

Exclusive Interview with the RUNNING SUIT GUY

PJ: How did you come up with the idea?

RSG: For a Halloween party years ago I dressed up as Indiana Jones. I had the fedora, the whip, the little bag he draped across his chest, the gun belt. It was a big hit and a lot of fun. After the party was over I wanted to wear that outfit again. It was cool. I didn't want to wait until next Halloween.

So where can I wear the outfit? Well, he RUNS in the movie. I'll run a local 10K race dressed like Indiana Jones! Why not, let's see what happens. Well, it was a big hit and I really enjoyed the attention, the smiles and the interaction with the crowd. After a year or two of being Indy I wanted to see if I could run in a suit and tie, fedora, and dress shoes. It was a bigger hit than Indiana Jones! The media started wanting interviews and photographs and I was getting a lot of exposure. That got me thinking that businesses **might be** interested in that and I started selling advertising space on my suit. Car racing does that on its cars and drivers, but road running doesn't. Why not? After all they're both races, they both have spectators and running is one of the most popular sports in America. In fact it now has its own television show. And I've been doing it ever since.

PJ: That brings me to my next question. How long have you been doing this?

RSG: I started running as Indiana Jones over 10 years ago and the suit and tie made its first appearance in 2007. I began selling advertising space in 2009. I walked up and down Main St in our local village, Northport N.Y. and asked to speak to the owner. I showed them a few pictures, had a few bites and started the business about a year and a half ago.

I created a website: www.therunningsuitguy.com and trademarked the name. At that point I was off and running!

PJ: I understand you promote charities?

RSG: Yes, I promote The Smile Train (they surgically repair cleft palates in children) and The Make a Wish Foundation, among others. I am blessed to be able to do what I do and it's important to give back. When I realized I had a platform that was unique, fun, and most of all, effective, it was a golden opportunity. I also participate in races that support charities themselves like

The Marcie Mazzola Foundation (they raise awareness for abused and at risk children) and Alec's Run, whose founders recently helped pass legislation improving blind spots on cars.

See www.smiletrain.org, www.wish.org, www.marciemazzolafoundation.org and www.alecsrunli.com.

PJ: Don't you get hot?

RSG: Yes, I do get hot. I throw water down my back and keep going. But I really feed off the energy of the crowd. Their faces light up when they see me and their smiles make it easier to run another mile. The spectators, my sponsors, and my charities are the ones that keep me going. That, and plenty of water helps me get to the finish line.

PJ: Last question. You run in those shoes?

RSG: Yes. It doesn't bother me and it's an important part of my look. It creates a little more buzz and that's what I want for my sponsors and charities. I take some precautions and I'm careful but I've been doing this for a while now and it's been working. People are amazed I can run a half marathon (13.1 miles) in dress shoes!

PJ: Thank you Running Suit Guy for spending some time with us.

RSG: Thank you for the opportunity to share a little of my story with PopimpressKA Journal.

