

CASE STUDY

Rheaply

CHICAGO PPE MARKET:

CITY OF CHICAGO COVID-19 PHASE II & III REOPENING



Connecting 2200+ Businesses to Available PPE from Local Suppliers

AT A GLANCE Situation

As a part of the Phase II and III COVID-19 reopening strategy for the City of Chicago, Mayor Lori Lightfoot's office wanted to ensure small businesses and not-for-profit organizations had access to and visibility into affordable, reliable, and local available PPE to protect employees and customers during COVID-19.

Balancing the immediate PPE needs of small businesses ("SMBs") and not-for-profits (NFPs), urgency to reopen the City of Chicago for business, and ongoing concerns of coronavirus transmission, Mayor Lori Lightfoot turned to Rheaply to completely design, implement, launch, manage, and maintain an online (local-to-local) marketplace in late May of 2020.

TARGET VERTICAL:
City Government

PURPOSE:
Centralized PPE Marketplace, local supplier sourcing

NUMBER OF SMBS & NFPs:
2245

PPE LISTING UNITS AVAILABLE:
~606,000



OUTCOME Platform Results

The Chicago PPE Market successfully fostered local business-to-business communication around available reopening resources, including face coverings, protective shields, and sanitation products. 4,604 transactions from 2245 verified Chicago-based SMBs and NFPs (see graph) occurred between the months of May and August 2020.

INFLUENTIAL LEVERS



Accurate visibility of PPE



High rate of asset fulfillment



Improve offer and fulfillment workflow



Equitable distribution of PPE



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“ Rheaply quickly and seamlessly pulled together an online platform to help connect Chicago’s small businesses and non-profits with local manufacturers of basic PPE items as the City began to reopen.

— Samir Mayekar, Deputy Mayor, Neighborhood & Economic Development

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Safely "reopening" the City of Chicago was a top priority for city officials and business owners alike. SMBs and NFPs were disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and are widely recognized as the engine of Chicago’s economy. Leveraging Rheaply’s technology, the City of Chicago aimed to quickly establish a platform dedicated for small businesses to more equitably request and receive PPE materials across the city from nearby locations at fair market prices.

Goals of the Small Business Resource Distribution Platform:

- Reduce the cost burden for small businesses in place of having to self-negotiate with price gouging suppliers.
- More equitably distribute re-opening resources across the city & allow more visibility into which small businesses have received PPE resources.
- Provide an easy to use system to procure the necessary materials to ensure the safety of both employees and consumers and protect against the possibility of COVID-19 transmission.
- Manage all communications surrounding PPE availability with in-app and email notifications.

Key Factors for a Successful Launch with Rheaply

- Aligning early on PR and marketing efforts
- Pre-launch communication to important State stakeholders
- Public servants: Mayors, City Councils, etc.
- Community leaders: Non-profit organizations, clergy, and education hubs
- SMBs leaders: Chamber of Commerce & Small Business Administration

FUTURE ENGAGEMENT

Circular Cities:

Locally Productive, Globally Connected Reuse Networks

The Chicago PPE Market’s success during the City of Chicago’s reopening plan showed promise for a future local-to-local sharing network within Chicago.

Rheaply is working with emerging thought leaders and has partnered with economic development agencies, institutions, private companies, local governments, and non-governmental organizations that are looking to transform cities by unlocking economic, environmental, and social opportunities through better tracking of resources and material flows.