

Conrad Eskelinen

Business Strategist | Marketing Executive | Philanthropic Innovator

Roots of Resilience: Growing Up in Michigan

A second-generation American, Conrad grew up in a modest cabin at the end of Log Cabin Drive in Walled Lake, Michigan—a Detroit suburb shaped by hard work and high standards. His mother ran a one-person sewing business from their home, instilling in him an unwavering commitment to perfectionism, meticulous detail, and client-centered service. His father, a former U.S. Army 82nd Airborne paratrooper, set an equally demanding bar with his legendary work ethic and dedication to excellence. "If I could be half the man my dad is," Conrad says, "I would be twice all other men." These foundational values—relentless hard work, integrity, superior customer service, and delivering high-quality results—continue to drive every aspect of his life and career.

Forged in High Stakes: U.S. Navy Search and Rescue Swimmer

Conrad learned composure amid chaos the hard way. He beat extraordinary odds, becoming one of only six sailors out of an initial class of 81 to qualify as a U.S. Navy Search and Rescue Swimmer aboard the USS Antrim (FFG-20). In life-or-death missions—whether plunging from a ship's deck or the open door of a helicopter into treacherous waters—success depended on precise procedures, informed decisions, crystal-clear communication, and unbreakable calm. Conrad never faltered, completing every rescue with flawless execution. These elite skills in high-pressure decision-making, teamwork, and resilience now define his leadership style, turning challenges into triumphs for businesses and causes alike.

Three Decades of Unicus: Building an Enduring Legacy

For over 30 years, Conrad has owned and operated businesses with unmatched passion and proven success, always applying his parents' timeless philosophy: work hard, provide exceptional customer service, and deliver top-tier quality.

In 1993, he founded **Unicus Marketing, LLC**, a full-service marketing and creative powerhouse that remains his flagship operation today. What began as a bold venture in a cutthroat industry has grown into a globally respected agency, serving more than 2,000 clients—including Nike, Ford Motor Company, McDonald's, Comerica Bank, Motorola, Jeep, GlaxoSmithKline, Taco Bell, Publix, PBS, Red Lobster, Detroit Electric, and others. The firm's impressive track record includes:

- Over 6,000 TV commercials
- 300+ websites
- 3,000+ radio ads
- 1,200+ videos
- 2,000+ photo/film shoots
- 3,000+ animations
- 100+ custom UI/UX portals
- 1,000+ integrated campaigns

Conrad's hands-on approach means he personally engages in every project, ensuring bold creativity, strategic precision, deep client understanding, and measurable results. He blends human insight with cutting-edge tools—including AI—to optimize branding, digital strategies, UI/UX, advertising, video production, and growth initiatives that drive exponential ROI.

A true pioneer, Conrad transitioned his entire team to a fully remote model in 2001—long before it became standard—mastering distributed leadership, seamless collaboration, and sustained high performance that now benefits clients in today's hybrid landscape.

Visionary Entrepreneur: Diversifying Impact Across Industries

Conrad's rounded business acumen and early marketing success positioned him as a powerhouse founder and partner. He launched and led multiple ventures spanning technology, renewable energy, creative media, and more, always focusing on practical innovation, profit growth, and operational streamlining. His reputation as the consummate strategist stems from not just charting blueprints for success but executing them fully with his team's resources and expertise—unlike typical consultants who stop at ideas.

He partners with organizations at every stage—from startups needing foundational plans to established enterprises seeking rebranding and reinvention—setting realistic expectations and relentlessly driving projects from concept to profitable, transformative outcomes.

Sharks and Grizzly Bears: Adventures in Cinematography

From 2003 to 2013, while continuing to steer his growing portfolio of businesses, Conrad pursued a parallel passion as a visionary underwater cinematographer and wildlife filmmaker through **DiveBum Studios, LLC**—a full-service production company he founded to capture the raw beauty and power of the natural world.

Led by Conrad as producer, director, and cinematographer, DiveBum became a respected force in documentary film and photography. He spent much of this decade immersed in extreme environments: diving deep underwater to film sharks and vibrant ocean life across global seas, or venturing into the remote wilds of Alaska to document grizzly bears in their natural habitat. Armed with pioneering 4K camera technology at the time, Conrad delivered stunning, high-resolution footage that brought viewers face-to-face with apex predators and untouched ecosystems.

His work blended artistic vision with conservationist ethos—highlighting the majesty of marine and terrestrial wildlife while advancing storytelling in the documentary space. As creative director for initiatives like SharkDefense in the early 2010s, he contributed his expertise to shark conservation efforts, merging his filmmaking skills with real-world impact. This chapter of Conrad's career not only showcased his technical mastery and adventurous spirit but also reinforced his lifelong drive to protect and celebrate the planet's most extraordinary creatures.

Philanthropist at Heart: Launching Unicus Alliance

Driven by a deep commitment to making the planet better, Conrad has donated thousands of hours and dollars to causes including Susan G. Komen for Breast Cancer, Build Africa Foundation (education and feeding children), Marine Mammal Conservancy (rescuing stranded dolphins and whales), PBS renewable energy promotion, Detroit Children's Hospital child fire safety initiatives, and many others.

