandise or services, and will ensure the growth of sales and profits discussed in the previous section.

a. If you're among the first Liberty Merchants, start with the Silver Liberty! We recommend that any community's early Liberty Merchants start out by using and accepting the Silver Liberty. This ten dollar, one-ounce silver piece will often be referred to as a "coin", in the generic sense, but it is important to remember that it is not "Coin", in the legal sense, which refers to government-produced metal coinage.

The Silver Liberty is beautiful to look at and pleasant to hold, especially when "dropped" into the hand of the customer. The weight of one troy ounce of .999 fine silver pleases the customer who wants to look at it before agreeing to take it, so ask your Liberty Associate to show you and your employees how to "Do the Drop"!

Silver Libertys tend to excite the customer, whether he remembers the old real silver coins we used to know or not. Many of your customers will show them to their friends and family, and you'll actually have people coming in just to buy one from you, or spending money just in the hope of getting one in their change!

#### ***b. Accept the Liberty Dollar with a smile!***

Each of your clerks must be aware that the Liberty Dollar is now accepted at your establishment(s), and should be instructed to accept it with a smile. Make the customer aware that you are glad he is spending

the new value-backed money, because it is good for your local economy, not just for your business!

### ***c. Offer it in change!***

Whenever a customer proffers a payment in greenback money, offer the Liberty Dollar in change! Be sure your employees know that it is not accepted at banks or issued by the government: "Would you like one of the new Ten Dollar Silver Libertys in your change? (while holding one up for them to see, and "Doing the Drop" when they reach for it to look it over) It's not from the government, it's really an ounce of silver, and the banks won't take it, but you can always spend it here!" That simple phrase, memorized easily, explains the nature of the new money, and eliminates any thought that you might be foisting off something false or illegal on the customer.

### ***d. Know who your fellow Liberty Merchants are!***

Ask your Liberty Associate to keep you fully informed of who else accepts the Liberty Dollar in your area! By telling your customers where else they can spend the money they get in change from you, you are supporting your local community; and as other Liberty Merchants tell their customers about you, you will all gain new customers that have never traded with you before, and retain many who have! This will result in a "circular promotion" that will help to keep money spent locally and help each of you to see significant increases in sales!

### ***e. Don't hesitate to buy them back!***

No matter how well your employees explain the new money, there will always be the occasional dissatisfied customer! Anytime one of your customers comes back and insists that you take back the Liberty Dollars he got from you, do so with a smile! You'll find that he will soon return and spend one he got from someone else, as the Liberty Dollar becomes more widely known in your community.

The issue here is to make sure that anyone who wants to get his greenbacks back can do so, because for every customer who is dissatisfied or frightened by the new money, you'll find that you'll gain hundreds of customers who will be pleased and excited by them! Happy customers will inevitably come from both sides, as long as you always buy them back with a smile!

### ***f. Decide how you want to make money with the Liberty Dollar.***

There are three ways to make additional profits as a Liberty Merchant. One is to merely accept them, letting your Liberty Associate sell them directly to the consumer at discount. This method will work because many people will buy them at discount and spend them, often along with the extra spending power they gain at your stores!

The second is to buy them from your Liberty Associate at an even better discount yourself, and give them out in change. In so doing, you're giving out a ten dollar value that only cost you \$8.50 or so, and making up to an extra \$1.50 on the current sale, just by making change for a \$20 dollar bill! Imagine, "Making Money Making Change"! You will even have opportunities to give out multiples when customers offer a Fifty or One Hundred dollar bill! Imagine making an extra \$6.00, over your normal profit, when a ten dollar purchase is paid for with a \$50!

Both ways will see an increase in your profits, and buying them at the Liberty Merchant Discount will make you more money, but there is a third way! The third way is to ask your Liberty Associate to sponsor you as a Liberty Associate yourself! This costs only \$250.00, and allows you to get your Liberty Dollars at the same discount he does! Any Liberty Associate will be pleased to have you join him as a new Liberty Associate, since he'll earn a commission every time you buy Liberty Dollars!

## **5. A Return To Community Values**

There you have it, everything there is to know about being a Liberty Merchant! However, there is one added bonus to establishing Liberty Merchants in any community that is often overlooked, and we'll close with that in mind.

Liberty Merchants return value to their community, by re-introducing real value into local commerce, but they also return another kind of values: community values. The morality and honesty that so many of us fondly recall from our childhood and youth was founded on the fact that the people in the community knew each other, that the customer who came into the store to buy his groceries, or stopped to fill his gas tank, or shopped for clothes or shoes or toys were not just dollar signs in the accounting ledger of some big company, they were the shopkeeper's friends and family, they were their church-fellows, neighbors and schoolmates.

With the entrance of the big super stores, however, that friendliness was lost, and replaced by "store greeters" and "smiling cashiers" who don't really know who the customers are, and are dependent on the customer's money for their own employment, and so see them as merely the means of continuing their jobs. Communities that try to bring back those traditional values are finding it difficult to do, as long as the big corporate stores continue to draw the customers, and the dollars, away from the local merchant.

This is the final bonus of being Liberty Merchant. By encouraging your community to shop locally, by giving them a way to do so and still save money with the Liberty Dollar, the Liberty Merchants make it possible for much of that old community spirit to grow once again, and for the people to once again be more than just numbers in a bank account in some far-off land. They're your customers. They're your friends. And in the final analysis, they're the real reason why you chose to become a Liberty Merchant.

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