“How I Turned $5 Into $500,000 in 90 Days!”

A special report by:
Preston Reuther

I can remember the details like it was yesterday, but for the life of me I can't remember the year. Some of you football fans may.

I was about 28 years old and had started a small limousine company in New Orleans that grew from one 1966 limousine to accompany that had a fleet of limousines, a bus company, a mini van service, and a for hire Rolls Royce service (my pride and Joy)...a 1956 white Rolls Royce that I restored myself.

Life was pretty good, business was good, but I wanted to offer tour packages and convention services to my hometown, New Orleans. I started buying more equipment for the project, spending lots of money on advertising and other expenses and, all of a sudden, I was broke!!! I mean really broke, as in busted, no money. I had written to many checks and was now over drawn and the only money I had was a $5 bill in my wallet.

It was in the middle of the summer, the slowest time in the tour and travel business in New Orleans. I had very little revenue coming in at all. I was a very energetic, ambitious young man, but my sense of record-keeping such as books, payroll, taxes, etc. had a little bit to be desired, and that's how I got myself in this pickle.

Well, the next couple of days I'm laying around my bachelor pad feeling sorry for myself and I read in the paper that the Super Bowl is coming to New Orleans and will be held at the domed stadium.

I'm not a football fan now and wasn't then, so I didn't really know who was playing and didn't really care. But the more I thought about this giant event, the more it intrigued me.

They estimated 75,000 visitors would arrive in New Orleans for a 3 or 4 day visit, and the city would become home to some of the wealthiest vacationers on the face of the earth!

All of a sudden it hit me like a bolt of lightening! 75,000 people might be coming to New Orleans, but the greater New Orleans area only had sleeping accommodations for about 35,000 at the time. So that meant that 40,000 people may not have a place to stay.

Now my mind is really reeling. All these people, some 40,000, are going to need a place to stay and a way to get to the Super Bowl game. So I came up with a SUPER BOWL PACKAGE. This package contained the following:

*4 night hotel stay...taxes and gratuities included.
*Bellman assistance at the hotel, gratuities included.
*Round trip transfers between airport and hotel.
*Round trip transfers between hotel and stadium.

Phase 1 of my $5 Promotion

So I have my package together and now all I need is some hotel rooms. I called all the downtown hotels and every one of them was booked to capacity! No rooms left anywhere in the city, at any price. Not one hotel room! So I called a Days Inn out of the city, about a 40 minute drive in one of the suburbs that no one really ever heard of, and I asked the sales manager if they had any rooms for

the dates of __-__. I don't use the words "Super Bowl" at this time. I just use the dates of the 4-dayweekend and, sure enough, the manager says, "Yes, we have lots of rooms."

Bingo!!!!!

I then move into phase 2 of the charade. You have to remember, I'm broke, I'm really broke. I don't have any money and no one in their right mind, including my banker, would loan me any money for this project or for any other reason for that matter.

Phase 2 of my $5 promotion

I tell the sales manger on the phone, I don't remember her name, but let's call her Ms. Smith.

"Ms Smith, I'm the owner of Mardi Gras Tours and Productions. We are a package tour company here in New Orleans (this was true) and we have quite a few clients coming into to the city during those dates." (this was really stretching a point!)

"How many rooms do you have there, Ms. Smith?"

"Oh, we have 450 very nice rooms sir. I'm sure your clients would be very happy here."

"Ms. Smith, what is the retail rate of your double rooms, accommodating two people?"

"They are $38, plus tax, per night."

"Ms. Smith, I want to buy all 450 rooms for three nights including tax, bellman and gratuities. What's the very best price you can offer my company for such a purchase?"

I could actually hear her start to hyperventilate. You must realize this was the middle of the scorching New Orleans, terribly hot summer, and that the cash register hasn't seen a $100 bill in quite some time. She conferred with the manager, came back to the phone, and she could hardly speak properly she is so excited.

"Mr. Reuther, we will give you a rate of $48."

"Ms. Smith, that's $10 more then your retail rate. I can't live with that rate!!!"

"Oh no sir. That's $48 for all three nights, taxes, tips and baggage handling."

"Oh great! I will see you in an hour or so to give you a deposit."

Phase 3 of my $5 promotion

Okay. I know 40,000 well heeled folks are coming to New Orleans for sure. I know there are no rooms left in the city for sure because I called every one of them. Now I know where there are 450 empty rooms and now all I need is some money right? Wrong. A good promoter never uses his own

money, remember that. I slip into my 300 Jupiter of Paris sports coat and slide on my $150 alligator shoes and then put my 26 diamond ring on (I liked the finer things in those days).

I pull up to the Days Inn with my 1956 Rolls Royce and make sure I pull right in front of the office window and pretend not to look as about 5 female employees come running to the window with their jaws opened wide looking at the Rolls. I take as much time as I can for the "Full Monty" to take effect. I walk up to the door and with a $10,000 smile I ask to see Ms. Smith.

Ms. Smith comes prancing out with her New Orleans drawl and welcomes me with open arms!

We go over all the details, double room, baggage, tips, bellman, dates etc, etc, etc and after about an hour I ask her what the total bill will be and she tells me $21,600. I say "Oh that's fine. Will $10,000 be a sufficient deposit for you?" And she says with eyes bigger then a Louisiana swamp owl, "Oh yes, $10,000 would be fine.

