



Geneva Long

Founder and CEO

Bowlus

Deciding on a career path comes early for some, while others find their calling later in life. For Geneva Long, founder and CEO of Bowlus, starting a business was something she always knew she wanted to do.

“I always knew I would be an entrepreneur,” she says. “It was just a question of finding an engaging product or service. The Bowlus (and the RV industry) holds a ton of exciting challenges. I like starting with a long-forgotten yet iconic product that no one had competed with in over 80 years – it fascinated me as a designer.”

First launched in the 1930s, the Bowlus was a lightweight, aluminum-riveted trailer sporting aerodynamic designs that quickly caught traction nationwide. Fast-forward to 2011, when the brand was revived, and Long says the company now offers a “premium luxury, truly lightweight towable that was anchored in quality and sustainability.”

“It was no surprise it really didn’t speak to the RV industry insiders who were digging out of a recession, and more than a few said we wouldn’t last a year or two,” she says.

Despite those hurdles, Long says working with mentors in the RV industry helped her grow the brand and vision. Since then, Long has earned accolades, such as the *Forbes* “30 Under 30” list, and the Bowlus has earned the distinction as the “Ultimate Camper” by *The Wall Street Journal*. Bowlus now offers three models: the Endless Highways, the Endless Highways Performance Edition, and the Terra Firma Limited Edition, all ranging in price from \$190,000 to \$300,000-plus.

Asked what her favorite part of being in the industry is, Long says, “Without a doubt, the best thing about the RV industry is there is so much space for innovation. At Bowlus, we love to speak directly to our client base with solutions that are truly meaningful to them,” she says. “We lead the segment that we created, which we call ‘luxury land travel.’ To do that, it takes an innate understanding of what is possible and what our customers seek. Since we always work so far in advance, I’m excited that we will continue to launch new products, which we anticipate to include more industry-firsts but, even more importantly, speak to the people we serve.”

In an industry filled mainly with male executives, Long says she considers age more than gender as an important distinction.

“I think my advantage as a CEO is more about my age than my gender,” she says. “Indeed, the issues I find important are not necessarily the same ones shared by other CEOs in our industry. For instance, for me, it’s not enough to address sustainability by offsetting a carbon footprint with a tree or forest purchase.”

Instead, Long says it’s crucial to her to make a difference with innovative solutions that are good for the environment, its owners, and its employees. She also points out that, while age and forward-thinking aren’t mutually exclusive, being younger offers flexibility in adapting new ideas.

“I think our clients, in many ways, are more aligned with the concerns of Millennials, which probably explains why we share such a solid philosophical connection with them about why we do what we do,” she says.

For other young professionals entering the RV world, Long suggests “be ready to pivot at a moment’s notice if you see change coming and to do whatever you can to prepare to be flexible in this industry.”

