

[Transcript] My First Million / Billy of the Week: Tyler Perry

All right.

Quick break to tell you about another podcast that we're interested in right now.

HubSpot just launched a Shark Tank rewatch podcast called Another Bite.

Every week, the hosts relive the latest and greatest pitches from Shark Tank, from Squatty Potty to the Mench on a Bench to Ring Doorbell.

And they break down why these pitches were winners or losers.

And each company's go-to-market strategy, branding, pricing, valuation, everything.

Basically all the things you want to know about how to survive the tank and scale your company on your own.

If you want to give it a listen, you can find another bite on whatever podcast app you listen to, like Apple or Spotify or whatever you're using right now.

All right.

Back to the show.

I see guys like Tyler Perry and I see the work that they like their output and their genius.

And I think, well, we're just not the same.

A million dollars isn't cool, you know what's cool?

Tyler Perry is interesting to me.

So Tyler Perry, like he mostly makes movies, like all like my black family and black friends, they like are obsessed with Tyler Perry.

And frankly, I've like never seen a Tyler Perry movie other than like what's the one with Eddie Murphy and he's like a fat professor.

Is it called the fat professor?

I don't know.

I don't know.

He's been in movies, but then he also has like his own line of movies.

And he has another one.

It's called like grandma, grandma's house or something that you have talking about.

Like those are the only ones I've ever seen.

I don't watch Tyler Perry.

What was it called?

The Nutty Professor or something?

Isn't that one of his movies?

You don't remember the Nutty Professor?

It was with Eddie Murphy.

It was from, it was in 1996.

Oh, it's sorry.

I'm wrong.

Tyler Perry, you know, but you don't know the Nutty Professor.

I've heard of the Nutty Professor, but I am so bad with films.

Like I've heard of them, but I could not tell you like who's been in them.

God, that's so funny that you don't remember that.

But all right, go ahead.

So Tyler Perry, I don't know a lot about him, but I know that he's a baller.

Yeah.

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Incredibly talented.

So what's cool about Tyler Perry is like one, he's a billionaire, but I mean, not a ton of people are billionaires, but like he is, I think, an unexpected billionaire in the sense that some people haven't even heard his name, right?

And there's a lot more people who you would think are more well known, who at least at first glance have done more things, but he's done a ton of things.

But just to compare it, you're like, okay, a billion dollars.

Like he works in, you know, in the movie slash TV slash play industry.

So like, okay, that doesn't sound so crazy.

But like Taylor Swift, guess what her net worth was?

I pulled this earlier this year.

So it's probably way higher, but maybe what, 50?

So 365 million.

Oh my God.

Leo DiCaprio.

How much do you think his net worth is?

100.

260.

Serena Williams.

Is Serena the oldest or the youngest?

She's the, she's the younger one.

Venus is the old.

200?

Yeah.

So 225.

Anyway, I share those.

Wait, but what are those?

What's that source?

I don't know.

I mean, some, some site on Google.

So yeah, take it with a grain of salt.

Dude, those sites are bullshit.

I, if you Google, like I, I tested this.

If you Google a couple of people's net worth, some of my personal websites come up, number one, and I just made this shit up and I've seen people cite it.

I mean, definitely take it with a grain of salt.

Cause I've definitely Googled some of this stuff before and you'll see someone and one site will be like,

their net worth is like 50K and another site,

it'll be like their net worth is 50 million.

So it's, it definitely, you know, can vary.

The point is,

through the podcast, I've met one or two like celebrities

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who, if you Google, they'll be like, yeah,
they're worth 10 or 15 and I've talked to them.

They're like, I wish they're like, I got,
I make like \$100,000 a year.

Yeah.

Okay.

So Tyler Perry is like,
at least I think he was like written about
by several different publications.

I think they verified, he's a billionaire.

I believe with him, with him, I believe it
because he's on the Forbes list.

Yes, exactly.

So Forbes is very reputable for that, for that reason.

His story is awesome because he basically,
I mean, he didn't start out with much.

So he used to, when he was younger,
he used to watch his dad subcontract
and his dad would make 800 bucks
and the person who he's contracting for
with like net 80,000.

