

From Bunny Tails to Oregon Trails: *Bieber's Work Sells and Generates Promotional Tales to Tell*

Seattle, WA: Former Playboy and Pabst executive Bruce Bieber has just about seen and done it all in his more than 27 years in the promotion and marketing business. From Bunny and Playmate promotions to one of the earliest national electronic game competitions and from marketing heart-shaped tubs to hydroplanes, Bieber has been involved in a wide range of consumer and B-to-B promotional marketing activities. Bruce recently launched his full service sales promotion and marketing agency, Perpetual Promotion, in Seattle.

His career began doing local and national Bunny and Playmate promotions as an agency liaison for TRG Communications. Though the promotion agency was based in New York City, Bruce's office was located within Playboy Enterprises' corporate headquarters in Chicago.

Many of these promotions were featured in the "World of PLAYBOY" section of the magazine. Bieber also handled Playboy Club's national celebration of the Magazine's 25th Anniversary and the 20th Anniversary of the opening of the first Playboy Club the following year. Bieber has executed numerous corporate anniversary promotions including those for Benihana of Tokyo, Old Style Beer and Henry Weinhard's Beer.

Bieber also developed a national radio sweepstakes in support of the PLAYBOY Music Poll and worked on the development and introduction of the PLAYBOY Pinball Machine as part of a tie-in with pinball maker Bally Manufacturing.

Another promotion forced Bieber to become an instant expert on pinball. The "SUPERSHOOTER Battle of the Bally Pinball Wizards" took place at 60 Aladdin's Castle arcade locations nationwide. The finals were held at the Playboy Towers hotel in



Chicago with Gilda Radner and Bill Murray among the celebrities.

"I nearly became a human pinball after I woke Bill Murray by phone at 10 AM on a weekday to arrange his travel to the tournament finals. He was not happy about the timing of my call; oops!" says Bieber.

Bieber also managed two major disco dance competitions. One was a national competition series for the Technics division of Panasonic with the finals held at Paul Anka's Jubilation Discothèque in Las Vegas during the Consumer Electronics Show. The other was an international competition held at Playboy Clubs worldwide with the finals held at the Palladium in Los Angeles.

In addition to his Playboy account duties, Bieber was also responsible for new business.

The assignment from his first new client, Wm. Wrigley Jr. Company, resulted in a "Top Ten Promotions of the Year" award from AD AGE Magazine. This major tie-in promotion with Mazda on behalf of ORBIT gum, literally saved the brand from major chain de-listings.

Later, as sales promotion manager for Playboy Clubs International, Bieber conducted in-Club promotions such as Playboy Pajama Parties and a national jazz band competition with the finals held at the Playboy Jazz Festival in Los Angeles. Bruce executed a number of new Playboy Club opening celebrations in Japan as well as stateside. Bieber then rejoined TRG and moved to its main office in New York.

It was there he created and conducted national promotions for Nissan Motor Corporation, Mattel Electronics, Benihana, Caesars Tahoe and Caesars Pocono Resorts. "Home of the heart-shaped tubs for honeymooners," says Bieber.

As a result of his frequent travel to the West coast to establish and maintain STRONG SOUNDS, a national rock 'n roll radio syndication for Nissan Hardbody Trucks, Bieber fell in love with the Oregon Coast. The first time he saw Cannon Beach he set his watch to Oregon time and vowed he would move to Oregon within a year. He did it in eight months.

The Portland advertising agency Marx, Knoll, Denight & Dodge hired Bruce to handle public relations and promotion for its roster of clients including THIS WEEK Magazine, Pacific Coast Restaurants, Steinfeld's Pickles and Warn Industries.

Bieber later launched the Portland version of Perpetual Promotion, a full service sales

promotion and marketing agency. "My office was directly across the street from Dan Wieden's office, of Wieden & Kennedy," says Bruce, "and I had a huge neon with my logo and phone number installed so anyone who came and visited Dan stared the whole time at my sign."

Henry Weinhard's Beer became Perpetual Promotion's first client. An early promotion created for Weinhard's won two PRO Awards, for best of show and best integrated promotion in the world, from PROMO Magazine, the industry bible, for an outrageous promotion for Weinhard's Ale.

