

# BILL JENSEN

**Leading North America's premier resorts to their loftiest heights, Jensen tirelessly mentored colleagues and always aced the "grocery store test."**



No one has led more major resorts in more markets than Bill Jensen, who held top posts at Vail Resorts and Intrawest and in a 45-year-career has applied his velvet touch to an A-list of mountains, including Sunday River, Northstar, Breckenridge, Vail, Whistler and Telluride. Perhaps even more impressive is the role he played as a career-shaping mentor to colleagues, many of whom went on to run their own resorts. Among the many "Bill-isms" Jensen has espoused along the way, this one stands out above all others:

"You are only as good as the people you work with."

So in a move that will surprise none of his friends, Jensen planned to dedicate his U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall Of Fame acceptance speech not to his career accomplishments, but to thanking the dozens of colleagues and mentees who travelled to the Salt Lake City induction to share in his award.

Born in Hawaii but raised in Southern California, Jensen's life changed in the fall of 1973 as a 21-year-old on a stroll along Ventura Boulevard, when he came upon the Sports Ltd. ski shop and saw a K2 Performers video playing in the storefront window. Within weeks he packed his car and headed to Mammoth Mountain, starting as a "liftie" in his first season. Promoted the next season to lift supervisor, Jensen's ski industry career was off and running.

After spending four years at Mammoth, followed by two years as a lift manager at Sun Valley and then two more years overseeing construction of a new resort, Ski Bluewood in southeastern Washington, Jensen made a decision that would set



the foundation for the rest of his career. As the North American sales manager (and then VP) of Pisten Bully Tracked Vehicles from 1981 to 1989, Jensen developed his business acumen and his sales and marketing chops, while increasing the company's market share from non-existent to dominant. At virtually all of the North American resorts he regularly visited on his rounds, resort leaders would set aside time to have dinner or just talk with Jensen about operations. It was a full-on immersion in resort issues from coast to coast, and Jensen eagerly absorbed it all.

A chance meeting with Les Otten on an airplane led Jensen next to Sunday River in Maine, which at the time was among the most dynamic resort workplaces in the country. Serving as VP of marketing, Jensen saw Sunday River's skier visits double over three seasons. With the goal of running his own resort by age 40, Jensen got his chance in 1991, joining publicly traded Fibreboard as president and GM of its Northstar resort in Lake Tahoe. Jensen increased skier visits by 120 percent in three seasons, acquired Sierra-at-Tahoe and Bear Mountain, and assumed leadership of the combined group. The experience of working for a public company, and lessons on the importance of making budgets, would serve Jensen well. After overseeing the resort group sale to Booth Creek in 1996, he was ready for bigger things.

The next move was to Breckenridge, where Jensen arrived as COO in 1997, not long after Vail Resorts had acquired the mountain. At company headquarters over the pass, they took notice when Breck's business boomed, increasing 22 percent over two seasons and eclipsing Vail in skier visits for the first time. He was soon promoted to COO of Vail, where skier visits increased 25 percent and the resort returned to its No. 1 ranking in the annual *SKI* Magazine Reader Resort Survey. He was then promoted in 2006 to lead Vail Resorts mountain division, with oversight of Vail, Beaver Creek, Breckenridge, Keystone and Heavenly.

Jensen was recruited in 2008 to become CEO of Intrawest, at the time North America's second largest ski and resort real-estate development company, with 12 ski resorts and 7 million skier visits. In 2010, the flagship, Whistler Blackcomb, would successfully host the 2010 Winter Olympics, and also earn the No. 1 ranking from *SKI* (from 2000 to 2012, under Jensen, Vail and Whistler achieved the No. 1 ranking nine times). But for perhaps the first time in his career, Jensen also hit an immovable object; the Great Recession had



## Congratulations Bill!

**You supported all us Freestyle Legends from the beginning and gave us the recognition that kept our spark alive! We embrace and cheer your induction into the US Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame.**

**—Scott, John, Eddie and all of your Hotdog buddies**

*'93 JS Brookbank*



decimated Intrawest's real-estate development business, resulting in the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars of annual revenue. Jensen and the Intrawest team faced that challenge head-on, and persevered in achieving a successful New York Stock Exchange IPO in 2014.

Now happily ensconced as the CEO and partner at Telluride Ski and Golf, Jensen works in one of the most beautiful corners of the ski world, at a resort that has been widely acclaimed as one of the country's best resort experiences. He's managed to increase revenues by focusing on destination visitors while building a resort culture focused on the guest experience. He deserves a separate award for steering Telluride through the initially snowless 2017-18 season, maintaining employee enthusiasm and keeping the local economy humming.

Jensen is a past chairman of the National Ski Areas Association, a two-time recipient of the Colorado Ski Country USA Chairman's Award, and was honored with the Ski Area Management (SAM) Industry Leadership Award in 2002. He was inducted into the Colorado Ski Hall of Fame in 2008.

Congratulations Bill Jensen for exceptional and ongoing successes, Wendy and your friends at Seirus



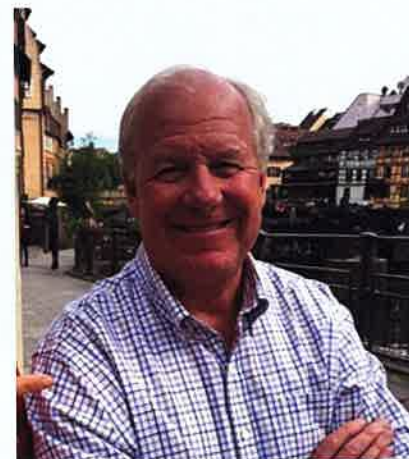
**These are the Bill-isms that have guided his career:**

- Be a listening leader—ask questions.
- Whatever you choose to do, do it well.
- 98 percent of a good idea is in the execution.
- When completing a task or a project, always “polish” with an extra 2 percent.
- Realize that every action you take with staff and the community has to pass the “grocery store test” (inevitably in a mountain town, every decision or action you take—good and bad—leads to an interaction in the local supermarket).
- Strive for 1+1 =3 outcomes. They are key differentiators of success.

**Career Accomplishments**



- 1974:** Starts resort career as a “liftie” at Mammoth.
- 1981-89:** North American sales manager and then VP at Pisten Bully.
- 1989-1991:** Serves as VP of Marketing at Sunday River, Me.
- 1991-97:** President and GM of Northstar-at-Tahoe; acquires Sierra-at-Tahoe and Bear Mountain and serves as group president.
- 1997-2008:** COO of Breckenridge, COO of Vail, then president of the Vail Resorts mountain division.
- 2008-2014:** CEO of Intrawest.
- 2015-current:** CEO and partner at Telluride Ski and Golf.
- Born:** Oct. 22, 1952 (Hawaii)



**Congratulations, Bill!**

Your induction into the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame is well deserved. Thank you on behalf of Vail Resorts for your contributions to our company and your continued passion for the ski industry.

**VAIL RESORTS**

Excelling in many aspects of running today's modern mountain resorts, Bill Jensen has left his mark, and set a standard for all to follow. By motivating, recognizing, and mentoring future industry leaders Bill is helping to ensure the future success of our US Ski & Snowboard community.



SALUTES BILL'S  
WELL DESERVED  
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HALL OF FAME.



**Congratulations to the Class of 2018!**

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