

# Employee Investment at Work at King Fish Media

Direct and indirect costs of losing staffers ripple across an organization. The U.S. Department of Labor lists advertising, headhunter fees, overtime, recruitment, training and decreased productivity as just some of the likely costs of turnover. The turnover cost per employee at b2b publishing company **Advance Online-Merion Publications**, for instance, has been calculated at \$5,333, according to employee retention consulting firm **Sasha Corp.**'s Web site.

**Cameron Brown**, president of **King Fish Media**, taking a forward-thinking approach to employee retention, has been focused less on the dollar cost of turnover than on maximizing his human resources. Brown's investment in employee retention has led to what he calls nearly zero overturn and has played no small part in the success of King Fish, which evaluates and executes integrated campaigns for major b2b companies and publications like **IBM**, **Ziff Davis Enterprise** and *On Wall Street*. In October 2007, *min's* Advertising Report honored the custom media company for its work revamping *Compass on Business*; KFM also made the **Entrepreneur Magazine Hot 500 List** last year.



Cameron Brown

Brown—who left **Ziff Davis Media** seven years ago to start KFM—has offered his employees 100% medical and dental, short- and long-term disability, an aggressive profit-sharing program and a host of other benefits from day one. “My staff has made an enormous commitment, and the last thing I want them to worry about is health care,” he says. Brown makes no bones about the fact that he works his staff hard—but he makes it worth their while.

“If you do something truly above and beyond, you’ll be rewarded,” he says. For example,



The King Fish Media offices (far left) in Salem, Mass. Aesthetically pleasing offices are part of KFM's employee retention strategy.

performance-based bonuses are doled out several times per year, and Brown takes his staff on a ski trip every winter. The resulting low employee churn has translated into savings in terms of the hiring and training process. Brown calls KFM an idea factory, and his employees consistently perform. “[KFM employees] generate amazing ideas with enthusiasm,” he says.

Brown also encourages his staff to work on programs benefiting not-for-profits **Give Us Your Poor**, **The Giving Planet**, **A Better Chance** and **Summer Search**. In addition to helping the community at large, donating their time to these altruistic pursuits can make Brown's staff feel good about themselves. Brown takes that idea one step further and offers KFM's high-profile clients sponsorship opportunities with the various charities, hitting a new level of relationship. “We're talking about mutually shared interests,” he says. Thus, philanthropy helps the KFM staff to build relationships with each other, and that community is organically expanded to the KFM client roster.

“I try to reward good people, and I know that's how I'm going to attract good people,” Brown says.

**min's b2b**

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