

WILLARD L. "BILL" BLEVINS, JR.

6 Brackley Circle
Fairport, NY 14450
585-662-7638
BillBlevins@mac.com

INTERNET MEDIA / ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING / CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER

Operations • Business Development • Strategic Planning • Executive Leadership

Accomplished senior executive with 14 years of experience managing online and Internet operations, and product development for regional and national newspaper publishing firms. Demonstrated strong ability to evaluate business opportunities and new technologies, with proven track record of effectively implementing leading edge concepts to leverage business success in new market segments and business spaces. Executive leadership and Board of Directors experience augmented by earlier experience in newsroom management and photojournalism. Maintain a broad understanding of server, web hosting, browser, and web development technologies and tools relating to design, development, and management of online content.

"20 Under 40 Award," *Presstime Magazine*, Newspaper Association of America (Dec. 2000)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

GATEHOUSE MEDIA, INC.; Fairport, New York (July 2006 – Present)

A national, publicly traded media firm (www.gatehousemedia.com) with holdings that include 92 daily newspapers, plus over 400 other weekly, directory, and online publications.

Vice President of New Business Development

July 2009 – Present

Chosen by CEO to serve in this newly created role. Charged with evaluating new investment (acquisition) opportunities, developing strategies for leveraging existing resources in new business spaces, and fostering new relationships with other media firms to pursue cross-promotional partnerships and alliances.

- Manage multiple pilot programs to assess viability and scalability for short- and long-term business growth.
- Identify potential new lines of business that are consistent with company's mission and vision.
- Evaluate acquisition opportunities and develop business case for pursuing these opportunities.
- Develop business plans and make presentations to Board of Directors for new initiatives.

Vice President of Online Operations

July 2006 – July 2009

Recruited to develop GateHouse Media's online strategy, which was integral to the firm's successful IPO in 2006. Managed online media operations that generated more than \$25 million in revenues during fiscal 2008.

Spearheaded research and development of next generation online product offerings, which led directly to creation of VP for New Business Development role (see above).

- Recruited, hired, and managed technical teams accountable for building and launching a content management platform (CMS) across over 450 web sites, which delivered a cost savings of 50%.
- Grew annual online revenues from \$3.8 million in 2006 to \$26 million in 2008 (680% increase).
- Managed the integration of web-based business components as GateHouse Media successfully acquired more than \$1.5 billion worth of new business.
- Directed the rollout of user generated content (UGC) video publishing platform across network of 465 sites.
- Briefed Board of Directors, CEO, investors, bankers, and senior management on new business opportunities and progress on forward initiatives.

SEARCH INITIATIVES, LLC; Nashua, New Hampshire / Temecula, California

This search engine optimization (SEO) firm helps small and medium businesses (SMB) build site traffic, strengthen their relationships with local consumers and advertisers, creating profitable eCommerce marketplaces. (www.elocalistings.com)

Member, Board of Directors

2007 – Present

Invited to join Board of Directors for this start-up company based on experience in newspaper industry and knowledge of SMB advertising, online marketing needs, and eCommerce business channels.

WILLARD L. "BILL" BLEVINS, JR.

Resume – Page Two

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

(continued)

COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER HOLDINGS, INC. (CNHI); Birmingham, Alabama

Vice President of Online Operations

April 2004 – June 2006

Directed electronic publishing operations for this employee-owned media company with 90 daily newspapers and more than 100 non-daily publications across the United States. Established Internet publishing vision and strategy, and championed initiatives to develop and grow this key business segment.

- Designed firm's Internet publishing strategy and implemented training for publishers and sales directors to familiarize them with new business models.
- Built online revenues from \$1.4 million to over \$12 million, annually, in first 24 months (850% increase)
- Successfully transitioned over 200 independent newspaper sites onto a shared content management system (CMS) using common templates, centralized site administration, and a unified business model.

THE FREE LANCE-STAR PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., Fredericksburg, Virginia (1990 – 2004)

Director, Fredericksburg.com & The Star Directory

1999 – 2004

Managed the Internet and Yellow Pages publishing division of The Free Lance-Star Publishing Company, including www.Fredericksburg.com and the Star Directory, a local community telephone directory.

- Supervised 26 employees, including a 12-person multi-media sales team, a programming group, graphic arts and production group and an editorial news staff.
- Positioned www.Fredericksburg.com as a leader in publishing local information online.
- Served on three-person team that developed a patented application for searching and displaying real estate MLS listing data in real time using mobile devices.
- Chosen for "20 Under 40 Award" by *Presstime Magazine* (Dec. 2000).

Director of Photography

1997 – 1999

Staff Photographer

1990 – 1997

EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bachelor of Science

1994

James Madison University; Harrisonburg, Virginia

"The Executive Experience," Executive Leadership Training – LeaderPoint

2006

COMMUNITY & PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Associated Press Digital Advisory Committee (2005 – Present)

Newspaper Association of America (NAA)

New Media Federation Member (1999 – Present) / Digital Advisory Council Member (2004 – Present)

Fredericksburg Jaycees, Board of Directors (1990 – 1993); Member (1990 – 2004)

Virginia Press Association, Technology Committee Chairman (2000 – 2004)

Trout Unlimited Life Member (2008)