

Will Kessler

willkessler.com

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Highlights

- Co-founder, Vice President, and CTO of nine high-technology startups. Assisted fund-raising efforts at all stages.
- Large corporation experience at PowerReviews/Bazaarvoice, IDG, Cisco, Sony.
- Extensive hands-on, ground-up experience building community systems, social networks, virality, and content search.
- Team builder/manager/mentor in fast-paced environments
- Author of multiple software patents

Education

- Stanford University, MSME Smart Product Design, 1989.
- Stanford University, BSME Product Design with Special Focus on 3D Computer Graphics, 1987.
- Baccalaureat with Distinction (Philosophie), Poitiers, France, 1983.

Recent Work Experience

Dir Engineering@PowerReviews/ Senior Dev Mgr @ Bazaarvoice **Sep Dec 2011-Present**

Background:

[PowerReviews](http://PowerReviews.com) and [Bazaarvoice](http://Bazaarvoice.com) are the SAAS leaders in ratings/reviews and question/answer software. Clients comprise more than half of the IR500, with logos such as Best Buy, REI, Gap, and Walmart, as well as thousands of SMBs worldwide.

Key Achievements:

- At PowerReviews, I managed a team of 8 engineers in 3 teams to launch the Essential Social Suite—a group of offerings adding social sharing, product discovery and highly enabled consumer advocacy (Community) to its basic ratings & reviews products. As Engineering Director, I managed hiring, promotion, engineering resource budgets, oversaw the full SDLC release process (java/spring/hibernate/velocity/postgres), and evaluated and purchased new technologies. Worked tightly with Product Managers and Customer Support to ensure we launched and provided world-class services.
- I architected the next generation of content delivery for PowerReviews. Where previously content was delivered statically in zip files, the new system could dynamically deliver more lively, fresher, SEO-optimized content, yet still scale to the millions of daily pageviews required.
- I assisted the company with due diligence procedures towards its acquisition by Bazaarvoice in the summer of 2012.
- At Bazaarvoice, I currently oversee 8 engineers and 2 contractors on four initiatives: Loyalty (consumer advocacy), BV Local (supporting distributorships), BV Express (previously PowerReviews' SMB offering), and PowerReviews Core stack.
- Loyalty, BV Local, and BV Express are being rebuilt on BV's new Conversations 2013 platform under my supervision. This new platform employs a very similar design/technology stack (nodejs/cassandra/phantomjs/akamai) to the "next gen system" that I architected for PowerReviews.

CTO, GroupPulse Inc

Sep 2010-Dec 2011

Background:

[GroupPulse Inc](http://GroupPulse.com) created social games where today's big questions become stimulating, thought-provoking, and fun. Our successful games included RocketPolls and Question Party, with nearly 6M players combined.

Key Achievements:

- [Question Party](#) players answer questions about their friends and ask their own of their friends or the public. Question Party grew from just a few hundred users to almost 5 million users in a few months, all via viral growth. Total ad spend: less than \$1000.
- In [RocketPolls](#) players create fun, graphical polls, and compete to predict poll outcomes to win prizes—everything from virtual coins to movie tickets to iPads.
- RocketPolls leveraged all of Facebook's viral channels. It sports a content flow system for processing user-generated content, a fully vetted prize awarding system, and a virtual goods purchasing system with Paypal.
- RocketPolls and Question Party were built by a staff 4 engineers and one graphic designer.
- Tech: jQuery, LAMP, Redis. AWS Autoscaling, monitoring and maintenance: Zabbix & Hudson. Custom-built, real-time user-tracking tools allowed us to maximize growth and respond rapidly to user behavior and frequent Facebook outtages.

VP/Engineering, Minted LLC**Nov 2007-Jul 2008****Background:**

[minted.com](#) applies crowd-sourcing to the world of high-end stationery products. Many products are voted to the top by the community, and all products are completely custom.

