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I use Design Thinking and creative tools to humanize communication and technology. I am passionate about process, context and crafting meaningful experiences. I love working in collaborative environments—especially, if the people I'm working with are in love with what they do.

I’ve worn a few different hats throughout my career, but really at the heart of what I do is create useful and meaningful experiences. It can be manifested in an identity system that is easy to implement, or an augmented reality storytelling platform or a beautiful application. Anyone with a sense of style can make something look good, but I believe that design that has lasting value is achieved through a combination of aesthetics and inspiration, backed by scientific knowledge and research.

I embrace change, and have an endless curiosity to learn and experiment. I see difficult problems as an opportunity to learn and grow, if these sound like qualities you are looking for in a team member then I would love to talk to you.

A qualified, experienced professional / Registered Graphic Designers are professionals who have been granted the right to use the R.G.D. designation, signifying their education, training and experience in graphic design and their ability to practice in the profession and perform to the standard of competence specified by the Association of Registered Graphic Designers of Ontario and the Examination Board for Registered Graphic Designers.

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FSEAP / identity

It’s not “eye catching” or “on trend”, but this rebranding project is one of my favourite portfolio pieces. The research I conducted revealed powerful insights which shaped every aspect of the final design.

CONTEXT

FSEAP is a national provider of employee and family assistance programs, wellness solutions and organisational consulting. They have a profound commitment to providing services that have a meaningful impact on the lives of Canadian employees and families. All proceeds go to support local community programs.

CHALLENGE

To navigate design direction with an organisational committee which represented over 40 branches across Canada. Each branch had a unique cultural perspective and different idea of how to communicate with clients.

PROCESS

To better understand the organization and their internal challenges I designed a brand audit. I conducted informal telephone interviews with employees from all regions, and wrote a survey that was emailed to current and former clients.

The insights gained proved to be invaluable. It became clear that language was an obstacle, by removing industry jargon from their communications we helped FSEAP craft targeted messages that were comprehensible to wider audiences.

I also discovered that the organizations name, “Family Services Employee Assistance Programs” was a barrier for prospective clients. Most people I interviewed said they were hesitant to sign up for the service because they thought it sounded like a government run program. Since an overwhelming amount of people called the organization FSEAP I recommended that they shorten the name.

The tagline “Now we’re talking”, was chosen because it spoke succinctly to the core of FSEAPs offerings (face to face counselling services) and the results from a competitive analysis showed that it was their number one differentiator.

In addition, the interviews identified that staff had difficulty managing the brand elements (this is why each branch had their own logo), I designed the logo so that even if the client “lost” their logo files all they had to do was type FSEAP in Word and make it Trebuchet in red.

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Kent Homes / web design

It’s amazing what can happen when you take the time to understand your clients communication problems. What began as a fairly simple infographic became a complete redesign of the clients website.

CONTEXT

Kent Homes is the largest homebuilder in Atlantic Canada. For over 50 years, Kent has been offering homebuyers’ quality modular homes in a safe year-round building environment.

CHALLENGE

Map the customers journey and simplify the purchase process. Provide Irvings’ in-house development team with easy to follow design templates for the website redesign.

PROCESS

Initially, Kent Homes wanted an infographic and few updated page layouts that their in-house web development team could develop into templates, however, after an in-depth briefing on the project it was clear that their website functioned as crucial component of their customer experience, therefore requiring careful consideration and ultimately a complete overhaul.

The first phase was to simplify the clients "customer experience map". What began as a lengthily word document became a board game like illustration that customers could easily understand at a glance.

The icons that are used in the map were expanded upon and grew to be part of the navigation system of the new website. These icons are also used throughout Kent’s factory signage and collateral material.

The second phase reorganized the web content. I worked with the client closely, and showed through prototyping that consistent hierarchy and clear, short verses of text could accomplish more than volumes of industry jargon.

A considerable design challenge of this project was that the site would need to be built by Irving’s in-house web development staff on a platform of their choosing. To keep the development as simple as possible I drew inspiration from Google and designed content blocks as "cards". These cards would have the same typographic styles, padding and word count throughout. This meant that the development team only needed to code a few elements, and then apply them accordingly. To this end a comprehensive style guide was written, and explained very clearly how the elements should be built.

