Brian Fending

Strategic technology executive specializing in governance, compliance, and product innovation

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SUMMARY

Technology executive specializing in governance-enabled innovation and digital transformation for regulated industries. Six years of board-level CIO leadership building enterprise security and compliance frameworks that drive business growth—from international market expansion to early AI adoption. Proven ability to establish governance structures that accelerate rather than constrain innovation, with deep expertise in cybersecurity, data privacy, and multi-jurisdictional compliance across healthcare, financial services, and technology sectors.

CORE COMPETENCIES

Governance & Risk Leadership: IT Governance, Enterprise Risk Management, Cybersecurity Strategy, Compliance Frameworks (GDPR, HIPAA, NIST 800-171, KSA PDPL), Third-Party Risk Management, Audit & Controls

Strategic Technology: Digital Transformation, Cloud Strategy & Migration, AI Governance & Implementation, Business Intelligence, Platform Architecture, Complex Systems Integration

Executive Leadership: Board Governance, Cross-Functional Team Leadership, Vendor & Stakeholder Management, P&L Management, Cost Optimization, Strategic Planning

EXECUTIVE EXPERIENCE

American Association for Physician Leadership (AAPL)
Tampa, FL and Washington, DC

Chief Information Officer | *January 2020 – March 2025*

Led enterprise governance strategy and digital transformation for a healthcare technology organization, balancing innovation velocity with compliance across platforms generating 80% of annual revenue ($8M).

- Established IT governance frameworks supporting international market expansion and multi-jurisdictional compliance (GDPR, KSA PDPL, U.S. data privacy), growing the sales pipeline by 20%.
- Built the cybersecurity governance program including continuous risk assessment, MFA implementation, and third-party risk management, enabling successful cyber insurance procurement.
- Drove enterprise AI adoption strategy, launching Microsoft Copilot pilots and Azure OpenAI integrations across business functions; later expanded to other enterprise LLM models like Anthropic Claude for HR, IT, and Marketing, improving knowledge access, workflow automation, and content development.
- Oversaw the organization's publishing business (2022–2023), including editorial platforms, digital content strategy, and monetization aligned with learning products and member engagement.
- Orchestrated cloud migration to Azure architecture, reducing IT spend by 30% while maintaining 99.9% uptime for mission-critical platforms serving 3,000+ monthly active users.

- Presented regularly to the Executive Committee and Audit & Risk Committee on IT strategy, enterprise risk posture, and compliance status.

Senior VP, Information Technology | *January 2019 – January 2020*

Modernized core infrastructure and laid the strategic foundation for enterprise governance, digital transformation, and cloud scalability.

- Established enterprise-wide disaster recovery, business continuity, and IT audit frameworks to support compliance and operational resilience.
- Acted as technology liaison for an external COBIT-based IT governance audit, aligning internal practices with industry-standard maturity models.
- Led modernization of legacy infrastructure and initiated the organization's cloud migration and governance strategy to support scalable, secure growth.
- Led custom development and extension of Salesforce CRM in response to evolving business needs, enabling deeper customer insight, improved lead workflows, and tighter integration with member engagement processes.
- Executed major vendor consolidation initiatives, streamlining contracts, eliminating redundant platforms, and improving interoperability while reducing cost of service delivery.
- Partnered cross-functionally to realign IT operations with evolving organizational needs, improving service delivery, system accountability, and stakeholder transparency.

Strategic Technology Consulting Practices
Buffalo, New York

Principal/Owner | *April 2010 – December 2018*
Operating as Fending Group (2010-2012), Monster Assembly (2012-2015), and MADE, Inc. (2015-2018)

Led strategic technology consulting practice focused on governance, architecture, and complex systems integration for enterprise clients across multiple industries.

- Supported AAPL (2017–2018) in modernizing revenue operations through marketing and CRM stack modernization:
    - Implemented HubSpot (2017) to unify marketing automation, improve lead attribution, and streamline campaign operations.
    - Deployed Salesforce CRM (2017–2018) to centralize customer data, align sales processes, and lay groundwork for long-term CRM strategy.
- Designed architecture for the world's first at-scale iPad ordering system at JFK Terminal 5, managing complex integration with legacy Micros POS systems (OTG Management, 2011).
- Developed proprietary graph-based content management systems combining Neo4j and Lucene technologies for enterprise content discovery and workflow optimization.
- Delivered fractional CTO/CIO services providing IT governance, compliance frameworks, vendor management, and strategic technology planning to enterprise clients.

- Specialized in complex systems integration requiring multi-vendor coordination and legacy system modernization.

