

# Monthly Musings



courtesy of Fletcher Consulting

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## SMART IDEA:

### See Mattress Mack on March 29

He did more than just talk about helping flood victims of Hurricane Harvey. Jim "Mattress Mack" McIngvale, owner of Gallery Furniture in Houston, sent his furniture trucks to flooded areas and instructed his team to rescue and bring displaced Houstonites to his stores. He then provided flood victims, along with emergency responders, with hot meals, showers, clean clothes and new beds to sleep on.

Mattress Mack then paid to fly several dozen of those victims to Game 6 of the World Series between the Houston Astros and the Los Angeles Dodgers. Further still, he paid all expenses for a quartet of first responders to attend last year's Super Bowl.

You might be saying, "That's so wonderful, and his story is truly inspirational, but I'll never have the opportunity to meet him."

**YES, YOU WILL!** The Northeast Leadership Forum has invited Mattress Mack to be the keynote speaker at its Annual Meeting and Award Luncheon on Friday, March 29. This is your opportunity to see one of the greatest entrepreneurs in American history.

He began Gallery Furniture by selling furniture from a tent on I-45 in Houston and grew the enterprise into a massive store that was, for decades, the largest single-point furniture store in America. He started with only \$5,000 and a dream!

This event will sell out, and you'll be blessed if you're able to attend. Bring your key team members and perhaps even a high school or college student who wants to become an entrepreneur.

Tables are \$500 and \$1,000 and individual tickets are \$55.

Feel free to reach out to me and I'll be glad to help you register. Please [email me](mailto:john@thefletch.org) or call me at 817-205-2334. Don't wait too long, because this event WILL sell out!

**Jim "Mattress Mack" is more than an exemplary Texan. He's a great American. He personifies the spirit of caring about others.**

**"That's so wonderful... but I'll never have the chance to meet him."**

**Mack will be the keynote speaker in Southlake on Friday, March 29**



Jim "Mattress Mack" McIngvale (left) from Houston.

## NOT-SO-SMART TIMING:

### Payless Shoe Source; Too Little, Too Late

On the surface, it was a brilliant concept: A discount shoe store would rent space in a high-end district, create an upscale ambiance, introduce their shoes to influencers, then attempt to trick these fashionistas into praising their "exciting" concept and exceptional quality.

[Adslasher.com](http://Adslasher.com) and [Fox News](http://Fox News) both reported in late November that Payless, the budget shoe purveyor, hired an advertising agency to create a campaign that would dramatically change perception of the brand.

Payless leased a former Armani store and renamed it "Palessi" to give it an Italian flair. The faux retailer held a grand opening and invited social media influencers to sample the "high-end, posh new



styles” from this exclusive new brand.

The guests walked on Palessi’s red carpet and felt like they were Hollywood royalty at the Oscars or Academy Awards. Palessi’s Instagram account documented that champagne was served during the event.

Some of the guests raved about the shoes and said they would pay hundreds of dollars per pair. One attendee said she would pay up to \$640 for one pair of amazingly stylish shoes. Inside a Payless store, the identical pump version of these shoes lists for \$19.99 and the boot version lists for \$39.99.

Fashionistas raved that the shoes were elegant and sophisticated. One even said, “I could tell it was made out of high-quality material!” Click on [this brief video](#) to see the reactions of customers when they learned that their expensive merchandise actually came from Payless.

Following the reveal, the influencers—who became duped customers—each received a full refund and were allowed to keep their new shoes. The chief marketing officer said the chain wanted to tackle the brand’s perception head-on, particularly since it faced e-commerce competition at the lower price points.

While the ruse was clever, the event copied an old 1989 coffee commercial (Announcer: “What they don’t know is that we’ve substituted this Folger’s coffee for their expensive gourmet coffee at Brennan’s of New Orleans.”).

It’s a shame that Payless waited until this past Christmas season to pull the stunt, because their efforts were too little, too late. Despite emerging from Chapter 11 bankruptcy in 2017, the company was too far gone. On February 15, Payless—once a major force in shoes—announced that it would close all its domestic stores.

Nevertheless, we can take some ideas from this brilliant stunt about how to re-position a brand when it’s experiencing negative momentum.

# SMART BRAIN EXERCISE:

## BMW’s Awesome Innovation

Innovators do one thing – they INNOVATE! Sometimes, these brilliant minds demand some mental stimulation and exercise. Such is the case at BMW.

The [BMW Designworks](#) division developed something unique that has very little immediate application for the company: They created the ultimate lightweight camper with high-tech fabric, called



Futurelight, from North Face. Futurelight is “the most advanced, breathable, waterproof material,” with nano-sized holes to keep water out while allowing air to penetrate.

The camper will never see mass production, but the process was an exercise in leveraging technology to develop an exciting new product.

BMW will no doubt find some applications for Futurelight, and I congratulate them for pushing the boundaries with this incredible fabric. I look forward to seeing how Futurelight makes its way into BMW vehicles in the future.

# THE Tiebreaker

It’s difficult to feel sorry for a guy when he just earned almost \$1.3 million for playing four days of golf, but pro golfer Matt Kuchar has been having a bad day lately – lots of them, in fact.

When he prepared to play in the Mayakoba Classic in Mexico, he tapped the services of a local caddie since his own regular caddie couldn’t be there. Kuchar, who had not won a tournament in over four years, made a deal with a local caddie.

Kuchar agreed to pay him \$2,000 if he made the cut and played on the weekend. If he finished in the top 20, that was a \$1,000 bonus. Top 10? Another \$1,000.

His fill-in caddie, David Ortiz, helped his pro shoot 22 under par to win the tournament. In a normal arrangement, the caddie



would earn 10% of the winnings, which amounts to \$129,600 in this instance. However, they already had a deal in place. Because he won, Kuchar paid an additional \$1,000 bonus that brought the total pay for Mr. Ortiz to \$5,000.

When the golf world expressed dismay that Ortiz – who read the greens and helped Kuchar devise a strategy for playing the course – received such a low payout, the pro golfer was offended. In defending his actions, he demeaned Ortiz’ livelihood by saying he was probably glad to make as much as he did, based on his typical rate of pay.

This is where public relations professionals have to smile. People like Matt Kuchar keep us in business! As pressure mounted on the pro, [he finally agreed to pay \\$50,000](#) to David Ortiz. Kuchar went further by donating additional money to the community where the tournament was held.

It’s similar to the narrative from the email that accompanies this newsletter: *Determine how far you would go if pushed to the wall, and then go there immediately and gladly – at the SPEED OF LIGHT with a SMILE!*

