

# Michael Lay

**Art Director, Graphic Designer, Writer, Artist, Creative Problem Solver**

North Chesterfield, VA - Email me on Indeed: [indeed.com/r/Michael-Lay/17ffaec16fd69326](https://www.indeed.com/r/Michael-Lay/17ffaec16fd69326)

I offer more than 20 years of professional creative experience, from creative development and art direction to graphic and web design, illustration, writing and photography. My extensive background in publishing, branding and design is enhanced by considerable editorial experience and my appreciation for writing as an essential collaborative element of successful messaging. Having held creative and management positions in both the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors, I'm sensitive to the balance between quality creative and cost-effectiveness and have successfully melded these seemingly contradictory imperatives throughout my career. I have extensive knowledge of printing practices and specifications and have maintained my proficiency in the technical aspects of the design field over the course of my career. I'm looking forward to new creative opportunities and challenges and enjoy hands-on involvement, good typography and new ideas.

My portfolio can be viewed at <http://mlaydesign.myportfolio.com>

Willing to relocate to: Richmond, VA - Raleigh-Durham, NC

Authorized to work in the US for any employer

## WORK EXPERIENCE

### **Creative Director**

Advertising Concepts, Inc. - Midlothian, VA - July 2016 to Present

Originally hired as a Senior Designer to improve the design of the company's publications and strengthen the advertising design provided to clients; promoted to Creative Director in mid-February 2017 during production of March/April issues

- Manage the design and production of four magazines — West End's Best, River City, Chesterfield Living and Hanover Lifestyle — as the primary designer (the design department consists of the Creative Director and two part-time junior designers)
- Beginning with Chesterfield Living Magazine in January 2017, initiated and conducted redesign of the company's four magazines from folios to body text specifications to page design structure to the redesign of logotypes (Chesterfield Living was the first; the others are in progress)
- Responsible for the selection, digital processing and printing preparation of all photography
- Responsible for all file preparation for printing output and digital usage; responsible for reviewing and approving all pre-press proofs
- Provide supervision to freelance designers and photographers
- Manage and produce approximately 50% of all placed advertising, including client contact, concept, design, client proofs and approvals, and preparation for printing
- Responsible for the design and production of four advertisement- and coupon-based shopper publications
- Oversee spreadsheets tracking advertising sales, ad sizes, prices, placement and client instructions

## **Owner, Freelance Art Director/Designer**

Michael Lay Design Co - Manteo, NC - September 2001 to March 2016

- Provide creative direction for all design projects from publications to logos/branding materials, posters, signage, websites, t-shirts and other peripherals, including the creation of associated materials such as editorial content, illustrations, photography, maps and other graphic elements
- Prepare all projects for printing output or production
- Manager and vendor liaison for all printing and production, including printing specifications, RFQs and proof approvals
- On-call art director and designer for Sparrow Marketing (2005 to 2010)

## **Senior Designer / Writer**

Oneboat Publishing - Manteo, NC - February 2012 to February 2016

- Expanded/diversified readership and increased ad sales for OuterBanksThisWeek.com Magazine through creation of consistently appealing and eye-catching cover designs which generated extensive reader and advertiser interest in a highly competitive, tourism-driven market; crafted feature article/advertorial magazine layouts to best showcase each issue's theme topic or clients' products or services; conceptualized and created advertising in multiple formats; collaborated with writers and editor; conducted photo shoots in support of editorial content and advertising
- Created seasonal cover designs and worked as part of production team responsible for six destination guide tourism tabloids focusing on specific beach communities along the Outer Banks; created maps and other infographics; provided concept, design, production and photography for promotional brochures for local clients; responsible for generating clean, press-quality PDF output and transmitting to print vendor via email or FTP
- Enhanced ad sales of new EAT • SHOP • PLAY publication through concept and design of mock-up covers, including typography and overall exterior look and feel; defined interior typography specs from headlines to subheads and body copy; worked as part of design team to craft interior graphic design styles and standards; set ad sizes based on page/column measurements
- Oversaw design and production of In The Park, a seasonal visitor guide for the National Park Service; provided training and supervision to a design intern and final design review and approval; responsible for all client liaison
- Concepted and designed responsive websites from project initiation to delivery of final design files to coding subcontractors; designed website interfaces using Oneboat's proprietary CMS; created online ads, banners, headers and graphics; designed Facebook business packages
- Concepted, designed and produced sales support materials for both print and digital platforms
- Authored feature articles and advertorials for OuterBanksThisWeek.com Magazine and wrote copy for sales materials and multiple company websites, client advertising and client websites; produced descriptive write-ups of local businesses for destination guide tabloids; provided editing back-up at editor's request
- Wrote popular weekly blog for Outer Banks This Week e-newsletter; input, formatted and distributed blog content using Expression Engine CMS; researched, selected and incorporated photos, videos and links to provide readers with additional information sources

