Director of Retail and E-Commerce

Belhaven University is a Christ-centered university in Jackson, Mississippi, committed to quality, service, and biblical truth. We seek a director whose vibrant personal faith in Christ guides both personal and professional life and who will advance the University's mission through leadership and service to others.

Position Overview

Belhaven is seeking a creative, entrepreneurial leader who can take an established campus bookstore and build a substantial new online retail business. Our current bookstore generates approximately $1 million in annual gross sales. We want to create an online operation essentially from scratch, with the ambition of growing it over time to $3 million in annual gross sales. That $3 million figure is a long-term growth goal, not current revenue or a guaranteed forecast.

We are looking for someone who sees possibilities others miss. The right person will love developing merchandise, trying new ideas, building a loyal customer base, and finding creative ways to put Belhaven products in the hands of students, families, alumni, and supporters across the country. This is a chance to build something, not simply maintain what exists.

The director will also lead a welcoming, successful campus store and make sure students receive the books and course materials they need. Belhaven has established finance, accounting, human resources, communications, and technology teams to support this work. The director will lead the retail business and be accountable for its results, but will not be expected to handle payroll or serve as the University's bookkeeper.

Functions and Responsibilities

Build and grow the online business

- Create and carry out a plan to launch an attractive, easy-to-use online store and grow it into a significant source of new revenue.
- Develop imaginative marketing that reaches beyond campus, including email, social media, digital advertising, alumni outreach, and campaigns tied to major University events.
- Experiment with new merchandise, promotions, limited-run collections, gift ideas, and other ways to give customers reasons to visit and buy again.
- Use sales results, customer feedback, and online analytics to improve the shopping experience, marketing effectiveness, and repeat business.
- Work with University technology and communications teams and outside vendors on the e-commerce platform, digital content, order fulfillment, and customer communications.

Make Belhaven merchandise distinctive

- Bring fresh ideas to apparel, accessories, gifts, and products that students, alumni, families, and friends of the University will be proud to buy and give.
- Select products with good design, dependable quality, appealing prices, and sound profit margins.

- Build productive relationships with suppliers, designers, and vendors, and identify opportunities for exclusive or original merchandise.
- Protect Belhaven's identity by ensuring that products meet approved University branding and licensing requirements.

Create an exceptional customer experience

- Make both the campus and online stores easy to shop, responsive, welcoming, and known for thoughtful service.
- Lead, train, encourage, and supervise employees and student workers, with support from the University's Human Resources staff.
- Plan merchandise, promotions, and store activity around move-in, orientation, homecoming, commencement, and other high-interest dates.
- Work with faculty, academic departments, publishers, and vendors to provide needed course materials on time, with clear information and attention to affordability.
- Keep online fulfillment, shipping, pickup, exchanges, and returns dependable and customer-friendly.

Lead growth with sound business judgment

- Take responsibility for retail sales growth, product mix, pricing, inventory performance, customer satisfaction, and healthy margins.
- Set practical goals, track performance, and regularly bring new ideas and clear results to the Chief Financial Officer.
- Work with the University's finance and accounting staff on budgets, purchasing procedures, reporting, and financial controls. Administrative accounting and payroll functions are handled through existing University departments.
- Ensure the physical store is well staffed, attractive, stocked appropriately, and efficiently managed while devoting significant attention to building online sales.

Please note that this job description is not intended to cover or list in full the activities, duties, or responsibilities required of the employee for this job. Duties, responsibilities, and activities may change at any time with or without notice.

Qualifications

- The successful candidate must articulate a Christian worldview in their area of service and must fully support the University's Vision, Mission, and Statement of Faith. https://www.belhaven.edu/about/mission/
- Experience launching or substantially expanding an online store is especially valuable. Familiarity with Shopify, WooCommerce, BigCommerce, or a comparable platform is helpful.
- Experience with branded apparel, gifts, visual merchandising, digital marketing, or a customer-focused retail operation is preferred.
- Experience in higher education or a college bookstore is welcome but not required.
- Availability for occasional evening and weekend work during major campus events and retail peak periods.

- A record of growing sales through creative merchandising, marketing, e-commerce, or direct-to-consumer retail.
- An entrepreneurial instinct, with the curiosity to test new ideas and the discipline to learn from what works.
- Strong taste in products and presentation, along with an understanding of how brands build lasting customer loyalty.
- A genuine commitment to excellent customer service and the ability to lead others to deliver it consistently.
- Practical experience with online selling, digital campaigns, inventory systems, and the numbers that determine retail success.
- The initiative to take ownership of a new venture while working well with colleagues across the University.

Application Process

Interested applicants may make an application by submitting the following:

- Letter of intent describing relevant experience, including one example of a creative retail or online-sales initiative you led and how it grew sales or customer engagement.
- Resume
- Reference list with contact information (including personal Pastor)
- Statement of faith, including a description of how the candidate would seek to integrate their faith into the position.
- Please prepare a brief account (no more than 750 words) of your spiritual pilgrimage, including the time and circumstances surrounding your becoming a believer in Christ and your current relationship with Christ. Please click on this link: https://www.belhaven.edu/pdfs/employment/letter-of-employment-commitment.pdf to review Belhaven University's Commitment Statement, which includes our employee expectations. Should you receive a job offer, you will be asked to sign and accept this commitment.

Only applicants who submit all five required items will be considered.

Email the complete application packet to:
Dr. Monica French
Assistant Vice President for Academic Administration
Email: mfrench@belhaven.edu

Employment at Belhaven University is contingent upon the results of an independent background check.