

DIRECT

HIT



The **SUCCESS** Spotlight

NAME TO A GOOD LOOKING FACE: MICHELLE TOIVONEN

Michelle Toivonen has a long history with Midwest Direct. She has been with us for over a year and a half as our Director of Strategic Marketing but began as an outside marketing consultant to Midwest for over five years. Michelle splits her time working on our internal marketing efforts, as well as working directly with clients. We often see Michelle running around the building wearing many different hats to keep the Marketing Department running smoothly.

What do you officially do at Midwest? I work directly with clients to develop their marketing strategy to include fully integrated marketing campaigns with an eye for not only campaign ROI, but the advancement of their business intelligence with better data and insights. As head of our own internal marketing team, I oversee the development and execution of our own strategic campaigns. We do a lot of internal testing of new concepts and products. It's always exciting.

You were a marketing consultant for Midwest before you came on full time. What did you do before coming here and how was the transition? The transition was easy because I had a history with many of the people I work with directly now. As a marketing consultant, I did a lot of what I do now. However, I now have direct access to a great data and analytics team. That's been one of the best parts of onboarding with Midwest Direct.

Describe what a typical day is like for you at Midwest. There's no such thing! Some days are very internally focused on our own marketing efforts – others are spent out of office with clients helping them improve their business growth with strategic marketing.

What is one recent success that you are proud of? I'm really excited and proud of our new consulting team. It's not easy to

pull together a high-performance team in under a year, but we did it. The team is made up of experts in marketing, business development, data, and analytics. We can help clients develop strategic campaigns and business intelligence with actionable insights by doing deep dives into their own data and marketing efforts, and making recommendations to improve performance.

What parts of your job do you find challenging? It seems like there's never enough hours in the day! I'm blessed to be surrounded by hardworking folks, so we get it all done.

Do you have a family or pets? I come from a big family – and a farm – so there are too many of both to name. I have two kids, both going to college now – and a beagle at home. On the weekends you might find me on the family farm, skiing or out with friends!

Did you do anything fun for the holidays this year? We have a family on all four coasts. (We're holding down the North Coast here in Cleveland). So, this year all we spent the holidays in Houston for a Cowboy Christmas!

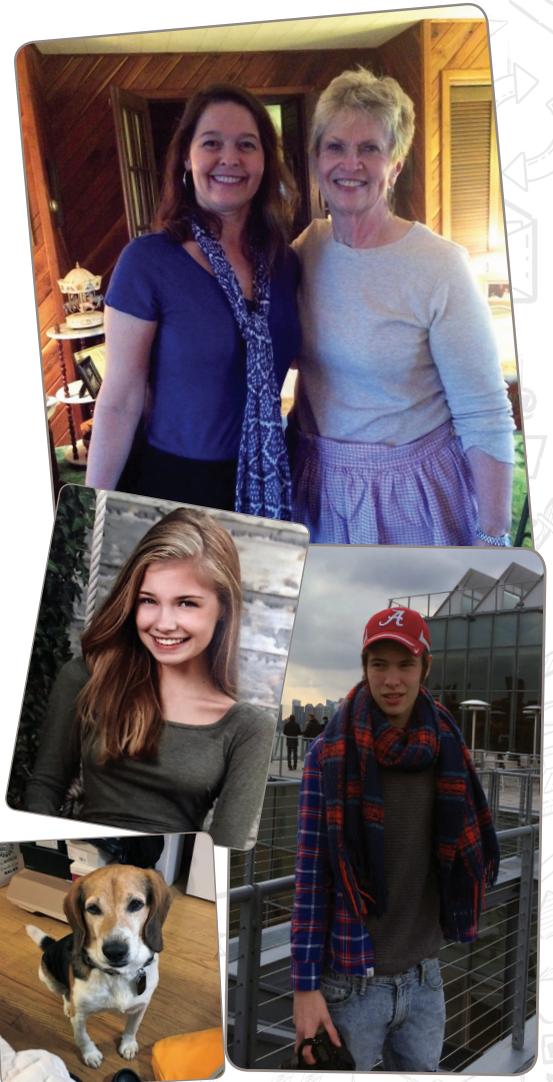
What would your dream vacation be? I had to think about this one for a while – I think it would be somewhere I've been many times – my sister's backyard patio overlooking Puget Sound and Whidbey Island in Seattle. There's so much amazing beauty there – rain or shine.

Where do you live? On the east side near John Carroll University. It's a beautiful area, but extra busy during the collegiate year. We hear every baseball and football game live!

What's your favorite movie or TV show? I've got way too many to pick one, but

if I had to pick just one "channel" it would be PBS. I'll watch just about anything they broadcast. However, I've been really impressed lately with the movies and original series created for online channels, like Sneaky Pete, House of Cards, Peaky Blinders, I could go on, but won't!

