

# Helping Clients Compete

An Interview with **W. Stephen Maritz,**  
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Maritz Holdings Inc.



W. Stephen Maritz

**EDITORS' NOTE** Steve Maritz represents the fourth generation of his family to lead Maritz. He began his career with Maritz in 1983 and became President and Chief Operating Officer in 1997. One year later, he succeeded his father, Bill Maritz, as Chief Executive Officer and was appointed Chairman of the Board after his father's death in 2001. Maritz serves on the boards of the John M. Olin School of Business, the Variety Club, The Laclede Group, and Wetland's American Trust. He also is a member of the John Burroughs School Board of Trustees, the Missouri Botanical Garden's Board of Trustees, the St. Louis Convention & Visitor's Commission, past Chairman of the Civic Progress Community Life Committee, and past General Chairman of Fair Saint Louis. Maritz served as the Greater St. Louis United Way campaign chairman in 2006 and Co-Chairman of the 2009 American Heart Association Heart Walk. Maritz graduated with a bachelor's degree in organizational psychology from Princeton University.

**COMPANY BRIEF** St. Louis-based Maritz ([www.maritz.com](http://www.maritz.com)) is a sales and marketing services business that helps companies achieve their full potential through understanding, enabling, and motivating employees, channel partners, and customers. Maritz offers market and customer research, communications, incentive initiatives, rewards and recognition, effective meeting, event and incentive management services, and customer loyalty programs.

## How is Maritz positioned coming out of the recession?

The recession was a lot worse than we thought, but we were able to get lean in a hurry and focus on the core of what we do and what our customers value. So we were able to come through that period in pretty good shape, and we're now picking up a lot of share and business is quite good.

## How critical is the focus on corporate responsibility to the culture of your company?

We have always believed that a great company should be a contributing member of the community in which we live and work.

Our business at Maritz focuses on people and helping the people who work for and with our clients reach their full potential. We've chosen to focus our community giving on educational programs that demonstrate a commitment to human potential. We're trying to be generous with not only our money but with the time and talent of our employees in helping community-based organizations, who have oftentimes found talent to be more valuable than any check we might write.

## How strong is the Missouri market and has the public/private partnership been effective?

The business community in Missouri, particularly in St. Louis, is pretty tight. A great example is the United Way effort in this city, which is the result of strong leadership at the United Way but also the support of the corporate entities here.

There are a lot of companies that have grown and thrived here including Express Scripts, Scottrade, Enterprise, and Edward Jones. So we've got biotech, financial advisory, technology, and health care businesses. We also have prestigious universities such as Washington University, Saint Louis University and Webster University, among others. All of these assets enable us to have a workforce that is well-educated, hardworking, and loyal. ●

# Marketing Missouri

An Interview with **Christopher Chung,**  
Chief Executive Officer, Missouri Partnership



Christopher Chung

**EDITORS' NOTE** Christopher Chung joined the newly formed Missouri Partnership in 2007 as the public/private corporation's first Chief Executive Officer. He is a certified Economic Development Professional through the National Development Council. He attended The Ohio State University (OSU), graduating with a dual degree in Japanese and economics. He is near completion of a Master of Arts in Public Policy and Management, to be awarded from the OSU John Glenn School of Public Affairs.

**ORGANIZATION BRIEF** In close collaboration with the Missouri Department of Economic Development and private industry around the state, the Missouri Partnership ([www.missouripartnership.com](http://www.missouripartnership.com)) spearheads Missouri's investment promotion efforts with the goal of attracting new industry, jobs, and prosperity to the state's communities.

## What did you see that made you feel there was a need for the Missouri Partnership and what role do you plan for it to fulfill?

Like a lot of states, there is a void of perception about what Missouri offers as a place in which to invest and do business. There isn't a lot known about the state, let alone about why it is a good business location.

In Missouri, the spectrum of activities that the state agencies are undertaking with respect to economic development ranges from retention and expansion of existing businesses, to helping small businesses get up and running, to helping foster ways to commercialize technology from our universities and research institutions into private sector enterprise, to tourism, film promotion, and community development – all of these things are part of the standard state portfolio of economic development activities.

By creating a public/private partnership to handle the marketing side of things, the goal is to try to harness some of these private sector resources to help fill in and round off those peaks and valleys when it comes to what a state is able to do in terms of investing in marketing activities. So it makes sense to get this kind of function away from the constraints of a purely public sector organization.

In addition, we are a sales organization, so we depend heavily on the relationships we form with people who make and influence decisions on where new investment projects are located. Relationships require continuity of people who are in place to form and tap into those relationships. If you move this responsibility to a public/private partnership where you're freed of some of those regular political changes and compensation constraints, you will be able to attract and retain people who will form those long-term relationships with the people that are necessary to our line of work.

## In promoting the state as a brand, is there a broad focus or are you targeting specific industries?

One of Missouri's points of pride is that it's generally considered to be one of the five or six most diverse economies in the country. Missouri isn't overexposed in one specific industry because of how our economy is spread out across numerous sectors. So there are likely to be assets and advantages that accrue for companies we're trying to attract in those same industries. ●