

# ROBERT STEELE

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## Professional Summary

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Senior Executive with expertise in startups, turnaround management, strategic planning, business/product development, operations, marketing, and finance. Possesses a well established and consistent track record of leading organizations to peak performance. Reversed fortunes of 3 diverse entertainment venues by increasing endowment funds, and affecting dramatic increases in attendance, sponsorship, subscriptions, and patron support. Provided strategic vision for a community bank with severe loan portfolio quality issues. Implemented a dynamic loan review program to reduce charge-offs and served as key liaison with the Comptroller of the Currency throughout the turnaround. Founder and principal of Change of Venue - Arts Management Consulting, which is a boutique consulting practice specializing in strategic planning, turnaround management practices, and organizational dynamics. The practice continues to have a waiting list of clients. Founder and chairman of a 100+ store association. Led negotiations for national contract pricing on most franchise inputs. Developed unique "value-enhancement" and "census driven" models to sustain dramatic performance and financial improvements. Strategist and Visionary with a solid combination of business and technical acumen. Was an integral part of the Booze, Allen, Hamilton consulting team on a highly successful strategic planning cycle for Comerica; a super-regional, bank-holding company. Led a community team to national recognition in the Pioneer Hybrid "Search for Solutions" initiative. Conceived and developed extensive strategic plans for municipalities, mid-sized businesses, churches, non-profits, and financial institutions. Able to leverage and integrate technology to achieve marked improvement in efficiency and profitability. Widely recognized for innovation and a commitment to thinking outside the box. Decision Maker and Leader with a history of providing strong leadership and serving as a voice of reason in trying times as well as periods of rapid growth. Called upon as an outside advisor to resolve business, supply chain, government, and organizational disputes. Organizational leadership skills have resulted in recruiting and retaining talented and productive staffs. Implemented effective cost-cutting measures to speed recovery and sustain long-term profitability.

## Work History

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**President and CEO**

11/2018 to Present

**Historical Society of Martin County** – Stuart, Florida

**President and CEO** 08/2015 to 04/2018  
**Old School Square Center** – Delray Beach, Florida

- Completed a Functional Analysis, Strategic Plan, and Comprehensive Development Plan in first year.
- Developed a diverse, reverse-engineered, ala carte menu for the programming season with a high-quality brochure which was distributed to 20,000 households.
- Engineered a Development Function and dramatically increased membership, annual fund, and major gifts.
- Secured a \$1,000,000 donor to support sweeping renovations of the interior of the Cornell Museum; these renovations helped to establish the museum as a significant venue for contemporary art.
- Negotiated a long-term (30-year) lease with the City of Delray Beach to protect the long-term interests of the organization.
- Developed a business unit focus for the multidisciplinary campus and instilled a sense of entrepreneurial spirit among all the unit directors.
- Led the initiative to rebrand the campus to Old School Square.
- Able to secure community and municipal approval of a \$12M Park Master Plan to map the evolution of the campus to become an Arts and Entertainment Park.

**Executive Director** 11/2005 to 07/2015  
**Community Arts Center** – Williamsport, Pennsylvania

- Implemented event analysis and fee negotiation practices, marketing strategies, and guest service enhancements that effectively doubled ticket sales and event season contribution in 24 months.
- Initiated a culture to "put the Community in the Community Arts Center" that increased the number of local and regional partners of the organization from 10 to more than 200 in 5 years.
- Developed a comprehensive series of educational workshops and outreach activities that led to the CAC being named the 2008 Business Partner in Education Award.
- Led a year-long, community-wide planning effort to host the 2008 Governor's Award for the Arts at the CAC which was recognized as the most galvanizing event in the history of the community.
- Facilitated the systematic upgrade of all technical systems and protocols to establish a broad reputation for the hall for technical expertise, resulting week-long and extended "tech-in" rental opportunities.
- Organized the formation of and served as producer and director for ACT UP! (A Community Theatres United Production) which has successfully produced five summer student musicals which have attracted over 15,000 attendees.
- Produced and Directed *Les Miserables* in 2010 which won 4 National Youth Arts awards including Outstanding Production.
- Devised the 2010 "Keep the Community In the Spotlight" endowment campaign which is expected to generate over \$5 million in gifts and bequests.