What's your favorite food? Well, I'll never need a DNA test to prove my ancestors are from the France/Germany region. My favorite food is wine and cheese – in any combination.



Team Treats



Chicken and Dumplings Soup!

This Chicken and Dumplings soup is here to warm you up in the cold winter months of Ohio!

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 celery stalks, chopped
- 2 medium carrots, sliced
- 3 cans (14½ ounces each) reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 3 cups cubed chicken breast
- ½ tsp poultry seasoning
- Pinch of pepper
- 1 ⅔ cups of reduced fat biscuit mix
- ⅔ cup of fat-free milk

DIRECTIONS:

1. In a large pot coated with cooking spray or oil cook celery and carrots over medium heat until tender, about 5 minutes.
2. Stir in broth, chicken, and seasonings. Bring to a boil; reduce heat to a gentle simmer.
3. For dumplings, mix biscuit mix and milk until a soft dough forms. Drop by tablespoonful on top of the simmering liquid.
4. Reduce heat to low; cover and cook for 10-15 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the dumplings comes out clean.

FUN FACTS:

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

A lot of people make New Year's resolutions every year, but few keep them. Sticking to your resolutions is hard, but we believe in you! Stick to your resolutions and beat the following statistics.

- 45% of Americans consistently set resolutions every year for the new year
- 37% of resolutions are about increasing the amount of exercise one gets
- 22% of resolutions fail in a week, 40% in a month, 50% in 3 months, and 60% in 6 months
- 38% of people claim to have never made a resolution

The number one reason resolutions fail is the lack of a clear goal, so make sure you set your goals and define how you're going to get there.



Melinda's

MOTIVATIONAL MOMENT

This month, Melinda wanted to share a quote that may help you stick to your New Year's resolutions:

"You will never know your limits until you push yourself to them."

Health & Safety Tip of the Month:

WINTER SAFETY TIPS

With cold weather upon us, we have set a goal to stay warm and safe this winter. We put together a few tips to help you do both.

- Take your hands out of your pockets and put on some mittens – keeping your hands in your pockets could cause you to lose balance and slip on the ice, plus mittens are warmer than gloves
- Use rock salt and kitty litter on your pathways – the salt melts the ice and the litter adds traction for less slipping
- Winterize your home – install weather stripping, insulate water lines, clean out gutters, and repair any roof leaks
- Don't forget about your furry friends – bring pets inside. If you can't do that make sure they have shelter to keep them warm and water that is not frozen
- Warm up before shoveling – it may sound ridiculous but shoveling is serious work and without stretching and warming up you could risk serious injury

Michelle's
MARKETING
MINUTE



Targeting with Digital Post+

Have you ever wished you could target all the people at a certain event with an ad on their phone, then at home? Or have you wished you could blast your competitor's brick and mortar location with your information? We have a solution that will help you aggressively target large populations on mobile with ads, then follow them home to serve ads there, too!

Our Digital Post+ online & mobile marketing platform masters the art of pinpoint targeting the people you want to reach most. Check out mw-direct.com/digital-post to learn more about Digital Post+ or call us at 216-251-2500.

Communication Tip:

DON'T LET YOUR DEALS RUN COLD

The icy weather may be keeping you and your clients' cold but that doesn't mean it should let your deals run cold. Make sure your deals are moving and avoid becoming a pushy salesperson by following these steps:

1. Don't repeat your close – If your potential client gives you a no don't follow up with the exact same thing. Your next correspondence should be something different and lighter.
2. Don't corner your prospects – You don't want to trap your potential clients. Before you even offer a deal make sure they have time to get out if they want. This will make them feel like you are working with them rather than against them.
3. Don't compound your close – One close at a time. Don't offer them more than one thing or ask more than one question. They are more likely to answer the easy question than the important question.
4. Close something light first – Every deal should be started by asking for a phone number, intro or meeting. This will get the potential client used to saying yes to you. Once they are used to the small "ask" they are more willing to say yes to the big "ask".
5. Keep the Close Prospect Centered – Keep the potential client on track by making them the center of the deal. Make sure you include what you can do for them and the finish line of the deal. Give a clearly defined ask that keeps them feeling valued and in control.
6. Send a New Quote-
At the end of the month or the quarter, it's time to reevaluate the unclosed business. Send the potential client a new contract a few days before the end of the month without the discounts and perks you were going to give them in the first contract. This will light a little fire to spur them into action. Even if you can't close before the end of the month you will keep the conversation going, and can extend the discount if needed.



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Tell us what you think. Email your comments and give us your feedback on what you enjoy about Direct Hit!



Questions or comments?
Email us at marketing@mw-direct.com.