

AGENCY FOCUS:



Whether you are a credit grantor, debt purchaser or collection agent, we are all affected by external conditions.

Al Scott
Collector
American Profit Recovery

A Softer, More Diplomatic Approach From 50 Year Collection Industry Veteran

Collection Advisor: Tell me about your role with American Profit and a bit more about the organization?

Al Scott: I'm 78 years old and I work as a collector for American Profit Recovery. I love talking with people, even if they may not at first want to talk with me. I work very hard to develop a rapport with the consumers I'm calling—with the main goal of helping them resolve their debt. While I don't get involved in their personal issues, I do try to understand their circumstances and help them come up with a solution they can live with. American Profit Recovery sees this industry differently, bringing a softer, more diplomatic approach to the collection industry. They are trying hard to make a good impression with each and every consumer and I have fully embraced their philosophy. At my age, there's nothing to worry about, so I never get rattled when I'm on the phone. I just do my job and try to help as many people as I can. Most of the time, we come up with a solution that benefits everyone.

Collection Advisor: How did you get to where you are today?

Al Scott: I spent 50 years in the banking industry as a senior executive. Part of my time was spent overseeing the collection department. I met the owners of APR at a conference and learned more about their business. I later called and asked if they would be interested in having me come to work for them. They have a great philosophy regarding this industry, as well as a



Seventy-eight year old Al Scott, collector, works closely with Jeff DiMatteo, co-owner of American Profit Recovery, to implement their diplomatic approach to the collection industry.

great business model and I love working with all of them. I try to bring my years of banking experience to APR and my job. I believe I have a very good understanding of this industry and an understanding of how consumers with past due debt think. I'm very involved in my community and a veteran of the Korean War. Ironically, my job in the military was to track down soldiers that had gone AWOL, so you might say I have a lot of experience in this business. I also like to keep busy and I encourage other people my age to not sit around. I work because I like to work and I like whom I work for. If that ever changes, I'll retire.

Collection Advisor: How do you feel about the current collection climate and your

involvement in it?

Al Scott: The environment has certainly changed since I was first in the business. There are more rules and regulations and I believe for the most part, that is a good thing. It helps to eliminate the companies that give our industry a bad reputation. I believe right now, the climate is an interesting one. I'm talking to people I might not ordinarily be calling due to our current economic condition here in the U.S. I do find however, these people are now more willing to talk with me and create a resolution that both parties can live with. Calls with consumers are much more cordial than they were many years ago.

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Collection Advisor: What are the greatest challenges facing the industry today? With the collection world continually changing, are you compelled to alter your approach to the business because of these changes?

Al Scott: In my opinion, collection laws have not kept up with technology. Our industry needs clarification on contact methods such as cell phones and email contact with consumers. The other challenge I see is clarification on the Fotti message. These laws, in some cases, conflict with each other and leave some in our industry trying to decipher different views on these regulations. One notable challenge is trying to overcome some of the negative attitudes toward our industry and I know everyone here at APR fully embraces the efforts of the ACA in trying to change those negative perceptions.

Collection Advisor: What is the most important technology to you? What

innovations would you like to see?

Al Scott: I have to be honest and say the most important piece of technology to me is American Profit Recovery's APRweb. This technology enables me to get a complete picture of who I'm calling and their history. But more importantly, it allows our clients complete access to all that we do on their behalf. It's an open book to all their accounts they place with us in real-time. And they can access their information 24/7.

Collection Advisor: Where do you see the collection industry over the next few years?

Al Scott: I believe collection agencies will continue to be more properly run and the ones that may be giving our industry a bad name, be weeded out. I think we are seeing that now. I also believe debt buying will become a much larger part of many agencies' business as regulations continue to be improved. One important aspect of this industry

is that I think we will see a much larger percentage of college graduates entering this field. As the industry works hard at improving its image, more and more college-educated people will see the value of a career in the collection industry.

Collection Advisor: What opportunities do you see for your business in the next several years?

Al Scott: I believe the folks here at APR will continue their crusade of impeccable customer service long after I'm gone. It is one of their hallmarks. They will continue to seek out and retain college-educated people to round out their team and they will dedicate much of their time to continued growth both for the staff and the overall business. While APR does serve a broad range of industries, much of their success lies in serving a core market of banking, medical, dental and lawn care. They will continue to build their business in these industries. ☺

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— Mike Brady, Director of Technical Support



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