

Josh Russell

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KEY ASSETS

Hard-to-find mix of strong traditional consumer packaged goods, brand management, and sports marketing background, nonprofit leadership, B2C and B2B experience, “car guy” passion, and get-it-done sensibility

*Transformational Leader * Innovative Thinker * Exceptionally Creative * Results Oriented * Sales Experience
* Strategic Planning, Promotion Concepting, and Executional Excellence **

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Windy City Motorcycle Company, Rosemont, IL

Marketing Director

April 2024 – November 2024

Marketing, social media, PR, communications, and event execution for a powersports dealership group with more than a dozen brick-and-mortar locations across Chicago, Milwaukee, and Detroit, with new product lines that include **Harley-Davidson, Triumph, KTM, Royal Enfield**, and **Polaris** ATVs/UTVs, plus national online retailing division **UsedMotorcycleStore.com**. Experience highlights include:

- Executed more than 40 individual enthusiast events/displays in 2024, including *Chicago Bike Nights* at Wild Fire Harley-Davidson (each drawing 1,200+ riders), MOTOBLLOT motorcycle & music festival in Chicago, Harley-Davidson Homecoming festival events in Milwaukee, motorcycle rides & shows, motorcycle track days, high-profile company-sponsored golf events, community events, and summer concert series event nights
- Used Sprout Social and Meta Business Suite platforms to create, schedule, post, and analyze social media content, events, and promotional messaging for the company and its dealerships
- Used Marigold Campaign Monitor and SimpleTexting to write, schedule, and send promotional consumer email and text messages, respectively
- Developed and executed the company’s first-ever *Patriots & Protectors VA Ride* in partnership with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Hines VA Hospital, and its Veteran Suicide Prevention program – tied to Harley-Davidson’s national *Salute To Service* weekend
- Used Harley-Davidson HD-net platform, tools, marketing assets, and legal review to guide planning, creative, design, and production work for dealership advertising, promotional, and POP materials
- Undertook event and sales promotion ideation, research, planning, creative development, and execution
- Managed through closure, PR, communications, and inventory liquidation sales of multiple dealership locations

The Workshop Marketing LLC, Chicago, IL

Founder & CEO

June 2023 – current

The Workshop overhauls, upgrades, or fine tunes marketing, advertising, social, promotion & activation efforts for its clients. We plan and build custom solutions that align to our clients’ objectives, delivering ROI, and rocketing their brands to the front of the field. Current client projects span across the automotive aftermarket, performance aftermarket, NHRA Drag Racing, rally racing, and the bar & restaurant industry.

Gilmore Car Museum, Hickory Corners, MI

Executive Director

September 2020 – April 2023

Executive management of the largest auto museum in North America, with more than 400 cars and motorcycles on display across a picturesque 90-acre historic campus in the Michigan countryside. Leading day-to-day operations of the 501(c)(3) nonprofit museum, delivering on our mission, executing exceptional events, driving our vision for the future, and reporting to our Board of Trustees, within two years my accomplishments have included:

- Managed through negative impact of the pandemic, immediately driving museum attendance and revenue to record levels in 2021/22 (+53% vs. pre-pandemic CY2019), and elevating the museum’s profile nationally
- Led a team of 20+ full-time and 60+ part-time, seasonal, and event staff, serving more than 130,000 guests annually

- Introduced innovative new shows and special events to drive attendance and engagement, including a classic boat show, vintage travel trailer rally, *Cars & Characters* Princess and Superhero days, a summer outdoor concert series, *Rock & Roll Dance Party* fundraiser event, Stand-Up Comedy Night, and Drive-In Movie Night
- Assisted in development of compelling museum exhibits, collections, vehicle loans, gallery updates, and dynamic experiences for museum guests
- Cultivated more than \$200,000 in new museum sponsorships, in-kind partnerships, and grants
- Introduced counter-seasonal programming to drive attendance and revenue, including *Winter Wonderland* walk-through and drive-through holiday lights, a *Winter Motoring Meet* vintage snowmobile show, Classic Boat Show, Vintage Travel Trailer Rally, *Hoods Up! Horsepower Tours*, and *DeutscheMarques Oktoberfest*
- Created *Gilmore Garage Works* auto restoration and trade skills *Winter Workshop Series* and *Summer Apprenticeships* with guest instructors, providing impactful hands-on tech education, inspiring automotive DIYers, and illuminating available career paths for young people
- Overhauled museum website, led advertising, promotional, and branding efforts, handled PR outreach, media interviews, and community relations, and pioneered museum influencer marketing initiatives
- Developed productive partnerships for the museum, with both regional and national entities including Hemmings, eBay Motors, NASCAR, Michigan International Speedway, Indianapolis Motor Speedway Museum, Muscle Car and Corvette Nationals (MCACN), Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra, Kalamazoo State Theatre, US 131 Motorsports Park, College for Creative Studies (CCS Detroit), NMRA/NMCA Drag Racing, GM Heritage Center, and Dodge/Mopar (Stellantis)
- Invited to join the Board of Directors of the National Association of Automobile Museums in 2021

