

Tom Willner

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Profile

I have over two decades of experience in technology management and digital strategy across multiple industries and enjoy teaching others about integrating the arts, technology, and education.

Objective

I create innovative educational solutions for universities, businesses, and organizations. I want to help more people get the education they need and do so in a meaningful way.

Education

Master of Education, Learning, Leadership, and Organization Development, 2021

University of Georgia

Honors: Summa Cum Laude

Bachelor of Science, Electrical Engineering, 1991

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, NY

Minor: Electronic Arts

Honors: Magna Cum Laude

Professional Experience

Stories and Music, Atlanta, GA, 2023 - present

Founder and CEO

- Our mission is to create powerful arts experiences to teach compassion, wisdom, and joy. We want to transform learning by integrating the arts, technology, and education.

Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA, 2017 - present

Director of Enterprise Applications

- Responsible for \$3M budget, 20+ person staff, contractors, and vendors covering the largest project portfolio of all student applications, enrollment services, and student success initiatives for the largest university in Georgia, ranked the second most innovative university in the nation by U.S. News & World Report, 2023.
- Created the Student Engagement Report by aggregating data from students' logins to campus systems and building card swipe data to improve the accuracy of attendance

numbers and enable early interventions for student success. This was one of several innovations featured in the Politico article “The ‘Moneyball’ solution for higher education.”

- Helped create the award-winning Financial Aid Packaging Status Promotion (PSP) application to quickly identify students at financial risk and provide them with timely interventions which helped contribute to a 5.6% improvement in overall year-over-year student financial readiness and a 2% reduction in summer melt.
- Improved team efficiency and effectiveness by centralizing to a single location, adopting new tools, providing training through courses and conferences, and by utilizing short-term contractors to quickly implement new solutions and learn by working directly with experts. As a result, we transformed the technologies we use, we track 59% of our work that we did not track before, and the new visibility and automated processes have allowed us to increase work that provides a direct impact on student success, efficiency, and enrollment by 6%.

Tom Willner Music, Atlanta, GA 2010 - present

Founder and Artist

- Create, record, produce and perform music as a pianist, singer-songwriter, and composer. Score film and video.
- Playwright and composer of Turning Thirty, The Musical.
- Author of Having a Ball at Thirty: How I Got Through Cancer by Writing a Musical.
- Produce and record music projects for artists.

Center Stage Education, Alpharetta, GA, 2016 - 2022

Co-founder

- Partnered with a social worker to create and deliver continuing education classes and keynote speeches using storytelling and music about my experience as a cancer patient to teach about clinical empathy and the patient experience.
- Featured speaker at numerous nationwide and global healthcare education conferences.

American Cancer Society - Atlanta, GA, 1997 - 2017

Various roles in multiple departments

- Increasing responsibilities to over 25 staff, \$10M budget, and \$20M in revenue in product, technical, and marketing roles.
- Conceived and created a multiple award-winning mobile app to allow volunteers and staff of the organization to collect credit card and check donations and manage events on their smartphones, increasing participation, reducing costs, and raising over \$10M in revenue.
- Championed and implemented the first company-wide and award-winning intranet in our federated organization which dramatically reduced the time to share consistent information across the enterprise, helping ACS to transform structurally, operationally, and culturally.
- Implemented the first nationwide Learning Management System for ACS, providing a large collection of technical and soft skills courseware available enterprise-wide, reducing costs and providing staff the ability to improve their skills using self-directed learning.
- Helped transform cancer information delivery from a geographically dispersed and inconsistent approach to a centrally managed, high-quality system including call centers,

websites, content management, and automated fulfillment systems. Scaled the solution to ultimately help a million callers and 75 million people online each year.

Elekta Instruments, Inc., Atlanta, GA, 1996-1997

IT Manager

- Developed global standards for computers, email, telecom, intranet, and financial and sales software, representing our North American offices on a global team to enable better efficiencies and productivity.

Management Decisions, Inc., Norcross, GA, 1995-1996

Network Consultant

- Led a team of 10 people at Scientific Atlanta to fix failing network services by meeting with the business staff of each department, creating standardized offerings flexible enough to meet individual department needs, then systematically applying it to the whole campus.