Key Achievements:

- As the first technical hire, I specified, designed all aspects of architecture, including schema, core product code, front-end flow, etc, and created a team to build it.
- Collaborated with CEO on business strategy w/r/t technology: functionality, timing, costing, and staffing.
- Personally coded key product aspects such as the product Customizer, search engine, and cart/checkout. All of these heavily leverage Ajax /jQuery for a highly interactive feel.
- Oversaw production processes, including production data flow into the database. Pricing of Minted products is very complex because of the hundreds of varying options, so many tools were built to assist this.
- Built all back-end integration points, such as Cybersource, printer relationships, etc
- Oversaw successful launch in March 08 after 4 month rapid development process.
- Hired staff of two engineers and CSS specialist. Also hired an outsourced development firm and several key individual contractors.

VP/Engineering, BuzzLogic Inc.**Jun 2005-Sep 2007****Background:**

[BuzzLogic](#) pioneered the science of locating *influencers* in social media, as a tool for brand management and tracking or altering public opinion.

Key Achievements:

- First hire: built the technology infrastructure from the ground up. Grew the engineering staff to eight engineers.
- Designed the core influence algorithm that constantly tracks conversations and calculates levels of influence across an index of hundreds of millions of social media pages.
- Filed two patents covering innovations in BuzzLogic's influence algorithm, including content categorization and filtering, page sectioning, and topically focused link-pattern analysis.
- Built original prototype system exhibited at Demo 2006, and then led development on production system, launched April 2007 to multiple Fortune 500 clients. Significant hands-on contribution to all three tiers of SAAS enterprise application.
- Managed internal and outsourced teams on products that leverage "influentials" to create highly targeted ad campaigns.
- Led due diligence efforts that secured over \$1M in seed funding, and \$9M in A Round funding, from Adams Capital/TransCosmos Ventures. Wrote infrastructure and staffing cost projections to align with op-ex model, and provided CEO with pricing models based upon cost per influence analysis.

Background:

ParentsTrust.com was a successful, trusted marketplace for parents—a safe and effective way to exchange and sell all that extra kids stuff in your own locale.

Key Achievements:

- Designed and executed every part of property, from initial concept to launch and ongoing marketing campaigns.
- Double-opt-in membership, spam-blocking controls, and cross-posting to Craigslist.org created a friendly, safe environment for shoppers.

Consulting Clients

TheSkinnyScoop.com Sole developer. Helped founder launch her dream of a “Yahoo Answers” specifically for Moms, with a powerful search and community system. Product launched in just under 4 months. Apr-Aug 2009.

TheSkinnyScoop.com Called back by the CEO on a consulting basis to rebuild infrastructure for scaling, improve Facebook presence, and solve search issues. Nov 2012-Present.

[The HARC Center, UCSF](http://TheHARC.Center) Reworked GPS-Prot Gene Discovery Tool with jQuery and better applet support. Jan-Mar 2009

Other freelance clients have included: Zinio Systems (patent authoring), MacHome.com, American Academy of Ophthalmology, AdvantageYellow.com (web development)

Previous Roles (see full details in older resume at willkessler.com) **1988-2004**

Co-Founder/Architect, ABCFree.com <i>Online Marketplace</i>	Sep 2004-March 2004
Technical Director, Rentfair, Inc. (<i>Netflix competitor</i>)	Mar 2003 – Aug 2003
VP/Tech, Digital Stories, Inc. (Sony) <i>Ebook Publishing</i>	June 2000 – Sept 2001
Technical Director, IDG.net <i>High-tech Publishing</i>	October 1998 – June 2000
VP/Tech, DigitalFacades Corporation <i>Multimedia Services</i>	1992 – 1998
Co-Founder, Beyond Technology, Inc. <i>3D visualization systems</i>	1988 – 1992

Interests

- Past President and Vice President, San Francisco Renaissance Toastmasters (CTM).
- Squash (the sport), sketching, African music, and cooking, and raising 3 boys.

References (contact information available upon request)

- Vince Monical, Google Corp.
- Laurie Morgan, CEO AdvantageYellow.com
- Sean Fee, CEO, Rentfair
- Kurt Freytag, SVP Products, Oodle
- Mariam Naficy, CEO, Minted LLC
- Eden Godsoe, CEO, TheSkinny Scoop