And he remembers thinking at the time,
like I always knew there was more power
in the man that owned the house
rather than the man working on building it.

So I wanted to be the guy who owned the house.

So he like very early on understood
the principle and the importance of ownership.

And he had a messed up childhood.

I think he was molested a little bit.

I think his dad was abusive.

This guy went through a lot.

Yeah.

And he was also a high school dropout.

So when he dropped out of high school,

he was, you know,

he was doing a bunch of different odd jobs.

He struggled to pay rent.

He was a bill collector.

He sold cars.

Like he did all types of stuff.

But eventually he saved up enough,

which was 12 K to rent

and Atlanta community theater.

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So this was his first bet.
He basically wrote this play himself.
It was called, I know I've been changed.
And he started running this play
and you're probably thinking like,
Oh, okay, overnight success.
No, it was really bad at first.
And he struggled to pay rent.
And he actually worked on this play
for over a decade.
He produced the play.
He sold the tickets.
He designed the set.
He sold the snacks.
So he was like doing the whole thing
because no one else would invest in him at the time.
But over that decade,
I think the play got better.
He like rained in his chops.
And basically throughout that decade period,
he sold over a hundred million in theater tickets,
20 million in March,
and 30 million in just the videos of the plays.
Because again, he owned the IP.
So he can actually make money.
He was just making plays like,
like interesting plays and which sounds simple,
but that's like in itself.
Crazy.
So he made these wonderful plays and was it like,
he made a bunch and then they went to different.
And they like,
did he like literally tour and just make like 50 grand a night
through like hosting it in Atlanta and then Nashville
and then like Chicago or wherever.
I think that it was just this one play.
I know I've been changed,
but I do think they did like several tours.
And actually one of the,
one of the different theaters that he eventually ended up at.
So remember, he was just at this like Atlanta community theater
to start.
He ended up, you know, at the acclaimed Fox theater.
So he like moved his way up.

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And I think this one play I know I've been changed kind of helped unlock some things for him.

So that was his start.

He started with plays,

but even then, you know, that 100 plus million,

a lot of that was in theater tickets.

I don't know how much profit he made from that.

So the next thing is he basically said,

okay, I want to,

and that was a hundred million in over 10 years.

Yes, exactly.

So it's over like a long period of time.

And so basically he wanted to create,

I think a movie next.

And he basically wanted to create,

it was called like the diary of a mad black woman,

which is pretty funny.

And he definitely knows his audience, right?

So he's definitely like tailored his career towards,

you know,

an audience that he understands really well.

But when he wanted to create this,

he basically be like, no one would take him up on it.

He's looking for a distributor.

And the only people that will take him up on it

and act as his distributor was landscape.

But even then landscape was like,

we're not so sure.

So basically Tyler had to put up half the money.

He said, look, like, you know what,

if this is what it takes,

like I'll put up half the money.

And how much was it?

The nice thing about that,

I'm not sure how much it was actually,

but the great thing about that deal,

which you'll see throughout every deal he does.

So the budget, by the way,

the budget was 5.5.

So he put up 2.2.

What's that three?

Nice.

So with that deal, though,

he owned and controlled the content.

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So basically every deal he's done,
like he's, he's owning that IP.
So the Lionsgate CEO basically said,
like before it was released,
like if this makes \$20 million total,
because yeah,
like the budget was like five mil,
he's like, we'll be really stoked.
And it did over 20 million in weekend one.
And since then is made over \$150 million
in licensing alone.
That's crazy.
So like, first of all, like I understand.
So he launched this stuff in the 90s
or not the plays in the 90s and 2000s.
And basically like the black population is,
I don't know what 12% of America.
And so you think like,
so you're going to do the thing dedicated
to only 12% of one group.
Like there's no way that can be big.
And he totally proved it correct because
it's kind of like in, is it ice,
where's Bjork from Iceland?
So I think Iceland and Iceland doesn't have a lot of people,
but Bjork is incredibly famous.
And I think the reason is, is like Iceland had so much pride
that a huge chunk of the Icelandic population was like,
oh, we love Bjork.
Therefore, once they start seeing her succeed,
they get behind her and they go, Bjork is awesome.
And that's almost what happens here a little bit.
And that's kind of why sometimes it's cool to appeal
to a smaller but more passionate base
than it is to appeal to the larger percentage.
Yeah.
And by the way,
Iceland has a population of 366,000 people.
Is it that small?
Very small.
I remember I had a friend on exchange from Iceland
and she told me not jokingly,
they have a dating app that makes sure that you are not related
to someone that you are dating