2025–Present: Founder/CEO, Unicus Alliance Conrad founded Unicus Alliance, a Michigan-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit and the philanthropic extension of Unicus Marketing. This initiative empowers mission-driven organizations—especially in veterans' services, human trafficking prevention, homelessness solutions, animal welfare, environmental causes, education, health, and community support—by delivering professional-grade creative and marketing services at reduced or no cost.

Leveraging Unicus Marketing's 30+ years of expertise, qualifying nonprofits receive transformative support in branding, website development, digital strategies, fundraising campaigns, graphic design, UI/UX optimization, video production, payment gateway integrations, pitch decks, brochures, and more. Funded by corporate sponsors, philanthropists, and donations, Unicus Alliance multiplies donor impact, amplifies visibility, tells compelling stories, and drives exponential fundraising success—turning contributions into rocket fuel for world-changing missions and creating generational positive change.

The Uncompromising Force: Principled Leadership

Conrad prides himself on a frank, principled approach in business and life. He is not just an executive—he is a relentless executor: passionate, committed, and unwilling to quit until every endeavor reaches its utmost potential. His hands-on involvement, visionary thinking, pioneering spirit, and genuine drive to create meaningful impact make him a standout leader in both for-profit innovation and nonprofit empowerment.

Business Experience Overview

Unicus Marketing Group, LLC – Founder/CEO/Creative Director

White Lake, Michigan / Key Largo, Florida

1993-Present

Full-Service marketing and creative firm. From a simple postcard campaign to documentary film production, Unicus has done it all.

Unicus Alliance 501(c)(3) – Founder/CEO/Creative Director

White Lake, Michigan

2025-Present

Full-Service marketing and creative firm. From a simple postcard campaign to documentary film production, Unicus has done it all.

136 Center & Grill – Founder/CEO

Birch Run, Michigan

2022-2024

5-star Steakhouse restaurant focused on high-quality, from scratch food, with a cozy and friendly atmosphere. 78-employees, exceeded all revenue goals. Conrad designed and built the brand, the restaurant, trained staff and opened operations.

Data Monitoring Solutions, LLC – Founder/Owner/CEO

White Lake, Michigan / Key Largo, Florida

2005-2022

Cloud-based software development firm that specializes in renewable energy monitoring systems for integrators around the world. Over 800 systems worldwide.

Wild Earth, LLC – CEO/Partner

Key Largo, Florida

2015-2017

Global expedition company that hosted world travelers on premier excursions to destinations around the world to enjoy different cultures and wildlife.

DiveBum Studios, LLC – Founder/Owner/CEO

Key Largo, Florida

2003-2013

Underwater and Wildlife Film and Photography for commercial and documentary projects. Concept to competition documentary film production.

BP Claim Pro, LLC – CMO/Partner

Key Largo, Florida

2012-2017

Claim processing company specializing in the Deepwater Horizon Settlement Program. Helping Florida, Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana residents and businesses submit and recover compensation for financial losses due to the oil spill in 2010.

Family First

At the heart of Conrad's world stands his wife, Holli—a brilliant research scientist, dedicated educator, and passionate advocate for marine mammals whose groundbreaking work in behavior, cognition, and conservation has earned her respect across the scientific community. Together, they share a profound partnership built on mutual respect, shared values, and an unwavering commitment to excellence—whether in professional pursuits or the quiet moments that matter most. Their greatest joy and deepest priority is their spirited 8-year-old son, Trevor, a fiercely determined young athlete who pours his energy into baseball and football with the dream of going pro burning bright in his eyes. Trevor's drive, enthusiasm, and boundless potential light up Conrad's life like nothing else, reminding him daily of what true purpose feels like.

Completing the family circle is their loyal Golden Retriever, Hopkins—a gentle, joyful companion whose wagging tail and unwavering devotion bring warmth and laughter to every day. For Conrad, family isn't just a part of life; it is the anchor, the inspiration, and the ultimate force that grounds his ambition, fuels his generosity, and shapes every decision he makes. In a life defined by high achievement and bold impact, Holli, Trevor, and Hopkins remain his most cherished priority—the ones who make every victory sweeter and every challenge worth facing.

In Summary

Conrad is a battle-hardened entrepreneur, creative force, and principled leader forged by decades of high-stakes achievement. With elite military experience that taught him unbreakable discipline, composure under extreme pressure, and flawless execution, he channels that same intensity into building thriving businesses and driving real-world impact.

Today, Conrad pours that relentless energy into greater purpose as the founder and CEO of Unicus Alliance, a nonprofit powerhouse delivering professional-grade branding, digital presence, fundraising firepower, and creative excellence at little to no cost to mission-driven organizations tackling veterans' support, human trafficking prevention, homelessness, animal welfare, environmental protection, and beyond—multiplying donor impact and fueling lasting, generational change. In every chapter of his journey, Conrad remains the same unstoppable force: passionate, hands-on, uncompromising in the pursuit of excellence, and deeply committed to creating meaningful good.

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