



Showman Extraordinaire – Kurt Kirckof

Going Crazy Inc.
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Kurt wears a lot of hats; husband, father to four children (soon to be five), game inventor, towing company owner, auto body repair owner, snowplow owner, and showman. Kurt has been involved in the other businesses for a while but his passion is the game, Going, Going Crazy that he invented in 2000 as the result of a dream he had in 1999. Kurt now has his games in 43 area Walmart stores and he hopes to go nationwide soon. He has such confidence in his game that he will take it back if you are not happy with it. He asks 'what would make me buy it?' and works from there.

His journey has taken him from the dream to the prototype to the patent process where he was successful in securing a patent for the game. Kurt has developed the packaging, worked with a manufacturer building the games, redesigned the packaging from the original red, white and blue to the more eye catching bright blue, yellow and magenta. His first shipment of games was 15,000. He is waiting for delivery of a container load of games now. He has also developed a self-contained travel version that will be available in stores in the next few months.

Kurt approached a local Walmart store and convinced them to try his product. He had 8 Walmart stores in 2002, 43 in 2003 and hopes to have the opportunity to go nationwide soon. His game is the number one selling game in most of the Walmart stores. He has gone to the stores and done in-store promotion, talked on radio shows about his game, tying appearances in the local Walmart stores with autographed games. Kurt realizes that his success at Walmart depends on continued high level of sales so he is constantly working to promote his product.

Kurt has a flair for showmanship and he has exhibited in many tradeshow and has placed first in competitions at all shows except one. He has appeared on TV with Charlie Gibson, Rosie O'Donnell and Diane Sawyer. He has been invited to be the keynote speaker at the inventors show in Devils Lake, ND this summer. He exhibits at the Toy Fair in New York in February, the largest toy show of the year. Kurt's website has more detailed information on the various awards that his game has received.

When asked how he learned what to do he replied, "you just start doing it and learn as you go. I'm still learning every day." Kurt is a natural showman and the game packaging and his decorated van and trailer are proof as well as his success at Walmart and the various shows. His van invites a lot of questions and questions lead to sales. His success is the result of a lot of hard work along the way and he 'has the gray hairs to prove it'. He plans to exhibit at the MN Small Business Expo & Conference at the end of March unless the birth of his baby changes his schedule.

The dream that spawned this game was one of four dreams in four days. Kurt wrote all of them down and has only put this one into motion. Imagine what might happen when he starts working on the other three!

