



SMART100

LEADERSHIP • STRATEGY • CHARACTER

2011 BOOK

Stories and ideas from
Baltimore's top thought leaders

smart **CEO**

People-driven technology firm

Q: What was the big idea that caused you to launch your company?

There is simply a huge opportunity in the marketplace for our services. Kear IT, Inc., offers the capabilities, resources and expertise of a larger IT consulting firm; however, our services are really targeted specifically to the unique needs of small and medium-sized organizations, which represent approximately 97 percent of the market in most major metropolitan areas. Our entire organization, our services and our staff are dedicated and focused on the needs, expectations and realities of serving these customers effectively with the highest quality of service and customer satisfaction possible.

Q: When you started your company, what was your biggest challenge and how did you overcome it?

I think the biggest challenge in starting Kear IT was simply doing just that. Previously, I had spent over 10 years as the managing partner at the helm of another mid-size IT services firm. It was a difficult and tough decision for me to leave, but my partner and I no longer shared the same vision and goals and each wanted to take the company in a different direction. From there, and perhaps more predictably, some of the more notable challenges included re-entering the marketplace as a new entity in an uncertain economy and rebuilding client and business relationships that had taken years to build previously.

Q: What is your secret to attracting new customers and keeping your best clients satisfied?

Almost universally, most IT firms are technology companies and focus more on the technology itself. Most technology companies are run by technology-oriented people. We're a service company. This is a people business, and I feel that many technology companies forget about that or don't get it at all.

Q: What was your biggest "failure" and what did you learn from it?

A long time ago, I realized that the concepts of "success" and "failure" were often only a matter of your perspective. To me, there is only "trying" (the sincere investment of one's efforts) and "not trying" (insincere or lack of investment of one's efforts).

Q: What are the biggest hurdles you are facing now in your industry or at your organization?

Over the past few years, with the advent and rapid adoption of social media and social networking, people are now creating, publishing, reading and reacting to the information posted by others in real-time. This new bi-directional flow of information represents a significant turning point in technology as people (and businesses) increasingly want to communicate and access information from anywhere in real-time. Perhaps more than any other time in human history, advancements in technology and the pace of change will continue to increase exponentially. As such, it will be critical for business owners to keep pace with regard to recognizing the potential impact of technology advancements and disruptive technologies that present some of the biggest challenges facing our industry.

Kear IT, Inc.

Industry: Computer networking and IT services
In a Nutshell: An exceptionally customer-driven professional services company providing expert IT solutions and support services dedicated specifically to the unique needs of small and medium organizations
 Founded: 2008
 Website: www.kearit.com



Michael Ande Kear
President and CEO



Kear enjoys the holidays with family.



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ARE YOU SMART100 MATERIAL?

The Smart100 is an exclusive, elite group of 100 CEOs chosen for their leadership, strategic vision and character. As selected members of the Smart100, this dynamic group of business leaders will share their personal stories of success, growth and leadership philosophies with thousands of readers.

SmartCEO is looking for the next Smart100 thought leaders in your area. Nominate yourself or another influential CEO for the 2012 Smart100 membership program.

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