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JUSTMEDIA 



"A VIEW FROM THE TOP"

TECH MEDIA INNOVATION IN THE HEART OF TEXAS  
FEATURING JAY HALLBERG

SPICEWORKS

INSIGHT INTO B2B MARKETING TRENDS, KEY INSIGHTS FOR MARKETERS AND PREDICTIONS FOR 2016

## Would you mind sharing a brief background on Spiceworks?

Spiceworks was founded in 2006 to simplify how IT professionals do their jobs and make their days more fun. As we were launching the company, we spent time with IT professionals in Austin just observing their day, seeing what tools they used, and understanding how they got their jobs done. One common theme emerged. They weren't passionate about any of the tools they were using.

So we set out to create an application that was simple, easy to use, and could be up and running in a few minutes – not something you hear everyday in IT. And then we decided to challenge ourselves even more. We decided to give it away for free and monetize by connecting those IT professionals with the brands trying to reach them via in-application advertising. We figured if it worked for Google, why couldn't the model also work for us in IT? Ten years, millions of IT professionals, and thousands of tech brands later, we've proven the model absolutely works.

## Briefly describe Spiceworks and how it fits into the media landscape?

Like Google, Facebook, or other marketing platforms today, we connect two audiences – buyers and the brands trying to reach them. In our case, we focus on connecting IT buyers and thousands of technology brands. We do so through a number of solutions including traditional advertising and email, research and insights, social capabilities, and content.

IT professionals are a notoriously difficult audience to reach and technology brands are now relying on us to help them develop campaigns that are more timely, relevant, and based on the unique first-party data our apps and community generate.

## How is Spiceworks different from other tech media solutions providers?

I think our differentiation lies in a couple of key areas. First, we've built the world's largest Community of IT professionals who rely on us for connections to their peers, brands, and an enormous amount of content that helps them do their jobs. Because of the Community, we're able to help technology brands understand their buyer at a much deeper, behavioral level.

Second, the applications we've developed complement the Community to provide an even richer view of how IT professionals are doing their jobs, what technologies they're deploying, what brands they prefer, etc. Together, we're able to see the entire IT purchase process – from how IT professionals connect with peers and research technologies in the Community to the actual deployment and management of those technologies post-purchase. That 360 view is unique to us.

## Spiceworks is based and was founded in Austin. What led to the decision to start and grow the business in this location?

This one is easy – we were here and Austin is home. The founding team has been a part of the Austin technology scene for more than two decades. Of the four of us who started the company, two were born here and the other two of us have lived and worked in Austin since the 90's. Frankly, we didn't seriously consider starting Spiceworks anywhere else.

## It's an exciting time to be part of the Austin technology community. What unique Austin attributes are helping this growth?

I think Austin is a great alternative to the other technology hubs in the United States, and many of the qualities that led us to start Spiceworks in Austin continue to drive growth today. Austin has a lot of advantages including a great quality of life, a lower cost of doing business which allows us to reinvest, and a creative culture that embraces the arts, music and the outdoors – all things our employees love. Austin is also one of the most educated cities in America with a strong network of local universities that produce great talent each year.

## How do you see Spiceworks evolving as a business and what new service will drive your growth in the future?

You'll see us focus on tackling two big initiatives. First, we're going to continue transforming how IT professionals find, buy, and manage the technologies that drive their organizations. We'll help them by developing new tools, finding new ways to connect them with peers and technology brands, and surfacing content that's relevant and within the flow of their workday.

In turn, doing that well gives us the opportunity to reinvent the inefficient ways technology brands market and sell to IT buyers today. We have the opportunity and ability to connect technology brands with the right buyer, at the right time, with the right message in ways that are more authentic and valuable to both parties. We're really excited about what's ahead.



## The Austin community is driving many new technology start ups. Are there any that you see as being particularly exciting?

Candidly, I'm so focused on Spiceworks that it's hard to keep track of everything happening at other companies. Here's what I'm excited about though. There are a lot of homegrown companies that appear to be scaling and doing well – past 100, 200, 400 employees and beyond. We're rapidly approaching 500 employees, and I'm optimistic a number of us are on the cusp of breaking out and becoming the next great Austin stories. Hopefully Austin will build critical mass of these home-grown success stories versus us just being the “cool outpost” for companies on the coasts.

## Finally, if you have advice for a CMO for 2016, what would it be?

As a marketer in a previous life, I always come back to staying maniacally focused on the outcomes you're trying to drive despite all the distractions out there. Over the past 10 years, we've seen an insane proliferation of technology platforms marketers can choose from. While I think that's settling down, I do think some can get swept up in the buzz surrounding those shiny objects.

Along those lines, I don't think we can let computers run marketing. Don't get me wrong - I believe technology can help. But we talk to marketers all the time who haven't spoken to a customer in months to understand their day, challenges, and opportunities. I don't think we can lose sight of the fact that, in the quest to establish real, authentic relationships with our customers, sometimes we have to use the human touch, go where they are, and be engaged.

## ABOUT JAY HALLBERG



Jay Hallberg is co-founder, president and chief executive officer at Spiceworks. He's responsible for Spiceworks' strategic direction, business results and the day-to-day operations of the company. Prior to becoming Spiceworks' president and CEO, he was the company's first chief operating officer and previously held the title of vice president of Marketing.

He has spent over 20 years in the technology industry. Before co-founding Spiceworks, he spent six years at Motive in various marketing roles including vice president of Product Marketing.

Jay holds a Bachelor of Sciences degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign and an MBA from Harvard.

## ABOUT SPICEWORKS

Every day IT pros and tech vendors use Spiceworks to do their jobs in a truly social way: IT pros manage their networks while interacting directly with other IT pros and tech vendors to decide what to buy. IT pros trust the people, info and brands they meet in Spiceworks. And find Spiceworks more convenient than having to visit multiple media or vendor websites.

Meanwhile, tech vendors connect with IT buyers where and when their tech offerings are most relevant. And get to build the relationships that buzz and new business are made of. Making it no surprise that Spiceworks is the most well loved IT network among IT pros and marketers alike! Here's how we did it. Learn more about Spiceworks: [www.spiceworks.com](http://www.spiceworks.com)

## ABOUT JUSTMEDIA

Just Media was founded in 1995 in London, England before opening its doors in San Francisco in 1996. Today, we've moved into bigger spaces, opened new locations and added more staff, all in service of your business. Our heritage and core is technology marketing, but we don't live in this box. Our success stems from expanding into diverse markets and handling campaigns domestically and internationally for leading brands. Our planning is more creative because it's grounded in hard-won experience across these markets. And our approach is more global because we bring in media experts from the countries you're running in so we can negotiate well, deliver quickly and have the benefit of being truly local. This means that no matter which audience you need to reach, we can help you do it and do it successfully. [www.iustmedia.com](http://www.iustmedia.com)

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