

# Monthly Musings



courtesy of Fletcher Consulting PR

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## SMART MOVE:

### Harlem Globetrotters to NBA?

They're not clowning around in Harlem, N.Y. as the city's namesake basketball team – the [Harlem Globetrotters](#) – now want a seat at the National Basketball Association (NBA) table.

Only a week ago, team officials sent a formal request to the NBA asking to become the league's newest franchise.

Originally, the Globetrotters started out as a serious team in 1926. They lost in the finals of the first professional championship in 1939, losing to the Harlem Rens.

The team extracted revenge by winning the world title the following year, and then began adding comedy to their games.

The clowns of the court worked their magic against the pros again, defeating the reigning NBA champion Minneapolis Lakers in 1949.

Long-time fans may recall the names of **Robert "Showboat" Hall**, **Meadowlark Lemon** and dribbling aficionado **Curly Neal**. You may be surprised to learn that NBA legend **Wilt Chamberlain** joined the Harlem Globetrotters directly out of college with one of the largest contracts in sports at the time.

The team has been a beacon of joy as ambassadors of basketball by playing in front of diverse crowds across the United States and the world. In addition to general audiences, the Globetrotters played before popes, kings, queens and presidents in almost 100 countries.

The likelihood of the NBA accepting their petition is extremely slim. However, I submit that this approach is a *brilliant move* to create some advance promotion for the 2021 season, now that the 'Trotters are back on the road.

I was honored to be the Globetrotters' promotional partner in 1998-2000 for 12 appearances from Fort Worth and Dallas to Waco, Bryan-College Station, Killeen, San Antonio and Midland.

The sheer camaraderie of the team both on and off the court was impressive. The team members are truly each other's best friends,

The Harlem Globetrotters want a seat at the National Basketball Association table...

... this approach is a brilliant move to create some advance promotion for the 2021 season.

I was honored to be the Globetrotter's promotional agent in 1998-2000...

and they love to have fun!

I never was able to learn how to spin a basketball on my finger, so the guys told me to hold my finger still and they got it started for me!

You can see the Harlem Globetrotters in person in less than two months: on Sunday, August 15, at 2:00 p.m. at Dickies Arena in Fort Worth, or with two shows the previous day at American Airlines Center in that city to the east.



## NOT-SO-TRUSTING MOVE:

### Shrinkflation

You and I are victims of shrinkflation – when a company maintains an existing price while shrinking the volume of the product we are buying. For example:

- Ice cream companies charged the same price while reducing their ½-gallon size to 1/3 gallon... **except for Blue Bell, which is still a legitimate ½-gallon size**
- Tropicana reduced orange juice volume from 64 ounces to 59 ounces
- Downy Unstoppables (in-wash scent booster) reduced from 13.2 ounces to 10 ounces
- Bounty two-ply sheets reduced from 121 to 111 sheets
- Toblerone Chocolate reduced the amount of chocolate in its bars
- Quality Street candy has shrunk its containers since the 1980s



John Fletcher is a recognized authority on the subject of effective communications.

He is available for speech-crafting, public speaking engagements and consulting on a project basis.

And on it goes, from ice cream and juices to candy and detergents. So, how should we as consumers respond? Consider purchasing alternative brands that are being truthful with us.

**When brands participate in shrinkflation, they are placing the responsibility on us to catch them as they game the system. At the same time, we are trusting those brands to be honest and straightforward with us.**

If you choose to change brands, make sure someone at the retailer where you shop knows that you are swapping brands because of the deceptive nature of the manufacturer's practices.

Unfortunately, the brand you switch to for your purchase may also very likely have been shrinkflating for quite some time, as well.

**Shrinkflating could be a never-ending story.**

# SMART RELATIONSHIP:

## Alabama's Fans Will Sell Out 50th Anniversary Tour

When the band Alabama plays at Dickies Arena on October 22 as part of their 50th Anniversary Tour, fans will remember up close and personal visits with the band members – again and again and again.

The band members – cousins Randy Owen, Teddy Gentry and Jeff Cook, and drummer Mark Herndon – **dedicated** themselves to building relationships with their fans. At the conclusion of each concert, they would sit at tables and sign autographs for their adoring fans –

*until the very last fan left with an autographed photo.*

They would sign autographs for hours, often until the wee hours of the night. Their fans called this a sign of their appreciation of loyalists.

**I call it their annuity.**

The band members believed that their fans would remain loyal to them for decades, and they have been proven to be correct.

**Personal story:** In 1980, I attended a music showcase in Nashville and the performers were Kenny Seratt, Stephany Samone and Alabama. I had not heard of any of them at the time. Before the program began, the four members of Alabama visited with the guests at every table.

I remember as if it was yesterday when a shaggy-haired young man walked up to us and said, "Hi, my name is Randy Owen from the group Alabama. We sure hope you enjoy our music tonight."

They were awesome – so impressive that their then-current label, MDJ Records, sold their contract to RCA Records, and that label made them country/southern rock superstars.

Rebecca made my day earlier this month when she bought us



tickets for the 50th Anniversary Tour of Alabama with their October 22 performance at Dickie Arena. I can hardly wait to see the band in concert one final time.

**Question: What have YOU done to make your customers/clients be fanatically loyal to you? If you don't know that answer, then we need to talk!**

# THE Tiebreaker

## Don't Let it Get THAT Far!

This photo has not been edited – it's authentic. With some cooperation, this emotional situation could have been prevented.

The owners of the house on the left had planted a tree that cast shade over part of their yard and over the driveway of their neighbors.

Accompanying the tree were flocks of birds, which do what birds do – they make noise, and they poop.

Tired of the bird droppings on their driveway and on their car parked under the tree, the homeowners on the right asked their neighbors to create a fair resolution, such as placing a net over the tree to keep the birds from roosting and nesting.

The neighbor refused.

The complaining neighbors did what was within their rights: They called an arborist to remove the right side of the offending tree.

While the tree surgery has removed the frustration of bird residue, the birds still serenade both families day and night.

**Lesson** (something that I preach to my clients regularly): **Determine how far you would go if pushed to the wall, and then go there immediately and gladly!**



Happy 4th of July!

