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## Audio Transcript

Episode 219 of "[E&P Reports](#)" Vodcast Series  
with Mike Blinder

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The banner features a top section with the E&P Reports Vodcast logo on the left, the URL [EditorandPublisher.com/Vodcasts](#) in the center, and a camera lens and microphone on the right. Below this is a video frame showing two men in a split-screen format. On the left is Chris Lytle, and on the right is Mike Blinder. The E&P logo is in the top right of the video frame. At the bottom of the video frame, there are captions for both men and the episode sponsor logo.

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Founder, CEO  
*Instant Sales Training*

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### [Media sales icon Chris Lytle shares tried and true insights that still apply today.](#)

In this episode of “E&P Reports,” we go one-on-one with media sales training icon Chris Lytle, who advises on the traits, abilities and techniques that will continue to help produce winning salespeople and sales teams, within any media company. Chis also comments on how today’s media consolidation has helped move the local sales process away from a winning consultive approach to a reversal back to “commodity selling.”



[music]

**0:00:04.2 Announcer:** This is E&P Reports, a vodcast from Editor and Publisher magazine, the authoritative voice of news media since 1884, serving newspapers, broadcast, digital and all forms of news publishing.

**0:00:19.7 Mike Blinder:** Greetings once again. Mike Blinder, publisher of E&P Magazine. As always, if you're listening to us on a podcast platform, please follow us. Watching us on YouTube, there is a subscribe button below, a bell to the right, ring that puppy and you'll get an update. Each and every time we upload a new episode of this weekly vodcast series that serves the news media ecosystem, E&P Reports. Now let me give you some background. In the 1980s, after 10 years as a radio talent and programming manager, I jumped behind the microphone and went into sales, selling AM radio, which at the time was being disrupted by FM radio. And I was knocking on doors. I had no list, cold calling in a small market community that all the manufacturing jobs had moved offshore. So it was economically challenged. Now, luckily, I was being mentored by an owner who took me under his wing and taught me concepts that we call today integrity selling and solution based selling. But not only that, he gave me access to sales training content from an emerging industry guru named Chris Lytle. Now, those techniques of Chris's helped me succeed into sales management. And I actually incorporated those into my sales training and revenue generation programs that helped generate over \$100 million for news publishers worldwide when I was a consultant.

**0:01:47.2 MB:** And also, we use those same techniques today in the transformation of E&P magazine. Now, the reason for this unusual one-on-one preamble to the show is an apology. It's kind of an apology for what may seem to be my overly obsequious hero-worshipping borderlining on a sycophantic behavior that has me acting like a 1950s giddy schoolgirl watching Elvis Presley hit the stage when I got Chris into the recording session. My apologies. Now, with that being said, stick around because after this commercial message, you and I will go one-on-one together with the iconic media sales expert Chris Lytle, founder and CEO of Instant Sales Training, author of *The Best Sellers*, *The Accidental Salesperson*, and *The Accidental Sales Manager*. He's trained thousands of sellers worldwide and has been described as, "Someone who can provide more usable information per minute than anyone else in the business." Stick around.

**0:02:50.0 Announcer:** This episode of E&P Reports is exclusively sponsored by BLOX Digital, formerly TownNews. Even though the name has changed, their commitment to the media industry is as strong as ever. BLOX Digital is now even better positioned to deliver integrated solutions like content management, audience development, advertising revenue, video management, and more. Join the over 2000 news publishers worldwide that power their ongoing digital transformation with BLOX Digital, serving over 141 million monthly users who view over 6.5 billion pages of content each year. You can trust BLOX Digital to empower you to connect you at scale with the community you need to reach. BLOX Digital, formerly TownNews, now reimagined to help meet the news publishing challenges of tomorrow and beyond. Learn more at [Bloxdigital.com](http://Bloxdigital.com).

**0:03:55.0 MB:** Okay, Chris, the world has changed a lot since you entered the industry, right? I mean, you started selling in the '70s, correct?



**0:04:04.5 Chris Lytle:** Correct.

**0:04:05.4 MB:** With radio, was that out of the box?

**0:04:09.4 CL:** Started with radio, yes. WCLT in Newark, Ohio.

**0:04:13.9 MB:** How did you get the job? You came out of college and just said hire me? What was it all about?

**0:04:19.6 CL:** No, I was a political science major. I interned in Congress when that was a safe job. And I came back to my hometown radio station and said, I want to be a newsman. And they said, well, we need a salesman. And I said, well, I have a political science degree. And they said, well, that won't slow you down. You can read and write and research, can't you? I said, yeah, sure. And I thought I'd work my way into news. But the news director was driving a seven-year-old Chevy Vega and covering the city council meetings till 1:00 in the morning and complaining all the time about how tough it was. And I said, maybe sales. I mean, the sales manager had a Cadillac. And I said, this might be for me.

**0:05:00.0 MB:** I was having a lengthy conversation with a senior manager of a big radio group. I don't want to say which one or how, because we were joking about how the world has shifted and why there's so much trouble selling media today. This was his words, Is because everybody's selling product. They're not selling audience. What do you think of that? I mean, when you hear words like that, today's world.