- Produced scenic, event, product and food photography for clients and in-house use to produce magazine and destination guide covers, article/advertorial spreads, print and online advertising, websites, brochures and sales support materials; extensive use of Photoshop to retouch, color correct and optimize images

- Supervised and trained design interns

### **Publications Manager/Art Director**

American Social Health Association - Research Triangle Park, NC - September 1999 to July 2001

- Revitalized and dramatically improved the quality of the association's stable of revenue-generating health education publications, as well as catalogs, conference graphics, presentation materials and peripherals, and marketing and corporate materials through establishment of a consistent branding system
- Created and maintained graphic identity across product lines, marketing projects and corporate materials
- Created families of publications for distinct target markets in collaboration with an editor, marketing partners and executive management
- Carried out updates of existing product lines on ongoing basis
- Managed the publication production process from concept to delivery, determining most cost-effective production/printing methods to decrease per unit costs while maintaining quality standards
- Chief vendor liaison, negotiated quantities/prices/schedules; determined project specifications and prepared RFQs
- Supervised graphic design assistant and freelance designers and illustrators

### **Freelance designer/illustrator**

Self-employed - Charlottesville, VA - May 1998 to September 1999

- Produced brochures, newsletters, ads, posters, illustrations, t-shirts and identity for diverse client list

### **Graphic Designer**

Wake County Public School System - Raleigh, NC - May 1997 to May 1998

- Provided design solutions for system-wide client base (from superintendent's office to individual school programs) within a large metropolitan school system through the creation of publications, posters, cards, brochures, letterheads, reports, support materials and other projects, including the system's annual report
- Maintained the school system's branding and graphic standards
- Responsible for preparation of digital output files, liaison with printers, press checks and approval of proofs, film and bluelines

### **Creative Services Director**

Insiders' Guides, Inc. - Manteo, NC - November 1993 to May 1997

- Provided design direction and production oversight for small travel book publisher that expanded from 8 to 52 titles over three years, all with an 18-month edition cycle
- Conceived, designed and produced four-color book covers, catalogs, newsletters, marketing and sales materials, and high-end real estate catalogs and brochures
- Initiated redesign of book series' interior pages, enhancing readability, reducing page counts, production time and expenses, printing costs and shipping costs
- Maintained quality and continuity of branding over the complete nationally distributed product line, all sales and marketing materials and other in-house design projects
- Supervised and trained junior designer staff
- Developed comprehensive specification sheets, publication templates and checklists to streamline and clarify project production and approval procedures
- Approved all creative services projects

### **Managing editor/designer**

RU News, Radford University - Radford, VA - December 1991 to October 1993

- Redesigned Campus Currents into RU News, an award-winning bi-weekly university newsletter, clarifying its mission and enhancing its appearance and readability; designed pages/spreads, created artwork and approved printing; produced black & white, four-color spot and full-page illustrations for award-winning university publications, including RU Magazine
- Designed and wrote brochures; identified photographic needs and art-directed photographers
- Wrote/edited articles for publications and news bureau; planned faculty/staff newspaper and other news bureau projects

## EDUCATION

### **B.A. in Communications Studies**

Virginia Tech - Blacksburg, VA

Virginia Tech University News Bureau

## SKILLS

Extensive experience with the primary components of the Adobe Design software package (InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator, Acrobat - currently using Adobe Cloud versions of each), CorelDRAW, FotoSketcher, Microsoft Word, Wordpad, Expression Engine and OneBoat proprietary content management systems, scanning softwares including optical character recognition packages, Avast and Trend Micro (antivirus/ security software), Windows Live Mail, Gmail, Skype, major internet browsers (Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Windows Internet Explorer) (10+ years)

## LINKS

<http://mlaydesign.myportfolio.com>

## AWARDS

### **Health Promotion Award - Bronze**

2000

Awarded by National Health Information Awards for health education materials created as Publications Manager/Art Director for American Social Health Association in Research Triangle Park, NC

### **Patient Education - Merit**

2000

Awarded by National Health Information Awards for health education materials created as Publications Manager/Art Director for American Social Health Association in Research Triangle Park, NC

### **Award of Excellence, Annual Report Category**

1997

Awarded by National School Public Relations Association for annual report created as a designer for the Wake County Public School System in Raleigh, NC

### **Best Newsletter**

1995

Awarded by Vacation Rental Managers Association for newsletter designed for Pirate's Cove, a residential boating community in Manteo, NC

**Award for Publication Excellence - Most improved tabloid/newspaper**

1992

Awarded by Apex '92 for design of RU News, the faculty/staff newspaper for Radford University in Radford, VA

**Best Designed and Effective Website**

2007

Awarded by Publishers' Marketing Association for design of website for Maritime Kids' Quest Press