

Hats off to Twice the Fun

FAMILY'S ENTREPRENEURIAL PASSION LEADS TO BROTHERS' RALLY FLIP CAP **BY EDITH G. TOLCHIN**

I MET IAN AND JORDAN KAY at INPEX 2017 and found them to be pleasant, ambitious young fellows who were eager to speak about their invention, the Rally Flip Cap®. I signed up for their mailing list and was happy to hear that they were recently featured on “Entrepreneur® Elevator Pitch.” Here is their story about a double-billed hat with a hidden flip-up feature.

Edith G. Tolchin (EGT): Ian, please tell us about your backgrounds and how the Rally Flip Cap came about.

Ian Kay (IK): From age 10 we sold candy necklaces, set up lemonade and snow cone stands in our neighborhood, and sold lollipops at local parks. We grew up with an entrepreneurial father who mentored us in business and in life.

I went to Loyola Marymount University and studied fine arts individual studies. My background is in graphic design, branding and online computer arts. Our dad has been sourcing, importing and developing products for over 40 years. Over the years, our dad has helped many people develop and manufacture their products. With our creativity and innovation, along with our father's experience, we decided it was time to create something of our own.

Jordan went to UC Berkeley, where he studied international business with an emphasis on work in the global economy. He also played football and was a placekicker for the California Golden Bears. He graduated in 2009 and went right into the family business (Cisco Sales Corp.) to ensure its survival because my father had to downsize the business by 75 percent. I decided to take a year off from college to work a whole year for free as warehouse manager and helped out where I could.

Through these sacrifices, we knew we were investing in our future and needed to keep the lights on. To this day, neither of us has taken a commission. We both had the burning desire to innovate, and in 2013 the Rally Flip Cap idea came to Jordan.

EGT: What are the cap's features and materials?

IK: Our flip caps look and appear like your average ball cap. We engineered and made sure that when the Rally Flip Cap is not flipped open that you cannot even tell there are two bills.

Ian and Jordan Kay (left to right) appeared on a show on which they had to make a 60-second “elevator pitch.”



“We are stoked to work with other like-minded individuals whose visions align with ours, while continuing to learn and grow our network and relationships.” —IAN KAY



We currently have two SKUs (classic and dry-erase) available on the market but also have a variety of added features that are currently patent pending, which we will be adding to our utility patent. The materials are PP (polypropylene) plastic, microfiber fabric, metal rivets and cotton twill.

EGT: Who created your initial prototype, and what was the route to success?

IK: Our dad’s company, Cisco Sales Corp. (ciscousa.com), created our initial prototype overseas. After opening up the tooling and eight different molds plus research and development, the whole process took a little over three years.

We took a lean start-up approach with the method of building, measuring and learning. We developed our MVP (minimum viable product), did countless testing, received feedback from exhibiting and walking trade shows, and from our customers.

EGT: How many different styles are you featuring, at what pricing?

IK: We currently offer two versions of Rally Flip Caps. Our Classic has a microfiber fabric on the top and bottom bills when flipped open. Our Dry Erase has a microfiber fabric bottom bill with a dry erase surface on the top bill when flipped open. On our website, we have over 20 designs ranging from \$19.99 to \$29.99.

EGT: Have you tried crowdfunding?

IK: Yes, but only recently. From appearing on Season 1 of the new streaming series from Entrepreneur Media, “Entrepreneur Elevator Pitch,” we did a crowdfunding campaign through Indiegogo. Crowdfunding is a cost-effective way to launch a product or idea and receive valuable feedback. It is crucial to receive honest opinions from the public and to create a dialogue of communication back and forth with your target market.

EGT: What about licensing?

IK: We currently have one NCAA license (UC Berkeley, a.k.a. “CAL”), but we are looking to team with the right headwear company that can expand our licensing and distribution.

Because of our IP and manufacturing background, we’ll have the flexibility to work in a variety of ways—from licensing in, licensing out, contract manufacturing and/or taking on custom private label orders for other businesses.

EGT: Tell us about your experience at the 2017 INPEX in Pittsburgh.

IK: It’s always a pleasure to be around creative individuals that have the desire to create and build something bigger than they are. There were many resources (researchers, illustrators, writers and customer service representatives) to help educate inventors who are working on ideas, innovations and new products. We really enjoyed meeting Allan Mamam and Cooper Weiss (Fidget 360 founders), the entrepreneurs who made fidget spinners trend and go viral.

EGT: Tell us about “Entrepreneur Elevator Pitch.” What happened afterwards?

IK: We are unfortunately unable to talk in detail as we are still covered under NDA, but it was an amazing experience!

Watch what happens when a 60-second pitch can make or break a business. The show is digitally streamed over the following channels: YouTube, Apple TV, Android TV, Amazon, Roku, Entrepreneur.com, MSN, Indiegogo and Sprint. The potential audience is over 100 million.

After the segment, my brother and I focused in on creating content and strategically planning our Indiegogo crowdfunding campaign. Simultaneously, we also had to put together our company background,

The Dry Erase Rally Flip Cap includes a dry erase marker with an eraser. If you’ve got a message to share, use the marker and flip up the bill for everyone to see. Return to the original hat by snapping both bills shut.



Students from the UC Rally Committee cheer the home team.

individual background of skill sets (Due Diligence Package) and financial information for our investors.

We've been emailing and have already held a few conference calls with our investors. We are currently getting our plan of action in order.

EGT: Where do you go from here?

IK: We are stoked to work with other like-minded individuals whose visions align with ours, while continuing to learn and grow our network and relationships. We plan on growing in the next couple of years by working with headwear companies to license out and integrate our product into proper distribution pipelines. (We also plan) influencer marketing paired with our IP, expanding our direct-to-consumer model, making private label flip caps, and working with those who have retail and distribution expertise.

We will continue to study our competitors and create content while scaling our marketing campaigns. Since we have a utility patent, we are flexible with how we decide to methodically build our market. Our utility patent expires in 2033, which gives us 15 years to strategically build the market.

EGT: What has been your biggest obstacle in product development?

IK: There have been three: the bill molds; establishing a consistent QC protocol for production and sampling fabrication; and having gone through three different factories.

EGT: Any advice for an aspiring inventor and/or entrepreneur?

IK: Take care of the little things, and the big things take care of themselves. Only you can tell your story. If your idea, business or service matters to you enough, you'll find a way to persevere, learn from your mistakes (because you'll make many and consider it learning capital) and be resourceful.

We love to empower others, and it never gets old seeing people's reactions when we flip our hats. 🧢

Details: RallyFlipCap.com

Books by **Edie Tolchin** (egt@edietolchin.com) include "Fanny on Fire" (fannyonfire.com) and "Secrets of Successful Inventing." She has written for *Inventors Digest* since 2000. Edie has owned EGT Global Trading since 1997, assisting inventors with product safety issues and China manufacturing.



2 Critical Steps to getting your NEW PRODUCT "out there"

1 GET IT MADE

Contact Edie Tolchin – "The Sourcing Lady" (SM) for sourcing, China manufacturing, product safety issues, packaging assistance, quality control, production testing, final shipment inspections, freight arrangements, import services and delivery to your door!

2 GET A WEBSITE!

Contact Ken Robinson – While your order is being manufactured, you need to start working on your WEB PRESENCE! Get people talking about your product on Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google+), get good search engine placement (SEO)!

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Get more BANG for your BUCK from two professionals with a combined total of over 60 years of experience!