



AESA BUSINESS PARTNER PROFILE: CORWIN

In the Information Age, information is king. It is impossible for educators to stay at the top of their game without a continuous supply of new information about how to teach and how to manage an education system.

That's where Corwin comes in. With a prestigious roster of authors, the Thousand Oaks, California, company not only publishes approximately 120-books each year on a variety of education topics, but it also offers seminars, e-learning courses and institutes for educational organizations.

The family-owned company doesn't have shareholders, said Jacob Bruno, Corwin's associate director of strategic partnerships. This frees the firm to invest heavily each year in books and services that will "help educators do their work better," he said.

The foundation of the business is finding and signing the top minds in their fields to write about the latest developments across a wide spectrum of education topics. Whether the issue is special education or human resources or curriculum or any topic in between, Corwin works hard to identify and promote the best thinkers and writers in that subject, Bruno said.

Bruno added that Corwin takes pains to find the best academic researchers to write their books. "That's what undergirds our company, our focus on quality academic research," he said. "It's that focus that separates us from other agencies."

Corwin's variety of services means districts don't have to settle for a "one size fits all" choice. The company's blended professional learning model allows for the use of a series of books or a series of seminars or even just face-to-face consulting. The company's variety of service models as well as its authors on a variety of subjects allows school leaders to access whatever they need to

improve education.

Corwin also takes pride in a one-on-one touch between the company itself and its clients. When you sign on, you work with the same team and can get what you need using the same phone number for the same contact.

It's that ease of use that has made a believer of Phoebe Bailey, the executive director of Southwest Arkansas Educational Services.

"The people at Corwin are willing to work with you and get you what you need," she said. "The same group of people are your contacts and you get to know them. If they say they're going to call, they get back to you."

SAES has worked with Corwin authors before. When they decided to tackle the issue of educational leadership, Corwin arranged a multi-day seminar on leadership with several experts on the subject. District leaders will discuss the qualities and duties of leadership, and then move to the meat and potatoes of who makes what decisions when. The result will be a streamlined and effective leadership structure.

"They also are a fantastic resource," Bailey said. "When someone calls and wants to talk on a subject I don't know much about, I can have them call Corwin. They are an excellent reference and resource."

To reiterate his assertion that the key to Corwin's success is flexibility combined with solid academic research, Bruno mentioned a district he has been working with that has had a large influx of Latinos. The existing school district hierarchy was straining to accommodate the needs of its new population and the district turned to Corwin.

The company was able to provide several e-books to teachers and staff that taught them how to work with students who are not only struggling with the language but also with the culture and, in some cases, poverty and homelessness. By providing several books and making them available to all teachers and staff, Corwin was able to keep the flow of information simple and direct so everyone in the district was learning from the same texts and approached the problem with a similar mindset.

"Instead of just buying books and hoping teachers read them, the district was able to make relevant information available to every teacher and keep everyone on the same page," Bruno said, adding that a seminar or conference in the district by extension became a more harmonious, streamlined and efficient affair.

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