



Inc. 5000

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TECHNOLOGY
WINNER CHOICE AWARDS



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Really?

Lisa M. Benson
CEO / Principal

It's the economy, stupid. That's the response I get when I commiserate on how difficult it is to conduct business these days and my associated frustration. My associate, Richard Jahnel, offered that we are experiencing a culmination of the *Walmart Effect* as consumers exclaim, "What's the cheapest price I can pay for this item, regardless of quality, sustainability or value?" Adding to the previous concern, are solution providers in their desperate attempt to gather market share through an influx of low cost and/or free solutions. It only gets worse in my mind's eye, when compounded with the "What's in it for me, regardless of you" client factor, which is becoming the new standard in today's business relationships. All of this is leaving me sincerely concerned there is no end in sight for our current, collective, financial constraints. Are we in it for the short term or long term, and will we do it together?

"We take personal responsibility for our own actions that create instances of client dissatisfaction..."

Ellipse's success is steeped in tradition, especially since our nascent company was incubated by and for the multifamily industry. I reference tradition in the familial form, inclusive of partnerships in both client and supplier exchanges; good will for employees and industry development; with engagement in both professional and charity basis. We give back to our community with education, advancement and encouragement. But here of late our own rewards are diminishing and frankly we've got to address our own deficits.

Admittance to blame is the beginning step towards healing, right?

Unfortunately the above statements only apply to outward reference, not internal review with the necessary mea culpa for placed fault or failure. We take personal responsibility for our own actions that create instances of client dissatisfaction and consumer upheaval, responding accordingly until each completed transaction results in deliverable success. But here of late we seem to be taking quite a shellacking over our attempts to retain our fiscal bottom line in our efforts to provide bona fide, results oriented client management and account handling. I do appreciate competitive offerings are playing a role in client perceptions of price commensurate to value, especially when responding to our own cost-based solutions. But today the client's perspective appears to be one way, it's the "do this for free or I will seek alternative solutions for my business." Frankly, this type of response is never appropriate, especially when it comes to providing our high level of service at a financial loss to our company.

I am confident we serve a purpose in our industry, and to continue to do so, we require a fiscal sustainability model. Our core clients realize value our leading technologies, hacker free environment, and technically advanced customer service, but it won't last if we don't get compensated fairly for our work. Honestly, I have seen it all during my 12 years at the helm of Ellipse, the Dot Bomb, two real estate crashes, Iraq war, and now the worst economic market of our lifetimes. The only difference today is that the humanistic contribution has been replaced with a brutal, survivalist standard that in its only light has got to unsustainable itself.

Lisa Benson is the CEO and Co-Founder of Ellipse Communications, Inc.; the largest provider of custom applications and website development for the Multifamily Industry. Visit the company website at www.ellipseinc.com.

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