

Will Kessler

willkessler.com

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Portfolio with recent work samples at : <http://www.willkessler.com>

Highlights

- I especially enjoy early stage media and consumer plays where founders have a strong vision. I love to build *incredibly slick* consumer products with small teams — asap!
- Co-founder, Vice President, and CTO of seven startups. Assisted fund-raising efforts at all stages.
- Extensive hands-on experience in community systems, social networks, virality, and content search over lots of content.
- Project owner/ tech-team manager /mentor.
- Large corporation and management experience at IDG, Cisco, Sony.
- Authored 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.

Outside Interests

- I love bicycling, playing squash, noir novels, giving Toastmasters speeches, and drawing. Every so often I try my hand at surfing in Pacifica.
- I am the proud father of three little boys who are hooked on Lego Ninjago and riding Caltrain.

Recent Work Experience

CTO, GroupPulse Inc

Sep 2009-Present

Background:

GroupPulse Inc creates social games where today's big questions become stimulating, thought-provoking, and fun. Our successful games include [Question Party](#) and [RocketPolls](#), 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 was < \$1k.
- 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 leverages 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 me and a staff of 2-4 engineers with one graphic designer.
- Built a full deployment stack on jQuery, LAMP, Redis. Autoscaling via AWS ELB with Zabbix, Hudson and other tools.
- Extensive monitoring and real-time user-tracking tools allowed us to maximize growth and respond rapidly to user behavior and Facebook outtages.

Developer/Consultant, TheSkinnyScoop.com

Apr 2009-Aug 2009

Launched founders' dream of a "Yahoo Answers" specifically for Moms, with a powerful search and community system. From mocks to launch in just under 4 months (I was sole developer).

Developer/Consultant, the [HARC Center](#), UCSF

Jan 2009-Mar 2009

Reworked Gene Discovery Tool w/jQuery and improved core applet support for researchers.

VP/Engineering, Minted LLC

Nov 2007-Jul 2008, Aug 2008-Dec 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:

- Specified, designed all aspects of architecture, including schema, core product code, front-end flow, etc.
- Collaborated with CEO on business strategy w/r/t technology: functionality, timing, costing, and staffing.
- 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.
- Launched Christmas-card support and hired replacement VP during consulting period of August 2008-December 2008.

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 from 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 our search partner's white-label search technology to serve BuzzLogic's needs for extensive analysis at crawl-time (2 man years invested).
- Led due diligence efforts that secured over \$1M in seed funding, and \$9M in A Round funding, from Adams Capital/TransCosmos Ventures. To this end, wrote infrastructure and

- staffing cost projections to align with op-ex model, and provided CEO with pricing models based upon cost per influence analysis.
- Managed internal team and two outsourced teams on three products that leverage and partner with influencers to create highly targeted ad campaigns.

Founder/Owner, ParentsTrust.com

Jan 2004-May 2005

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.
- Cross-browser DHTML front-end ensures rapid load-times, without sacrificing visual appeal.
- MySQL back-end acquires content from RSS and email feeds as well as via on-site submission screens, and auto-categorizes it for optimum browsability.
- A custom-built application server, XMLForm quickly built pages, forms, and session-based interactions.

Past Consulting Clients

- AdvantageYellow.com *Web development*
- Zinio Systems, Inc. *Patent Authoring*
- MacHome.com *Web development*
- American Academy of Ophthalmology *Web development, Architecture*

Previous Roles (see full details in older resume at willkessler.com)

1988-2004

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| 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. (<i>Sony</i>) <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 kids.

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