



creator
 adventurer
 original
 energetic
 imaginative
 motivator
 innovator
 loyal
 enthusiastic
 visionary
 insightful
 dreamer
 excellence
 dynamic

"...people are magnetized by your passion for what you love..."
 — David Roberts,
Regional VP for Fairmont Hotels Alberta, Canada

sales leadership

created and shaped a revolutionary way of selling
 conceptualized and built the unique and visionary brand of Rare Indigo
 developed and drove the overall global sales strategies
 personally grew Rare revenues to \$1.2 million in one year, and \$4 million in three years



elise williamson

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Global Sales and Marketing – Hospitality Industry

A highly energetic entrepreneurial executive with a track record of outstanding results in sales and marketing and a passion for product development and sales excellence.

Experienced applying expert knowledge in launching products, creating new markets, and developing winning sales strategies for start-up and multi-national companies.

- Founded and grew Rare Indigo to be a global leader in the destination management industry, winning nine industry awards in its ten-year history. Sold the company in 2003.
- Led sales and marketing efforts that resulted in millions of dollars of pre-sold business for Fairmont Chateau Whistler Resort even before the doors were open. The resort is now a widely acclaimed, year-round destination with an international clientele.
- Transformed Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise from a four month, individual and tour group hotel to a year-round resort by focusing on previously unexplored markets.

Rare Indigo Destination Marketing Inc. – Vancouver, BC

Founding Partner, Board of Directors
 Director of Sales and Business Development

In 1993, co-founded Rare Indigo, a leading destination management company specializing in innovative and award-winning incentive travel programming and creative events. During start-up, worked with partners to develop the business model, refine the corporate culture and key messages, and develop strategic global partnerships with synergistic corporate clients.

Assumed responsibility as Director of Sales and Business Development, and was the key sales driver for the company from 1993 to 1996. Travelled worldwide, developing client relationships through personal sales calls, sales missions with industry partners, boardroom presentations, trade shows, and extensive phone outreach.

As a partner, played an instrumental role in building a unique corporate culture with a focus on company values that promoted team synergy and creativity, attracted highly charged professionals, provided an uncompromising level of client service, and drove a better bottom line.



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rare accolades

"Best Event Produced for a Corporation Overall Budget \$250,000-500,000," Special Event Magazine, 2004

"Best Ever Event Produced for a Private Individual," International Special Events Magazine Award, 2001

"One of the 50 fastest growing companies in British Columbia," BC Business Magazine, 2000

"One of the best companies to work for," in British Columbia, BC Business Magazine, 1999

Ernst & Young "Entrepreneur of the Year Award" nominee for British Columbia in 1999

"Best Corporate Brochure in Canada," Lotus Award, 1994

Sales and Marketing Leadership

- Created and shaped a revolutionary way of selling and marketing inbound incentive programming to western Canada that was recognized nationally and globally with multiple nominations and awards in the hospitality/incentive industry.
- Conceptualized and built the unique and visionary brand of Rare Indigo that established the company's award-winning identity among industry partners, clients, and employees.
- Developed and drove the overall global sales strategies of Rare Indigo by identifying and creating individualized plans for various market sectors.
- Built, trained, mentored and led sales organization to achieve 400% revenue growth annually, reaching top line sales of \$8.2 million in 2002.
- Pitched and won the largest incentive program that had ever come to western Canada (Merrill Lynch, with 4,500 participants, generating \$4.0 million in revenue).

Business / Financial Management

- As a business partner, was fully accountable for annual business/market strategic planning, advertising and promotion budget management, business development, sales forecasting, and review of financial performance and operating budgets.
- Established co-operative relationships with leading industry government partners that have resulted in millions of dollars in revenues and a distinctive positioning within the highly competitive global market.
- Developed and maintained a clear organizational plan for business growth revising the plan based on the direction of growth and financial capabilities of the company.
- Achieved business objectives through effective sales forecasting and budgeting. Sustained strong revenue gains and generated above average profits, despite a fiercely competitive market.
- Established and built a client base of Fortune 500 companies and Incentive Houses, of which 80% were US-based, and 20% were Canada, UK, Australia, and Europe.
- Business ownership and Board of Directors experience. Negotiated shareholder agreement and sale of company shares.



