

Barry M. Meyer-The Ultimate C.E.O.

Karen Luise Fields

Executive Leadership

Donald Lipham

Steve Adkins

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Since the 1920's, Warner Bros. Entertainment, Inc. has brought us such classics as *The Jazz Singer* (1927), *Around the World in 80 Days* (1956), and modern fare like *300* (2007).

Warner Bros. Entertainment, Inc. retains their position as one of the top entertainment industry giants through the innovative, ethical, and visionary leadership of Barry M. Meyer.

Meyer started at Warner Bros. Entertainment, Inc. as an associate director of business affairs for television. Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. was lacking original television programming and it was Meyer's job to put a team together to develop the department. Because of his legal background, people viewed him as a hard-driven leader who played by the numbers only. But Meyer, by his own standards, isn't a micro-manager and believes in finding and surrounding himself with the best people he can and nurturing their skills, which in turn, allows them to creatively shine. Eventually, everyone saw how Meyer's innovative ideas for original programming and his skills as a people developer led Warner Bros. Entertainment, Inc. to create such television gems as *Alice-based on the book Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore*, *Dukes of Hazzard*, and *Wonder Woman*. Meyer's innovations didn't stop there. His team's success in original television programming has expanded Warner's foothold into home entertainment through Warner Home Movies (As cited in CaseMagazine, 2004). With the dawning of new technological advances going from VHS to DVD to Digital Distribution, entertainment companies, including Warner Bros. Entertainment, Inc., have been faced with copyright infringement and piracy. Barry M. Meyer is on the front line of this ethical battle to protect his and others Intellectual Property (IP).

With his legal background, Meyer is able to advise and steer our government and other entertainment company leaders on how to combat piracy. He has been instrumental in co-authoring legislation to protect IP inside our borders as well as overseas. He has called on foreign governments such as China and Mexico to join in the fight against piracy. According to a study by the Institute for Policy Innovation, motion picture piracy costs the U.S. economy more than \$20 billion in total output, resulting in the loss of more than 141,000 jobs for American workers, and costs Federal, state and local governments \$837 million in lost tax revenue (Institute for Policy Innovation *“The True Cost of Motion Picture Piracy to the U.S. Economy,”* by Stephen E. Siwek, September 2006 retrieved from Testimony of the Senate Judiciary Committee, 2010). Consumers are unaware of the impact they have when they visit sites known as cyberlockers or peer-to-peer file sharing sites. Thieves can obtain personal, and sometimes financial information, which results in identity theft. Meyer’s fight against unethical distribution of all media is a never-ending battle. Meyer’s leadership on this front will enable future entertainment executives to continue the battle in this war on piracy. The future of the industry will be directly affected if the tide of piracy isn’t stemmed.

That future is on the horizon now as Meyer’s visionary goal of offering new distribution methods for home entertainment is coming to fruition in the form of theatrical releases distributed to cable and satellite on-demand formats before the movie gets to Netflix or Blockbuster (Los Angeles Times June 2010). Meyer is reinventing home entertainment distribution technology to meet the consumers demand for new and cost efficient ways to view movies and other media from the comfort of their living rooms. Meyer has teamed up with

several different media outlets such as Apple, Sony, and Amazon to distribute Warner Bros. Entertainment products to personal computers, gaming consoles, and mobile devices. With these new distribution outlets, exhibitors such as movie theaters and music stores fear this will collapse traditional distribution windows. That just means the executives for those companies will have to change with the times and create new visions for those traditional windows to keep up with Meyer's visions of the future. As the Studio embraces new distribution platforms, technologies and opportunities, Meyer leads the company's efforts to create new business models to fit emerging consumer demands (Time Warner 2010).

Barry M. Meyer has reached the pinnacle of leadership that most people only dream about. It appears he did it single-handedly but he is surrounded by like-minded people whom he has nurtured and shown his vision of how entertainment should be. Because he doesn't take credit for a team effort, Warner Bros. has consistently remained on top. The only thing that could torpedo Barry M. Meyer's future with Warner Bros. Entertainment would be death. Warner Bros. Entertainment, Inc. would be signing their Bankruptcy warrants if they ever replaced him. There is no one else in the industry that knows as much or more than him on what the consumer wants. Others look to him for guidance in all aspects of the entertainment industry. Meyer's innovative, ethical, and visionary leadership continues to move Warner Bros. Entertainment, Inc. forward into the digital age with new ideas for delivering the best entertainment and solidifying them as the foremost global entertainment authority.

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