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Biography

Nick Grouf, Co-Founder

Nick Grouf is the co-founder, chairman and chief executive officer of privately-held Spot Runner, Inc., the first Internet-based ad agency aimed at revolutionizing the way advertising is created, targeted, bought and sold.

Grouf and longtime business partner, David Waxman, have successfully built and sold two prior companies, PeoplePC and Firefly Network, both of which focused on harnessing the democratizing power of the Internet.

Grouf formerly served as co-founder, chairman and CEO of PeoplePC, Inc., which was dedicated to simplifying the process of joining the online world and grew to become the fifth largest Internet service provider in the U.S. PeoplePC served over 600,000 individual subscribers as well as Fortune 500 corporations such as Ford Motor Company, Vivendi Universal and Delta Air Lines and The New York Times. In August 2000, Grouf took the company public and in 2002, it was acquired by EarthLink.

Prior to founding PeoplePC, Grouf served as a venture partner at Softbank Technology Ventures, a venture capital firm based in San Jose, California.

Grouf was also the co-founder, chairman and CEO of Firefly Network, Inc., which was acquired by Microsoft in 1998. Its core product, the Firefly Passport, became the foundation for Microsoft's Passport and .NET initiatives. While at Firefly, Grouf was also a co-founder and Director of the Internet Advertising Bureau (IAB) and co-founder of TrustE.

Grouf spent his early career with McKinsey & Co. in its New York office, where he focused on media and technology companies, as well as at Goldman Sachs, where he worked in the Mergers and Acquisitions Group.

A native New Yorker, Grouf holds an M.B.A. from Harvard Business School and a B.A. from Yale, where he was awarded the Norman Holmes Pearson Prize for Best Thesis.