**0:05:26.0 CL:** Well, what I hear is, it's an inner... I call it level one selling, and if you see the chart in the Accidental Salesperson, I'm in there to talk about my race, my ratings, and my format, and I'm not talking advertising with you. I'm talking about my numbers. I'm talking about me. So it's all about me instead of what are you trying to accomplish? Who's your biggest competitor? What are the issues that you need to resolve? So it's being more consultative, of course. But one of my first exposures to training in 1973 was Jay Douglas Edwards and 13 methods for closing the sale. And it was just pound people. But here's one thing. I've never heard a CEO at a radio group say, Did we get results for these customers?

**0:06:26.7 MB:** Nothing's really changed, has it, Chris? I mean, this is the stuff we good sellers I've seen for decades understood. Is you're there in front of the advertiser to find out what makes them unique, the unique selling proposition and market it to your audience, correct?

**0:06:43.6 CL:** Goes all the way back to Ross Reaves, who invented the unique selling proposition.

**0:06:49.6 MB:** Of course.

**0:06:50.6 CL:** The milk chocolate melts in your mouth, not in your hand.

**0:06:56.0 MB:** Who is the one that said sell the sizzle, not the steak. I could go on and on. There's so many old expressions. Let's then dive into the changes. In today's world, Radio according to the latest and greatest data from Burrell, is the leading legacy media. Between outdoor. Well, actually,

outdoor is doing pretty well, too. But between radio and television and newspapers, the three big legacy brands and markets, radio still outselling the other two. When I asked Jim Brown, the president of Borrell Associates on this program a few weeks ago, why that was the fact, he said, It's the sellers. They're the better salespeople.

**0:07:37.5 CL:** I think that radio people, especially the people who have longevity, they've been in the market for a while. They've got a good list. And they'll do very well because they've got relationships, they've got reputation, and they can really leverage that.

**0:08:00.4 MB:** I find they also know how to beat the bushes. See, here's the big challenge today we're seeing also in our report is the top categories you have to go after today in order to win in local advertising sales are small businesses. The big dogs are all buying around legacy media now, if you know what I mean. They're finding programmatic and OTT options, and they're buying off their own desk. They don't have to go through the media company to buy OTT or electronic outdoor, or whatever. But the small businesses you and I both know are the hardest to get into, the hardest to sell and sometimes the hardest to manage. Radio was always good at that, at least in my background, we knew how to... I mean, 'cause the paper would have most of their business was transactional with agencies, television, most of their regional agencies. What is it that you see in a good seller and radio that makes them able to deal with all that rejection and all that trying to get into that plumber or that heating and air conditioning guy, or that chiropractor or that cosmetic dentist?

**0:09:04.8 CL:** I read a long time ago that a happy customer can do wonders. And it sparks your enthusiasm. Just one good happy customer story beats five or six rejections. And so you got to hang out with people who are getting some results from you and then take that belief with you into that place that's a little more difficult and not give up too early. That's what happens to most people. They make a call or two and don't have anything to come back with.

**0:09:35.8 MB:** I remember seeing it at an NAB or a radio only convention, I think it was years ago. His name is Alan Simberg, does that ring a bell?

**0:09:44.4 CL:** Absolutely. Absolutely.

**0:09:45.3 MB:** An old guy was standing on the stage and all he said was, If you don't believe in your product or service, you're not that good of an actor. They can feel it in your... You don't even have to say it. So you're suggesting that if a sales rep now is feeling rejection or not feeling the energy of their audience, that you should hang around your customers more that are doing well with you. And feed off that energy.

**0:10:12.1 CL:** Yeah, I mean, I can remember one of the best sessions that I was ever a part of is a Golden West radio up in Canada. They're in Alberta and Saskatchewan, and they brought me up to do three hours and the afternoon session was I was the MC of a session with five or six of their clients who talked about how they had used the radio station to build their businesses. So there was a car dealer and a butcher and he said, until we started advertising, we didn't have any business. And so they were building belief. And that's really the one thing that managers have the power to do is build belief in what you're selling.



**0:11:03.6 MB:** So let's talk about that.

**0:11:04.7 CL:** We spend too much time talking about how to close and questions to ask. But can we help people?

**0:11:13.6 MB:** My experience and again, I'm not... I'm almost like you now 'cause I'm not walking into media companies like I used to. I mean, years ago, three or four years ago is when I was back in the consulting business. I would visit three media companies a week locally. And I'm talking real small towns. I mean, I've been to Wasilla, Alaska in the winter. That if the ad director didn't have the right qualities, the whole sales team fell apart. The coach, the chief, that hasn't changed either, has it, Chris?

**0:11:43.4 CL:** No. And I call it the sales management trap in my book, The Accidental Sales Manager.

**0:11:49.0 MB:** Exactly.

**0:11:49.2 CL:** Where you get promoted to sales management, you were out there selling up a storm and then bam, somebody says, Hey, we want you to be the manager. And you say... Sorry. You say, Oh, that'd be great. And then they say, Well, but you need to keep your list until you can develop some people to take over for you. And so now you've got a full time job and another full time job. And you get trapped. And what I see so often right now is that the market manager is the sales manager and the top biller. And so that they're not hiring and developing the people who are going to develop their top line revenues. And so it's a mess in some of these markets.

