

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



351 You Think You've Made Costly Mistakes? — Part 1

So you think you've made mistakes in business or investing, or predicting the future. I'm Jerry Roberts and today, let's see how your mistakes stack up against those made by other people. It's coming next, on The Extra Point.

Mistakes. We've all made them, and some of them may have proven costly. Maybe in the hundreds of dollars, or thousands? I've got nine today that might change how you view your fumbles.

If we start with politics we don't have to go back very far. Three years ago, Hillary Clinton decided she had the 2016 campaign pretty much wrapped up and didn't bother to campaign in a select number of states. As a result, Donald Trump was elected president.

In baseball, the worst trade in that sport's history happened almost 100 years ago, when the Boston Red Sox sold the hottest young star in the sport to the New York Yankees. The Sox got \$100,000 and a \$300,000 loan to finance a Broadway musical. The Yankees and Babe Ruth would rule baseball for most of the next dozen years. Boston would wait almost 90 years to win a championship.

You want a sweet mistake? Mars, the makers of M&Ms, refused to pay to feature their candy in the movie *ET*. Director Steven Spielberg's kids liked a lesser known candy called Reese's Pieces. Hershey, the owner of the brand, spent the \$1 million fee and Reese's Pieces' sales tripled, plus demand grew everywhere.

You want a picture perfect mess up? Eastman Kodak owned 85 percent of the photography business for nearly 100 years. In 1974 through 75 one of their engineers built the world's first digital camera. Kodak invested billions in its development. All good, right? Conservative elements within Kodak stalled the release of the digital camera because it didn't want to abandon the film-and-paper business which

had made them rich. By the time Kodak finally shifted to digital in the late 1990s, it was way too late and they ended up filing for bankruptcy.

If you think that losing out on control of the digital camera business was big, you'll love this one, Alexander Graham Bell patented the first telephone in 1876 and tried to sell it to communications giant Western Union...for \$100,000. Western Union executives declined, figuring people wouldn't give up their handy telegrams for grainy-sounding phones that didn't work over long distances.

Do you subscribe to Netflix? In its early days it was offered to Blockbuster video. Remember them? The price was \$50 million. Blockbuster said no. Last year Netflix hit \$100 billion in total value. Blockbuster is history.

Staying with entertainment, 20th Century Fox didn't see the value of merchandising for the movie *Star Wars*, allowing director George Lucas to take a \$20,000 pay cut on his fee for directing the movie in exchange for total rights. Lucas has pocketed over \$3 billion from that decision. Why don't you Chewbacca on that.

One more for today, Decca records in London auditioned four young guys, listening to 15 of their songs, and told their manager they didn't like their sound. EMI Records decided to take a chance on the group and are paid back handsomely as the Beatles became the best-selling group of all time. These mistakes were big, but I've got even bigger ones on Monday.

That's The Extra Point. Get out there and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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