



Jennifer Young

Co-founder
Outdoorsy

For Jennifer Young, knowing her customers has shaped her career and led to the success her company, Outdoorsy, has found in the RV industry.

Young says she started her career in marketing at the bottom of the barrel.

“I learned absolutely everything I could about marketing. I was drawn to the customer experience, retention and acquisition,” she says.

From there, she worked her way up to positions in some of the world’s best ad agencies on three continents, where she honed her skills, which would inform the way she would build the Outdoorsy brand.

“A key ingredient before building advertising or content that connects with customers is gaining insights. It helped launch Outdoorsy – the company and brand,” says Young. “I knew Outdoorsy was a *big idea*. There are 20

million recreational vehicles that sit unused for most of the year. We knew we had a market, but we didn’t know enough about the customers.

“What would be important to the owner and the renter?” she says is a question she and her husband, Jeff Cavins, asked themselves early on. “That got us out on the road. We sold our homes, got a truck and a camper, and hit the road. We spent hundreds of thousands of hours interviewing customers and compiling what mattered.”

The couple wanted to escape their professional careers underneath fluorescent lights and out of conference rooms.

“We thought about where we are most happy and feel our most sense of joy – Outdoors. We wanted to travel down the road and feel the greatness of the blue sky or wind on our skin,” says Young. “We wanted to do something big. We’re both big thinkers and had big careers. We thought, ‘How do we stay connected to a greater purpose and something that draws us to the outdoors?’”

While figuring out what they wanted to do next, Young says the couple came across a data point at a Las Vegas convention that sparked the idea for Outdoorsy. She learned there are 20 million RVs in the U.S. that don’t get used 350 days a year.

Thinking about other companies that utilize unused assets, such as Airbnb and Uber, Young began



to think of a solution for the outdoors – and Outdoorsy was born.

Upon entering the RV industry, Young admits she felt a little bit like an outsider.

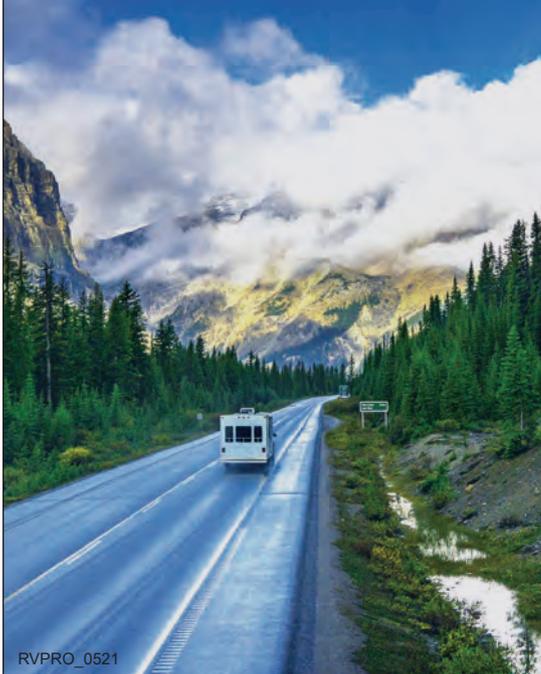
“So many in this industry have long-tenured careers and generations of family in the business. I had fears that this wouldn’t work, and we wouldn’t be accepted,” she says. “I thought, ‘Maybe someone already in this industry should do this.’ As it turned out, those thoughts were my own limitations I was placing on myself. Others didn’t put those limitations on me. In fact, I have found that all those tenured men have offered tons of education and are open to discussions.”

Young says her advice to others entering the industry would be to speak up.

“You’d be amazed that most of the barriers you think are in front of you are magnified in your own mind,” she says, adding, “Exercising the muscle of speaking up will help you practice and get really good at breaking down those limiting beliefs in your mind.”



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