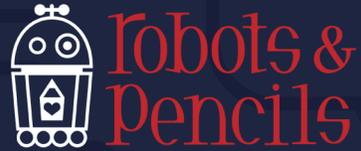


## CASE STUDY



How Robots and Pencils helped Brandmuscle create a new web platform and recoup 100% of their development costs within a single year

1,000+

CLIENT WEBSITES  
LAUNCHED WITHIN  
SIX MONTHS

100%

RETURN ON  
INVESTMENT WITHIN  
ONE YEAR

100%

RETENTION RATE OF  
CLIENTS USING THE  
NEW PLATFORM



“Robots and Pencils provided a complete solution -- the support, ideation, vision, technical excellence, communication and project management. If any of those pieces had been missing, LocationBuilder wouldn't be the success that it has been.”

**Paul Elliott**  
Chief Digital Officer, Brandmuscle



## Challenges

### Transforming an executive's idea into reality

Brandmuscle helps global and national brands to empower their local business partners with marketing automation software and platforms.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### CHALLENGES

- Wanted to create a new consumer engagement platform
- Needed a strategic partner with the right knowledge and expertise
- Wanted to recoup the development costs within one year

### SOLUTION

- Integrated team of developers
- Project leadership and management
- Agile software development plan to monetize the platform from day one

### RESULTS

- 1,000+ client websites launched within six months
- 100% return on initial investment within one year
- 100% retention rate of clients using the new platform

Every great new piece of software starts with something simple: an idea.

For Paul Elliott, the Chief Digital Officer at Brandmuscle, the idea came to him shortly after he joined the company early on in 2016.

“My goal was to build out our innovative digital marketing solutions for Brandmuscle,” says Paul. “I needed to develop a robust foundational platform for our clients’ local digital marketing programs. I wanted to grow that part of the business and demonstrate its scalability.”

To put it simply, Paul wanted to create a platform that would enable businesses to create, publish and manage location-specific microsites and campaign landing pages.

“We knew that was an underserved part of the market,” Paul explains. “So we decided to create a local consumer engagement platform for distributed marketing businesses, like insurance companies, who have agents all across the country. This would be a digital platform for their marketing efforts. It would give agents the opportunity to develop content at the local level and really elegantly blend it with their brand’s marketing.”

The platform would be called LocationBuilder™.

In order to get this idea off the ground though, Paul knew he would need some help.

“We do have a large development team in-house, but we made the strategic decision to do this with outside help,” remembers Paul. “We wanted to bring in some knowledge and expertise that was different from what we had done in the past. We were really looking for that marriage of technology and strategy.”

At the same time, Paul wanted his team at Brandmuscle to be highly involved with the development process.

“I really wanted to have an integrated and collaborative development team,” says Paul. “So I wanted to bring in technology talent to work side-by-side with Brandmuscle.”

Of course, there was one other challenge that Paul had to consider: the return on investment.

“The goal was to earn back the initial investment within the first year,” Paul laughs. “It was maybe a little overly aggressive, but it was certainly the desired goal.”

Therefore, Paul knew he had to find the right strategic partner who could help him transform his idea for LocationBuilder into a reality.

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## Solution

**An integrated team of technologists to build the platform from the ground-up**

To get the process started, Paul reached out to a few organizations who he thought could help Brandmuscle develop the LocationBuilder platform.

“We invited a handful of companies who I felt were skilled or well-suited to be development partners,” Paul says. “We ran a formal RFP process, which had both a written portion and an in-person presentation to our executive steering committee.”

During the presentations, Paul says he was most impressed by our team.

“Robots and Pencils actually demonstrated their abilities,” recalls Paul. “They showed me that not only do they have the skills necessary to complete the project, but they understood my vision for it as well.”

Paul had made his decision. He brought us on to build the platform.

“For the better part of a year, we’ve had between eight and twelve folks from R&P working from our office,” says Paul. “It’s a very small and focused team. They believe in the platform and want to produce the best possible results.”

Once we got started, Paul says he was surprised at how smoothly the development process went.

“Robots and Pencils provided not only the technology capabilities that we needed, but also a lot of leadership and management,” Paul praises. “For a large project of this size, they really helped make sure it stayed on the rails. It truly exceeded my expectations.”

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## Results

**100% return on investment within one year**

Instead of waiting until the LocationBuilder platform was completely finished, we used an agile development process to get an initial version in front of Brandmuscle's clients early on in the development cycle.

Within just six months, together we had launched over 1,000 client websites using the platform.

"A big challenge for us was figuring out how to start launching clients on our platform, even before it was functionally completed," says Paul. "But the team from R&P was incredibly creative. And that was part of the success story for our joint team."

Paul says getting those initial client websites up and running was critical to the success of the project.

"It was a very, very big deal," Paul remembers. "It gave us all the confidence that the solution we were building was satisfying a significant need in the marketplace, and that we had selected the right partner from the onset. It was a huge win to be able to show our investors that they were investing in the right solution, and that we had the right team to deliver on that. It was exactly the best-case scenario."

Not only that, but the early clients provided feedback and requests for the platform that helped us improve the initial release.

"The team from R&P bends over backwards to get results," Paul praises. "As my direction has changed, or as my team's direction has changed, or the clients' needs have changed, they've been incredibly flexible with us."

The results? Paul says Brandmuscle was able to recoup 100% of their initial development costs within the first year.

And now that the LocationBuilder platform is complete, Paul says his original idea is paying off.

“We’re coming into the renewal cycle with our existing clients now,” says Paul. “So far, we have a 100% retention rate of clients finding value in our platform, and so they’re renewing for multiple years to come.”

Overall, Paul says he is thrilled with the results.

“Robots and Pencils provided a complete solution,” says Paul. “The support, ideation, vision, technical excellence, communication and project management. If any of those pieces had been missing, LocationBuilder wouldn’t be the success that it has been.”

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# Want to transform your next big business idea into a reality?

Find out how we can combine strategy, experience and technology to make it happen.

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