PROtential, St. Charles, IL

Executive Vice President & Creative Director

March 2012-September 2020

Development and management of sports marketing investments, sponsorships, trade promotions, consumer promotions, retail activation, event marketing, creative, advertising, branding initiatives, social media, trade show displays, and photo/video/digital production for PROtential clients. While our agency specializes in motorsports and automotive marketing, our capabilities and experience allow us to serve our clients' needs across many other disciplines. Recent client initiatives include:

NASCAR sponsorship management, retail activation, consumer promotions, and race hospitality for **SMITHFIELD FOODS**, the world's largest producer of pork products (\$15 Billion) with leading consumer packaged meat brands across categories

Created and introduced the first **SKILLS USA** National Signing Day for the Trades with **KLEIN TOOLS** (\$500+ Million) in 2019, to celebrate high school seniors entering the skilled trades, securing national spokesperson duo of **NFL FOOTBALL** San Francisco 49ers Quarterback Jimmy Garoppolo alongside his father Tony Garoppolo – a career union electrician – who helped deliver more than 300 million impressions in the event's very first year

Negotiated presenting sponsorship of Motor Trend's **ROADKILL ZIP-TIE DRAGS** event for **PANDUIT CORP.** (\$1 Billion), executing onsite activation and video production with hosts David Freiburger and Mike Finnegan

Chicago Fire **MLS SOCCER** sponsorship, trade & consumer promotions, TV advertising, guest hospitality, and match-day activation for **KRAKUS POLISH HAM** (#1 Deli Ham in Chicago Market)

Worked with national and regional **MAKE-A-WISH** chapters to develop and execute **KRETSCHMAR DELI MEATS & CHEESES** sponsored in-store, PR, digital and event fundraiser promotion campaigns with grocery retailers including Albertsons, Jewel-Osco, and Redner's Markets – as well as celebratory "send-off" parties for wish kids and their families

Helped design and execute regional and customer-specific Gift-With-Purchase, sweepstakes, and trade sales contest programs to leverage **FEDERAL-MOGUL MOTORPARTS** (\$3 Billion) sponsorship of NHL HOCKEY, sending customers to the annual NHL Winter Classic® and regional NHL Stadium Series® outdoor hockey games

Tanner Foust and Red Bull Global Rallycross sponsorship management, trade promotions, consumer promotions, event marketing, and race hospitality for **NAPA AUTO PARTS** (\$14 Billion), and its private label chassis parts manufacturer partner **FEDERAL-MOGUL MOTORPARTS**

Motorsports sponsorship management, event creative, logo identity development, and 100th anniversary creative for **SNAP-ON INC.**, a leading global manufacturer (\$3+ Billion) of tools & equipment for professionals

Motorsports sponsorship management in **NHRA Drag Racing** and **NASCAR**, plus mobile marketing, a grassroots racing program, and product training events for **OLD WORLD INDUSTRIES (PEAK Antifreeze, BlueDEF)**, one of the largest privately-held companies competing in the automotive aftermarket (\$1+ Billion)

Affinia Global Brake & Chassis (Raybestos), McHenry, IL

August 2007-February 2012

Vice President of Marketing, and Director of Sales & Marketing for Online, Performance and Racing

Raybestos Brakes, Raybestos (SPICER) Chassis Parts, NAPA Brake & Chassis, CARQUEST Brake & Chassis

Across brands, responsible for marketing strategy, integrated communications, creative development, advertising production, media, motorsports programs, racing league relationships, racing team/driver relationships, promotions, field sales support, sponsorships, partnerships, research initiatives, new product development, and outside suppliers. Oversee more than \$10 million in annual marketing spending for the \$1 billion brake & chassis division. Beginning in January 2010, also accepted formal sales responsibility to drive distribution and share in important, developing segments for the brand: Online Retail, Performance Aftermarket, and Racing.

