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Professional Summary

Seasoned creative leader with over 25 years of expertise in B2B, B2C, and higher education industries, blending strategic vision with hands-on technical skills to drive award-winning marketing campaigns and elevate brand presence. Extensive experience delivering impactful creative solutions across a wide range of industries, including automotive, tech, education, transportation, medical, health/beauty, food/beverage, real estate, non-profit, music, hospitality, and trade shows. Proven track record of inspiring high-performing teams, optimizing processes to achieve cost efficiencies, and mentoring the next generation of talent.

Leadership Philosophy

Leadership, for me, is both a privilege and a passion. Across roles as a lead designer, studio owner, educator, and mentor, my mission has always centered on fostering creativity, growth, and excellence in others. While I value rolling up my sleeves and contributing directly, my greatest fulfillment comes from empowering others to achieve their own success. Leadership is about sharing knowledge, leveraging expertise, and cultivating an environment where creativity thrives and talent flourishes.

Key Accomplishments

- Directed an award-winning team recognized with a Gold Davey Award and five Telly Awards, elevating brand visibility through impactful campaigns.
- Achieved nearly \$500,000 in annual cost savings through strategic print brokering without compromising quality.
- Spearheaded a college-wide Multi-Platform Delivery program during COVID-19, ensuring uninterrupted learning and zero student attrition.
- Revitalized a corporate website, enhancing the user experience and increasing engagement through new product and service pages.
- Elevated studio revenue by \$250,000 in a single year through innovative design strategies and client-focused branding.

Professional Leadership

Mentor, AIGA (American Institute of Graphic Arts): Designed and led multi-week portfolio development sessions for students and working professionals, driving measurable improvements in presentation and branding. Nominated for VP of Education.

Portfolio Introduction

My portfolio showcases a combination of experiments, artistic explorations, photography, and client illustrations. Each piece represents not just a finished product but a journey, illustrating the thought process, inspirations, and decisions that shaped the final outcome. Explore the creative process behind the work and gain insights into what drives a designer's imagination.

Education

- 05/2016
Harrington College of Design
Chicago, IL
MFA in Communication Design
- 05/1998
University of Illinois Chicago
Chicago, IL
Bachelor's Degree in Graphic Design
Bachelor's Degree in Industrial Design

Honors/Awards

- Davey Award — Gold
- Telly Awards — One Gold, Two Silver, & Two Bronze
- Nominated for the VP of Education position, Chicago Chapter of the AIGA
- Alpha Beta Kappa National Honor Society
- Graduated with High Honors from Harrington College of Design
- Awarded Harrington Scholarship for Academic Excellence

Certifications

- Adobe Certified Instructor
- Mac University:
Web Development Certification
Multimedia Certification

Skills

Core Competencies:

- Leadership & Mentorship
- Omni-Channel Marketing
- Brand Strategy & Development
- Print & Digital Design
- Creative Direction
- Curriculum Development
- Client Relations

Technical Skills:

- Adobe Creative Suite
- Microsoft 360
- HTML, CSS, w3.css
- Mac & PC platforms

Experience

Freelance Creative Director / Designer

10/2024 – Present

- Developed the full brand identity system for Nomadic Concepts, including logo, typography, color palette, and visual language.
- Designed the packaging system to support retail and promotional efforts.
- Directed and executed the visual design for the brand's website to align with the brand's aesthetic and user experience goals.
- Created the comprehensive style guide and graphic standards manual to ensure consistent application across all media.
- Established the brand's look and feel across digital and print platforms.
- Planned and defined the social media strategy, outlining content direction and campaign goals.
- Produced custom illustration work for apparel, merchandise, and other branded collateral.
- Managed client relationships, timelines, and project scope while delivering high-impact creative solutions.

Design Manager

05/2021 – 10/2024 | HP Tuners, Buffalo Grove, IL

- Directed an award-winning creative team, securing a Gold Davey Award and five Telly Awards (one gold, two silvers, two bronze) for high-impact marketing campaigns.
- Spearheaded omni-channel marketing strategies, encompassing digital content, advertising, product design, video production, photography, social media, and front-end web development, resulting in increased brand visibility and customer engagement.
- Drove cost-saving initiatives, achieving nearly \$500,000 in annual print savings without compromising quality.
- Revitalized the company website in collaboration with developer and copywriter, launching new product/service pages and enhancing the user experience.
- Mentored and empowered the team to deliver consistent, high-quality branding across all channels, from product photography and video shoots to social media assets and packaging design.

Founder & Lead Creative

10/2000 – 01/2022 | *diversedesign, inc., Chicago, IL*

- Delivered creative solutions for high-profile clients across diverse industries, including Oscar Mayer, Chicago Blackhawks, and Sharpie.
- Directed diverse projects, including catalog design, promotional materials, print advertisements, web design, and custom illustrations.
- Cultivated strong client relationships and managed end-to-end project execution, from concept development to print production.
- Negotiated print production costs, ensuring premium quality while achieving budget efficiencies.
- Delivered impactful branding and marketing materials that enhanced client visibility and drove measurable business outcomes.

Department Chair, Graphic Design/Interactive Media

02/2014 – 07/2021 | *Flashpoint Chicago, Chicago, IL*

- Advanced from adjunct instructor to department chair, overseeing curriculum development for Associate and Bachelor's programs.
- Pioneered an inclusive, project-based learning model, equipping students with contemporary and traditional design skills.
- Led the college-wide adoption of the Multi-Platform Delivery (MPD) program during the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring uninterrupted remote learning.
- Contributed to policies enhancing student retention and success, driving measurable improvements in academic outcomes.
- Managed budgets, optimized scheduling, and fostered professional development for faculty and students, strengthening the institution's creative community.

Program Director, Graphic Design

07/2008 – 08/2013 | *Fox College, Bedford Park, IL*

- Designed, implemented, and taught an accelerated Associate's Degree program in Graphic Design, crafting curricula for nearly 20 courses.
- Achieved a 99% placement rate of program graduates securing jobs in the design industry.
- Guided students in Adobe Certified Associate exams, with all scoring higher than the national averages.
- Instructed and mentored students, shaping portfolio development and externships to ensure career readiness.
- Played a key role in securing re-accreditation from the HLC (*Higher Learning Commission*) through innovative curriculum design and quality assurance initiatives.
- Fostered a collaborative, engaging learning environment that prepared students for competitive roles in the design industry.

Team Lead/Graphic Designer

01/2000 – 10/2000 | *Grayscale, Chicago, IL*

- Led a team of designers to execute national marketing campaigns for prominent clients, including Philip Morris, Allstate, and Midas.
- Produced high-quality print advertisements, promotional mailers, and packaging, ensuring alignment with client branding goals.
- Contributed to creative pitches and brainstorming sessions, delivering innovative, results-driven design solutions.

Graphic Designer

11/1998 – 01/2000 | *Trisect Design, Broadview, IL*

- Delivered branding and marketing assets for clients such as Bosch and Mario Tricoci, driving a \$250,000 revenue increase within a year.
- Managed design projects, including trade show posters, brochures, and promotional materials, ensuring consistent quality and client satisfaction.
- Directed photo shoots and led vendor negotiations to produce visually cohesive campaigns.

Graphic Designer

01/1998 – 11/1998 | *Graphix!, Schaumburg, IL*

- Designed promotional materials for clients in the hospitality and music industries, producing logos, flyers, and album art under tight deadlines.
- Built strong client relationships and secured cost-effective print solutions through meticulous vendor negotiations.

