

"How-To" Make The Money Pit Sound Less "Syndicated"

Localizing this and other national shows is an easy do-it-yourself project

EVERYTHING we can do to make The Money Pit sound less "imported," and more like a-part-of-your-station's-own-on-air-family will help you make money. Here are some ideas from McVay Media News/Talk consultant Holland Cooke that have helped other Money Pit affiliates:

Help local callers reach the show by phone

Tom & Leslie's call-in number is different than your station's local call-in number. So let's do whatever we can to explain, "in listener language," how to reach Tom & Leslie. Here are some suggestions:

- While The Money Pit airs, can you forward your call-in lines to 1-888-MONEYPIT? If not, check with us. AT&T has a feature called "Daytime Manager" that will do this for you automatically. If you're clearing the show live, your local callers will go directly to The Money Pit screener. If you're clearing a network re-feed, or DB-ing the show in-house, your callers will either get Tom & Leslie live (off-the-air) or our 24/7 LIVE call center.

Our screeners will take their question and tell them that Tom & Leslie will CALL THEM BACK the next time they're live. Plus, to make sure all of our station's listeners get to participate, all non-live callers from the prior week get priority during the next show.

- If you cannot simply forward your local call-in lines while The Money Pit airs, the next-best thing would be to send your call-in lines to voicemail during the show. The voicemail greeting can simply explain that "TO REACH TOM & LESLIE ON-THE AIR RIGHT NOW, CALL THEIR *DIRECT* STUDIO LINE, 1-8-8-8-6-6-3-9-7-4-8. THAT'S 1-888-MONEYPIT." Tom & Leslie will be glad to record this greeting into your voicemail system, incorporating your call letters.
- Tom & Leslie will also record on-air liners, explaining that, during The Money Pit, "RATHER THAN CALLING WXXX'S USUAL CALL-IN NUMBER, USE OUR *DIRECT* STUDIO LINE, SO YOU WON'T WAIT ON HOLD, AND WE CAN GET RIGHT TO YOUR HOME IMPROVEMENT QUESTION."

WORST things to do

- Let your local call-in lines ring...ring...ring...unanswered.
- Also, AVOID having someone at the station answer your local call-in lines and give callers an unhelpful explanation that "the show comes from somewhere else."

Help visitors to your station's web site

Email Tom & Leslie

In addition to making Tom & Leslie seem like part of your station's local on-air family, make them easy-to-reach online, by putting a prominent E-mail link on your station's web site. By doing so, you're giving listeners one more reason to visit your station's site: free advice! Tom & Leslie will write-back, with a specific response to your listeners' questions. Simply have your webmaster link to <http://www.888moneypit.com/ask.htm>

Two other ways that smart stations are using Tom & Leslie's voice to help make money

- Have Tom & Leslie record short promos which mention local employers, and thank those companies' employees for listening-at-work. Simply script a 5 or 10 second liner, and send it and a list of local employers (with pronounces) where people are at-work during the hours you air The Money Pit. Invite your Sales department to contribute to that list and you'll be a hero.
- Have syndicated hosts mention each other. Tom & Leslie will be glad to record short in-show liners plugging the show you've got coming up next.