The website was completed in the spring of 2015, Kent was very happy with the results. And even though it was not as meticulously executed as it could have been it has had a huge impact on the usability and customer satisfaction.

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Sid’s Cider / identity

Great product. Horrible name. In the competitive market of alcoholic beverages, name recognition is half the battle. How do you design a new line of beverages and NOT focus on the name? Let your customers see themselves in your brand.

CONTEXT

Sid’s Cider is a new product-line in the Shipbuilder’s Cider family. It has a style that offers a smooth mouth filling texture, lots of juicy fruit flavour and no additives.

CHALLENGE

Create a compelling story and unique packaging experience in a crowded market place.

PROCESS

To understand what we were up against I conducted a competitive analysis. I looked for design trends, language, story elements and quality claims. Analysis revealed that most cider brands skewed male, no brand talked about an origin story and the majority of cider labels were modestly designed (there were no risk takers). Additionally, no brand put an emphasis on quality or craftsmanship. This is important because analysis of NSLC sales showed craft brews are their number area of growth.

The name alone proposed a challenge, and it was something the client would not budge on. I decided that the package design should rely more heavily on story, and less on name recognition. The idea came to me as I was standing in line for a coffee. On the counter, the baristas had two tip jars, one for cats, and one for dogs. It surprised me how much was in the dog jar versus the cat. It occurred to me that people like to belong to a category, “I am a dog person”.

Using data from previous studies I conducted on the purchasing habits of new alcohol brands in Nova Scotia, and studies the studio had done on millennials, I created personas for each of the cider flavours.

With the positioning of the brand became “Happiness grows on trees”. I empathised what “happiness” looks like to adults in Nova Scotia and translated that into the brand aesthetic. Apple became a relaxed camper, Blueberry an adventure seeking surfer, Chai a contemplative yoga practitioner, and so on. The cans were produced with a smooth matte finish and feel really wonderful in your hand.

After the launch when I asked people what they thought of the name, to my delight the majority of people said they really hadn’t noticed it, they just looked for the package design on the shelf. The client was ecstatic, stating that sales of the new cider line represented a 500% growth in their overall cider sales in the first three months.

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Museum for Human Rights / augmented reality app

The Proclamation of the Constitution Act of 1982 marked a pivotal moment for human rights in Canada, it was my honour to help bring this story to life.

CONTEXT

The Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR) is the first museum solely dedicated to the evolution, celebration, and future of human rights. Their aim is to build not only a national hub for human rights learning and discovery, but a new era of global human rights leadership.

CHALLENGE

Design an augmented reality app that tells the story of human rights legislation in Canada. The app will be used as an exhibit in the museum, and will later be available on the Apple App Store.

PROCESS

This project has been a joy to work on. Though still in development, I am very proud of it’s progress. When we began the client had only a script, and an idea that they could leverage technology to create a compelling exhibit.

My first task was figuring out how to tell the four stories the museum outlined. I examined many augmented reality applications and consulted the development team to ensure my concepts were realistic for both the timeframe and budget of the project.

I ideated four concepts and presented them to the client, the Avatar direction was chosen and the work began. I created detailed wireframes, and through an iterative process with the development team we refined the menus and interactive elements. I also conducted research for accessibility and made recommendations to the development team based on best practices and commonly understood gestures for the visually impaired.

When the wireframes were complete my next task was to produce detailed storyboards, including sound design. I illustrated and animated story features, and wrote an art direction brief for the 3D artist.

The app is almost complete, with only the professional voice overs and timing tweaks to be done. I am currently involved in design reviews and art revisions.

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Canadian Partnership Against Cancer / reports

These System Performance Reports may look simple enough, but they took a lot of critical thinking and planning to get right.

CONTEXT

The Partnership works with groups and agencies across Canada to reduce the impact of cancer on all Canadians.

CHALLENGE

Design templates for a series of reports relaying complex information and then to produce the first set of reports in French, English and accessible PDF versions.

PROCESS

I needed to carefully craft a grid and typographic system that would align and differentiate three categories of reporting; Technical, Narrative and Special Study. The information in these reports were communicated through case studies, complex charts and figures, callouts, statistics and references.