**Executive Director**

11/2001 to 10/2005

**Tecumseh Civic Auditorium** – Tecumseh, Michigan

- Responsible for planning, budgeting, staffing, fundraising, volunteer recruitment, booking, rentals, building and grounds, website development, marketing, promotions, and public relations for a 572-seat venue.
- Raised over \$1,000,000 through sponsorships and development efforts in 2 years.
- Developed an 8-show event season with 18 performances which have all been virtual sell-outs.
- Achieved great success building consensus and cooperation with a score of very diverse groups.
- Completed an extensive facility upgrade and equipment refit program with well-contained costs.
- Achieved a fivefold increase in attendance and doubled the number of hosted events in one year.
- Designed and completed an extensive 5-year strategic plan for the venue.

**President**

06/1993 to 10/2001

**Cumber-Obersteinaur, LLC** – Monroe, MI

- Developed 72 seat, full-service restaurant from build-out to staffing and training.
- Conceptualized and implemented model marketing programs.
- Extensive knowledge of food service practices and procedures.
- Founder and chair of 100+ unit franchise association.
- Utilized by the franchise owner as a consultant.
- Invented a "grinder" box which is utilized in over 200 stores nationally.

**Executive Vice-President**

09/1985 to 06/1993

**Thumb National Bank & Trust** – Pigeon, MI

- Served as a loan officer, trust officer, and loan review officer.
- Conducted an extensive strategic planning project for the institution.
- Served as liaison to the Comptroller of the Currency.
- Chaired the Asset/Liability Management Committee.
- Developed and maintained the microcomputer assets of the bank.
- Programmed a loan documentation system in application software.
- Implemented a dynamic loan review system.
- Constructed all spreadsheet models and prepared annual budgets for the bank.
- Designed and oversaw construction of the bank ATM network.
- Performed analysis on all new products, expansion, and other special projects.
- Consulted with a wide variety of business owners.
- Provided leadership to many community organizations.

**Product Analyst - Corporate Development /Planning Analyst - Cost Analyst**  
**COMERICA, Inc** – Detroit, MI

09/1980 to 09/1985

**Product Analyst**

- Performed new product marketing, pricing, and positioning analysis and implementation.

**Corporate Development/Planning Analyst**

- Developed a sophisticated model for mergers and acquisition analysis.
- Corporate Planning Analyst - conducted all phases of strategic planning on a corporate basis.

**Cost Analyst**

- Performed product/service costing analysis.
- Branch Management Trainee.

## Education

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**MA:** Business Administration 1986

**Central Michigan University** - Mt. Pleasant, MI

**BA:** Business Administration 1980

**Adrian College** - Adrian, MI

## Affiliations

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- ACT UP! – Co-Founder: Producer, Director, Designer
- City of Tecumseh: Retirement Board of Trustees
- Clear Channel Advisory Board: Member
- Deane Center for the Performing Arts: Board of Directors
- Delray Beach Chamber of Commerce: Board of Directors
- Holder of 2 United States Patents
- K's for Cancer: Board of Directors
- Lycoming College: Guest Lecturer; Communications, Public Relations
- Lycoming County Brotherhood USA, Pickelner Citation Award Winner
- Mancinos Licensee's Association: Founder, Chair, Vice-Chair
- Michigan Directory Company: Board of Directors
- Pigeon Bandshell Committee: Founder, Chair
- Pigeon District Library Board: Trustee
- Pigeon Strategic Planning Committee: Founder, Chair
- Public Art Academy: Board of Directors-Emeritus
- Rig Maids, Advisory Board

- State of Israel Bonds, Coin of Israel Award Winner
- Tecumseh United Methodist Church: Chair Pastor/Parish Relations Committee
- Tecumseh Youth Theatre: Trustee, Treasurer, Producer, Designer, Director
- Uptown Music Collective: Board of Directors, Chair
- Williamsport-Lycoming Chamber of Commerce: Board of Directors
- Williamsport-Lycoming Visitor's Bureau: Board of Directors