Media/Communications Programs: TV, Print, Radio, Digital, Social, In-Store, Direct, Motorsports, PR/Event, Promotions, Mobile Marketing, Catalog, Technical Services & Training

Highlighted Experience:

- Received ACC *Best In Show* award for the Digital & Social Media promotional campaign surrounding the Raybestos 1964 GTO-R integrated sweepstakes, and its RaybestosGarage.com microsite.
- Created and developed perennial Raybestos summer “project build” sweepstakes, which in 2011 generated 300 million impressions, 60,000 unique entries, and a sellout of 5,000 promotional kits within 45 days.
- Executed fresh, contemporary advertising campaigns for key brands, dynamic selling videos, improved websites, and e-tools.
- Developed and introduced breakthrough, best-in-class sales promotions: RaybestosGarage.com, Raybestos Rookie Racing School, NAPA NASCAR Crew Chief Training, themed consumer rebates, loyalty and incentive programs.
- Executed consumer research, developed and validated strategy, and ultimately extended Raybestos brand to re-launch the company’s premium chassis parts line in 2008.
- Successfully managed \$10+ MM marketing, advertising, sales promotion, technical services and training budget through annual business planning cycles and several rounds of challenging budget reductions.
- Delivered presentations at executive-level customer meetings, national sales conferences, trade shows, and corporate board of directors meetings.
- Developed and managed critical media relationships: automotive trade print, enthusiast print, racing media, television, radio, and digital.
- Introduced vastly improved package designs across multiple product lines, as well as vibrant new logo designs, artwork, website content, POS/signage and apparel.
- Engaged in Category Management discipline to aid in making fact-based decisions and customer recommendations; used both custom primary research and subscription tools such as NPD, Polk, IMR, and more.
- Worked with NASCAR corporate licensing to activate “Official Brakes of NASCAR” status, NASCAR Raybestos *Rookie of the Year*, and contingency sponsorship programs; pitched NASCAR competition directors and R&D staff on Spec Brake designation.
- Negotiated expanded Joe Gibbs Racing (NASCAR) Technical and Marketing partnership deal; captured testimonials, film, and photography assets for proper activation of Raybestos Brake & Chassis lines.
- Through Joe Gibbs Racing partnership, created ad/promo/POS campaign featuring team management Joe Gibbs and J.D. Gibbs, drivers Kyle Busch, Denny Hamlin, and Joey Logano, crew chief Greg Zipadelli, and more.
- Initiated and developed IndyCar Series “Preferred Road & Street Course Brakes” league relationship, as well as supply relationships with series teams & distributors.

- Negotiated and structured race team Technical/Marketing Partnerships and driver/crew personal service agreements across multiple series: NASCAR, IndyCar, SCCA, Off-Road, grassroots, and more.
- Coordinated partnership with UTI/NTI automotive trade schools for young mechanics.

Sales Achievements:

- Established direct B2B supply relationships with several leading Online Retailers and Racing/Performance distributors through 2010-11, including Amazon.com, Rock Auto, JCWhitney.com, US Auto Parts Network, CV Products, and Hoerr Racing – representing millions in incremental product sales.
- Established multi-year supply agreements with new NASCAR team customers in 2010-11, including Roush Fenway, Richard Petty Motorsports, Earnhardt Ganassi, and Tommy Baldwin Racing.

Old World Industries (PEAK Antifreeze), Northbrook, IL

July 2004-July 2007

Director of Marketing

December 2006 – July 2007

Brand Manager – PEAK Antifreeze, Mr. Clean, & New Product Development

July 2004 – December 2006

Across brands, responsible for marketing strategy, integrated communications, creative development, advertising production, media, motorsports programs, promotions, sponsorships, partnerships, research initiatives, new product development, and outside suppliers. Oversee more than \$25 million in annual marketing spending.

Media/Communications Programs: TV, Radio, Print, Digital, In-Store, Direct, Motorsports, PR/Event, Promotions, Product Placement/Integration, Mobile Marketing, Grassroots/Guerilla

Highlighted Experience:

- Developed all marketing strategy and tactics, directing an advertising agency, media buying agency, public relations agency, motorsports marketing partner, and design teams toward common brand goals.
- Brought recommendation to sign IndyCar Series driver Danica Patrick and activation plan to OWI management – revitalizing PEAK, growing brand awareness, retail distribution, and market share; all of which strengthened its position in the market, and delivered a tremendous contribution to the brand's equity and long-term value for ownership.
- Deep personal involvement in acquisition of new PEAK distribution at more than 6,000 Wal-Mart, Advance, and O'Reilly stores – from buyer presentations, to planogram recommendations, category management analyses, retailer promotion programs, and overall marketing leadership.
- Developed strong relationships with Procter & Gamble executives, who admired our marketing programs and accomplishments – and expanded the scope of the strategic partnership.
- Established and cultivated enviable relationships with influential industry opinion leaders that impact brand preference and sales: examples include Ford Racing, *Hot Rod Magazine* editorial staff, Goodguys, Skip Barber, race teams, custom car builders, aftermarket trade publications, peer aftermarket companies, consumer media, and enthusiast TV personalities, and production companies.