Since the reports began as templates, the hierarchy of the typographic system was of prime importance. I designed a comprehensive style guide which helped me test the system and proved to be a useful tool when presenting concepts and design choices to the client. This allowed them to make informed decisions when requesting changes.

In the end, the client was so pleased with my work that I designed and produced the first three sets of reports. The system works extremely well and has been used for the last 6 years.

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Hal-Con / web design

New website celebrating geek and nerd culture – zero budget — one week. Challenge accepted.

CONTEXT

Every year since 2010 this community-focused, volunteer run sci-fi, fantasy and gaming convention strives to be Canada’s best fan-run “comic con” style convention.

CHALLENGE

Redesign the website for Hal-Con with a focus on improving guests experiences and attracting new visitors from outside the province.

PROCESS

With only a week in the budget for design, whatever choices I made had to be smart and based on relevant information. I executed a comparative analysis of comic-con style conventions across North America. I looked for best practices in content, navigation, and accessibility and made recommendations based on my findings.

I presented my recommendations and wireframes to the volunteer board who quickly approved the new direction. Final design files were produced in a few days and handed off to an outside web developer.

Hal-Con has grown into Atlantic Canada’s largest sci-fi convention! Volunteers say that they receive far less telephone requests for information since the redesign.

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Toronto Hydro / campaign

Nothing says conservation better than talking animals!

CONTEXT

Toronto Hydro promotes saveONenergy programs that offer residential customers incentives to conserve and reduce electricity.

CHALLENGE

Craft and execute a campaign that increases participation in residential energy conservation programs.

PROCESS

Toronto is a very crowded space when it comes to out of home marketing. Billboards are on every corner, and let's face it, energy conservation isn’t very sexy. This campaign had a healthy budget and if positioned correctly had the potential to affect real change.

My answer? Puns! We often joked in the studio “how many different ways can we say save on energy?!” Well, it turns out, if you use puns and Toronto-centric wildlife there are a lot of ways to say “save on energy”.

I illustrated squirrels, raccoons, mice, blue jays and Canada geese and paired them with simple messages that effectively drove activity to the web. This award winning campaign was seen in outdoor, out-of-home, direct mail and online ads. Toronto Hydro ran this campaign through summer and fall and saw record levels of online sign-ups.

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Brave New World / promotion

Strong presentation skills are of value in any work environment. I have written, storyboarded, designed and produced dozens of meaningful presentations for design studios and for their clients. Here are a few examples:

BRAVE NEW WORLD / SHOW REEL

Brave New World is a boutique digital/technology agency that works on a wide variety of projects: websites, AR/VR, branding, large scale web applications, IoT, marketing, and even robotics. I designed and produced a short show reel that the studio could send to prospective clients and investors.

BUK PROMOTION VIDEO

Buk is a social food discovery platform. It uses machine learning to find and recommend restaurants and dishes in any city around the world. Brave New World needed a short video to send to investors that explained the apps capabilities.

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Various Logos / identity

A logo is not a brand. Unless it's on a cow.

That's what my first CD used to say. No, a logo on it's own is not a brand, but sometimes a client only needs a logo (at least at first). Here is a collection of logos I've designed over the years.

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Feed Nova Scotia / web design

As part of Trampolines’ mission to be a force for positive change in Nova Scotia the studio collaborated in redesigning Feed Nova Scotia’s website pro-bono.

CONTEXT

Feed Nova Scotia is a non-for-profit organization with a member network of 146 food banks and meal programs that distribute food across the province. Their mission is to feed those in need and reduce that need.

CHALLENGE

Design a responsive WordPress site and infographics for Feed Nova Scotia.

PROCESS

When I was briefed on this project the development team had already produced wireframes and I was tasked with designing the layout and interface, however as I worked through crafting the grid and navigation system I found issues with accessibility and navigation. I worked with the development team to elevate accessibility standards and to simplify content and navigation.

I also designed a system for presenting quantitative and qualitative statistics on the site, as well as a series of infographics.

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Vintages of the Mind / identity

What’s in a name? In this case a whole lot.

CONTEXT

Vintages of The Mind is a fundraising event for the Nova Scotia Early Psychosis Program (NSEPP). NSEPP promotes early detection and provides optimal healthcare for persons either experiencing (or at-risk for) their first episode of psychosis.