So I reach into my leather brief case with gold initials (P.J.R) and hand her a written contract on my letterhead. And she says with even bigger eyes, "What's this?" And I say in my coolest, calmest New Orleans twang, "Why Ms. Smith, my dear, my clients won't be arriving until (such and such a date) Here is my letter of commitment of $10,000 payment to be paid 90 days before their arrival, and final payment of $11,600 to be paid two weeks before they arrive. I do hope this meets with your approval?

Looking a bit confused and overwhelmed, she goes into the manager's office and I can see an animated conversation going back and forth. She comes out smiling and says. "Oh yes, Mr. Reuther, this will be fine and we will block 450 rooms for you for three nights. I bid the lady farewell and take off in my gleaming Rolls Royce, feeling a bit like "Robin the Hood!!!

Okay, Phase 4 of my $5 promotion. Yes it gets better!

I know people are coming and I now own 450 hotel rooms capable of accommodating 900 people!!! I got the people. I got the rooms. What about the hotel transportation to and from the airport? No problem. I call the local airport limousine and bus company and tell them I have thousands of people coming in for the Super Bowl and I need transportation (I was telling the truth, but I actually thought I was lying, more on that later).

So the airport company tells me its $14 per person for round trip airport transportation and we go back and forth and finally we settle on a price of $10 per person round trip and they will honor my printed vouchers and bill me!!!

Oh boy, I'm rolling now, not only do I have the people but I have the rooms for them to sleep and the transportation to get them to and from the airport. All on credit!!!!!

Not one dime spent yet!!

Phase 5 for my $5 promotion.

Now I need to transport all 900 people from their hotels to the Super Bowl stadium. I called every

transportation company from New Orleans to Chicago...no buses available, no limos available, no taxies available, no trucks, not even a motor scooter. Do I get nervous? Heck no. Why should I. It hasn't cost mea dime yet (don't try this at home). So I called the manager of the independent school bus drivers association and tell him. "Look, I need 22 full passenger school busses to transport people to and from the game. What can you do? He says, "No problem. You got them for $90 each."

I say, "Great hold all 22 buses for Sunday and I'm going to send you a check as soon as my clients give me their info He says: Great no problem!

Phase 6 for my $5 promotion

Okay, I have rooms, I have a tour package, I have buses, and I know 40,000 people will be needing them soon!

Only one small problem. I'm broke!! No money! Nada! So how I am going to put together a national advertising campaign focused on Super Bowl attendees? How am I going to afford a brochure? Stamps? Envelopes? Mailing lists? Super bowl tickets? It seems I always do best when my back is against the wall. Because I have nowhere to go.
I'm desperate to do this deal. In my mind I have already made a million bucks and spent it!! But I have got to figure out some miracle on how to promote the biggest package tour in the history of New Orleans second only to the Spinks- Ali fight (true story)

BINGO!!!! I got it!

I get on the phone and call one of the biggest hotels in town, with over 4,000 rooms, and the operator answers and I say, "Hello. Do you have Super Bowl rooms?"

And she says, "No I'm sorry, we are booked and have been for months. Frankly people have been calling all day for rooms."

"Really?"

"Oh yes, people have been calling from allover the U.S."

"Who am I speaking to?"

"This is Susie."

"Susie, I own Mardi Gras Tours and Productions. We are one of the largest tour package companies in New Orleans. I'm sure you have heard of us?"

"Oh yes!"

"Well Susie, it seems that one of our largest clients has cancelled and we now have 100 rooms opened up with airport transportation, transportation to the game and everything.

I was wondering if when someone calls you might refer them to our HOTEL PACKAGE HOTLINE?"

"Oh yes! That would be great because people are really looking for a place to stay and can't find any. All the hotels are booked, you know?"

"Ah yes, I understand. Well just give them our hotline and we can sure help them out. And I wonder if you could do me just one more favor?"

"Sure, what is it?"

"When the Super Bowel is over, would you be so kind as to call our hotline and let me treat you to breakfast at world famous Brennan's Restaurant, compliments of Mardi Gras Tours?"

"Oh that would be great. Thank you so much!!!!

I called the next hotel...same story, and the next, and the next. By the time I got off the phone with fourth hotel, the phone started to ring!!! And boy did it ring!!! I sold $3,000 worth of hotel tour packages that day. The next day I sold over $5,000 and the next, over$20,000.

The money was coming in so fast and furious I made them send it in by Western Union. Then I went to the Days Inn and paid them off, and bought another whole hotel and on and on.

In total I bought out the total rooms of over 17 hotels all without spending one thing dime! I sold the last tour package on Super Bowl Sunday from my den in my apartment and the total revenue was over $500,000, and over $200,000 was clear profit. For90 days work!!!! And yes till this day it remains the largest promotion and sending of hard cash ever received by the New Orleans western union office other then the Spinks-Ali Fight!!!!

Oh, you might be wondering about the $5?

I used it for gas in my car to get to and from the hotel. Gasoline was the only thing I couldn't figure out how to get for free!!!!!

Preston Reuther (aka “The Master Wire Sculptor”) teaches people how to start their own home business making and selling jewelry with his exclusive "Gold Wire Sculpting System." For more information visit his website at http://wire-sculpture.com/index.html

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