

Expert-in-Residence Overview, ROI, and Case Studies

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OVERVIEW

An expert-in-residence, known as an Expert-IR, acts as an in-house consultant to a firm's start-ups. Said individual provides directed professional consulting services on specific short or long-term limited engagements. An Expert-IR provides a firm with a flexible and less expensive expert resource that can be utilized, on an as-needed basis, for specific start-ups in a portfolio. Additionally, the Expert-IR pursues the interests of its clients in its day-to-day interactions through outside commitments. The Expert-IR position is typically a one to two day a week commitment, with monthly in-person meetings, and is paid accordingly in cash compensation and a small amount of equity (to help align incentives). The rest of the week is spent on personal projects and across disciplines, which increases exposure, introductions, deal flow, and insight for the firm. An ExpertIR position differs from an entrepreneur-in-residence position in that there is no expectation of taking over one of the firm's portfolio companies.

ROI

This position will provide:

- A readily available in-house resource to educate entrepreneurs on presenting, marketing, business case development, and how to leverage unique team/tech advantages;
- Increased competitiveness in achieving bleeding-edge, new-market and market-leading investments;
- Faster track to market and to revenue;
- Better and faster M&A exits and series-B investments;
- The expertise to quickly establish technical viability in execution and design;
- higher-quality deal-flow as a result of a reputation as a firm that is insightful and unique in leadership and strategy

This would be achieved through:

- Exposure for portfolio investments through ongoing conference presentations,
- Technology due diligence around social software, mobile technology, new media, and scale/scope/security,
- Securing industry partnerships and furthering M&A opportunities,
- Ongoing consultation to investments around:
 - Pitching, presenting, and positioning,
 - Effectively leveraging cross-platform integration and cross tautological market opportunities,
 - Creating technological efficiencies through means such as scale and open source,
 - Executing useful crowdsourcing and community management at an early stage,
 - Discovering methods of devious innovation and rethinking problem sets.

CASE STUDIES

My work is a mix of public speaking, IT and culture hacking, and technology due diligence and assessment on behalf of dozens of parties from a huge variety of backgrounds. My unique value lies in being able to introduce and define the opportunities to be found between the disciplines and markets they play in. Because this "fuzzy" return is difficult to quantify, I'm including some examples below to illustrate how my unique position can demonstrate value for a retainer client or a portfolio.

Case Study: *MusiTraq*

A asked that I speak to a startup he was investing in called MusiTraq. They were designing a platform to walk museum-goers through their exhibits. While we were chatting he mentioned that the biggest problem he had was around having to create custom devices and/or installing software on specific phone hardware for the museum. I suggested he use the POS to send an SMS message to the customer's device with a link to the software specific to that hardware.

He chewed this over for a moment and confessed that this would completely circumvent the hardware tracking and training issue while adding very little to the software development costs. As an added bonus, it would capture all the users' contact info as well as give them ongoing incentive to use his platform.

Take-away: A deep technological and systems background across multiple fields allows me to connect the dots in those cases where entrepreneurs can't see the forest for the trees. This creates ongoing opportunities for serious efficiencies and model improvement, both in business and in technology.

Case Study: *BeDo*

Some time ago I was asked to speak at the Future Trends Forum in Madrid hosted by Bankinter, the largest domestic bank in Spain. I was there to present on the future of capitalism as I'd done work in this area for the US Intelligence Community. While I was there my speaking agency, Monitor Talent, introduced me to Marc Mathieu, who had just stepped down from being CMO of Coca-Cola Global.

We ended up having a conversation about how virtual currencies were largely based on reputation (the topic of my next book), and how a good example of this shift could be seen in corporate CSR initiatives (which we were both consulting on independently). That led to his sharing his desire to create a philanthropy platform. Pretty soon we'd filled up several napkins with diagrams and drawings, and a couple weeks later I'd taken him on as a client to design the underlying technology and market model.

Take-away: an ongoing speaking career coupled with a deep technical background allows me to explain complex concepts and to quickly identify new market opportunities with experts who are normally hard to meet.

Case Study: *DailyPerfect*

Some months after I'd been working with BeDo I was speaking at a conference in the Netherlands. One of the fellow speakers' boyfriend was a coder from Estonia who happened to know some IT Security groups from S. Africa and Seattle who were friends of mine. Despite his being the retiring sort I was able to draw him out, and soon discovered that he knew the Estonian coders who had developed Skype. He had been working with them on a secret new initiative designed to use natural language processing (NLP) to profile individuals based on open-source data. Some time later the software was deemed powerful enough to need external validation, and was brought in to be part of the central platform for BeDo.

Take-away: a wide variety of interests and credibility with otherwise reticent sources give me quick access to, and understanding of, new technologies.

Case Study: *TED*

My first public speaking engagement was a two-minute speech at a small geek conference called Gadgetoff. A friend of mine from Alaska had convinced the founders to invite me to talk about training crows to bring me money (a project I'd done for my graduate thesis at NYU), and they agreed to give me a small spot in which to do so.

While I was there I met Dr. Aubrey de Gray, the foremost biogerontologist (expert on aging) and author of "End of Aging." He kindly offered to answer my questions about cloning and DNA preservation, so I followed up on the conference by emailing him about

same. After assuaging my fears, he asked if I'd like to take my crow talk to TED. I said yes, and five minutes later Chris Anderson had emailed me, explaining that his old school chum Aubrey had told him he had to get me in, and would I be so kind as to join him in CA for the conference?

Take-away: regularly being present at a variety of conferences and interacting with unusual thought leaders puts me in a position to capitalize on the unexpected.

Case Study: *Bloomberg TV*

I was approached by a TV production studio some time ago to come up with some ideas for science shows, and ended up tweeting that I needed some coaching on writing the treatments. A friend-of-a-friend responded and we went to coffee. It turned out that she ran Bloomberg TV and wasn't happy with it. She wanted to leave it to do something in music, but had no idea where or how.

At the same time, a friend of mine who had been managing bands and selling music rights for nearly a decade was eager to get into television. I'd recently met the head of talent and hiring for Discovery, and he'd mentioned they had a studio sitting idle in CA. I introduced the musician and the head of Bloomberg TV, and helped them pitch a show idea to Discovery. Now they're all in CA, putting it together.

Take-away: connecting the dots across fields and people yields ongoing opportunities for advancing initiatives.