CHALLENGE

Design collateral for a wine tasting/silent auction fundraiser. And oh ya, you have three hours allotted for design.

PROCESS

Normally three hours wouldn’t be enough time to design anything worth putting in your portfolio, but something about the name and subject of this event inspired me.

I started by quickly searching for facts about psychosis, the clients website (part of Dalhousie University) had a lot of relevant information. I kept those that I found impactful to the side and thought about how psychosis could be represented visually. I used optical illusions as a metaphor for mental illness, and gave the large posters context by adding the facts I had found.

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Toronto Hydro: Copeland Station / hoarding

The power to power Toronto.

CONTEXT

In 2014 Toronto Hydro would complete the construction of a new transformer station 45 feet underground in Toronto's historic Roundhouse Park.

CHALLENGE

Conceal the construction of the transformer station which is situated in one of the most visible tourist areas in Toronto. Roundhouse Park is directly across from the CN Tower, Rogers Centre and Ripley's newly constructed Aquarium.

PROCESS

This project required a lot of planning and attention to detail. The first thing I tasked myself with was laying out the hoarding flat and dividing up the streets and corners. I built a fun angled grid on top of it and used colour as a way to transition from one section to the next.

The location served as inspiration for the theme, “The Power to Power Toronto” fit perfectly with the hoardings surroundings. I used this theme as a way to tell the story of Toronto and Toronto Hydro’s commitment to contributing in a positive way.

Another consideration in the design strategy is that hoarding needs to look busy enough to conceal graffiti, the collage style did not leave any white space to be taken advantage of.

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Patricia’s Bistro / identity

Beet the rush!

CONTEXT

Patricia's Bistro serves lovingly prepared sandwiches, pastas, soups and salads made from scratch. Named for the Chef's mother, it provides patrons with a warm and inviting atmosphere and terrific food.

CHALLENGE

Create and execute an identity for a new restaurant in a very short timeframe. Scope of work included design and implementation of the business proposal, interior design, logo, flyers, signage, menus, website and social media graphics and posts.

PROCESS

With only weeks before opening the identity of Patricia's Bistro needed a system that would be easy to implement but flexible enough to grow.

Vintage inspired typography; colour palette and simple shapes can be used in limitless combinations. In the beginning, typographic posters using food puns were to be displayed as large-scale posters to brighten the trendy black walls, but soon provided to be a source of inspiration and a voice for social media and promotional messaging, "Beet the Rush! Call your office lunch orders in".

The result is colourful and quirky with a nod towards nostalgia, truly, a unique addition to the food landscape in Bedford.

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Various Publications / editorial

I learned a lot about typography and grid systems from my time as an editorial designer. It’s a skill that I have found to be very useful in all areas of my work.

CONTEXT

I worked as an editorial designer for two years on 11 publications that were published by-weekly. Since then I have designed countless annual reports and magazines.

CHALLENGE

The challenge with editorial design on a large scale is generating fresh layouts in a very small time span. You have to work quickly, efficiently, learn to experiment and be conscious of style guidelines. I used to think of them as puzzles, small pieces to arrange and then place in a larger context.

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Prismatic Arts Festival / identity

Art for everyone!

CONTEXT

The Prismatic Art Festival (Prismatic) brings the work of Canada’s leading Aboriginal and culturally diverse artists into the spotlight, creating opportunities for local, regional and national audiences to engage with new art forms and artistic traditions.

CHALLENGE

Make the Prismatic Festival a household name, increase awareness and attendance, and build sponsorship relationships. The project scope included ideation, and design of billboards, print and online ads, rack cards, buttons, bridge banners, window and elevator wraps, program guide and sponsorship package.

PROCESS

To reach these goals, the 2014 festival allowed the general public free admission to the bulk of Alderney Landing’s main stage performances.

Congruently, I worked on a brand standards guide for Onelight Theatre and Prismatic. As I crafted the messaging, a concept emerged that so completely embodied the culture of both entities—Art for Everyone. This became the festivals ethos and the visual identity for the festival quickly evolved from there.

Graphically, I drew inspiration from the festival’s main stage scaffolding. Abstracted, this underlying grid provided structure and unity throughout the collateral. The juxtaposition of hard and soft textures mixed with a bold colour palette and beautiful photography created a vibrant and engaging visual experience.