



While her business may be in destruction, Kari Overweg, Managing Partner of West Michigan Shredding, has focused her entire career on building: Building a solid reputation for herself and her company; building a strong culture based on values, hard work, and respect; and building a thriving enterprise that is able to withstand uncertainties in the marketplace by focusing on what they can do, not what they can't.

Kari and her husband, Scott, both have family histories of entrepreneurship, so it was a natural choice for them to found their own company. With a degree in industrial administration in hand and a desire to run her own company, she, along with Scott, who now serves as General Manager, created West Michigan Shredding. And, 20 years later, they're still going strong.

West Michigan Shredding is family owned and family run. A certified women-owned operation, the company serves thousands of clients throughout Michigan and northern Indiana—in the business, government, and private sectors. From accountants and lawyers to healthcare providers and manufacturers to mortgage and title companies, they can support nearly every industry imaginable.

Who can benefit from a shredding service? Just about any business with more than 10 employees.

Kari Overweg
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Payroll, HR, and medical records contain sensitive information that could be misused in the wrong hands. And, beyond that, any entity with proprietary products or trade secrets will also want to make sure their materials are disposed of securely. West Michigan Shredding offers both on-site and off-site services, and when it comes to what they can destroy, it goes well beyond documents. From confidential paperwork, to obsolete products, to hard drives, DVDs, and other forms of media—including whole computers—they handle it all. Handily.

"No matter what comes to us to be destroyed, we treat it as our own, with a high level of trust and service," Kari says. "We know that what we do helps protect other people and their businesses. That means a great deal to us."

As an i-Sigma, AAA industry certified shredding facility, West Michigan Shredding provides more protection to their customers by meeting strict security requirements with regard to their facility, processes, and standards. They maintain a chain of custody for confidential information, safeguarding it from collection to recycling—giving their customers complete peace of mind. In addition, their employees hold the necessary certifications and licensing to further instill customer confidence.

Kari is proud that her company holds memberships in the several Chambers of Commerce and the National Federation of Independent Businesses, and gives to local philanthropic organizations. She also feels strongly about her role as a woman in business. "The culture at West Michigan Shredding is very supportive of women in many aspects, but I believe if a woman succeeds, it's because of her work ethic, her character, and her goals," Kari says. "For myself and for friends of mine who have also been successful, I don't believe we have seen our gender as a handicap or used it to ask for preferences. We've worked hard, persevered through adversity, and respected our customers and employees—and I think that's where success comes from."