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Business Profile

By Will Jordan

Ira Allen Blonder

Moving with a vision

Ira Allen Blonder had name recognition through a family business venture in Connecticut, but when he moved to Nashville, he had to make a name for himself.

Blonder had been trained in the family tradition in the scrap automobile industry that his grandfather had started in 1919 after moving to the U.S. from Latvia. In 1981 he made a decision to branch out on his own as a founder and principal of a national mortgage service firm.

But in 1995 when New England's economy started tanking, Blonder called his wife and two boys in for a family meeting.

"I knew it was time to make a move," said Blonder. "I had clients with interests in Nashville and after I flew in, I fell in love with the city."

Blonder convinced his family that Nashville would be their new home and said it was one of the best decisions he ever made.

"This is such an eclectic, energizing community," Blonder said. "The reality is that this is a very broad-based economy serving many aspects of the business community. It allows for entrepreneurs to succeed."

He created The Blonder Group and provides real estate and financial advisory services to businesses, building

owners and tenants.

“I feel I’ve done well for myself, he said. “I have goals far in excess of where I am currently and have a vision of where I want to be in ten years.”

INSIDE INFO

What is your personal business mission?

Personally, I strive to consistently exceed my client’s expectations, with an underlying “mission” to convert a transaction into a strategic working relationship.

What gets your creative juices flowing?

Solving complex problems, combined with the excitement of seeing opportunity and value where others haven’t.

What single career decision has most affected your life?

Leaving the security and guarantees offered of a 75 year-old family company.

What is your least favorite task?

Managing office staff.

What is the best advice you’ve ever received?

Never negotiate away your integrity.

If you had to choose a different career, what would it be and why?

Chef/Owner of a respected vineyard/restaurant in Napa Valley. Cooking is my passion and therapy. Give me a Viking stove, a great bottle of wine, a cigar and a roomful of friends to cook for and I’m content.

How will the Nashville business climate be different in 10 years?

Inevitably, Nashville’s livability will be compromised as a result of being considered one of the best places to raise a family.

What could make Nashville a better business city right now?

Entice a major university to locate in downtown Nashville, by offering them substantial tax and relocation incentives to develop an in-town campus and housing (similar to Vanderbilt, but more like Yale).

