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Real Estate

INVESTING

**PRACTICAL
LANDSCAPING
ADVICE**
THE **MOST** BANG
FOR YOUR BUCK

Best
CITIES
for RETIREES

**TINY
HOUSES**
CAN YOU REALL
LIVE IN ONE FOR
THE LONG HAUL?

**Tim
JOHNSON**
TOP REAL ESTATE INVESTOR



Top Real Estate Investor

Known as the King of Connections and the King of Cheap, Tim Johnson is a master at scoring sweet deals—and helping clients close some pretty sweet deals of their own.



South Bend mogul Tim Johnson runs Bradley Management, through which he owns and manages over 200 real estate properties, and Global Renegade, a company that assists speakers with converting attendees into buyers. What do the two businesses have in common? Plenty, starting with Johnson's in-depth knowledge of both real estate and people.

Johnson knows properties from the ground up—literally. He started in the construction industry when he was still a teenager, learning skills like dry walling and metal stud framing. In his early twenties, he worked his way up from employee to owner of a construction company that specialized in retail and restaurant buildings. By the time he was in his early thirties, Johnson



was ready for a change. He became co-owner of an after-market drawer company called Shelly, that grew to include two dealerships in Chicago and Milwaukee. Johnson's natural sales ability resulted in impressive numbers for the company. And while his accomplishments were peppered with phrases like "number one seller" and "largest sale ever," Johnson soon discovered a new outlet for his sales and business acumen.

He was invited to a real estate seminar and fell fast and hard for the industry. After all, his decade and a half career in the building trades gave him a thorough understanding of what it took to construct and remodel properties. But

because Johnson doesn't do anything halfway, he decided to study with the best—like Robert Allen, Nuva Reese University, Ted Thomas, and Lou Brown—so he could master every aspect of the flipping and rental business. In 2005, he sold Shelly and launched his real estate company, Bradley Management, from his home base in the Chicago suburb of Downer's Grove.

Real estate is one passion that hasn't waned, perhaps because it's never boring. He does it all: flips and sells houses, holds onto some for the rental income, and manages properties for other people. The secret to his success is carefully choosing what makes sense for him,

whether that means profiting from a tax lien flip or managing another owner's property.

It also helps that Johnson has an uncanny knack for getting materials at a much lower cost than anyone else, which is how he earned the nickname, "King of Cheap." He once bought 17 properties for \$63,000, and while others were paying \$5,000 to get a furnace installed, he paid \$1,500. Clients have open access to his tips and tricks, and Johnson also shares his knowledge through his books, *How*



to Get Rich by Being Cheap and Living a Wholesale Life in a Retail World.

One of the biggest keys, he says, is simple negotiation. Rather than blindly paying what big-box hardware stores charge for supplies, for example, Johnson suggests using apps like Red Laser, which allow you to comparison shop before setting foot in a store. And don't discount the power of a good old fashioned bargaining session. "We're the only country in the world where people don't say, 'Is that price the best you can do?'" he laments. "Negotiate!



With Erika Arias from Fox 61 News Connecticut

Get six or seven prices, and if you really like a vendor, show him the other bids. Make them compete against each other a little bit."

In what he calls "due diligence," Johnson spent—and continues to spend—time pricing supplies at both the big name, national retailers and wholesalers. He then borrowed a strategy from mega-retailers like Walmart and began negotiating larger quantities for larger audiences. "I got a bunch of investors together and asked them whether, if I can get stuff cheaper, they would buy under my name," he says. "So they did."

In the furnace example, his "furnace guy" buys under Johnson's name and saves a big percentage. Which saves Johnson money on installations for his properties. This method of operation is something he uses in every aspect of his business, from lumber to booking blocks of hotel rooms for events.

His expertise in both real estate and deal-making prompted Johnson to launch his second business, Global Renegade, which assists clients in creating hugely successful real estate seminars and events. His services span everything from helping speakers hone their message to filling a vendor area to conducting back-of-room sales.

The demand for Johnson's services, especially when it comes to those back-of-the-room sales, is off the charts. In fact, this element of the business got started because clients came to him. "I was going to events and talking to people, and then I would walk an attendee

back to the sales guy and say, 'This person is ready to sign up.' The salespeople were stunned."