Perpetual Promotion exclusively handled promotions for Weinhard's for seven years including Henry Weinhard's sponsorship of the 150th Anniversary Celebration of the Oregon Trail. With Henry Weinhard's, Perpetual Promotion outlasted two corporate takeovers, four company presidents and numerous changes in ad agencies only to lose the account a year after the brand was bought by the Stroh Brewing Company. "We came in right after the Australians sold the company to G. Heileman and held onto the account with the sale by Heileman to Hicks Muse and from them to Stroh - we were a legacy for Henry's. The fact that Henry's sought my services later when I was in St. Louis was very flattering."

Bieber parlayed his considerable beer expertise into a senior account executive position at St. Louis based Zipatoni, the sales promotion agency for Miller Brewing Company, managing promotions and tie-ins for Miller's "Allied" brands: Milwaukee's Best, Icehouse, Red Dog and Leinenkugel's. Tie-ins included Everlast with Red Dog and ESPN.com for Icehouse. Two years later, Miller acquired Henry Weinhard's in the break-up of Stroh Brewing and Henry's brand promotion was given to Bruce and his Allied brand team at Zipatoni.

At the same time, Bieber was made an offer by the Pabst Brewing Company. "It was an agonizing decision. Henry's had come back to me, but the Pabst opportunity won out." As the national promotion director, he was one of the original marketing team to help light the fuse on the explosive growth of Pabst Blue Ribbon beer. Bruce was responsible for the national tie-in with PBR and the House of Blues.

The resulting "Pabst Blue Rhythm" Sweepstakes featured radio promotions around the country. "We flew local radio station winners to stay at the House of Blues Hotel in Chicago, sat in the exclusive HOB opera style box and watched Delbert McClinton and his band burn the house down with some hot-smoked, rockin' blues. It was one of those special moments in your life," says Bieber.

"At Pabst, Bieber led the promotion team that orchestrated the phenomenal turnaround of the Pabst Blue Ribbon brand via a number of buzz marketing efforts including a national tie-in with the House of Blues."

Special moments seem to follow Bieber, or vice versa. "I was doing publicity for Faberge's TURBO fragrance at Caesars Palace Grand Prix. The casino was gearing up for the evening's corporate sponsor party and had completely cordoned off the party area. No one was allowed out of the casino into this area except me as I had to set up the Faberge receiving line. Just as I stepped out into this huge outdoor pool area, all by myself, the Duke Ellington Orchestra led by Mercer Ellington, started to play 'A Train.' I slowly looked around, and for about two minutes, it was just me and the band. It was an incredible experience for a serious jazz fan."

At Pabst Brewing, Bieber was also the brand manager for Rainier and the Malt Liquors. For Rainier Beer, Bieber was a constant advocate of bringing back the old Rainier spots. "I always thought that what those spots achieved for the brand was awesome. At the time, the only way I could finagle any tip-of-the-hat to the old TV spots was to have a radio station call-in promotion where people imitated the sound effects: 'Raiiiiiiiiiiiiiieeer Beeeerrrrrr.' I'm thrilled they figured out a way to bring back the TV spots. It's just too much fun!"

This small Pabst Brewing Company team handled the marketing chores for over 40 brands of beer including 14 core brands such as: Old Milwaukee, Schmidt's, Schlitz, Lone Star, Schlitz Malt Liquor, Colt 45, PBR and Rainier Beer.

After three years, Bieber left Pabst in San Antonio, Texas and returned to his beloved Pacific Northwest as consumer promotion director for the Westcott Marketing Group in Seattle to work on Nintendo, Nabisco and Viz Communications - a Japanese Manga and Anime client. Bieber has since re-launched Perpetual Promotion, a full service sales promotion and marketing agency based in Seattle.

Perpetual Promotion has completed an assignment for Henry Weinhard's Gourmet Soda and is currently working on projects for the Seattle chapter of the Washington Restaurant Association and the U-16, Miss Elam-Plus Hydroplane.

More sales and tales are in the making. Perpetual Promotion is a full-service, sales promotion and marketing agency designed specifically to work closely with the client and its advertising and public relations agencies to develop and execute fully integrated marketing programs.

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