



Christy Spencer

Director of Marketing

Keystone RV

Christy Spencer, director of marketing for Keystone RV, says she never intended to be in the RV industry.

She previously worked for advertising agencies in the home fashion, paint, and fashion decor industries, focusing on brand strategy and positioning.

Still, given that she lives in northern Indiana, the RV industry seemed like a good opportunity. And it just so happened she was searching for new opportunities when Jim Mac, who had been Keystone's marketing director for more than a decade, was retiring. Spencer reached out to then-Keystone RV President Matt Zimmerman, who hired her.

Once she started the job, Spencer noticed something unusual.

"People told me that the RV industry is not like any other industry," she says. "I thought to myself, 'How can that be?' But it's true – it really is."

And one of those differences is the people, according to Spencer.

"The industry is full of people who are really enthusiastic," she says. "Over the past three years, I have met a number of women who are doing dynamic, interesting things – cool things. People like Karra Blair, the CEO of Curtis Trailers; LaDonna Meadows, who owns Tacoma RV Center; Jen Young at Outdoorsy; Janine Pettit at Girl Camper; Toby O'Rourke and Whitney Clarkson at KOA; and Cortni Armstrong at The Flipping Nomad. Working with them and dreaming about what we can do together is a blast!"

When asked what it is like to work in an industry that's been historically male-dominated, Spencer says, "There are definitely a lot of *alphas* in the RV industry. It's exciting to be involved with a group that's so passionate about what they do."

Her advice to women entering the industry?

"Be smart and strong and be the incredible contributor you are. Know that you have gifts that the industry needs," she says.

And find a mentor or partner who shares your enthusiasm. Spencer says she found "a great partner" in Jeff Runels, who became Keystone's president/CEO a year-and-a-half ago. She is excited about where he's taking the company.

"Keystone is 27 years old; it's a mature company. And when I came on, the marketing was

fine, a little staid, but fine. He (Runels) is a visionary who brought a lot of energy to innovate, to staying relevant, and taking the company to the next level."

Spencer says the Keystone marketing team has attracted some top-notch men and women who are bringing creative energy to the company.

"On my team, there are some smart, capable, passionate women who are the industry's next generation. It's wonderful to watch them grow, pick up the reins, and expand the footprint of women in (a traditionally male) industry," she says.

One thing Spencer says she particularly enjoys is that her job "uses every part of her brain."

She and her team "do a lot of nerdy, techy things, like handling the marketing tech stack that powers the website, lead management, analytics, all the back-end stuff – and we also do really creative things: public relations, video, photography, working with influencers, production for brochures and the website, channel marketing and training. I never feel like I don't use my whole brain. At the end of the day, I feel as though I have been fully utilized."

