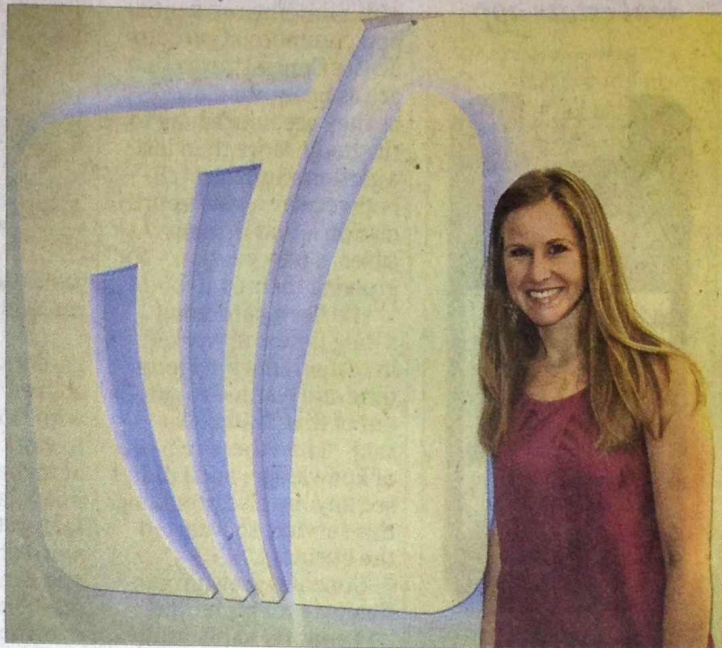


Sara Sullivan of Mass Relevance



Sara Sullivan, product manager at Mass Relevance, says the company offers much more than great perks. MAURI ELBEL / FOR STATESMAN SOLUTIONS

Product manager praises collaborative work environment

By Mauri Elbel
Special to Statesman Solutions

When Sara Sullivan walks into work each day, she doesn't have to contemplate lunch, squeezing in a workout, counting vacation days or finding an avenue for her hobbies.

As a product manager at Mass Relevance, a technology company that gives marketers access to the world's social content in real time to help build their brands and increase consumer engagement, these perks come with the job. But it's not just the employee-centric benefits, team-building "Fantastic Fridays," swank downtown offices, flexible paid time off policy and full-time nutritionist and fitness director tasked with preparing daily healthy lunches and wellness activities for Mass Relevance employees that keeps Sullivan loving her job.

"Those perks are nice to

have," Sullivan said. "But Mass Relevance also marries all of that with an awesome work culture."

At Mass Relevance, there are no offices – everyone sits or stands behind large Apple iMac screens, including the executives. Sullivan said having an accessible and knowledgeable executive team that trusts and bestows a high level of responsibility upon its employees creates a strong collaborative work environment.

"When we are deciding how to build or create something new, we all come together and have an equal voice, which ends up creating diversity and a much more powerful end-result than if it were driven by only one person in the organization," she said. "There is something else here that is really special."

Founded in 2010 by former Bazaarvoice executive Sam Decker, Mass Relevance serves brands such as Pepsi, Victoria's Secret and Campbell's as well as media companies such as FOX, MTV and HBO. The Mass Relevance technology allows these companies to build social experiences with

Love continued on G11



Sara Sullivan says she loves being able to contribute her passion for food at work. One way she does that is through potluck dinners. MAURI ELBEL / FOR STATESMAN SOLUTIONS

Mass Relevance founder credits its talent for growth and success

Love

Continued from G1

the most relevant content from Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Google +, which can be displayed on any digital screen – mobile, desktop, billboard, Jumbotron – to engage consumers and bring their voices into the brand.

From its downtown Brazos Street headquarters, the company has quickly established itself as one of the hottest tech companies in Austin with more than 300 clients in the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Brazil, France and Germany. In less than three years, the company has grown from three co-founders to 105 employees and plans to hire 40 more by year's end. This past week, Facebook announced a new alliance with Mass

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Sara Sullivan, Mass Relevance

Relevance that grants the Austin-based startup unique access to Facebook data to help media increase audience engagement and ratings. Mass Relevance is the first and only social experience platform to gain full access to this Facebook data for display in broadcast and on digital properties.

Decker attributes Mass Relevance's growth and success to the talent the company attracts, hires and retains.

"It's the ability to build

a company where the kind of people you hire are the kind of people you want to work with long-term," he said. "People have to be passionate about what they are doing and inspired about working here."

For Sullivan, it was a nontraditional work path guided by her combined passions for travel, food/wine and technology that eventually led to the job she loves at Mass Relevance. After completing

Love continued on G12

Product manager gets to offer cooking classes to colleagues

Love

Continued from G11

her undergraduate work at the University of Texas, Sullivan joined the Peace Corps as a small-business development consultant in West Africa before returning to Austin to marry her love of food, travel and business as a sous chef at the Driskill downtown. After deciding cooking might better serve her as a hobby, she worked as a brand manager at Dell, got an MBA at Berkley and landed a job at Zynga before ultimately finding her way to Mass Relevance.

As a product manager at Mass Relevance, Sullivan has not only been able to use her tech skills to help guide the company through numerous strategic decisions, but she's also found happiness by bringing her passion for cooking into the office. Working with Mass Relevance's director of health and fitness, Emilee

WHY SULLIVAN LOVES HER JOB

1. Who she works for. "My brother gave me the best advice I've ever gotten, which was to pick your boss," she said. "At Mass Relevance, my boss is phenomenal, as is our CEO and our new chief product officer — they are knowledgeable, and they trust their teams and are really accessible."

2. Collaborative work environment. "Everybody has a place at the table, which allows us to deliver a better product and to create a better business," she said.

3. Innovation. "Mass Relevance really encourages and breeds new ideas," she said. "Innovation is part of our every day. It gets us excited about the direction of our company."

4. Autonomy and flexibility. "I went to Singapore for two weeks, and I was able to do that with this job," she said. "You hire good people who want to do good work so they don't abuse it. And if your employees are more balanced, they are going to bring more energy and excitement to the office."

5. Work and play. "I can bring my hobby to work and also be fulfilled with the work I am doing here."

Feldhausen, she has started a monthly series of cooking classes for her colleagues and frequently represents Mass Relevance in the Austin foodie community.

"While I am good at

tech and love the challenges that come with it, I love that I can contribute my passions, too," she said. "I've never worked at a place that has been so genuinely interested in its employees. Austin is full of hobbyists, and the folks here are very dedicated to the work aspect and also have a lot of fun bringing their hobbies into work."

Every third Thursday, Sullivan puts on a food series for her co-workers, ranging from knife skills classes to food and wine pairings, and she also participates in Mass Relevance's "foodie nights" where co-workers get together to contribute to theme-based potluck dinners.

"I love that I get to have a really interesting and challenging day job and also have really smart and interesting colleagues who I get to learn about their passions and share mine with them," she said. "I feel like I get to be my whole self, not just my work self."

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