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corporate relationships

- CitiGroup
- Prudential
- Merrill Lynch
- American Express
- Kimberley Clark
- Oracle Corp.
- Seagate Technologies
- Pfizer
- IBM - Asia Pacific
- Audi
- General Electric
- Applied Materials
- BI Performance Group
- US Motivation
- Carlson Marketing Group
- Maritz

Fairmont Hotels and Resorts – Toronto, ON

Director of Sales and Marketing
Chateau Whistler Resort, Whistler, BC (1988 - 1993)

After nearly 10 years of success in sales, marketing, and public relations for Fairmont Hotels and Resorts, was selected to serve on a 6-person feasibility team to determine whether Fairmont (then Canadian Pacific Hotels and Resorts) should open the Chateau Whistler Resort. These efforts led to the opening of the largest resort hotel built in Canada since the turn of the century.

The Chateau Whistler Resort is now an immensely successful year-round destination resort with an international clientele. As an executive team member, created all pre-opening Sales and Marketing Pro-formas, and subsequent Sales and Marketing Strategic Action Plans.

- Initially served as key sales strategist and sales driver building the Tour and Travel, FIT, Meeting and Incentive, Association, and Special Interest Group markets. Recruited and led a sales team of five to handle all markets.
- Instrumental in positioning the hotel as the premiere deluxe hotel experience, and the resort as a year-round destination.
- Created an atmosphere of spirit and energy in the hotel to attract highly motivated and professional employees.
- Motivated, inspired, and rewarded the sales team; created internal incentive programs for Sales and Front Office teams.
- Created a market for summer and off-season business, substantially increasing summer occupancy rate from 30% in 1990 to 70% in 1993, along with a 50% increase in average rate.
- Pitched and won the biggest, most prestigious corporate group that had ever come to Whistler – the 1992 Pepsico Worldwide Management Conference – securing the resort’s highest summer rate ever.

Director of Sales and Marketing

Chateau Lake Louise, Lake Louise AB (1982 – 1988)

Promoted to become the first-ever Director of Sales and Marketing, transforming this world-renowned seasonal hotel into a year-round resort by focusing on previously unexplored markets. Member of the Executive Committee with responsibility for designing and executing Sales and Marketing Plans for this niche resort.

- Initially served as key sales driver, travelling five months of the year internationally selling Canada, the Canadian Rockies and Chateau Lake Louise. Built the sales department to a team of three, with a regional office in Calgary.



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languages

working knowledge of French and German

interests

reading, hiking, skiing, triathlon, dramatic arts, musical theatre, dance, drama, belly dancing and travel

sabbatical

following the sale of Rare Indigo, took a two-year sabbatical

learned new skills, re-energized, and challenged myself physically and mentally

completed the 26-mile accredited Marathon du Medoc in Bordeaux, France

skied and hiked in the Canadian Rockies – scaling over 100,000 vertical feet

traveled throughout western and southern India

was caught in, and survived the December 26, 2004 tsunami in Sri Lanka

learned to sit still

- Took the hotel from a four month, individual and tour group hotel to a year-round resort that worked with corporate meeting planners, international associations, and special interest groups, particularly US-based ski clubs (i.e. Texas Ski Council).
- As key sales driver and marketer during the first five years, results were so profound that the company proceeded with a 200-room addition.

Public Relations Director

Banff Springs Hotel – Banff, AB (1979 – 1982)

Served as contact and media liaison for the hotel, working with celebrities and VIPs, meeting with travel writers, coordinating itineraries, and organizing photo shoots.

- Supported corporate-driven sales and marketing campaign into the Japanese market, working with tour operators, media and industry partners
- Conducted historical and anecdotal tours at the Banff Springs Hotel and organized all the entertainment for the hotel.
- Coordinated international concerts and headline-grabbing entertainment programs.
- Promoted off-season experiential ski weeks and substantially increased rooms revenue in the shoulder season.

Education

Bachelor of Arts-German and English, Queens University. (1977).

Professional Development

Strategic Coach Program, StrategicCoach.com, 2002

Member, Society of Incentive Travel Executives (SITE), 1998 – 2000

References

Happy to forward upon request