



MARKETING STAR



Bruce Law: Founder and President of Sprout Marketing

[By Kenneth Davis]

Bruce Law never doubted that marketing would be his career field.

“Marketing, for me, honestly dates back to, like, elementary school,” he said. “I was always fascinated with advertising. I was always drawing and coloring ads, doing ad campaigns in school. It was just one of those things that I kind of thought about a long, long time, and I’ve been in it, really, since I graduated from college.”

In June of 2002, Law took his nearly 20 years of marketing experience and opened up his own marketing firm, Sprout Marketing. It is a full-service, integrated marketing firm that focuses on small to medium-sized businesses.

Law discussed some of the work the company does to help its clients:

“We do a lot of strategy work,” he said. “We help companies reposition themselves, find new markets, change their distribution strategies, and then we actually also execute all the strategies that we put in place. So we’re not one to just say, ‘Here’s our recommendation. Good luck.’ It’s more, ‘Here’s what we should do, and let us take you there.’”

He said that revenue-wise, Sprout’s clients range from zero (meaning pre-revenue) up to about \$130 million. The smallest company Sprout has worked with has two employees and the largest about 200.

Some of Sprout’s clients include US Synthetic, a large manufacturer of synthetic diamonds used in oil and drill bits; Sentrix, which makes wound-healing products for the animal market; and AccessData, which specializes in forensics for technology.

Sprout has several virtual locations and is headquartered in Salt Lake City, UT.

Law talked about some of the skills he believes one needs to be successful in the marketing field:

“Honestly, in marketing, if you lean too heavily toward the analytical, you can miss the creative big idea,” he said. “And while it’s good to be meticulous and to measure everything, it’s the big ideas, the creativity, that takes the science, if you will, and makes it something of magic. And so I think a blend of both—the passion and the analytical and then the respect and the drive for the creative big ideas. You kind of have to have them both.”

Q. What do you do for fun?

A. I love sailing, and I love my two weeks a year in Maui. I love the beach. I love skiing—obviously we do a lot of it in Utah—and I love to read.

Q. What is in your CD player?

A. I love Kohala. It’s a Hawaiian guitar group. It’s just incredible music. It completely relaxes me and makes me feel like I’m on an island somewhere so I can just kind of chill. I would describe it as Hawaiian folk.

Q. What’s the last magazine you read?

A. I’m an addict of *Fast Company*. I love the articles in there.

Q. What’s your favorite TV show?

A. *24*.

Law studied communications and advertising at Brigham Young University and graduated in 1985. Following graduation, he joined Ogilvy Advertising in New York as an assistant account executive. At Ogilvy, Law worked on the Owens-Corning Fiberglas and Hardee’s Food accounts, among others. He was a senior executive at Ogilvy when he left to join software corporation Novell as a marketing communications manager in 1989. Law made it to Senior Marketing Communications Director for Novell and left in 1994 to join startup company Network Professional Association as its vice president of marketing. Law said working at Network piqued his interest in “marketing lots of companies.” He remained at Network for a year and a half.

In 1995, Law said he started consulting and then co-founded Knowlix, a knowledge-management software company, in 1998.

“Knowlix was like my final exam,” he said. “I put everything in practice that I had learned the preceding 15 years and launched a startup.”

Knowlix was acquired in 1999, and Law went to another startup company called NextPage, a computer software company that helps “companies track content and content changes in a virtual environment.”



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In June 2002, Law established Sprout Marketing. He said NextPage was his first client at Sprout.

Law discussed what he'd like to accomplish with Sprout in the next few years:

"I would like to expand Sprout nationwide and really work on the model to help smaller companies get super, high-level marketing,"

he said. "It's a real challenge. Most of the time, they can only afford junior team members, but I really want to make sure that they get good marketing from seasoned professionals."

Law was born and raised in Wilmette, IL. He's been married for almost 19 years and has four children, aged 17, 14, 11, and two.

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