

Jeff Kowal

Creative Director

I'm a Creative Director with 20-ish years experience. Technically I am an Art Director, but I'm an Art Director that has a fabulous hat collection. Illustrator, animator, editor, coder, tweetist, and even musician. Why? Success in today's advertising, marketing and brand communications arena has everything to do with agility, foresight and the ability to think around all sides of a challenge. The right implementation of concept and technology (or lack of it) to hit your mark is critical.

I love to drink in new ideas and technologies and integrate them into my process. Although I'm a geek, I never lose sight of my Golden Rule: Tools are constantly changing, but concept is still king.

I've worked in big markets, small markets and small markets pretending to be big markets. And I've won an award or two along the way. My ambitions are not to rise to the top of Madison Avenue. My goals are simple:

Stay happy. Stay true. Stay relevant.

Specialties

- Holistic marketing solutions and strategy
- Broadcast and Multimedia production
- Digital / web based marketing initiatives
- Branded entertainment and interactive experience

Experience

Creative Director

Giant Ideas

November 2011 – Present (3 months)

[Clients include: Advantage Credit Counseling Service, Straub Beer, Braddock's American Brasserie]

Co-founder

Lotuspike LLC

2004 – Present (8 years)

Myself and my partners founded Lotuspike as an independent publishing company for our own music. It was designed originally as a means to bypass the headache of trying to negotiate with record labels for a contract that was fair and reasonable for the artist. Today, Lotuspike is partnered with San Diego based record label Spotted Peccary. Together we are one of the largest and most well respected publishers of Ambient / New Age / Electronic music in the US. We have sales both nationally and abroad, and our music can be heard on syndicated programming across the us, as well as on music programs and web radio stations globally.

VP/Creative Director

Garrett Creative

November 2010 – November 2011 (1 year 1 month)

[Clients include: Brown Mackie College, Thor Motorsports, Wine Loft Pittsburgh, Station Square, Restaurant Echo]

Vice President / Creative Director

Rick Johnson and Company

July 2006 – November 2010 (4 years 5 months)

I had a unique role at RJC. As Creative Director, I was more than the traditional leader and evangelist of the creative product. I was also knee deep and hands on in the creation of that product. From conceptualization, art direction and design of more traditional marketing tactics, to the programming, editing and deployment of new, digital marketing solutions, my tenure allowed me to evolve into the kind of Creative Director that will be successful in an industry that is literally reinventing itself from week to week.

[Clients included: UNM Hospitals, UNM Cancer Center, McDonalds, Los Alamos National Bank, Roswell Tourism Board, Las Cruces Tourism Board]

Senior Art Director

Giant Ideas

June 2002 – May 2006 (4 years)

Role included the conceptualization, execution and production of branding campaigns and collateral. Additional rolls included, oversight of broadcast production and post production, web development, flash programming and animation, illustration and photo illustration, client interaction and assisting in the account supervision process, and assisting in the budget planning process.

[Clients included: Adelphia cable, Pittsburgh Penguins, Pittsburgh Opera, Heinz and Black Family Channel.]

Senior Art Director

Fitting Group

May 2000 – June 2002 (2 years 2 months)

Role included conceptualization, creation and deployment of broadcast, digital and traditional marketing collateral. Additional rolls included, print pre-production, flash animation, web development, broadcast production, client interaction and assisting in the estimating process for projects.

[Clients included: Adams Capital Management, Penn Telecom, Nauticom]

Graphic Designer

The Bailey Group

May 1994 – May 2000 (6 years 1 month)

Role included the conceptualization, design and execution of packaging and marketing materials for major brands. Other rolls included participating in team creative sessions, design and illustration, client meetings and interaction, preparing files for production.

[Clients included, Johnson and Johnson, Just Born Foods, Maxell, Canteen services, Agway, D.L. Jardine's foods.]

Education

Tyler School of Art, Temple University

BFA, Design, Illustration, Animation

1990 – 1994

Carnegie Mellon University

Fine Art (non-accredited)

1988 – 1990

Organizations

Board Member; New Mexico Advertising Federation

January 2007 – January 2008 (1 year 1 month)

Pittsburgh Advertising Federation

2000 – 2006 (6 years)

Board Member; AIGA

2001-2003 (2 years)

Recommendations

"I've worked with a lot of creatives over the years and I can tell you that Jeff is truly one of a kind. He has great ideas and the ability to bring them to life visually that I have not seen in a very long time. He also knows how to stretch a budget for a client to get things done which is critical in this day and age. Most importantly, he knows how to link strategy and execution in a way that works.

He has a thirst for knowledge that drives him to learn new things like motion graphics, animation, editing and CSS. He is one of those rare talents that can blend traditional advertising and digital advertising into his solutions for clients. All of these things make him a much better creative. Whoever has a chance to work with Jeff is getting a great talent with the drive to make great things happen. His entire team misses him and we all wish him nothing but the best."

- Erik Lohmeier, Chief Executive Officer, RJC Advertising

"Jeff Kowal is one of the more creative individuals I have had the pleasure of working with in the advertising business. Aside from always being clear and organized with his concepts, his ideas and his ability to have them realized consistently surpass expectations. I would recommend Mr. Kowal to anyone who is in need of great creative concepts that build business." - Rob Deaner, President, Creative Director, Market Street Sound

"Jeff is a premiere creative. He has a motivated and enthusiastic approach to working with clients and is driven to approach projects the right way, whatever it takes. I would recommend working with Jeff to anyone, regardless of their project needs." - Daniel Pipitone, Graphic Designer

"Jeff was always able to take even the most mundane subject matter and produce fresh, creative materials. His work crossed media boundaries with the design working well in print and Web environments. Many creatives have a certain style, regardless of the client needs. Jeff is not like that, he is able to intuitively understand the audience and design effective, targeted materials even when the audience might have been the exact opposite of himself."

- Raelin Musuraca, President and Owner, Sharp Creative

"Jeff is an excellent conceptual, creative and talented individual who can successfully manage complex multi-component campaigns under pressure of deadline. Personable and motivated to high standards, I highly recommend Jeff and consider him a personal friend." - Bryan Ward, CEO/CCO, Giant Ideas

"I came to know Jeff during my time as an MFA student at Tyler School of Art, Temple University. I noticed in Jeff an intense curiosity about various subjects, including contemporary fine art, music, and his specialty, graphic design. He exuded a sense of confidence and ease when pursuing projects in these fields, and it is no wonder that since his days at Temple University he has proven himself to be a first-class musician and exceptional designer. I strongly encourage any prospective employer to recognize these traits in Jeff and to seriously consider him for whatever position he may be pursuing." - Stephen Salel