

Jim Lewis

Making the world safer, smarter, and more secure

Creative problem solver, a strategic connector, and a purpose-driven soul that charts my path.

I am the executive director of the Vaughan Institute of Risk Management and Insurance at the University of Iowa's Tippie College of Business, and a seasoned entrepreneur with a strong track record of success in the insurtech, insurance, and marketing technology industries.

Over my 35+ year career, I have started and grown companies, made some stupid mistakes, learned quickly, and I love a good "why". At Relationship Marketing, we served many of the Fortune 100, and improved loyalty and profitability for millions of their clients' customers. Notable clients have included Principal, Ameriprise, AT&T, Time Warner, Volvo, and eight of the top 20 largest pharmaceutical companies.

In 2013, I co-founded a medical bill review and wellness company, which opened my eyes to the lack of price transparency and an overprescribed nation that plagued the healthcare industry. This inspired me to take on the challenge of making the \$3.5 trillion health insurance industry more affordable and less complex. In 2017, I assembled a talented team to create Benjamin®, the first permission-based AI advisor. Benjamin securely accessed individuals' health insurance claims to proactively seek prescription savings while predicting and preventing adverse drug events. The innovation earned recognition as the University of Iowa's JPEC Venture School Business of the Year in 2021.

I was fortunate to participate in renowned innovation accelerators such as the Global Insurance Accelerator, Gener8tor, StartUp Health and Expert Dojo. We were blessed with funding from diverse sources, including angels, the State of Iowa, and venture capital, that propelled significant client and revenue growth for Benjamin®.

In 2022, we sold Benjamin® to Clever Health to join forces and launch an AI-driven, smart virtual care platform. It has grown to nearly one million contracted users in less than three years. I then leveraged my experience to help the Global Insurance Accelerator (GIA) as their alumni director to better manage their portfolio of 46 active insurtech companies. I envisioned a new strategic partnership between the GIA and the University of Iowa to create a product-market fit methodology for insurtech startups and connect students with insurtech founders.

When an opportunity arose to pay it-forward to the next generation of insurance leaders and join my alma mater on a "worthy mission", I left the warm weather of Scottsdale, Arizona, to help build the Vaughan Institute into the top risk management and insurance program in the country.

When not innovating, I love to be on a golf course or a warm sunny beach with my friends, family or my significant other, Gina Bell.