Exxon Chemical Company, Linden, NJ, 1991-1994

Systems Analyst

- Partnered with the telecommunications lead to propose a network improvement plan, acquire funding, and ultimately implement the solution, reducing bottlenecks and improving performance.

Publications

- Willner, T. (2018). *Having a Ball at Thirty: How I Got Through Cancer by Writing a Musical* (1st ed.). Atlanta: Coz Branding Press.
- Tom Willner. Using a Musical to Teach About the Patient Experience. *Canc Therapy & Oncol Int J*. 2018; 9(4): 555769. DOI: 10.19080/CTOIJ.2018.09.555769

Skills and Certifications

- Situational Leadership, The Center for Leadership Studies,
- Certificate of Nonprofit Marketing, Georgia Center for Nonprofits,
- ITIL Foundation Certificate in IT Service Management, Peoplecert,
- Certified Professional in Health Information Technology, Health IT Certification
- Certified Professional in Electronic Health Records, Health IT Certification
- Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, Franklin Covey
- Project Management, Franklin Covey
- TRIZ Problem Solving Process, AAIM Management Association

Honors and Awards

- Global Top 50: Government Innovators 2023, Public Sector Network
- Virtual Innovation Award 2020, National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), Georgia State University, Virtual Support Services during the COVID-19 Pandemic
- 2019 Ellucian Impact Award Finalist, Georgia State University, Financial Aid Application

- 2017 Content Marketing Association Award, Best Use of Influencer Marketing, American Cancer Society's Taboo Campaign
- 2016 Atlanta Mobile Awards, Atlanta Mobile Marketing Organization - Best in Public Service / Nonprofit, American Cancer Society
- 2016 Intranet Design Annual Winners, Nielsen Norman Group, American Cancer Society
- CIO 100 2015 Winner, CIO Magazine, Strategic Impact or Competitive Advantage, American Cancer Society Mobile App
- The 100 Best Nonprofit Web Designs of 2015, EveryAction, American Cancer Society
- 2013 Public Relations Society of America Silver Anvil Award, Communications - Enabling the Transformation of the American Cancer Society

Speaking Engagements

- Story Collider: Personal Stories about Faith, September 14, 2023, Decatur, GA
- TEDx GeorgiaStateU: Reimagine, Transforming Learning Through Stories and Music, April 14, 2023, Atlanta, GA
- Government Innovation Georgia, The Digital Future of Work: Innovation, Problem-Solving and Making Change (Keynote), and Public Sector: Top Priorities for 2023 (Panel Discussion), March 29, 2023, Atlanta, GA
- Center for the Study of Human Health and Emory Arts at Emory University Arts Series: Transforming Learning Through Stories and Music: A Patient Experience, February 9, 2023, Atlanta, GA
- 2022 AcuityPlus User Group Conference: Having a Ball: A Healthy Dose of Music, Laughter, and Patient Inspiration, November 9, 2022, online
- 46th Annual ONS Congress: Catalyst for Innovative Care, Having a Ball: A Healthy Dose of Music, Laughter, and Patient Inspiration, April 22, 2021, online
- 2020 Aphon Annual Conference, Recognition Session for Certified Oncology Nurses, Having a Ball: A Healthy Dose of Music, Laughter, and Patient Inspiration, September 3, 2020, online
- NASW Georgia Chapter 2020 Annual Conference, General Session Address - Having a Ball: Including a Healthy Dose of Music, Laughter and Patient Inspiration: A Unique Collaboration Between a Social Worker and Cancer Survivor, August 7, 2020, online
- Emory University Arts in Healthcare, Having a Ball: A Healthy Dose of Music, Laughter, and Patient Inspiration, February 26, 2020, Atlanta, GA
- 2019 interactUSG Annual Conference, The Student Engagement Report, September 18, 2019, Savannah, GA
- 2019 Georgia State University Tech Trends Conference, New Technologies and the Student Experience, August 1, 2019, Atlanta, GA
- 2019 Global Social Welfare Summit, Understanding the Patient Point of View Through Storytelling and Music: A Unique Collaboration Between a Social Worker and Cancer Survivor, March 21, 2019, online
- 2019 Academy of Managed Care Pharmacy (AMCP) Winter Symposia, Understanding the Patient Point of View through Storytelling and Music, February 9, 2019, Atlanta, GA
- 2019 Annual Conference: Alliance for Continuing Education in the Health Professions, The Power of Stories to Connect Us All: Bridging Divides Between the Patient, Caregiver, Physician, and Educator, January 25, 2019, National Harbor, MD