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because it is such a small population.
And hey, they made and Bjork sucks.
Sorry if you're a Bjork fan, but objectively she, she sucks.
It is not good music.
So like it was definitely, you know, they say is like,
it was the product of the marketing good,
the Icelandic marketing or whatever she's from.
It was wonderful because they made her famous.
That's so funny.
Anyway, so that was his first foray into movies,
but then he kept going.
Okay.
So he's done play.
Then he's done a movie and now he wants to do TV.
Okay.
So he goes and basically he goes and creates 10 episodes first
himself because again, he's like, I can do this.
Like I produced a play for 10 years.
I don't need like to hire a bunch of people.
I can do this myself.
So he creates 10 episodes first.
He sells it to one network called CW and they air it and the
ratings are through the roof.
People absolutely love it.
And because of that, it caught the attention of another network,
which basically was like, Hey, can we steal this?
And they did.
And they struck a deal for \$200 million for him to leave this
other network and he would produce 90 more episodes.
And again, he owned the episodes, which is kind of crazy.
He owned the IP of those episodes even after that \$200 million
deal.
This deal alone is expected to have made him \$138 million.
So his show, his earnings, then, you know,
people still aren't really paying attention to Tyler for
some reason.
He continues to make, remember that Lionsgate deal that he
did, he continues to make movies with them.
And over time, he makes an 11 film franchise.
That's done over a billion in sales and netted him specifically
him individually over \$290 million.
Because again, he always owned the copyright.
And then Tyler made one, I mean, I'm sure he's made other bets,
but one really big bet in 2015, which basically this whole time

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he's like an Atlanta native, right?

And he, he kind of saw the potential for the city.

And so he bought a plot of land where 30,000, sorry, \$30 million at the time is 330 acres and about double the size of a Warner Bros.

Warner Brothers lot.

And he turned it into this like production base or different like media companies could go and film shows.

So since then, I think like The Walking Dead has filmed their Black Panther.

And part of it is he actually like, it wasn't just him betting on his city.

He saw that in 2008, Georgia had changed the tax law.

So there were certain incentives for production companies.

So we saw these incentives and he said, you know what,

I think people are different production companies.

And I bet maybe they could have created those incentives just for him.

All right.

A quick message from our sponsor.

You know, I was thinking about the shortest day of the year earlier.

And while we technically have the same amount of time as every other day of the year, the lack of daylight makes it feel so much shorter, which is exactly the same kind of feeling as working with disconnected tools.

Our work days the same length as always.

But before you know it, we spent three hours just fixing something that was supposed to be automated.

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Well, I mean, this happened, so the law happened in 2008.

He did this in 2015.

So we saw that this was changing.

And basically in 2007 before that law, 67 million was spent in, or sorry, in Georgia.

And then in 2018, it was 2.9 billion.

Wow.

Much thanks to Tyler and his investment there.

But basically because of that, then he was also to, he's since

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signed like \$150 million deal with Viacom, CBS to run another suite of episodes.

And he's just like kept going at an every juncture.

He's made sure to own what he's producing.

And so now he like has, listen to this, he's basically amassed 22 films, dozens of plays and 1200 TV episodes.

That's what like his like life work so far plus this like production base.

And he owns much of his work, even the latest \$150 million deal.

I think he sold it for five years.

But after those five years, the rights returned to him.

I love Tyler Perry.

Is there a Tyler Perry biography out there?

I would read that in a heartbeat.

I think there's a few go to Google Tyler Perry house.

He's got a, this huge spread in outside of Atlanta with a private jet runway, a runway.

No one has that.

That is baller.

So I was doing this podcast earlier today with Rob Walling.

