

Business As Usual

by Ulrik Remy

Ladies and gentlemen, the state of our economy is strong. It's the strongest economy 100 feet around. And here's why:

The caller ID shows "Private Number" but I pick up anyway. Opportunity very often comes in disguise, and I have nothing else to do. The caller identifies himself as the president and CEO of GBS Corporation. Global Business Services. Corporation. President. CEO. I sit up straight.

He has this great business idea, and it is in the process of being trademarked, as we speak. A couple of months from now, he will acquire a shell company, merge his outfit into it and perform a triple summersault reverse backwards-inwards split – something like that. He says that I – meaning: Me – was recommended to him as the ultimate genius in the field of concocting business plans, web sites, corporate logos, advertising, and writing satire. And we should get together as soon as possible to discuss further proceedings of our partnership, wedding date, etc. How about Tuesday, for lunch? Alright, Tuesday it is.

Tuesday. Lunch. Hot wings and french fries. We – he and I - first need a web site. A domain name, a couple of hundred e-mail addresses: info@, sales@, support@, research@, jobs@, admin@, carla@ (that's his girlfriend). Corporate logo, of course, letterhead, business cards, the works. A draft business plan. Feasibility study. Is it doable by Friday? Sure, I say, depends which Friday you are talking about. Ha, ha, great joke. His pace is breathtakingly dynamic, at least as far as it relates to my tasks. I am impressed. We go dutch.

Friday. The web site looks great, the section of "Products and Services" is still under construction. What is the product? He looks at me as if I had asked him what the distance is between Alpha Centauri and the nearest Hooter's. Product? We are selling shares. An idea. A business plan. And if we penetrate only 0.1% of the world market, that makes for 128 million Dollars. Monthly sales. Roughly. And I ask him what the product is..!

Well, Joe, I need something to put in the business plan. And I need a check. A check is a piece of paper with numbers on it... a check, right. How about Tuesday –

Tuesday. Lunch. The money is there. In the bank. It's only going to take a couple of days to get it out of there. In the meantime – boy, everybody is just enthusiastic about the new web site. And the logo. I am one of the company's greatest assets. I will receive 10 million shares as soon as we have the money to print them. As far as the product is concerned, he's still waiting for his VP of Research and Development to get back to him on that. Friday.

Friday. Great news. Complete change of plan. And of address. The Royal family of Bulgaria wants to buy the whole thing. And Lamborghini wants the logo on their cars. The attorneys are working on the deal, day and night. That means money, my friend. Lots of it. How about Tuesday?

Tuesday. Bulgaria does not have a Royal family. Oh yes, they do, but they're in exile, that's why they have the time to do business. They've already made a significant deposit, that's how eager they are. Millions of Bulgarian Pesetas from before the war. In escrow. Tuesday. Friday, that is.

In the meantime, tens of millions of real life Americans do their jobs. They build houses, cars, bridges, and roadways. They deliver oranges to the grocery stores and pick up the trash. They teach children, care for the sick and the elderly, and write satire.

That's why the American economy is strong.