- 2018 Testicular Cancer Conference, Testicular Cancer Awareness Foundation, Having a Ball at Thirty, December 2, 2018, Denver, CO
- 2018 CIO Advisory Council, Chatbot, Making an Impact (Georgia State University), October 1, 2018, Lawrenceville, GA
- Overcoming Obesity 2018, Understanding the Patient Point of View through Storytelling and Music, September 29, 2018, Washington, DC
- 2018 Annual Meeting of the Georgia Society of Clinical Oncology (GASCO) and Cancer Patient Navigators of Georgia (CPNG), Turning Thirty, The Musical, September 15, 2018, Alpharetta, GA
- 2018 Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association (AFCEAU), Digital Panel Luncheon Moderator, March 22, 2018, Atlanta, GA
- 2018 Annual Conference: Alliance for Continuing Education in the Health Professions, "Insanity!" Delivering the Same Old Patient Education and Expecting Results, January 22, 2018, Orlando, FL
- Bristol-Myers Squibb, Turning Thirty, The Musical: A Patient Centered Experience, May 8, 2017, Lawrence Township, NJ
- 2017 Annual Conference: Alliance for Continuing Education in the Health Professions, Turning Thirty, The Musical – An innovative, patient-centered, educational event featuring musical & educational commentary, January 27, 2017, San Francisco, CA
- 2016 Constellation's Connected Enterprise, Digital Marketing Panel, October 2016, Half Moon Bay, CA
- 2016 Argyle Executive Forum - CMO Think Tank: The Future of Data-Driven Marketing, Marketing Panel, September 28, 2016, Atlanta, GA
- 2016 World Congress on Continuing Professional Development, "Turning Thirty, the Musical": A Journey of Survivorship - An Innovative and Inspiring Educational Event Featuring a Musical and Interdisciplinary Team Commentary, March 17, 2016, San Diego, CA
- 2016 Adobe Digital Marketing Symposium, Fighting Cancer Digitally, February 10, 2016, Atlanta, GA.

Teaching Experience

- Emory University, Arts, Community, and Public Health Class, Guest Lecturer: Transforming Learning Through Stories and Music: A Patient Experience, February 9, 2023, Atlanta, GA
- The 24th Annual Louis A. Cancellaro Primary Care Conference, Understanding the Patient Point of View through Storytelling and Music, March 23, 2021, online
- The University of West Georgia, 3rd Annual Healthcare Oncology Symposium: Patient Perspectives through Music and Storytelling, July 26, 2019, Newnan, GA
- American Academy of Family Physicians, Conversation with Your Patients: A Patient Perspective Through Storytelling and Music, December 2018, Online/eLearning
- Emory University Rollins School of Public Health, MPH, Behavioral and Social Sciences in Public Health Class, Guest Lecturer, February 27, 2019 and November 29, 2018, Atlanta, GA
- Hope Center Memory Care, Patient/Client Centered Care CEU, Perspectives of Diagnosis, Treatment, and Survivorship Through Storytelling and Music, September 22, 2018, Fayetteville, GA

- Emory University Rollins School of Public Health, Turning Thirty, The Musical: A Patient-Centered Perspective, April 17, 2017, Atlanta, GA
- Gwinnett Medical Center, Patient Centered CEU: A Day at the Theater with an Ethics Twist, June 25, 2016, Lawrenceville, GA
- Dogwood Forest of Dunwoody, Turning Thirty, The Musical: A Journey of Survivorship, March 3, 2016, Atlanta, GA
- Emory University's Goizueta Business School Executive MBA, Leadership and Life, Guest Lecturer, March 20, 2004, Atlanta GA
- Clayton State University, Continuing and Professional Education, Programming in C, Instructor, 1994