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You should get to know... Doug Mitchell

The Des Moines Register

Founder and chief deliverer of results, RentalMetrics, West Des Moines

Job description: RentalMetrics is a subscription-based consulting service operating online. Professionals in the construction rental industry subscribe to research technology solutions, deploy those solutions and calculate the ROI.

Background: In 1999, I took a chance on my first tech start-up. The founders said, "You have a job for 30 days. If you write a business plan that gets us funding, you'll be in. If not ..." Within 45 days, there was \$1 million in the bank.

Notable achievements: My first start-up venture went from funding to acquisition in 2 years, and was purchased by CNET Networks in 2002.

Why I do what I do: I have an unstoppable passion for creation and a distinct distaste for stagnation.

What I do to get away from work: I love to cook and share a great bottle of wine with friends and my exceptional wife, Stephanie.

How I give back to the community: Last New Year's Eve, I organized and served dinner to 120 people at the Central Iowa Shelter. It was satisfying to see the less fortunate warm and full.

Words to live by: "It doesn't matter how many times you fail. It doesn't matter how many times you almost get it right. No one is going to know or care about your failures, and neither should you. All you have to do is learn from them and those around you. All that matters in business is that you get it right once. Then everyone can tell you how lucky you are." Mark Cuban

Best business book I've read lately: "The Paradox of Excellence: How Great Performance Can Kill Your Business" by David Mosby and Michael Weissman. It was as though this book was written about many of the situations I've been in. I was able to affect positive change immediately because of it.

The best place to entertain clients: Centro's atmosphere is upscale and quiet enough to have a business meeting, yet lively enough to inspire.

One thing I would change about Des Moines: Absolutely nothing. I've traveled extensively and lived in three different states, and I've never been more content with a city.

What Iowa can do to attract more people like me: Iowa must foster an aggressive start-up technology business climate that nabs talent fresh out of school. The by-product: People looking for a better lifestyle and value system will gravitate here.

My mentor: My mentor is a widely successful venture capitalist who rejected my previous company's pitch for funding. I told him I'd like to study why he said no and learn how to get others to say yes.

My leadership philosophy: Inspire others to greatness and greatness will befall you.

If you want to contact me: E-mail me at doug@rentalmetrics.com.