

UNDERSTANDING YOUR CUSTOMER

how can we work with designers to create



WORKING WITH CREATIVES – HOW CAN WE ALL DO BETTER?



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How we approach designers and agencies as clients is critical to the success we can achieve together. What do designers want from their print partners and how can we work together to drive the value of printed materials? All sprinkled with a lovely layer of inspiration to create and execute wonderful campaigns in partnership and honour to our mutual artistry and craft.

Sam Dobie, Co-Director and Creative Director at Inclusive Creatives, sees the process of design and print as a hand in glove opportunity to work harder together. Bringing over 15 years working across creative industries, Sam has a passion for fostering creative collaboration and creating work that pushes the boundaries and delights its audience. A strong advocate for the industry with long-term involvement across the Diemen Awards, advocating female leadership across the creative and print industries and more.

For anyone who has worked with Sam, her passion for print design and creative is infectious. She is candid, intelligent and focussed. A Creative who gets the craft of print and wants more.

- › LIVE LIFE TO THE FULLEST
- › LIVE IN YOUR PARADISE
- › EXPLORE THE WORLD
- › CHALLENGE YOURSELF
- › LOVE THOSE AROUND YOU
- › BE CURIOUS

CONNECT WITH YOUR CREATIVITY

A creative collective needs brains trusts and talent we can rely on and work well with. The print process is a significant part of each and every project designers undertake to ensure that the creative vision is brought to life. The connection of our creativity to its life form is the printer's creativity when bringing our vision to life.

“Creativity is just connecting things. When you ask creative people how they did something, they feel a little guilty because they didn't really do it, they just saw something. It seemed obvious to them after a while.”

-Steve Jobs

INSPIRE YOUR AUDIENCE TO BE GREAT

Creatives love inspiration, they're tactile beings. The paper industry brings wonderful form and function examples which build ideas, and printers have a key role to bring inspiration to teams across the artistry of print craft.

Always consider how designers, agencies and creatives like to consume their inspiration and it is always more powerful in the physical form. Bring examples, finishes, folds, the proverbial cardboard couch - bring it all.



INSPIRE ME BY SHOWING ME WHAT YOU DO.



TRANSLATE PRINTLISH

Creatives have many pressures across pricing, deadlines and they have their own clients with unique demands. Engaging and communicating your pressure points can truly work in partnership.

Fast, Cheap, Great (or Free) is a mantra we often hear from clients. And the outcomes can be less than desirable. Decide what you really want as an outcome, what is most important in the process. But remember it's impossible to get all three, you can only get two. Exploring a printer's version of the mantra will help creatives understand any potential limitations – be the translator to help communicate and merge the creative and print landscape.

FU*K AVERAGE, BE LEGENDARY

Creatives are not the experts in print, we want to work with you, the expert, to take us on the journey to create beautiful work. If your business cannot print on t-shirts, don't limit the idea to what you can do. Work with your creative agency clients across the entire industry and help them source and build a print network of excellence. Make passion a critical point in the path to bringing the creative to life – print in all forms.

1. Get hungry and do not be afraid to ask for a seat at the thinking table – creatives are not experts. If you are at the table to start with, the ideas will be stronger for it..
2. Say no to the comfort zone – reprints, standard approaches, complacency. If you feel you're falling asleep at the party with half a glass of wine, switch to vodka. Bring in another voice from your organisation. Involve a supplier. Add enlightenment.
3. Remember who you are, print is beautiful. Share your knowledge and artistry with pride. Yes, there are the bread-and-butter earnings, however at the core of what you do, remember the work you are most proud of and the passion that resonated with those campaigns or pieces. Don't be afraid to be part of the creative process, printers are artists in your own right.
4. Find the right people, empower them, invest in them and invest in creativity - It might not be what pays the bills to start with, but when you become famous for creative thinking and passion, the clients, creatives and money will follow.



Q & A

How far is too far across the role printers play? Should we explore your customer base to develop concepts to bring some new ideas that print has a great application for? Or would that be overstepping?

Creatives need print partners. Partnerships are about working together – collaborating and pushing each other – inspiring. If you know your agency holds an account or client that you think a particular print product or print technology could apply really well to, bring it to the table. A designer will take that concept and pitch it to their customer. You will definitely achieve accolades from the designer for allowing them to look great in front of their client and you'll potentially win a new project for your efforts. Again, it may not be right then, however your expertise will be remembered for the right project when it comes.

