



Jay Hover

University of Wisconsin '07



When Jay Hover graduated with a B.S. in economics from the University of Wisconsin, his path wasn't entirely clear. "I had explored marketing positions during school, but I wasn't entirely sure of a career path," recounts Hover. As it turned out, the entrepreneurial style of work at MBI has been a good fit. It was a job that allowed him to capitalize on his marketing experience while involving him in aspects of the business with which he

was less familiar. "You're going to make a lot of mistakes in the beginning," says Hover, "but you keep moving forward and adapt and eventually get the hang of it." He also enjoys the free flow of ideas, and takes satisfaction in the creative process of working with designers to come up with marketing materials that hit just the right note with customers.

Jay appreciates seeing hard work pay off for himself and others, as it did with an MBI product devoted to Barack Obama. "We wanted to capture the excitement people were feeling right after the election, but it meant working fast." There is always an undertone of urgency working at MBI, but this undertaking was unlike anything he had faced before. Creating marketing materials for a product that didn't yet exist within an extremely tight deadline was just one of the many constraints Jay dealt with during this rapid-fire product launch. After the marketing effort went out at breakneck pace, focus then shifted to product development and getting the product shipped to customers within a reasonable time.

Working at MBI has provided Jay with a wide breadth of experience. One assignment in particular had him participating in producing an infomercial — a marketing medium that doesn't fall within the company's traditional business model. "It was great to help pioneer this process and develop an infomercial from scratch." Scripts needed to be written, hosts selected and product prepared to star in this TV spot. Even the seemingly simple task of processing customer orders posed new challenges, and Jay called upon his college experience in website design to help create a new site for

"Since day one I was being groomed to run a multi-million dollar business. It's trying, but extremely rewarding, especially coming straight out of undergrad."

the infomercial. In the end, after an exhausting few months, he was excited to see that his hard work had paid off and the TV spot was successful at bringing in new customers to MBI.

What Jay admits he likes best is the daily mix of marketing, product development and other duties: “There are so many things to do for so many different products at so many different stages that you are wearing all these different hats throughout the day. It makes time go by fast — you’re never bored. There’s always something to be done, and it makes your days enjoyable because of the variety.”

Jay has worked with a number of Product Managers since joining MBI, and found them to be supportive and receptive to new ideas while insisting that every Assistant Manager stand on his or her own two feet. “Each manager has notable strengths and is extremely experienced in this business. They definitely have a lot of knowledge and history behind their endeavors. Product Managers do a good job of instilling responsibility, as you are ultimately in charge of your own products. They will want you to formulate a reasonable approach to a situation before they give their input.” Product Managers want to make sure that the Assistant Managers are thinking about these things in their own capacity. “You will definitely be challenged and will need to spend time not only analyzing the details, but also stepping back and thinking about the bigger picture,” explains Jay.

The congeniality of MBI’s corporate culture, exemplified in Jay’s case by having the company’s CEO periodically pop into his office with a quick question, extends past business hours, as well. Jay rooms with one of his co-workers in New York City, and notes that “there is a lot of camaraderie with the younger managers, and it’s definitely a great environment to be in during and after work. Everyone else is trying to learn the business at the same time you are, so it helps that you can ask each other questions and rely on one another.” Jay attends happy hours and other functions with co-workers in both Connecticut and New York City and credits the diversity and varied backgrounds of his MBI co-workers for helping him build a solid group of friends in New York.