And I was talking about how it hustle con because I've met all these like successful people in these billionaires and stuff like that, that I was like, often I'll meet someone like, for example, like the founders of Casper or something like that.

And I'll say to myself, you know, you're like, maybe you're financially more successful than I am, maybe.

And like your company is definitely bigger than my company.

But I don't think that you're necessarily like, if I, I don't think you're necessarily 20 times or 50 times more smart or smarter than I am, or however much bigger.

I was like, you know, like we're in the same ballpark.

You might be a little bit or maybe even I might be a little bit smarter or even hardworking or something like that.

The difference is, is that maybe you just kept at it or there's probably some luck involved or you kind of like landed on the right idea.

Like you're not like significantly better than me.

And therefore that's why I believe that most people can accomplish something interesting.

Of course, like it definitely takes luck and like all this crazy other stuff to become a billionaire.

But like we can all become pretty successful if we just kind of stick with it because the intelligence isn't that big of a factor in order to achieve some success.

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However, I see guys like Tyler Perry and I see the work that they like their output and their genius.
And I think, well, we're just not the same.
You're just better than me.
Like you are so good at what you do.
Like I went and just, I saw Hamilton the other day and I was researching Lin-Manuel and I was like, oh, you're just a freak.
Like you, like, like I was watching it and I was like, I don't even like musicals.
But the fact that someone was so brilliant that they came up with us and put this together, that like, I understand you should be a billionaire.
Like you should have it all.
You should have, or like when I read Harry Potter, I'm like, how on earth does one person invent this in their brain?
You, you're better than me.
You and I, we are not the same.
You are just a different human being and you're more of an alien than you are a human being.
And that's how I feel about Tyler Perry.
That's how I feel about like Lin-Manuel or what is his name?
Lin-Manuel.
And that's how I feel about like a J.K. Rowling type.
So kudos to Tyler Perry.
He deserves it.
Yeah. I mean, it's crazy.
He's done like over 1200 TV episodes.
Like you have to be just like so good at what you do to be able to do that for like, I think his first play came out in 1992.
So he's been creating for 30 years straight.
And it's like, some people are one hit wonders.
Like this guy is not a one hit wonder.
He like who's what he's doing.
He's like honed in his craft.
And so yeah, it's like super cool.
I remember I got a lot of flak for this, but I like once tweeted something about like Jeff Bezos.
I think he had like resigned and I was like, this guy's been working on this company for 27 years.
Like how rare is it that someone works on anything for even like five years straight.

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And these guys like Tyler Perry as well.
Like he's just like worked on his craft for decades.
Like that's insane.
Yeah. It's pretty cool.
I think that like we were talking about on this podcast.
I was like, you know, I think I could become a billionaire if I wanted to.
I just, you have to be willing to dedicate like 30 years to it.
Like I'm definitely smart enough and I, and I work pretty hard.
I just don't know if I'm like, if I like want to spend the time doing it and, and, and, and I think a lot of people who achieve greatness, they're not much different.
Except there are people.
I was like Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos.
I was like, you just have more horsepower than I do.
Like you're just different.
And I'm going to put Tyler Perry in that category.
You just, you just, we're just, we're not the same.
You know what I mean?
Yeah, I know.
It's just like a race car versus like, you know, not a race car.
Like there's just no amount of modifications.
Can I make my car as fast as that?
Yeah, you have to like have so much horsepower to want to do this for so long, which is why you're, you ask me all the time.
You're like, you want to be a billionaire?
And like every time you ask me, I'm like, less sure of the fact that I want to do it.
Cause I'm like, yeah, I, everyone wants to be a billionaire.
Everyone wants to like a mass.
Well, maybe not everyone, but a lot of people are like, yeah, I'd love to live like a great life, but a lot of people don't want to put in that effort.
And now I'm questioning like, I think I'll actually be pretty happy with less than a billion.
Yes.
I think you'll be, I, you do, you definitely don't need that to be happy.
Yeah, sure.
And so I just wrote future owner of the LA Lakers, future owner of a lake.
That's why you're playing the game.
Your goal is to be happy every single hour of every single day of your life.