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Experience

Principal, Civic Operator, October 2018 - Present

Self-owned management consulting practice, where clients are mid-cap manufacturers, private equity firms, and complex nonprofits. Use emerging artificial intelligence tools, along with classic design thinking and organizational development strategies, to improve operations and solve problems. Recent work:

- Led the organizational redesign of a large property management function, redefining the roles and responsibilities of 15 people operating 600 public housing units across dozens of locations
- Created the long-term strategy for a large private equity-owned manufacturer that led to a 50% increase in EBITDA and eventual sale
- Evaluated the returns process for a manufacturer that reduced the time from issue notification to material delivered by 20% and uncovered waste and reduced costs by 25%

Founder & CEO, Civic Elevator, April 2020 - January 2023

Founding CEO of this maker of enterprise software for the vertical transportation industry created to use public data to drive value creation for elevator servicers. Built a fully remote technology team during a global pandemic while upholding my values of equity and diversity— scaling the team to 5 to 40. Growing through acquisitions, I established fair pay structures and performance review processes.

- Built a successful product— maintaining 90% customer retention, growing business from existing customers, and adding new customers year over year— while cultivating a high-performance team grounded in inclusivity and a global perspective.

Ad Hoc, Director of Product Development and Business Strategy, June 2016 – October 2018

Created and led the business development and marketing processes for this federal government software design and engineering consultancy. Generated \$78M in sales.

- Served as the Program Manager for the 2016 open enrollment period for healthcare.gov, managing a digital service team of 70 designers, engineers, and researchers across four companies with no significant system downtime
- Developed and launched Cohorts, a service that allowed Ad Hoc to conduct incisive research with groups of relevant users

Executive Director, Smart Chicago Collaborative, July 2011 - June 2016

Responsible for vision, strategy and operations of this civic organization devoted to making lives better in Chicago through technology. Created & developed products & programs that set the pace for community technology over the last decade and raised \$10M in philanthropic funds for multiple initiatives, many of which have been sustained as businesses.

- I invented the Civic User Testing Group (CUTGroup), a new model for UX testing, digital skills development, and community engagement. Over 2 years, we signed up 1,400 residents and conducted almost 20 tests. This methodology has been adopted across the world
- Co-created Documenters, a program that trains and pays people to attend public meetings, publish the results, and engage community members. The program has since been adopted in 15 U.S. cities

Further experience

- EveryBlock/ msnbc.com, Co-founder, July 2007 – July 2011: Worked with municipal governments in 14 U.S. cities to obtain new data sets, which helped launch the modern open government data movement.
- Streams Online Media/ Dunn Solutions Group, Consulting Manager, June 1998 – March 2007: Sold technology to dozens of clients while managing teams of 5-20 people over the course of more than 150 projects

Awards, Honors, Speeches, Writing

- Author and editor of four influential business books on civic engagement and technology: The CUTGroup Book, CivicWhitaker Anthology, Chicago School of Data, and Experimental Modes of Civic Engagement in Civic Tech
- Foodborne Chicago: Top 25 Innovation by the Harvard Ash Center
- Chicago Tech 50, Crain's Chicago Business
- White House Champion of Change for Technology and Innovation
- "Open Data: Roots, Impact, and Promise" at The White House Open Data Innovation Summit
- "Open Data & Mass Joy" at Personal Democracy Forum
- "The Need for Investment in the Digital Lives of All", City Club of Chicago

Education

- Bachelor of Arts in English and Anthropology, University of Illinois at Chicago