



ALSA Member Services Report

October 2020

Statistics

	May 19 2020	Dec 31 2019	Oct 5, 2020
Region	Total Stores	ALSA 2019	ALSA 2020
Calgary	481	172	170
Edmonton	412	195	163
North	215	79	76
Central	257	81	83
South	163	47	58
Associate		5	5
Out of Province	1	1	2
	1528	584	560

New Members: 112 new Full Members and 4 Associates so far in 2020.

2020

Prior to July 1, we were proceeding on a pace to have 600 members by year end. We reported 31 new members to the Board in late June but then several things changed.

- Firstly we had the complete withdrawal of membership participation by a very large group which at the time of leaving numbered just under 200 stores. 110 of those stores never did join for 2020 however 86 had paid for the year.
- On July 1 we embarked on a membership recruitment program which was advertised to all non-member stores in early July (nearly 1000 mail invitations). The program was very simple, join ALSA for the rest of 2020 with a complimentary membership and avail yourselves of our programs. Coke offered a 6 week added inducement of additional new product with first full order.
- To date with the new recruitment we have added 82 new members which when combined with the new members reported in June we have added 113 new members in 2020.
- We are continuing the complimentary program for all non-member stores but are adding an option of pre-paying for 2021 to avoid an invoice in the January.
- We have also targeted all new registered stores that are not part of a chain to the list of "complimentary" membership and plan to continue that practice into 2021.
- We recognize that the retention rate of the new members is in doubt but we plan to offer an added incentive to their first invoice.

- Of the 560 stores, only 474 are going to receive an invoice as the 86 stores from the departing chain will not be billed in 2021.

- We had excellent collaboration from our partners in the program with referrals from Profitek, Western Financial and Coke most welcome. We have also had several stores become members or return as members because we “caught” them using our rates on Moneris.

Observations and Comments from stores

Finding the person to talk with is still an amazing problem even in the smallest of stores. It is clear that the owner/manager defers to the store clerks to run interference. Or they are absentee owners who must be contacted for a decision or an absent partner that must be consulted. I only met or spoke with owner or manager in about 20% of the stores. I received no call backs to messages.

Second observation, the “lure” of a “free” membership was not attractive to a good number of stores. Many that I spoke with have been in business for years and realized that the full cost in the new year was going to be a continuing cost and it was “not worth it” for them to change their service providers such card processing, point of sale etc.

The most common complaints heard were about restaurants acting as liquor stores, product shortages particularly those products on restricted amounts, about the time of day when specials are announced, and ALSA only caters to the big chains.

Most of the new members are in fact new store owners or relatively new. They also have had a struggle keeping business this year, so a chance to save money was a welcome option.

Licensing

There have been over 50 cancelled licenses for liquor stores this year. There are also nearly as many sales of stores. There are still new stores being licensed particularly suburban Edmonton and Calgary but fewer than in the past 2 to 3 years.

2021

Invoicing will happen again in January.

New contracts will be negotiated with 3rd parties as needed. Moneris and Coke have another year on the current arrangements.

We hope that Covid 19 will be behind us!!!!

Howard Riddel, Membership Services