

How four Scouts combined to sell a quarter-million dollars in Scout popcorn



A group of four young men who met at a council popcorn kickoff event in 2012 have since become some of the most prolific popcorn salesmen in the nation.

Together this fantastic four has sold more than \$250,000 worth of Scout popcorn, meaning more than \$175,000 has gone to support Scouting.

The funds raised stay with the local unit. Many packs, troops and teams use popcorn money to buy equipment, fund camping trips or excursions, or purchase awards and advancement items. (Read more about how Scouting is funded [here](#).)

These days all four young men are members of Venturing Crew 4385 in the Washington Crossing Council, headquartered in Doylestown, Pa. The Scouts are from Mercer County, N.J.

From left to right in the photo above, they are: 15-year-old Donovan F., \$95,000-plus in sales; 20-year-old Anderson Monken, \$75,000-plus in sales; 13-year-old Elian R., \$60,000-plus in sales; and 13-year-old Will C., \$20,000-plus in sales.

These four aren't stopping to count their money, though. As popcorn season gets underway, they're serving as mentors to other Scouts and Venturers in their unit, district and council.

They know more sales for their fellow Scouts means more money for Scouting. So I asked the Venturers (with permission from their parents) for some of their top popcorn-selling tips. Here's what they shared.

1. Know how to respond to a “no”

“Always have a way that person can say yes,” Elian says. “For example, if they say they don't have cash, let them know that they can pay by credit card. If they say they don't like popcorn, remind them that they can make a donation to send popcorn to the military. Most of the time this gets them to say yes instead of no. But if they say no, just say ‘thanks anyway’ and ask the next person.”

2. Make time for “one more”

“Push yourself to do ‘just one more,’” Will says. “One more house, one more street, or one more hour.”

3. Keep detailed notes

Will keeps copious notes about the neighborhoods in which he sells. While not everyone purchases the same amount every year, Will does have some loyal customers who remember him as a younger Scout and look forward to catching up with his Scouting adventures at popcorn time every fall.

The notes help him remember what the person bought and a few details about that person (pet's name, favorite sports team, etc.).

4. Remember our troops

After the customer says yes, but before they go get their payment, Donovan likes to say this: “It is great that we have the freedom to eat Scout popcorn with our friends and family, but there are American men and women serving all over the world that are away from their friends and family protecting our freedoms. Wouldn't you love to thank them with some Scout popcorn, too?”

Donovan doesn't say anything until they respond. He just smiles. “Of the \$95,000 I have sold in my life,” he says, “more than \$20,000 has gone to our servicemen and servicewomen and their families, mostly from continuously using this phrase — but not until *after* the sale.”

5. Don't let a missed sale get you down

Like all the parents of these young men, Elian's mom has seen her son miss out on plenty of sales.

“It is such a great learning experience for the Scout when the customer says no,” she says. “He first has to learn not to take it personally. Then, he has to learn how to manage it. When the boy engages with the customer after an initial ‘no,’ he learns about building a relationship. Like most of life, sales is all about relationships.”

6. Make a personal connection

"Take time to get to know your customer," Anderson says. "The time spent making a personal connection can be rewarding not only in renewed sales, but also because it makes selling more fun and meaningful. You are an ambassador of the Scouting movement. Don't just sell popcorn. Show your customers what Scouting has done to help you grow."

Your top popcorn tips?

So maybe your unit doesn't have someone who has sold \$95,000 in popcorn. But I'm guessing you still have some tips proven to work. Share them below!

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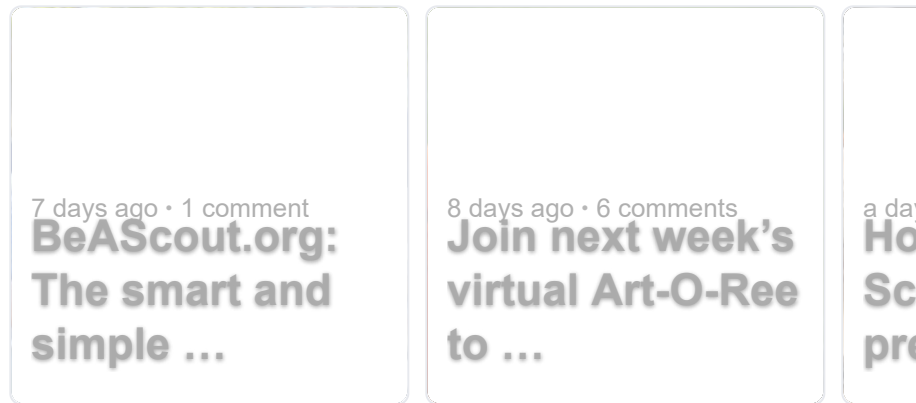


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