

By [Blink Staff](#)

Today, July 1, 2015 is a special day in the life of Blink UX as we celebrate 15 wonderful years!

Yes, it's our Quinceañera, and in honor of the many wonderful memories, people, and events, we'd like to share a few Blinker stories and photos with you, including the one above where Karen was recently a finalist for the prestigious [Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year](#) award for 2015! As we nosh on birthday cake and sip celebratory bubbles, we reflect on what makes Blink a very special place to work indeed!

Kelly & Karen founded Blink in 2000

It was 15 years ago that Kelly and I sketched out an idea for a company (which was not even close to a business plan) at the original Cherry St Café. Our goal was to have great jobs, doing only what we loved, and delivering to clients “only what they need, not anything more for the sake of a sold deliverable,” adding the most value to their business as possible. Back then there was no field of “UX” and we called ourselves Information Architects and Usability Specialists. Blink Interactive Architects was our first name, but since we couldn't get the URL, we used BlinkIA.com. About five years later BlinkInteractive.com became available and times had progressed to calling our field “Interaction Design” so we changed our name. It was not until a few years ago we got BlinkUX.com, and changed our name once again with the shifting times for what we do, User Experience.

Never in my wildest dreams did I think we would grow to me more than 10 people. Mostly because there simply weren't more than 10 people we could even hire to do the work since we were still in such a new field.

*Over the last 15 years I've been both proud and amazed at our little company, our clients, and the growing UX industry around us. User Experience is clearly here to stay, and so is Blink. — **Karen Clark Cole***

Blinkers

Early Blink days for Kelly, Karen, and John in Post Alley.

Still scrappy after all these years

*On my very first day at Blink back in October 2000, Kelly Franznick and Karen Clark Cole welcomed me to the office with a paintbrush and a can of paint: "John, do you mind doing something a little different today and painting the usability lab?" While my clothes were completely splattered by the end of the day, I appreciated the spirit behind rolling up our sleeves and doing whatever needed to be done. I think we were usability testing in the lab that week, paint vapor, "missed spots," and all. Fast-forward 15 years and I appreciate that we are highly professional but still scrappy. We have formal processes, templates, project managers, and decades of collective research and design experience to fall back upon to ease projects along. But we are not afraid to go out on limb at times, do something a little different, learn or invent new ways of doing things, and stretch ourselves to reach successful outcomes. I have to say that I am glad we hire professional painters these days, though. — **John Dirks***

John's first big project at Blink.

John's first big project at Blink.

When Mondays are the best

Every Monday I am like that nerdy kid who loves going to school. I get ready for work and anxiously await all my colleagues/friends to get in so we can all talk about our weekends. The best time of year for Mondays is Game of Thrones season (that's right we have a fifth season at Blink: winter, spring, fall, summer, and GOT) when about 10 of us debrief every Monday morning. Blink is a place I've always felt comfortable being myself and I feel like we have created a big family. Blink embraces new ideas and the staff supports me in everything I do. Whether it is planning a blood drive, starting a book club or taking on new responsibilities in my role, I feel like I have a system that always sets me up for success. Cheers, Blink UX. Here's to the next 15 years! —

Kristina Knaus

Blink's first blood drive was a big success!

Kristina's first company initiative: Blink's blood drive.

Work hard, play hard!

I think my favorite memory of my time at Blink so far has to be our Halloween Party. I thought I might get people to dress up in costumes if I offered a prize, but I had no idea that 95% of the office would show up in costume! It was hilarious! Everyone was in such good spirits that day. We were laughing so hard at each other and just had a blast around the office. Blink is full of fun and creative people and on days like Halloween it really comes through. I still look back on those pictures and smile. — Sarah Miller

Blinker Halloween!

Blinker Halloween!

Wearing many hats

I kept walking to our old office out of sheer habit for a week right after we moved into our current space in 2011. I think a couple of folks did this! I have fond memories of my trips to Zappos with Kelly and NASA with Karen. Just a good time talking one-one-one with them when things were otherwise very hectic (and both trips involved pictures with space ships, strangely enough). I've also taken apart our espresso machine no fewer than three times to fix it. I clearly wore many hats in the past. — Lauren Martin

Our third office location, all within a two block radius of the waterfront district.

Lauren on her interstellar adventures at Zappos.

What TIE-me is it?

I handle the communications programs here at Blink and that includes our social feeds. Never did I imagine what an impact a hashtag could have: #tietuesday. Yes, rain or shine, in sickness or in health, on the road, with clients, and even on vacation, Jonathan spearheads our immensely popular weekly Tie Tuesday photo for our social feed. Usually featuring multiple Blinkers in an array of poses and a variety of splendid neckwear, you'll find us every Tuesday looking dapper and figuring out the latest tie pun. See you next Tie Tuesday on [Facebook!](#) —
Amy L. Dickson



The TIE-tans of Industry: Tie Tuesday continues to be a weekly tradition.

Always looking out

“The reason that I love working here is that you may be out on a limb at times, but you are never alone - I always have a fellow Blinker by my side.” —
Lauren Brown



Geoff gets a surprise visit on his big birthday!



The
UBER
Ice
Cream
truck
was

a
special
highlight
for
Claire.

*Interested
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