Keep collaborating and inspiring to achieve a true partnership approach.

You mention the paper reps doing the job well, would you recommend a printer and paper representative visiting together or do you think they should remain separated?

Nothing wrong with that idea, if you have a relationship that could work and add value, absolutely, work together. Again, commit to being collaborative.

An example of this was with a cosmetics client we have, and during the brand + collateral brief, they spoke about their desire for recycled papers, and for the work to reflect the tactile nature of their industry (skin & cosmetics). So, we worked very closely with our print and paper partners, looking for tactility, touch, curiosity, and the longer they had to work on it, the better the responses. Getting them involved early meant so many more options were explored, tested and evolved.

You mention bringing printers into the early phase of creative. How formal should we approach this? Would you recommend working on a regular WIP appointment each week or fortnight with the creative or studio team or something more-lax?

Most agencies are open to any idea or solution that you can leverage from. Look to ways to add to the conversation, something to share, or be involved in a particular project from a unique angle. It could be that discovery stage, bringing something back to the table, providing inspiration. Different strokes for different folks, whatever works for that agency. It could be informal, it could be job by job, we're all busy and this is sometimes hard, but if a big job comes in, try to get involved at that briefing stage, it pays off.

With the focus of collaboration, would you recommend printers build a collective on their own terms to bring to solutions across all aspects of print, even if we don't necessarily produce it? Or do creatives prefer to manage their own supply chain/suppliers directly?

Printers may only offer what they can do, don't limit yourselves to that. Be part of the project, find someone, get them involved, deliver more. Be passionate, come alive with what you do. If you want to just sit in your sheds printing bread and butter, that's fine. The purpose of greatness is to be inspired, understand better and engage more. Let's say 3 printers rocked up to buy my print work. Printer 1 & 2 say: "This is all we can do, that's it, we will give it our best shot." Printer 3 says: "Yeah we can work collaboratively, explore and work with you, not sure we can do it all ourselves, but we can certainly try and collaborate and push for that end result," well, I'll go with them every day of the week.

I challenge every creative that doesn't think that. If the client's needs are X,Y and Z, no problems, we will always help. When we have a great working relationship with client and the process is collaborative, they get a better product. In Tasmania, there is a lot of that happening anyway. Working with local capabilities within the state, we look everywhere for expertise. For example, with the Dieman awards, we ask if parts of the job are produced in other states, given the Dieman awards are locally focussed, however, nothing is excluded. We never limit, we always collaborate, giving our clients the best outcomes possible.

How do you overcome the difficulty in bringing a wonderful option to the table, however challenged with budgeting restraints? Should we limit to taking the order and budget or push broader opportunities?

As a creative agency, we face that all the time. Always allow exploration and options. We give our clients options. Sometimes our response to clients is: Sure, all you can afford is this, however, check out these other options. Give them what they aren't asking for as well as what they are. On the one hand, here is the on-budget solution, on the other hand, you could consider these other options, far more engaging or exciting, even if they may be just out of reach. Sometimes we have to come to the party. For example, a client may only have \$5K budget, and we all start with solution X. Next month, however, let's push it and build to option Y. If you have a business, you can make it up, you don't have to follow what is being asked for.

A particular provider showed us some amazing AR tech whilst working on a project, a Scan of a milk carton that triggered augmented reality characters. Did we use it for that particular project, no, but we now knew what he could do that sort of work. The opportunity came up a few months later, with an electrical supplier. They wanted a virtual experience, and in the end, we had people lined up around tents, wanting to experience this approach. We kept it in mind, and ended up looking for the opportunity to use this expertise.

CREATIVES NEED PRINT PARTNERS.

“No one can whistle a symphony. It takes a whole orchestra to play it...”

-H.E. Luccock

CLOSE TO OPEN

Be passionate. Be present in everything that you do.

Less order taking and more partnering. Bring your excellence, your expertise, your soul to the projects and you will be rewarded for it. If our passion is matched by yours, you will truly become a partner that is bolted on to who we are. From the original brief to the final delivery, we are all only limited by our imaginations and our enthusiasm.

Ask yourself, 'how can you be a part of the symphony'?

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