

Meet the “Million Dollar Genius” Behind the Nite Ize Gear Tie

Inventor Dan Martinson to be featured on HISTORY series

BOULDER, Colo., March 15, 2016 – The new HISTORY® series, “Million Dollar Genius,” reveals the incredible true stories of ordinary people who started with an idea and, through hard work and perseverance, transformed their whims into wildly successful products. This week, the story of [Nite Ize® Gear Tie®](#) inventor, Dan Martinson, will be featured along with two other aspirational, inspirational and identifiable inventors.

The “[All Tied Up](#)” episode will air Friday, March 18 at 9 p.m. MDT (11 p.m. EDT) and will convey Martinson’s eight year Gear Tie journey - from the initial light-bulb moment through the development, marketing and distribution of his modest yet, mastermind idea.

“Like all inventions, the Gear Tie was created out of an annoyance with available solutions to a specific problem,” Martinson said. “After struggling with bungee straps and some other wire based products, I decided that I could make something better and more useful.”

With a background in rubber and plastics manufacturing, Martinson was determined to develop a consumer-friendly solution for common problems such as securing cargo and organizing tangled headphones. “I wanted something that applied to multiple channels and end uses,” he said. Sourcing everything from the United States was important as well. “The key was to make this product in the U.S.A.,” Martinson said.

After a number of variations, Martinson’s American-made, million dollar design featured a small flexible wire bonded inside a durable rubber exterior, available in multiple lengths.

“During the time I was developing the actual product, I spent just as much time developing the other components of the business,” Martinson said. Eventually the Gear Tie was ready for consumers so Martinson started selling via Amazon’s merchant website, which provided a reputable sales channel and also allowed him to collect important consumer feedback before pursuing larger retailers. With a quality product and valuable retail insight, Martinson began to sell to places like Menards® - a large home improvement center in the Midwest – and eventually landed an endcap promotion at all their locations.

In late 2010, Martinson decided to look for a distribution and marketing partner to help bring Gear Ties to the global market. “My sales rep suggested I contact a company in Boulder, Colo. called Nite Ize,” he said.

Martinson quickly arranged a meeting with [Rick Case, Nite Ize Founder and CEO](#). Case was impressed with Martinson’s Gear Tie concept and believed in the product’s potential. With an informal handshake agreement after one day together, Case became instrumental to the sale and overall success of the Gear Tie.



Nite Ize Gear Tie inventor, Dan Martinson, will be featured on the new HISTORY series “Million Dollar Genius” Friday, March 18, 2016.



“I would make the Gear Ties in my Xtrudex manufacturing facility in Rogers, Minn....he would package them, market them and sell them. It was the perfect marriage. Rick is a very important person in the Gear Tie story,” Martinson said.

At the time of their meeting, [Nite Ize](#) was a small business but had an impressive sales force with established retail relationships. Nite Ize officially launched the Gear Tie as part of their product lineup in January 2011. Over the course of the last six years, the Nite Ize/Xtrudex partnership has catapulted the product into every major big box retailer in North America and throughout the world. As sales continue to intensify, the Gear Tie continues to build a loyal following of brand enthusiasts.

For more information about Dan Martinson and the Nite Ize Gear Tie, tune into HISTORY Friday, March 18 at 9 p.m. MDT to watch Million Dollar Genius.

About Dan Martinson and Xtrudex:

Dan Martinson grew up in Minneapolis, Minn. and graduated from the University of Minnesota, Carlson School of Management in 1992. Three years later in 1995, Martinson started his first plastics and rubber manufacturing business, LTI Flexible Products. In 2006, he sold the business and started a new venture – Xtrudex. Xtrudex specializes in extruded and injection molded plastic products and manufactures the Gear Tie Reusable Rubber Twist Tie along with other Nite Ize products.

For more information, please visit [Xtrudex.com](#).

About Nite Ize:

Founded on the principles of creativity and innovation, Nite Ize designs, manufactures and distributes solution-based products with quality and performance at their core. Headquartered in Boulder, Colo., the company celebrated its 26th anniversary in 2015 and offers more than 500 innovative products and accessories in six unique categories: mobile, hardware, LED, flashlight, pet and lifestyle. Still captained by its founder and CEO, Rick Case, the Nite Ize team is passionate about their products, their customers, their partners and the environment.

For more information, please visit [NiteIze.com](#).

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