



Mike Simmons

CREATIVE DIRECTOR • CONCEPTUAL DESIGNER

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SUMMARY

High-impact and results-driven branding and creative professional with 20+ years' experience and a focus in keeping companies viable in fiercely competitive markets. Well-regarded for leading ideation sessions in grasping subtle and nuanced information and transforming it into digestible and relevant concepts for a positive user experience. Expert in conducting deep dive research into consumer trends and preferences to make for an intuitive and readily accessible user interface. Tenacious forging strong relationships with external business partners and vendors based on business acumen and earned trust and respect. Calculated risk taker to get processes moving quickly in transforming ideas into action; highly skilled in connecting complex and disparate information into a distinct concept and aggressive plan of action to deliver the 'wow' factor.

WORK HISTORY

FEB 2009 - Present



Design Director

BEST ASSOCIATES /ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS

Spearheads and leads projects from conception through completion, including wireframes, UX and UI designs, coding (front- and back-end) SEO, and implementation. Manages creative, IT, and external vendors. Reports directly to Chairman/CEO.

- Oversees building of multiple databases and UX/UI design for database admin tool to consolidate information.
- Merged all national and international college/university marketing websites into one content management system.
- Creates templates to build 1,300 sites with Fortune 500 companies, and thus generate thousands of free leads to partner universities.
- Leads and builds websites for member organizations including multinational and domestic corporations, major health care systems, military operations, and numerous public-school districts nationwide.
- Created all branding for Academic Partnerships, American University System, Best Associates, New England College of Business, and Whitney University System.
- Originate and manage bidding process for various key projects:
 - Dual Credit: online application for high school students to enroll and complete college courses.
 - Epic LMS: learning management system that allows students to take college courses online.
 - Epic Self-Authoring Tool: application that enables college professors to create online courses.
 - Paragon: A platform for global distribution of content and credentials with many of the world's best universities
- Successfully led and completed more than 50 major projects, with budgets of \$500K to \$1.5M.
- Marketing and strategy development for Paragon, which offers specialized certificates from universities all over the world.
- Built entire IT foundation, automated all systems, introduced new technologies, and dramatically slashed costs. Help drive the company from two to over 40 partners, and from Web 1.0 to 4.0.

JAN 2008 - FEB 2009



Art Director/Conceptual Designer

TELLIGENT/SOUND CREATIVE

Created UI and UX designs for the software development company, building and strengthening online social communities for more than 3,000 companies worldwide. Created wire frames and user experience for key clients, including EA Sports, Dell, Microsoft, Intel, and MySpace. Maintained a highly satisfied customer base by continuously updating functionality. Pushed artistic and product capabilities to the next level using the newest technology.

- Gave many Fortune 500 companies a sharp boost in Google ranking by re-skinning entire websites, blogs, and internal communications.
- Built powerful online communities, produced more efficient websites, and dramatically improved clients' web presence.

JAN 2007 - FEB 2008



Senior Designer

IMC2 (currently MePlusYou)

Heavy web design and interactive marketing on multi-channel platforms (digital, social and mobile media). Teamed with Procter & Gamble to increase sales via internet marketing of high-profile brands such as Crest, Scope, and Crest Whitestrips. Generated innovative campaign ideas while leading writers and flash designers with concepts and client pitches on messaging, visualization, and animation.

MAY 2000 - JAN 2007



Art Director

DALLAS OBSERVER

Conceptualized and produced all visual aspects of The Village Voice Media's alternative weekly publication. Art director for all covers and editorial sections; oversaw photo/illustration assignments; and held authority for publication's final approval. Managed internal/external teams of artists, illustrators, and designers. Led the conversion of all print editorial to web format.

- Partnered with cutting-edge, award-winning painters, photographers, claymators, illustrators, and 3-D animators worldwide to achieve striking results.
- Created promotional materials for large-scale events, including St. Patrick's Day Parade, The Dallas Observer Music Awards, SXSW, and Best of Dallas.
- Consistently delivered high quality, error-free publications within tight time constraints.
- Played a key role in magazine's dramatic increase in circulation, distribution sites, brand recognition, and revenue.

EDUCATION

SEPT 1994 - MAY 1998 ● Bachelor of Science
TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
Major: Communication Studies
Double Minor: Studio Art & Graphic
Design (1998)

SEPT 1999 - MAY 2000 ● Associate of Applied Arts
THE ART INSTITUTE OF DALLAS
Major: Graphic Design (2000)

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Creative Direction

Team Management

Strategic Planning

User Experience (UX)

User Interface (UI) Design

Project Management

Database Marketing

Graphic Design

Mobile Design

Tactical Execution

Brand Design

Information Architecture

SKILLS

Adobe Creative Suite, Fireworks, Wordpress, Sitefinity, Telligent Evolution, Fetch, Dispatch Working knowledge of HTML, CSS, and .net, Java

RECOMMENDATIONS

DR. ERIC J BAN ● MANAGING DIRECTOR, DALLAS COUNTY PROMISE

Mike has a multifaceted skill set that begins with the creative process and ends with high impact tools that are delivered ahead of schedule, under budget, and with exceptional quality.

ERIC CELESTE ● DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS AT CIVITAS CAPITAL GROUP

Mike hired me to work with him on website development and marketing work. His strategic approach to a project is refreshing. He not only executes day to day, but he sees the big picture. He is creative enough to improve a project beyond its original vision and careful enough to make sure it still achieves its original goals. In summation, he is skilled at wearing multiple hats, organized, talented, a team worker, he meets deadlines, and he can take a project from concept to completion.

KEVIN BYRD ● CREATIVE DIRECTOR AT SCHIFINO LEE ADVERTISING + BRANDING

Mike has great passion for everything he does, and as such, is a positive influence on the entire team. He jumped into every project enthusiastically and delivered work with speed and quality. He constantly works on improving his skills and takes direction well. Bottom line, he's a very dependable team player and would be a valuable addition to any creative group.

LESLIE SHAFFER ● CREATIVE DIRECTOR / COPYWRITER AT GSD&M

Mike's passion for creative execution allows him to excel in any medium. He has a unique eye and a natural ability for integrating his own talents with those of his team members.

RHONDA REINHART ● EDITOR-IN-CHIEF AT MODERN LUXURY INTERIORS TEXAS

Mike is a rare breed. Not only is he a talented artist, but he's also a diligent go-getter. No matter the task, he gives it his all, and his work is always unique, eye-catching, and well-crafted.

BROCK MARION ● PRESIDENT + FOUNDER AT THOUGHTFUL DIGITAL

Mike is a solid designer with proven creative chops--always affable, open to direction without ego, he would be a great addition to any creative team looking for a strong producer. Mike always delivered high quality work for us under seemingly impossible timelines and always maintained a good attitude, regardless of the challenge.

MERRITT MARTIN ● COPYWRITER AT THE COMPANY

Mike was an amazingly focused and driven art director. His ability to communicate with all departments of our publication was always very impressive. He maintained both a creative and sometimes administrative (managing freelance artists) position without losing his inherent accessible nature, boundless energy and humor. An absolute pleasure to work with.