Michael Zeligs

SALES AND MARKETING EXECUTIVE

Fractional CMO and CEO | Go-to-market strategy | Business domain expertise

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Professional Summary

Sales and marketing executive and fractional CEO with 15+ years building brands, leading teams and advising technology, clean-energy and consumer businesses. Founded a consultancy with approximately $2.5 million in lifetime revenue; held Vice President of Sales and Marketing engagements with Terabase Energy and Intersect Power. Now also applies that commercial judgment at Mercor and Handshake AI, testing whether AI can make sound business decisions.

Core Expertise

Go-to-market strategy | Product marketing | Sales enablement | Brand positioning | Business analysis | Financial modeling | Executive and investor communications | AI evaluation and rubric design

Professional Experience

Start Motion Media

Founder and Principal | Fractional Chief Marketing Officer
2010 - Present | Petaluma, CA

- Built a creative, marketing and communications consultancy generating approximately $2.5 million in lifetime agency revenue; scaled delivery through a 12-person studio.
- Led brand positioning, go-to-market strategy, product communications and creative delivery for clients including Smithsonian, Discovery Channel, Amazon Fire TV and Sutter Health.
- Reduced production cycle time approximately 40% through workflow redesign and automation; used marketing analytics to guide campaign and communications decisions.

Mercor

Sales and Marketing Domain Expert (Contract)
Aug 2025 - Present | Remote | Concurrent consulting engagement

- Built two sales and marketing simulation worlds from specifications through complete world files, using Salesforce and ERPNext workflows to test multi-step executive decisions.
- Embedded realistic, fair decision traps that repeatedly expose AI analysis and reasoning errors for benchmarks and bug-bounty programs.
- Author reference solutions and evaluation rubrics; document failures so reviewers can distinguish sound business reasoning from plausible answers.

Concurrent projects: Les Artistes Artefacts; Julius.

Handshake AI - MOVE AI Fellowship

Business Domain Expert and Senior Reviewer (Contract)
Jul 2025 - Present | Remote | Concurrent consulting engagement

- Selected for CEO Domain Expertise; later assigned Cross Domain Analysis on Project Mark, covering nonprofit and grantmaking decisions, financial modeling and management consulting.
- Design long-horizon business assignments, complex prompts and scoring rubrics; identify and comprehensively document model failures in multi-step business reasoning.

Project sequence: Diamond, Horizon, Spectra, Mark, RollingStone.

Additional Executive Experience

ApertureAPI

Founder and Chief Executive Officer

Jun 2025 - Present | Petaluma, CA | A Start Motion Media venture

- Lead product strategy and founding-team development for a computational-imaging venture; own P&L, product direction and board-level reporting.

Selected Consulting Engagements

Independent engagements and client work through Start Motion Media.

Terabase Energy

Vice President of Sales and Marketing (Contract)

Oct 2021 - Aug 2022 | Concurrent with Intersect Power

- Led go-to-market strategy and B2B communications for utility-scale solar technology, including the Radian Solar Project; developed sales enablement for enterprise energy buyers.
- Directed media strategy, technical journalist engagement and executive interviews, translating complex products into clear commercial narratives.

Intersect Power

Vice President of Sales and Marketing (Contract)

Oct 2021 - Aug 2022 | Concurrent with Terabase Energy

- Directed communications for large-scale clean-energy infrastructure, overseeing an eight-person team with three direct reports; developed investor and sustainability messaging.
- Supported executive and board-level capital-allocation communications across concurrent infrastructure engagements.

Amazon Advertising - Fire TV

Product Marketing and Communications (Contract)

Sep 2020 - Sep 2021

- Led product marketing, launch communications and competitive intelligence for Fire TV advertising; managed a seven-person team and coordinated campaign delivery.
- Built announcement processes and ROI inputs supporting executive business reviews.

FocusCalm (BrainCo)

Brand, Product and Communications Lead (Contract)

Oct 2017 - Sep 2019

- Led brand positioning, product messaging and global communications for a consumer biometric-technology product from prototype through volume production.

Baubax Inc.

Communications and Marketing Lead (Contract)

May 2015 - Sep 2017

- Led campaign communications and media strategy for travel-apparel launches; reported to the CEO and managed vendor relationships and campaign analytics.

Additional clients and engagements: Google, Kleiner Perkins, Airbus, Jelly Comb, DF.it, Konnected.io, Zipbuds and Dreampad.

Education

Stanford University | Bachelor of Arts | 2005 - 2010

Major: MST in Digital Signal Processing and Media Communications

CCRMA, Department of Music