

# Eric Lefkofsky

www.lefkofsky.com

**Eric Paul Lefkofsky (born September 1969) is a U.S.-born serial entrepreneur. He is currently president of Blue Media, LLC, a Chicago-based private equity and consulting firm focused on applied technology.**

Lefkofsky grew up in Southfield, Michigan; Lefkofsky's father, Bill, is a structural engineer, his mother Sandy was a school teacher. Lefkofsky attended the University of Michigan and graduated with honors in 1991. He continued on at University of Michigan Law School to receive his Juris Doctor in 1993. He is married with three children.



## **Entrepreneurial ventures**

Lefkofsky began his career selling carpet at the University of Michigan. After law school, in 1993, he and a college friend, Brad Keywell, borrowed money from relatives to buy an apparel company in Madison, Wisconsin named Brandon Apparel. In 1999, Lefkofsky and Keywell created an early Internet company called Starbelle that specialized in promotional products. Starbelle experienced rapid “pre-bubble” Internet growth and was sold to Halo Industries in January 2000. Eighteen months after the acquisition of Starbelle, Halo filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection.

After Starbelle, Lefkofsky, along with a core team of investors and entrepreneurs, founded InnerWorkings in the fall of 2001. InnerWorkings provides print procurement services for mid-sized companies and has achieved solid year-over-year growth. In August 2006, InnerWorkings had a successful initial public offering in the U.S. stock market (NASDAQ: INWK).

In February 2005, Lefkofsky and Keywell created a freight logistics company called Echo Global Logistics. Echo attracted series D financing from New Enterprise Associates (NEA), one of the largest technology investors in the country, in June 2006. Echo is currently considering an initial public offering.

In June 2006, Lefkofsky and Keywell founded MediaBank, a media-buying technology company. MediaBank provides advertising buyers with planning, buying, accounting and analysis software. In June 2007, MediaBank acquired Datatech, one of the leading media planning and procurement platforms in the advertising industry. In July 2007, New Enterprise Associates invested in MediaBank.

In January 2007, Lefkofsky and his partners provided funding for ThePoint.com, a collective action website founded by Andrew Mason. In January 2008, New Enterprise Associates invested in ThePoint.

## **Philanthropy**

In 2006, Eric Lefkofsky and his wife, Elizabeth, formed a charitable trust, the Lefkofsky Family Foundation, for the “purpose of supporting charitable, scientific, and educational organizations and causes around the world.” The Foundation has a focus on children and has helped fund more than 50 organizations to date.

## **Community interests**

Lefkofsky is on the board of directors at Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, and The Art Institute of Chicago. He is also a member of the Chicago 2016 Olympic Committee.

## **Teaching and published works**

Since his success at InnerWorkings, Lefkofsky began a teaching career at business schools in the Chicago area. He has taught Applied Technology at DePaul University's Kellstadt Graduate Business School. He is currently teaching a course in Disruptive Technology & Business Models at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management. In November 2007, Easton Studio Press published Lefkofsky's *Accelerated Disruption*, which focuses on how applied technology can drive business success.