



Craig Wood

Chief Executive

Craig Wood is an accomplished business executive, board member, author, and people-centric leader with over 30 years of experience founding, managing, growing, and leading companies at all stages. Today, Craig serves as CEO of Definian, an award-winning data and AI consulting firm that helps organizations unlock the value of their data.

Craig has rocketed Definian into a phase of significant revenue and employee growth. The business has gone from \$3 million to more than \$26 million in revenue over his eight years as CEO, growing organically and through strategic acquisitions that deepened the firm's capability and industry expertise. He has also built out a global team of nearly 130 employees, including a delivery center in India. Along the way, he led the company's rebrand from Premier International to Definian, a repositioning that reflects the firm's bigger ambition without losing the culture it was built on. Craig's leadership catalyzed the company's evolution from a founder-led organization to one backed by private equity.

The business community has taken notice: Definian has been named one of The Best and Brightest Companies to Work For® in Chicago and one of Crain's top 100 Best Places to Work in Chicago, and the company has twice made the Inc. 5000 List of America's Fastest-Growing Private Companies.

Business Leadership

Craig's journey to Definian was built on three decades of establishing and growing multiple companies from revenues of \$1 million to \$30+ million. Craig has led primarily in the data, research, and technology industries, consistently focused on establishing and sustaining the heartbeat of a culture that will help his colleagues, employees, and teams thrive and succeed.

This fusing of industry expertise and a deep dedication to company culture became a winning combination for Craig as he led each of his early ventures — KnowledgeBase Marketing, BusinessModel.com, Yankelovich, and The Futures Company — to become profitable, successful organizations. Craig's entrepreneurial spirit and desire to do all the good he can also drove him to launch The Clarity Group and The Collaboratory, two consulting firms that helped nonprofits, associations, and faith-based sector organizations leverage data and research for their CRM needs.

At Definian, that same instinct for building has extended to acquisition. Craig has led three strategic acquisitions during his tenure, each one chosen to expand real capability and expertise rather than just add headcount.

Commitment to Culture

As the CEO of Definian, Craig has enhanced his reputation for being a people-centric leader, connecting with and supporting every employee at every level in the organization. Craig believes that putting people first promotes positive customer experiences that produce deep loyalty and lasting growth. Craig "walks the talk" of authentic leadership by modeling candor, optimism and action to drive his team forward with a unified purpose and spirit – and the results are evident.

Public Profile

Craig is the co-author of *'Coming to Concurrency: Addressable Attitudes and the New Model for Marketing Productivity'* and frequently authors articles and provides expert commentary on leading industry and national podcasts.

Craig is also an in-demand public speaker, having spoken at hundreds of events throughout his career. For the last 20 years, he has served as the program chair and longtime host of the CRMC (Customer Relationship Management Conference), the retail industry's premier loyalty and relationship management conference.

Personal Life

Craig was raised in Overland Park, Kansas, where his Midwest values and common sense took root. He attended college at the University of Virginia, where he developed his leadership skills not just in the McIntire School of Commerce but also as a four-year letter winner and captain of the cheerleading squad. Craig graduated from UVA with distinction with a Bachelor of Science degree in Commerce with a dual concentration in Marketing and Management.





CRAIG WOOD

SUMMARY OF LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

CONTACT INFO

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SIGNATURE STRENGTHS

- Executive Leadership
- Business Vision, Strategy, Planning & Implementation
- M&A Strategy & Integration
- Private Equity Partnership & Capital Raising
- Global Team Building
- Consulting & Advisory Services
- Client Engagement Management
- Business Re-Engineering and Change Management
- Operations, Financial Management and Governance
- Brand Repositioning
- Speaking Engagements
- Business Development

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

A top-performing, culture-first entrepreneurial Chief Executive Officer with over 30 years of experience as an accomplished business leader in the data, research, and technology industries. Actively recruited for leadership roles in publicly and privately held companies, and currently CEO of Definian, where he has grown the business from \$3 million to more than \$26 million in revenue while building a nearly 130-person global team. He has also led three strategic acquisitions and a full rebrand of the company along the way.

Over time, Craig built a reputation as a turnaround specialist for underperforming privately-owned companies, introducing long-term planning and renewed operational and financial discipline to drive sustainable growth. That track record was matched by experience operating at scale inside Kantar Group, a \$2B+ Data Analytics and Brand Consulting firm, where he led a growing division within a much larger, publicly traded organization.

Early in his career, he participated in a mid-market roll-up of three companies that sold to Young & Rubicam for \$175M, one of the top three M&A deals completed in the NC Triangle area at the time. That deal became the springboard for founding two companies, one of which he later sold.

He also serves as a board member and published author and is frequently requested as a speaker at industry conferences. He graduated with distinction from the McIntire School of Commerce at the University of Virginia, with a dual concentration in Marketing and Management.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP ACHIEVEMENTS

DEFINIAN DATA, LLC, (formerly Premier International), Greater Chicago Area CEO 6/2018 – Present

Assumed leadership of a legacy IT consulting firm and built it into Definian, a data and AI consulting firm serving enterprise clients through strategy, modernization, insights, and AI work. Created a new vision for business growth focused on top-line revenue, expanding distribution channels to support sales, and continuous improvement in internal processes around forecasting, financial discipline, and talent acquisition.

