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Software company acquires pair of Innovation Campus enterprises

By JAKE MOORE jake.moore@bgdailynews.com Jun 2, 2023

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Sly as a (Lobby)Fox

Good things come in pairs for Leitchfield's Jeremy Jacobs.

Two of the entrepreneur's companies were acquired by communication software company Transmission in late May; LobbyFox and Industrial Communications.

"You kinda like it when you sell two of them at the same time. I kinda liked that part of this transaction," he said. "If we could sell them two-at-atime from now on, it would speed this process up."



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LobbyFox, founded in 2019, provides touch-screen kiosks to help manufacturing plants manage visitors and other lobby traffic. Industrial Communications is a digital signage division of Eyeconic.TV, Jacobs' primary company.

Transmission aims to cut the amount of disengaged workers in manufacturing facilities by installing kiosks and televisions to provide surveys, animations and other forms of feedback to employees – in other words, the perfect match for Jacobs' two enterprises.

"It made the most sense in the world," Jacobs said about the acquisition. "Transmission is being formed specifically to communicate with both visitors and staff members at factories. ... Both of those (companies) are focused on factories and that's what Transmission does."

According to Jacobs, some of the companies already utilizing LobbyFox include Jack Daniel's, plastic packaging manufacturer Berry Global and Bowling Green's Huish Detergents.

One of the reasons Jacobs was intrigued by Transmission's offer is the company's use of A.I. technology, whether that be in generating signage text on the fly or examining injury data to send employees safety reminder texts when they enter a specific area of a factory.

"The statistics are undeniable: manufacturing is facing record-high employee turnover rates and exorbitant safety incident costs, which are hampering productivity in an industry that is already facing margin pressure," Transmission CEO Jeff Fiala said in a release. "With 75% of the manufacturing workforce being characterized as unengaged, there is a tremendous opportunity for us to support our customers and their employee retention and safety goals."

Jacobs and his work have deep ties to WKU's Innovation Campus, formerly known as the Center for Research and Development.

That relationship was forged about a decade ago when he was trying to bring Eyeconic.TV from Glasgow to Bowling Green.

The campus' amenities – funding for tests, backup generators, high-speed internet and networking opportunities – lured Jacobs in, and his companies have called it home ever since.

"It's one of my favorite relationships in Bowling Green, with the Innovation Campus," he said.





He recalled when his Industrial Communications team wanted to conduct field research on a potential product and WKU pulled together 20 top manufacturing leaders to discuss the idea over a chicken dinner.

That idea later turned into LobbyFox.

In return, Jacobs said his companies' success gives the campus a boost in visibility. "I kinda draw attention to the center with things like this right here, building and selling companies. We help give them a very successful image," he said. "The dream that you can build companies and sell them is coming true."

Jacobs will stay on for a while as a board member and consultant for Transmission as well as a likely investor.

"What I won't do is be the CEO of Transmission. I don't have that kind of desire for those things in this acquisition," he said.

He said he has a couple of things cooking for the near future.

For one, Jacobs will be turning his eyes back toward the cannabis industry, a market he's quite familiar with.

Enlighten, his cannabis-focused digital menu and advertising company, was acquired by WM Technology in 2022. "I would expect great waves from me once (legalization) moves forward. I think my role there would be more in empowering other people to get in the cannabis business and less about me owning things," Jacobs said.

He will also be lending his technical know-how to a digital signage start-up.

"I'm playing more of an adviser role as I'm moving farther into my career," Jacobs said. "Less CEO at this point, more a part of the team than the leader of the team."

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