CrowdBouncer
Buffalo, NY

Chief Technology Officer | *February 2013 – December 2014*

Led technology strategy for a fintech startup building regulatory compliance tools for the emerging equity crowdfunding market following the JOBS Act.

- Architected an API-based platform enabling automated investor accreditation and KYC verification for crowdfunding portals navigating new SEC regulations.
- Built core compliance infrastructure supporting real-time investor verification, AML checks, and audit trail requirements for Regulation D and emerging crowdfunding rules.
- Designed secure transaction processing and document management systems meeting financial services security standards.
- Developed InvestorID, a web-based platform that extended the core API functionality to provide direct investor access to accreditation services.
- Managed technical due diligence and compliance documentation for Series A fundraising process.
- Led platform pivot to RenterID, adapting core identity verification capabilities for property management and tenant screening workflows.
- Coordinated development team and vendor relationships through product development lifecycle and market validation.

Black Squirrel Distillery
Buffalo, NY

VP Product Development | *December 2012 – September 2019*

Co-founded and built a craft distillery from concept to commercialization, leading all aspects of product development, operations, and regulatory strategy.

- Brought four unique maple-based spirits to market, managing formulation, TTB approval, packaging, and production scale-up:
    - Aged Maple Spirit: A whiskey-style spirit aged in oak and distilled from 100% maple syrup
    - Mapleshine: A clear, moonshine-style maple spirit highlighting pure sugar content and terroir
    - Ardilla Negra: A coffee liqueur made with cold brew and maple syrup, designed as a bold, lower-sugar alternative to traditional offerings
    - Maple Liqueur: A smooth, sweet liqueur designed for sipping or cocktails, showcasing New York–sourced maple.
- Developed operational standards and quality control protocols that enabled consistent output while scaling to 4,000 cases annually.

- Directed multi-state compliance operations, overseeing TTB reporting, state-by-state licensing, and distribution logistics.
- Built and managed a vendor ecosystem across raw materials, packaging, and fulfillment, ensuring regulatory alignment and cost-effective quality.
- Led the company through a successful exit via acquisition by Lafayette Distilling, including due diligence, asset transfer (including recipe & process IP), and continuity planning.

PRIOR EXPERIENCE

BuildingGreen, LLC
Brattleboro, VT

Senior Web Developer | *2007 – 2010*

Served as lead developer and content architect for digital platforms supporting green building professionals, federal agencies, and USGBC-aligned initiatives.

- Managed development of enterprise publishing systems, including the High Performance Buildings Database for the U.S. Department of Energy.
- Principal architect and developer for LEEDuser.com (launched 2008), a companion platform for LEED certification guidance, creating a new subscription-based revenue stream in partnership with the US Green Building Council (USGBC).
- Led information architecture and content systems strategy for sustainable design tools and regulatory resources used by architects, facilities professionals, and government entities.
- Built CMS features, search tools, and interactive user engagement systems tailored to technical professional audiences.
- Collaborated across editorial, product, and policy teams to align web capabilities with evolving sustainability standards and user needs.

Delaware North Companies
Buffalo, NY

Information Analyst | *2005 – 2007*

Delivered enterprise analytics solutions for a global hospitality and food service company, supporting business units across sports, travel, and gaming operations.

- Led Oracle Business Intelligence initiatives to centralize reporting and improve operational visibility across departments.
- Developed data frameworks to support real-time and strategic decision-making at the business unit level.
- Built a custom Gantt-based project dashboard for the IT PMO, visualizing resource allocation across internal teams, individual contributors, and contracted firms for field deployments.
- Provided technical input on infrastructure decisions supporting high-availability e-commerce operations,

ensuring uptime and continuity across transactional systems.
- Represented Delaware North as chair of the HTNG "Next–Generation Entertainment Systems" working group (2006–2007), setting industry direction for in-room technology standards later adopted by AHLA.
- Advised on emerging technology adoption and data management practices across finance, operations, and HR teams.

LoVullo Associates (MGA)
Buffalo, NY

Senior Programmer | *2003 – 2005*

Delivered full-stack development and data integration solutions for online rating systems serving excess and specialty P&C insurance products, including personal watercraft and travel trailers.

- Built custom insurance rating engines, translating complex underwriting rules and state–level regulatory requirements into reliable, testable systems.
- Collaborated directly with P&C underwriters to convert actuarial models and compliance guidelines into functional technical specifications.
- Automated ingestion of ABOS Marine Blue Book data to support real-time watercraft valuation, improving rating accuracy and underwriting efficiency.
- Developed a custom driver to transform and ingest legacy data into Sybase, enabling migration to a new agency management system (AMS).
- Led ETL design and execution for all historical insurance data, reshaping datasets for compatibility, integrity, and regulatory compliance within the new AMS.
- Built financial reporting tools aligned with regulatory standards to support internal operations and insurance filings.