Drove top-line revenue growth from \$3 million to \$26+ million over eight years, combining organic growth with three strategic acquisitions and a global delivery model of nearly 130 employees across the U.S. and India. Sustained a consistent 25–30% EBITDA in a company that was historically an inconsistent profit performer.

- Led three strategic acquisitions during his tenure, each one chosen to deepen Definian's capability and expertise rather than simply add scale.
- Championed the rebrand and repositioning of the company from Premier International to Definian, reflecting a bigger ambition and the firm's expanded place in the market while staying true to the culture it was built on.
- Orchestrated a formal process to secure private equity investment, running a competitive search that produced dozens of bidders and five letters of intent, and selected Renovus Capital Partners as the right partner to fund the company's next phase of growth.
- Built a global delivery model spanning the U.S. and India, growing the team to nearly 130 employees to keep pace with client demand.
- Introduced an Entrepreneurial Operating System (EOS) that forged a new vision for the business through governance that clarified all phases of business execution and aligned people and processes to achieve defined objectives and goals.
- Sustained customer acquisition and partner relationships by building, guiding, and training a high-performance sales organization; continues to serve as the organization's face during critical client and partner negotiations.
- Recognized with multiple company awards over his tenure, including being named one of The Best and Brightest Companies to Work For® in Chicago and one of Crain's Top 100 Best Places to Work in Chicago, with two Inc. 5000 nods for America's Fastest-Growing Private Companies.

EXECUTIVE PROFILE

EDUCATION

BS in Commerce with distinction, dual Concentration in Marketing and Management, University of Virginia

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Past Chairman and Board Member, MarketingEDGE.org, and former Board member Data & Marketing Association (DMA)

M&A ACTIVITY

Participated in the 1999 mid-market roll-up of three companies sold to Young & Rubicam, a publicly-traded advertising firm, for \$175M. At the time, one of the top three M&A deals ever completed in North Carolina and the Research Triangle area.

As CEO of Definian, led three strategic acquisitions over a three-year period to add significant capability and expertise to the business.

AFFILIATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

Customer Relationship Management Conference Host and Emcee since 2006.

Co-Author of 'Coming to Concurrence: Addressable Attitudes and the New Model for Marketing Productivity' published by Racom in 2006

THE COLLABORATORY, Washington, D.C. Metro Area Founder & Chief Collaborator

11/2017 - 6/2018

Founded and financed this boutique consulting company, filling a market need to serve the trade association and non-profit sector. Service focus on market segmentation and audience engagement helped clients better understand and connect with their audiences and drive increased revenue and ROI. Left the company to assume a broader leadership opportunity.

Generated a seven-figure revenue pipeline in the first year, driven primarily by engagements secured after strategic industry presentations.

360 LIVE MEDIA, Washington, D.C. Metro Area Chief Engagement Officer | Managing Director

9/2015 - 11/2017

Recruited to lead the experience design, strategy, account, and marketing teams for this creative agency specializing in live media. Introduced an innovative business expansion and marketing strategy driven by speaking engagements and published articles. In collaboration with the CEO, capitalized on design experience and industry expertise to solve complex business challenges for the most progressive industry associations, including ASAE, National Business Aviation Association (NBAA), and American Osteopathic Association (AOA).

Quickly became a domain expert in the space, strengthening the brand's credibility through successful engagement delivery that doubled revenue and employee growth to reach all-time high revenue and staffing levels over two years.

- Teamed with the Founder and CEO to build a value proposition that resonated with potential investors, partners, and clients and eventually led to the successful sale of the business in 2018.
- Named one of the Top 10 Places to Work in Washington, D.C. by Washington Business Journal

THE FUTURES COMPANY, Chapel Hill, NC Group President - Advisory Services

1/2013 - 8/2015

Tapped by the CEO to lead this Division of the \$2B+ Kantar Group and capitalize on the acquisition of the Clarity Group. Oversaw three domestic locations and 100 employees. Led the North American consulting team to unlock growth for more than 250 Fortune 500 companies with award-winning consulting on consumer insights and actionable database solutions.

Established a non-profit practice within the Division, capturing new clients and delivering an incremental revenue stream that consistently met all top-line revenue targets and net profit contribution goals to support a \$35M division.

- Drove a successful client acquisition strategy and quickly secured \$2M in new business through speaking engagements at industry conferences.
- Entrusted by the CEO to be the primary presenter of company plans and vision to the Board.
- Recognized by the CFO as the most data-focused and financially savvy member of the leadership team. Assumed ownership for overall budgeting and forecasting of revenue and expenses.

CLARITY GROUP, Chapel Hill, NC CEO AND FOUNDER

3/2006 - 12/2012

Created this consulting firm to support the unique customer relationship management (CRM) needs of the non-profit and faith-based sector. Built the brand into a million-dollar business in the industry. Tapped for a broader leadership role due to company sale to The Futures Company.

Led the development of core intellectual property around the Pillars of CRM, including Culture, Operations, Data, Technology, and Engagement, that successfully established the Brand in targeted business sectors.

- Supported the United Way, the largest non-profit organization globally, as a strategic CRM partner serving over 110 local United Ways in North America.

EARLY CAREER SNAPSHOT

1995 - 2006

Group President, YANKELOVICH

President/COO, BUSINESSMODEL.COM

EVP, KBM (KnowledgeBase Marketing), Purchased By YOUNG & RUBICAM