

A Freedom Story

MICHAEL DEVER

PRESIDENT, GUIDEWIRE CONSULTING

Every industry needs its maverick. Before Southwest Airlines launched service in 1971, the nation's airlines were plodding along with prohibitively high fares, sluggish productivity, and stodgy service. Southwest – oft credited as the industry maverick – has changed the travel business from the ground up.

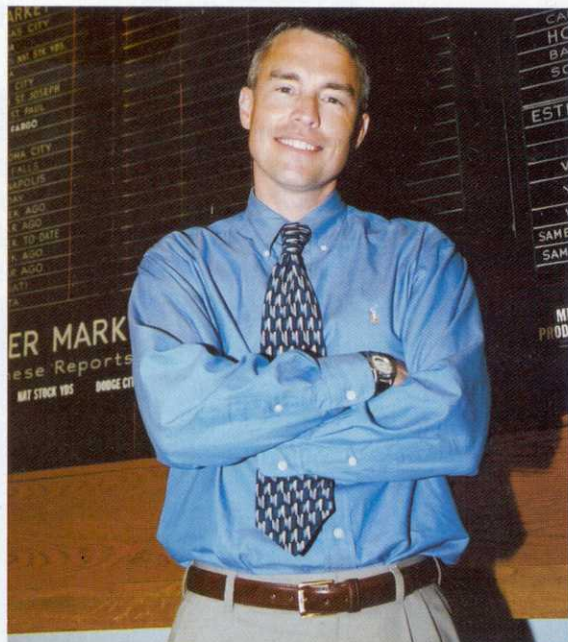
Rapid Rewards Member and entrepreneur Michael Dever is on the brink of maverick status in an entirely different business: environmental consulting. After more than 15 years of managing environmental site assessment programs for several Fortune 500 companies, Dever created Guidewire Consulting, based in Kansas City.

Dever's quest is to revolutionize the business of the environmental site assessments that take place before commercial real estate transactions. "Guidewire Consulting is bringing technology to a somewhat old-fashioned business," he says.

Not only is Dever developing revolutionary software that allows data input to Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) to create fast, accurate environmental assessments, he's creating a nationwide network of environmental consultants who can work efficiently and accurately.

The practical and frugal Dever is quick to mention that Guidewire Consulting is not only active in software design, the company also performs environmental consulting services from coast to coast, providing a steady stream of revenue to support the development of technology tools.

Dever's work takes him to the skies about once a week, and his airline of choice is Southwest Airlines. "We can



be anywhere in the U.S. in about three hours, and Southwest's fares and flexibility make it possible for us to commit to a project at a moment's notice," he says.

"In my business, time is money," says Dever. This philosophy drives everything from his travel habits to the model of his business. "Southwest has allowed me to realize the dream of servicing my Customers economically and efficiently while still delivering a top-quality product," says Dever. "The frequent flights and on-time performance also give me the freedom to spend my nights at home with my wife and our two girls."

And because Dever appreciates time-saving technology tools, his business uses SWABIZ, southwest.com for business travel. This free service creates online travel reports for companies of all sizes. "SWABIZ allows me to track all of our company's Southwest travel online," says Dever. "It's just another way Southwest makes life easier."

– Jill Raines