He's able to do what most speakers and even other salespeople aren't able to: speak the audience's language. No matter the industry, people on the inside of it learn a lingo that doesn't usually click with the general public. There's a disconnect. But the King of Connections breaks that lingo down into a language that makes sense—and makes participants ready to buy.

It's an ability Johnson has always had. "From very early on, I was connecting this person and that person, and so both of my businesses kind of evolved together," he explains. "The King of Cheap and the King of Connections are both about who you know and how you work those connections."



With Brian Tracy



The King of Cheap (a title he proudly embraces as he remodels houses for rental or resell) finishes cleaning up on one of his newest projects.

At the heart of everything he does is one basic understanding: people need to know what's in it for them. Johnson says too often speakers focus on what a great company they have, rather than how that company benefits people in the audience. His gift is in translating the concept into concrete benefit for the potential customer. "It was something I did over and over, and people began to take notice," he says.

What most people want—and are willing to pay for—is convenience, a concept that was driven home when he ran the drawer dealerships. "I wasn't selling a drawer box, which was simply a piece of wood on 100-pound rollers," he says. "I was selling convenience. Now, someone who was 80 years old and couldn't bend down anymore to reach the back of their cabinets is adding function back into their life."

With both Bradley Management and Global Renegade, convenience is the name of the game. Johnson has a seemingly limitless Rolodex that make clients' enterprises and events extremely successful. People who are looking for great services, products that deliver, and events that sell don't have to reinvent the wheel. They can just call Johnson. "Whether I'm connecting construction guys so they can get better prices or connecting seminar participants with people who have products to sell them, it's about knowing how to make someone's life easier," he says. Though he's now based in South Bend, Johnson's skills are in demand all over the country. One good example is a Connecticut real estate investment club for whom he ran back-of-room sales for two years. He's also able to reach people throughout the U.S. and around the world through Renegade Real

Estate Riches, a coaching program that walks people through due diligence and teaches them how buy for less.

His clients won't let him get out of the joint venture business, though, with repeat customers demanding more of the same great back-of-room sales and vendor results. He attributes that track record to being what he calls the "Henry Ford" of every room. "I don't need to be the smartest guy there," he admits. "Henry Ford wasn't the smartest guy in the room, but he knew the guys who delivered the best value."

“*The King of Cheap and the King of Connections: both about who Johnson knows and how he works those connections.*”

When it comes to connections, there's no one better than Johnson for delivering the best value. He advises clients to stick to what they're good at—what their business is all about—and let him take care of making the connections that can take that business to the next level. "If I can come in and use my

resources to skyrocket their success, I will," he vows.

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No-Excuses SUCCESS

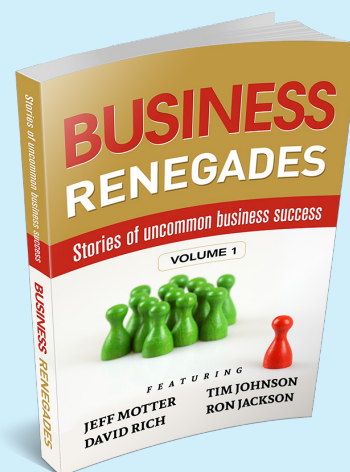
If Tim Johnson's childhood was a fairytale, it was of the Brothers Grimm variety. His father, a death row inmate, was executed on national television. Johnson grew up in a series of foster homes, where he was at the mercy of people who exposed their charge to drugs, heavy drinking, and worse. It was a horrific beginning, he admits.

But Johnson refused to be defined—or limited—by the bad hand he was dealt. He was a hard worker from a young age, learning valuable trade skills that gave him the confidence to branch out into business ownership. And now? The successful businessman is helping others achieve the kind of success that he's built for himself. "My story is that you can be whoever you want to be," he stresses. "You can give all the excuses in the world and say you've 'tried.' But you either do or don't."

Johnson believes owning a business is a true test of character because it will either sink or soar based on the leader's efforts. "At the end of the day you either succeed or you don't succeed," he says. "It's all up to you."

And he refuses to do anything but succeed.

Stories of Uncommon Success and the people behind those stories



Johnson's rags to riches story is being featured in this newest book - soon to be released on Amazon.