



Lisa Vallee-Smith, APR
CEO

Lisa, 50, co-founded Airfoil in 2000 after having successfully established a technology practice at a previous agency for which she was majority owner. In her role as CEO of Airfoil Public Relations, Lisa is responsible for planning the strategic direction of the firm. Under her leadership and team building, Lisa has grown Airfoil to be among the Top 50 Independent PR Firms in the country (O'Dwyer's) and Technology Agency of The Year (The Holmes Report). She is an active participant on numerous Airfoil accounts, including Microsoft Corp., which she has served directly or indirectly for more than 10 years.

A public relations consultant with more than 25 years of professional experience, Lisa has served industry segments that include consumer packaged goods, automotive manufacturing and aftermarket, information technology, retail, and healthcare. She has applied this experience at Airfoil by enterprising new practice areas and services offerings, namely the healthcare, industrial, and Silicon Valley operations at the firm.

Her expertise includes marketing communications, corporate communications, research, and issues management.

Successful campaigns for Lisa include:

- Information Technology --
 - Market launch and brand identity for ANXeBusiness, a start-up within Science Applications International Corp.
 - Multiple Microsoft product launches, as well as consumer education campaign
 - CareTech Solutions brand and product identity strategy
- Retail
 - Best Buy For Business
- Manufacturing
 - North American introduction of Faurecia, global tier one automotive interior systems supplier
 - Product introduction of iSupply for SCM provider SupplySolution
 - North American Debut of Microsoft's Automotive and Industrial Equipment industry vertical
- Healthcare
 - Issues management and restructuring communications work with CEO and senior management team of St. John Health System, the largest subsidiary of Ascension Health
 - Early-stage company and production introduction for HealthMedia, web-based population health management
- Professional & Financial Services
 - Plante & Moran
 - L.R. Kimball
 - PayPal

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Prior to establishing Airfoil, Lisa was president and majority owner of Franco Public Relations Group, where she led a turnaround program to rebuild that agency's declining market share and reputation. During her Franco tenure, she carried out award-winning campaigns for Starbucks, AutoNation, Nissan, Chrysler, MGM Grand Detroit Casino, The North American International Auto Show, and The American Automobile Centennial. She established a technology practice in 1997, when she competed for and won the Great Lakes District of Microsoft account. With that signature account, the tech practice grew to be a dominant force in the Franco firm and was split off to become a separate, independent firm, now known as Airfoil.

Lisa's background includes work for Creamer Dickson Basford (now Magnet Communications) in New York, where she supervised a national issues management program for client Ocean Spray Cranberries that revolved around new FDA food labeling regulations.

The campaign involved cooperative relationships with associations including the American Dietetic Association, as well as a national high school-based sports nutrition program directed to young women in partnership with the National High School Athletic Coaches Association. During this time, Lisa also supervised the Ethan Allen account, which was repositioning itself through the introduction and marketing of new furniture lines.

Over the course of Lisa's career, she has counseled executives and companies in managing issues – legal and otherwise – including work for a defendant in a major national class action lawsuit involving allegedly defective breast implants. Other issues and crisis management projects have involved workplace violence, bankruptcies, consumer activism, mergers and acquisitions, product recalls, and special interest groups.

Lisa is an accredited member (APR) of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). She is past president of PRSA-Detroit, and takes an active role in the community, where she is a board member of the St. John Hospital Foundation, the University of Michigan School of Nursing, and the Contemporary Arts Collections of the Detroit Institute of Arts. She serves her alma mater, Wayne State University, as a member of its Board of Visitors for the College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts.

Lisa earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in journalism/public relations from Wayne State University. She has been honored by the AdCraft Club of Detroit and the American Women in Radio and Television for professional achievements. She was recently recognized by InForum as one of 15 most successful business women in Michigan, and is a recipient of the 2004 Wayne State University Alumni Achievement Award. She was a finalist in the 2006 Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year program.

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