



WHEELS OF FORTUNE

Fun bike rental biz drives home \$500,000 and owners say you can pedal home profits with one of your own.

The brains behind Wheel Fun Rentals did a lot of research on the travel and amusement market. Here are some of their findings:

1. Travel and tourism generated more than \$519 billion in domestic sales in 1999, according to The Travel Industry Association. Expenditures from domestic travelers are forecast to reach \$535 billion in 2001.
2. Business travelers who brought a child along for a business-related trip grew by 247% between the years 1987 and 1997.
3. Travel is consistently rated as one of the most popular ways Americans choose to spend their free time.
4. Family travel played an important role in demographics. About 70% of travelers took their families with them.
5. The International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions reports activities such as miniature golf have 78% of participants with household incomes above \$25,000 and 57% of participants with household income levels about \$40,000.
6. The amusement industry is comprised of more than 35,000 businesses, averaging \$326,000 in annual sales. This creates an industry segment close to \$11.5 billion in size. Growth in this segment has averaged 14.8% in each of the last three years.

What looks like a lot of fun, can get you where you want to go, and helps the environment? If you said a ride in a recreational wheeled vehicle from Wheel Fun Rentals, you are correct.

Wheel Fun Rentals is a specialty recreational wheeled goods rental franchise that offers hourly rentals of unique bikes--and more. Wheel Fun's menu includes a variety of human powered surreys, and three-to-four wheeled specialty bicycles, carrying names like "Deuce Coupe," "Slingshot," and "The Chopper."

Located in leisure and tourist resort areas and parks and recreational areas, the business offers customers an alternative amusement that is family-friendly,



environmentally safe, and plain, old-fashioned fun.

Each Wheel Fun location sports a festive amusement atmosphere, which includes brightly colored awnings, umbrellas, signage, and colorful safety flags on each specialty bike. Hourly rental rates range from \$5 to \$35, depending on the vehicle and the number of

people.

The company was started in January, 2000. It is the offspring of Freetime, which was founded in 1987 by Brian McInerney, and provided the base for the recreational rental franchise concept.

McInerney's love of bicycling and sense of fun first led him to import and distribute Italian made surreys to established bicycle shops in the United States under Freetime's banner.

During the 1990s, McInerney grew Freetime to six locations, all in California. Sensing a need for an amusement activity that combined the outdoors, some exercise and family involvement, McInerney launched Wheel Fun Rentals as a natural outgrowth of his Freetime company. The business is booming.

Wheel Fun Rentals, the nation's premier recreational rental franchise, is now co-branding with city and state parks as part of its nationwide rollout this year. Ten parks are targeted for Wheel Fun rental outlets this year, all in southern California. Lake Balboa Park, an 80-acre city park in Van Nuys, California, is the prototype co-branding location.

"We targeted parks as an ideal location because of the high attendance numbers and the outdoor environment that lends itself to our product line," said Jack Pentlarge, who operates the Lake Balboa Wheel Fun outlet.

A Wheel Fun Rental franchise costs anywhere from \$35,000 to \$330,000 to launch depending on the territory size, the build-out costs, inventory level and whether the franchise is a start-up or a conversion.

The company posted annual system wide sales in 1999 of \$546,063 from the current company-owned Wheel Fun franchises.

Growth for the company, said the principals, will be selective and steady. Ten to 15 franchises are planned for this year. Additionally, select independent bicycle shop owners will be invited to convert to a Wheel Fun franchise.

The company doesn't require that franchisees have experience in the bike or bike rental business. An understanding of how to have fun and how to help other people have fun is essential.

Wheel Fun is interested in finding a select group of individuals who have good people and business skills, adequate financial strengths, and a sincere love of life. Individuals who understand retail and retail theater as a necessary element to product and service delivery are preferred.

All franchisees--both start-up and conversion--must successfully complete a weeklong intensive Wheel Fun Rentals Training Camp in Santa Barbara, California. All areas of operating a Wheel Fun Rental franchise are covered, with training delivered in the classroom, on the Internet and on-site at the Santa Barbara franchise location. Ongoing refresher courses will be offered on an as-needed basis. Franchisees carry liability insurance and have the customer sign a standard waiver of liability form.

For more information, contact Wheel Fun Rentals by visiting their website at: www.wheelfunrentals.com or by contacting the headquarters:

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