

Michael Holthouse - The Man Behind Lemonade Day

Last month we told you about Lemonade Day, and that it will take place this year on May 2, 2010. This week we would like to share with you a little that we have learned about the founder of Lemonade Day, Michael Holthouse.

Mr. Holthouse was born and raised in Richmond, IN, and was a graduate of Indiana State University, majoring in computer science and economics. He spent a number of years in the corporate world in executive positions. But Michael had an irrepressible entrepreneurial drive, and decided to leave his corporate job to strike out on his own. That was 1991. After being involved in a number of start-ups, Michael launched Paranet, a Houston, TX-based computer network services firm, with a \$20,000 initial investment. His goal: to reach \$100 million in revenue within five years.

To make a long story short, Holthouse threw himself into the work. The company took off and grew to 1,400 employees in six years. And revenues did in fact exceed \$100 million in year six. In 1997, Sprint bought the firm for \$375 million.

After selling Paranet, Michael turned his focus in a new direction. "I made the decision that I was going to spend the rest of my life helping at-risk kids," he said. In 1999, he created the Holthouse Foundation for Kids to help at-risk children acquire the skills and habits they need to become successful adults.

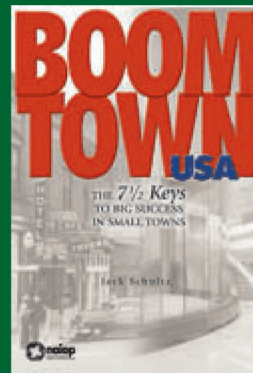
In 2006, Michael's daughter said, "Daddy, I want to do a lemonade stand." He agreed to help, and managed to squeeze in some business lessons. "It turned into this amazing day of learning," Holthouse says.

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From this experience, Lemonade Day was born.

"Our goal is to teach youth, especially those that are at risk, that they have options other than those that they might see in their everyday life. The schools aren't teaching them this and unfortunately, most families aren't either. It is a step-by-step process that they can use for the rest of their lives," stated Michael.

The Lemonade Day project started in 2007 with 2,600 stands in Houston. In 2009, there were over 27,000 lemonade stands in Houston alone, plus thousands more in Austin and Bryan-College Station in Texas, and Richmond, IN, Michael's hometown.

Mr. Holthouse's new goal? One million Lemonade Stands by 2013.

I had the pleasure of visiting over the phone with Mr. Holthouse shortly after our Lemonade Day ezine ran in February. I admire his lofty ambitions, and appreciate all his efforts to further the entrepreneurial spirit in American youth.

Don't forget, Lemonade Day is May 2, 2010. Anyone and everyone can get involved. Young entrepreneurs that have lemonade stands need adult supervision, sponsors, investors, employees, and customers.

Communities can register for an official Lemonade Day stand and participate in the event. Through sponsorships, companies can donate or become a partner. Schools can also get involved by teaching youth about entrepreneurship.

All the money earned at the lemonade stands is kept by the young entrepreneurs. In the spirit of a true business, they are encouraged to open a savings account, pay back investors, and make a further investment in their community by donating a portion of their profits to a charity of their choice.

To learn more about Lemonade Day, visit www.lemonadeday.org.

Happy Lemonade Day!



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For more details, contact Dean Bingham via [email](#) or call 217.342.4443.

Jack Schultz is the CEO of Agracel Inc., an industrial development firm majoring in rural America, and author of *Boomtown USA - The 7 1/2 Keys to Big Success in Small Towns*.

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