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What's the Origin Story of Bellwether?

I wish I could tell you we drew up some complex business plan during a 5-day brainstorming retreat. The reality is Bellwether was born out of necessity. My co-founder, Alan Edwards, and I were technical directors behind some of the industry's most celebrated events. After years of watching agencies set...let's say...overly-optimistic expectations and struggle to deliver on critical outcomes, it was clear that it didn't need to be so hard. We shared a vision to create a leaner, more creative, and easily scalable event production company. Ten years later Bellwether is recognized as an industry leader thanks to the powerful simplicity in 4 areas: Boutique service. Global resources. Promises kept. Laughter encouraged.

With so many agencies, what makes Bellwether unique?

The typical production company model is broken because it doesn't truly align with each customer's best interest. One recent example we witnessed: After an extensive RFP the awarded agency had to tell their client that the RFP response budgets and designs wouldn't work in the venue. Many agencies are more focused on winning than executing, so they over-promise and underdeliver continually. We are passionate about delivering a "Render to Reality" experience in every aspect of design, creative and production. From the initial renderings and budgets to the numerous revisions, to the final execution we do considerably more due diligence than our competitors to deliver on EVERY promise. It's why our clients are hyper-loyal to Bellwether and take us with them to new corporations as their careers grow.

What's the secret to Bellwether's being so successful over the long term?

This isn't an easy business but done correctly it doesn't need to be as hard as so many brands experience. You hear a lot of chatter about satisfaction, but that's generally focused on attendees and executives. We extend that critical metric to include our people and our partners. When you're on-site with Bellwether you can absolutely feel the difference. Talented people in a positive environment will deliver miraculous outcomes...every time. We also believe that bigger is not always better. We don't want to grow to be a huge agency because that would require us to implement policies & procedures focused on our needs vs staying a boutique

agency who can focus on each client's specific needs and processes. Finally, we turn down a lot of opportunities because we want it to be a great fit for everyone including our current clients. We only take on new projects if 1) we're the ideal partner for the project, 2) our people can have a great experience doing challenging work and 3) taking on the new project doesn't impact promises made to others who've already awarded us their trust.

Bellwether is recognized as an industry leader, so what are your predictions for the future of events?

As the father of 3 daughters, I'm painfully aware that my understanding of current trends is, let's say, below average. As for the future, what got us here won't get the industry through the next 3 years. It's a completely different game in nearly every way. Past events were designed with an "Escape Room" mentality where attendees must follow a process mandated to them. Keynote to breakouts to expo...rinse, repeat. Future events (as early as 2023) will have far fewer people in the keynote room. Instead, attendees will be able to choose their adventure and are encouraged to ingest the content in their preferred place (Keynote, Expo, Lounges, Digital). Production technology continues to evolve allowing for far shorter production schedules, saving considerable time and money. Simply said: Better. Faster. Cheaper.

What are you most excited about for the industry going forward?

Coming out of the pandemic, we have a unique opportunity to reimagine events. Prior to the pandemic Bellwether was already working to disrupt the traditional model by offering clients innovative ways to educate and engage attendees. With everything going digital for nearly three years, our unique vision and ideas are now easier for our clients to comprehend and embrace. As an industry we can take what we've learned during the last few years of digital events and expand it into a highly customized hybrid model. Today we can give attendees more power to shape their journey and our clients new communication pathways. At no time in event marketing history have we had such a disruption of the norm. It's a fantastic opportunity and as an industry we have to capitalize on this unique moment to create something entirely new...and better.