**0:12:35.9 MB:** You and I both know Jim Doyle pretty well. We had him on the show just a couple of months ago 'cause of his latest book, Selling with a Servant Heart, which I got autographed, by the way, I want you to know that. But anyway, Selling with a Servant Heart, basically reminds me of that old expression in my book. I quoted Zeke Zeigler, who said, They don't care what you know till they know that you care. And then I found out that he stole that from Teddy Roosevelt. That's one quality you agree. You already said it. I mean, you gotta be customer focused. Care about their results. But are there any other qualities off the top of your head. If you wanted to find someone that you know could handle the rejection, it had to have the tenacity, the grit, to manage an account of local advertisers, what do you look for?

**0:13:26.4 CL:** Yeah, I mean, I follow a guy named Anthony Iannarino, and he talks about caring being the superpower in selling. But the other thing is. Instead of just going in and trying to get some business, go in there and as Jim Doyle calls it, serve them with some information that you have that they may not have because... And Anthony calls it a briefing. We used to do, when I was doing the seminars all the time, I did seminars for advertisers and told them, Here's the five local advertising mistakes to avoid. Here are the elements that need to be in your commercial. Here's how to be more creative. Use stories instead of just cliches and brief people on how to be better advertisers, because an educated customer buys more. And then you come off as helpful, caring, intelligent. And so, I don't... One of the great things I ever said to the guy, the car dealer who said, Sit down and pitch me, I said, I don't know if you should be on our station or not.

**0:14:39.1 MB:** I did the same thing once and I stole it from you. You're the one that said the next time a guy says, what do you got? I think you said this on a stage. You said nothing. Tell him until I learn more about you, I want to see if we're a good match. I'd never forgot that. That was back in the '80s. I saw you on a stage. Reminding me to not fall into that trap, 'cause what did you say? And I know I'm misquoting you, sir.

**0:15:00.8 CL:** Well, the story was, it was a cattle call. And this new new Dodge general manager, they'd fired the other guy. And this new guy had come in from Milwaukee. I was in Madison and I got the memo, the nail. I got the message that said you'll have 20 minutes to pitch Mr. Voss at 1:20 on Friday or, it was Thursday. And cancel all commercials until then. And I thought, Wow, if I'm the 1:20, there's a 1:00, there's a 11:40, there's a 11:20, there's an... I'm going to be the 13th rep he sees. And so they've all been in pitching their station. I've got to be different. So I said, I don't know if you should be on our station or not. And I said, I want to be in a position to give you an intelligent presentation based on what you're trying to do. And I was calling on Steve last week and he's gone. And I know your goals are bigger than Steve's. And I want to be in a position to make an intelligent presentation. And I gesture to the credenza behind him. I said, have you had any intelligent presentations so far today, sir. He says, This has been the most boring day of my life. I said, Well, Mr. Voss, he said, call me, Bob. I said, Bob, what are you trying to do here? And we spent an hour and a half of that. It was an hour and a half meeting instead of 20 minutes. And when I walked out, there were five reps waiting for their 20 minute meeting. And I said, good luck, everyone.

**0:16:33.5 MB:** I stole that from you and landed \$100,000 account. When I was... I flew into New York City for a 20 minute... 30 minute presentation to a major media group. And he said, what do you got? And I said, Nothing. I had to force myself to do this. I had a PowerPoint ready, I said, Nothing. I want to know if we're a good match. I don't... God forbid we do business together and we... And he said, Hire him and walked out of the room. He made me stay an extra night. Let me go buy some clothes. Chris, I could talk to you for hours, but we're running out of time. I'm going to let you now promote yourself. You're still got amazing training at your website and you're updating it weekly, which I'm very impressed with. What is the web address? If anyone wants to check out your stuff.

[music]

**0:17:13.9 CL:** My website is [instantsalestraining.com](http://instantsalestraining.com). And I post... There's a lot of video content that's longer, but I post a three to seven minute knowledge bite every week. It's video and there's usually an audio and then discussion questions for a sales manager. And the discussion questions, you can send it to people on their phones. They can listen to it in the field and then you can discuss it and have they applied this idea in a sales meeting and really have like an honors class in sales instead of a lecture course.

**0:17:53.5 MB:** I'd like to urge all the sales managers that are listening today to maybe check it out because that can be fodder for an entire... One segment can be fodder for a good sales meeting. And the price is very, very reasonable. I'm not going to shout it out because this recording could be listened to three years from now where you've tripled your rates, which we even have a discount



code there. So I know I'm plugging you.

**0:18:16.1 CL:** Thank you.

**0:18:17.3 MB:** You didn't pay for this advertising and I'm not a communist. I like getting paid, but I have so much respect for you, sir. This was something I wanted to share with our audience. Thank you, Chris Lytle, founder and CEO of Instant Sales Training. Check out [instantsalestraining.com](http://instantsalestraining.com). You stay well, sir, and keep fighting the fight and motivating those teams.

**0:18:33.3 CL:** Thank you, Mike. My privilege.

[music]