Buffalo & Erie County Public Library
Buffalo, NY

Web Administrator | *2001 – 2003*

Managed digital services and public web infrastructure for a 52-branch library system, focusing on scalable service delivery, internal knowledge sharing, and digitization standards.

- Replaced static flat-publishing workflows with a custom database–driven content management system, enabling dynamic updates and distributed authorship and editing.
- Designed and built an internal online "reference desk" platform, allowing staff librarians to independently manage and maintain a shared, searchable knowledge base across branches.
- Served as technical liaison on the Digitization Committee, collaborating with librarians to define archival imaging standards and metadata protocols for early digitization efforts.
- Partnered with the Public and Government Relations department to strengthen the library's web presence, expanding online service delivery, community engagement, and access to digital resources.

Network Solutions (Verisign)

Herndon, VA (HQ)

Technical Support Contractor | *April-October 2001*

Provided front-line technical support for enterprise and small business clients using the rebranded website builder platform, originally acquired as ImageCafe, along with Network Solutions' domain services.

- Resolved complex integration issues across hosting environments, including domain routing, platform compatibility, and root DNS misconfigurations within the Ingres-based infrastructure.
- Supported onboarding and troubleshooting for early web-based site development tools, helping clients deploy and manage branded web properties.

3Com Corporation

Vienna, VA

Federal Sales Administrator | *1999 − 2001*

Supported sales operations for federal civilian and DoD customers, enabling compliant procurement and delivery of networking and communications technologies.

- Managed end-to-end procurement processes, coordinating with government buyers, prime contractors, and internal stakeholders to ensure contract accuracy and timeliness.
- Facilitated vendor onboarding and compliance documentation in alignment with FAR and agency-specific acquisition rules.
- Interfaced with engineering and product teams to translate technical specifications into bid and proposal materials for federal opportunities.

Calato Manufacturing, Inc. (*Regal Tip™*)

Niagara Falls, NY

Distributor Promotions and Artist Relations | 1997 − 1998

Supported global channel marketing and artist endorsement efforts for the Regal Tip™ brand.

- Managed inside sales campaigns for distributor promotions and product launches across North American and international retail channels.
- Coordinated tour support logistics and promotional efforts for endorsing artists.
- Initiated and led a targeted artist recruitment campaign, resulting in ten new Billboard-level endorsements and expanded brand visibility.
- Wrote catalog content and trade publication advertising copy for global distribution.
- Departed to complete an already-started master's degree at Miami University (Oxford, OH).

VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP

Association for Talent Development (ATD) Buffalo Niagara
Buffalo, NY

Vice President of Membership | 2025 – 2026

- Drive membership growth through retention initiatives, member repatriation programs, and net new member acquisition strategies
- Align individual and corporate memberships with sponsorship opportunities and business development initiatives
- Develop strategic partnerships connecting professional development with organizational growth objectives

Business Mentor NY, New York State Empire State Development Agency
New York State

Volunteer Mentor | 2015 – Present

- Provide strategic guidance to entrepreneurs and small business owners through New York State's chief economic development agency, supporting job creation and economic growth across diverse industries and communities.

SPEAKING & PRESENTATIONS

"Generative AI, Healthcare, and Governance: Opening the black box to deliver results and safety for patients"
AAPL Fall Institute (Vanguard Meeting) attended by health system leaders and payors | October 2023 | Scottsdale, AZ

"Salesforce Project Management Success"
DemandBlue Customer Success Webinar Series | July 2021

PUBLICATIONS & THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

"On IT Strategy" Strategy and Governance Content Series
brianfending.com, LinkedIn, and Substack | 2025 – Present

Ongoing thought leadership series exploring governance-enabled innovation, AI implementation strategies, and technology leadership in regulated environments.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Information Systems Audit and Control Association (ISACA)
- Product Development & Management Association (PDMA)

- Project Management Institute (PMI)
- Association for Talent Development (ATD)

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

Certified Information Security Manager (CISM)
ISACA
Certification #252857849 · Expires January 2029

Miami University – *Oxford, OH*
Master of Music (MM) | 1996–1999

- Graduate Assistant, 1996–1997

State University of New York at Fredonia – *Fredonia, NY*
Bachelor of Music (BM) | 1992–1996

- Honors in the Liberal Arts / Honors Program
- Performer's certificate (1996)
- Hillman Scholar (1992–1996)
- Frazeur Percussion Scholarship (1992–1993)