Responsibilities and Achievements:

PEAK Antifreeze

- Created breakthrough, award-winning “When You PEAK, You Win” multi-media advertising campaign featuring Danica Patrick.
- Redesigned, improved, and brought uniformity to package labeling across entire product line.
- Concepted and executed annual 4th quarter national promotions for the PEAK brand, supported by advertising, retail point-of-sale, and PR.
- Negotiated and developed formal relationships with: IndyCar Series (Official Marketing Partner), Rahal Letterman Racing (Associate Sponsor), Andretti Green Racing (Associate Sponsor and Official Antifreeze), NASCAR Nextel Cup Menards/PEAK DEI #15 entry (Associate Sponsor), Goodguys Rod & Custom Association (Official Antifreeze), Hot Rod Power Tour (Official Antifreeze), and PBA Bowling (Official Sponsor).
- Orchestrated multiple national-scale press events with Danica Patrick, Kyle Petty, Paul Menard, Mr. Clean, and OWI management.
- Negotiated and executed entitlement sponsorship of the PEAK Indy 300, championship race of the IndyCar Series season, with both ABC and Chicagoland Speedway.
- Managed customer hospitality/entertainment and VIP programs: Indy 500, Racing Lessons, AAPEX/SEMA.

- Developed strong relationships with Danica Patrick, her parents, race teams, agent, and partners.

Mr. Clean: AutoDry Car Wash System, Windshield Washer Fluid, and Wiper Blades

- Catapulted P&G's venerable Mr. Clean brand into the automotive channel with successful development, concept validation, product testing, and retail launch of these items.

BBDO, Chicago, IL

October 1998-June 2004

Vice President, Account Supervisor

December 2002 – June 2004

Account Supervisor

July 2001 – November 2002

Senior Account Executive

November 1999 – June 2001

Account Executive

October 1998 – October 1999

Was responsible for brand strategy, integrated communications planning, creative development, advertising production, research initiatives and day-to-day service across my clients' businesses. Served as agency steward for my clients' brands, and worked as a partner with their marketing leadership. Across accounts, had been responsible for up to \$20 million in marketing spending annually, which included:

Wm. Wrigley Jr. Co. Chicago, IL

- Hubba Bubba Bubble Gum, Bubble Tape Bubble Gum, Everest Powerful Mint Gum, Big League Chew Bubble Gum, and other kids novelty confections.
- From 1998 to 2004, roughly doubled sales of Bubble Tape Bubble Gum (to \$45MM) in a declining bubble gum category. Achieved category leadership in all trade classes except c-stores. Developed successful "How Much Can You Handle?" integrated advertising and promotional campaign forged from a strong consumer insight.
- Through the "Some Like It Cold" and "Mint Gum Without Mercy" advertising campaigns to launch Everest powerful mint gum, helped to grow sales to \$13MM by 2002 -- double the original forecast.

Borden Cheese and Dairy Products. Columbus, OH

- "Borden Brings the Dairy Home"
- Successfully re-positioned and re-launched the dormant Borden brand in regional markets; involved in every aspect of the restage from positioning & advertising development, to TV campaign to print ads, FSI production, recipe selection and packaging redesign.

MARC USA, Chicago, IL

April 1996-September 1998

Formerly K&R/MARC, and Keroff & Rosenberg Advertising

As Account Executive, was instrumental in all aspects of account management, including research, planning, creative, media and production for accounts including Chicago Tribune, Cole Taylor Bank, Empress Casino, Rush Prudential Health Plans, and Yellow Cab.

EDUCATION

Western Michigan University. Kalamazoo, MI

Haworth College of Business

BBA, December 1996

Major: Advertising

Minor: General Business

Recipient of WMU Medallion Academic Scholarship

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Proficient With: MS Office (PowerPoint, Word, Excel, Outlook, Project), Adobe Suite, Google Analytics, Marigold Campaign Monitor, SimpleTexting, CRM platforms, Circana/NPD/IRI, Nielsen, Meta (Facebook/Instagram), and more. Pretty good with a mig welder and set of hand tools, too.

PERSONAL

Passions include traditional-style hot rods and customs, racing, motorcycles, vintage boats, DIY home remodeling, basketball, football, cooking, tiki bars, and travel.