

From a \$5K ad test to a \$6M-a-year business

Before we wrote for clients, Peter built his own business from zero, with his own copy and his own money.

12X

Return on the first
\$5,000 ad test

\$500K

A month in subscription
revenue

4X

Circulation growth in five
years

0

Subscribers on day one,
and no outside money

THE BUSINESS

Penny Stock Journal, an investor newsletter covering small-company stocks

WHAT WE DID

Founded it, wrote the original advertising, and grew it into a subscription business

THE RESULT

From a \$5,000 test to \$500K a month in subscription revenue within five years

THE STARTING POINT

No subscribers. No brand. Just copy and a test budget.

Most copywriters write with other people's money. Peter started Penny Stock Journal with his own. There was no customer list, no reputation and no investor to cover a miss. Whether the business existed at all came down to one question: would the advertising pay for itself?

THE FIRST TEST

\$5,000 in. \$60,000 back.

Peter wrote the original ads and offers himself and put \$5,000 behind them. They brought in \$60,000, a 12X return on the first dollars spent.

The numbers made the decision. He didn't need a business plan or a pitch deck to know what he had. He had proof that strangers would pay, and that the copy could find them profitably.

THE MOMENT

A business, overnight.

One small test, read honestly, and the decision to scale.

HOW IT GREW

From one test to a subscription business

01 Test small before betting big

The first \$5,000 proved the offer before any real money was at risk. Every expansion after that started the same way.

02 Scale only what the numbers prove

The ads that paid back got more budget. The ones that didn't were rewritten or cut.

03 Build credibility readers could see

Contributors like Mario Gabelli and Ken Fisher of Fisher Investments. Circulation grew 4X in five years, surpassing Barron's.

04 Turn buyers into subscribers

One-time buyers became recurring revenue, reaching \$500,000 a month, about \$6 million a year.

IN THE PRESS

LOS ANGELES TIMES

"Read the prospectus."

Peter Betuel, publisher of Penny Stock Journal, quoted as the voice of caution in a market known for hype.

THE RESULTS

- ✓ **12X return** on the first \$5,000 in ads
- ✓ **\$500K a month** in subscription revenue within five years
- ✓ **4X circulation growth**, surpassing Barron's

THE LESSON

We're not just advertisers. We're entrepreneurs. We know what it means when the money is yours, because ours was. That's how we treat your ad budget: test small, read the numbers honestly, and scale only what pays back.

Source: Robert Hanley, "High Hopes, High Risks Go With Buying Penny Stocks," Los Angeles Times.

Let's grow yours like it's ours.

A father-and-son team with 47 years of direct-response experience.

Book a 30-minute call

chris@betuelpartners.com