TARA PASTINA

Creative Director / Design Educator

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SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Extensive experience in brand strategy and integrated marketing communications across diverse organizational environments, including large-scale global teams, agencies, higher ed, and individual clients
- Proven leadership for cohesion of distributed teams, driving collaborative, results-oriented creative solutions
- Strategic business acumen combined with hands-on creative leadership to translate market insights into compelling creative campaigns that align with organizational objectives and enhance operational efficiency
- Professional affiliations: American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA); American Marketing Association (AMA)

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Brand/creative strategy and integrated marketing communications
- Cross-functional team leadership and distributed workforce management
- Creative conceptualization; performance analysis and optimization
- Creative team development and mentorship
- Stakeholder communication, relationship management, and collaborative leadership
- Financial, operational analysis and efficiency optimization

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- **UX/UI Design & Accessibility:** Expert in design thinking with deep understanding and practical application of UX/UI design principles, human-centered design methodologies, WCAG accessibility requirements, and intuitive user experience development
- **Web Development & Analytics:** Certified Web Developer fluent in HTML, CSS, WordPress, HubSpot CMS, Drupal, with working knowledge of JSX, JavaScript, PHP, JSON, MySQL, plus proficiency in Google Analytics and Qualtrics for data-driven insights
- **Creative Software & AI Integration:** Advanced expertise in Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign), Adobe Firefly, Figma, Adobe XD, Miro, and video production using After Effects and Adobe Premiere, enhanced by AI tools including ChatGPT, Claude, and Gemini for optimized creative workflows
- **Project Management & Stakeholder Communication:** Extensive experience with enterprise platforms (Asana, Workfront, Basecamp, Wrike, Monday.com, ClickUp, Hive, Microsoft Project) combined with strong presentation and communication skills for diverse audiences, plus Google Workspace Admin capabilities for team collaboration and system management

EXPERIENCE

Partner, Head of Creative **1/2021–Present**

Honeycomb Collaborative (Boston, MA)

- Direct comprehensive branding initiatives and cross-channel marketing campaigns (web; mobile; social; email; print) driving brand awareness and engagement through compelling content and visual identities
- Provide end-to-end creative direction (8 distinct brand projects and counting), ensuring strategic alignment, creative excellence, and measurable impact
- Drove significant revenue growth by securing 17 new clients, many with repeating contracts, generating over $650,000 in gross profits within two years
- Enhanced operational efficiency and profitability by programming an automated project-estimating calculator and implementing streamlined proposal-writing and project-management systems
- Developed and implemented robust operational systems for financial management, budget tracking, and comprehensive end-of-year reporting

Senior Lecturer, Graphic Design **9/2012–Present**

Suffolk University (Boston, MA)

- Innovated and expanded Web Design course curriculum, leveraging insights from graduate thesis research
- Designed engaging course material focused on fostering critical thinking and significantly improving student confidence in the digital design arena
- Modernized digital design curriculum to integrate current industry standards, including UX/UI principles, coding fluency, and emerging technologies
- Consistently achieved high marks on student course evaluations, directly enabling a higher percentage of graduating students to secure employment in digital design roles

Senior Manager / Associate Creative Director, Global Brand, Marketing, Communications **6/2011–10/2019**

Pearson Education (Boston, MA)

- Pioneered and grew a new in-house marketing agency, overseeing multiple complex projects
- Managed and mentored a cross-functional team of designers, copywriters, and external vendors, including designers, videographers and photographers, ensuring project alignment and timely delivery
- Directed global marketing campaigns across 19+ business units, spearheading the implementation and oversight of new global brand standards to ensure consistent brand messaging and visual identity worldwide
- Orchestrated a strategic brand-architecture shift from 'house of brands' to 'branded house' across global markets, leading the implementation of new identity standards in close partnership with international marketing and project management teams
- Masterminded creative major-campaign strategy, fostering a collaborative and supportive team environment
- Expedited the operational launch of a fully functional team under tight time constraints, regularly reporting project status to senior leadership
- Drove the successful completion of nearly 300 discrete project requests within the first year
- Implemented scalable creative solutions to optimize asset utilization across multiple global channels, driving efficiency and maximizing ROI in response to evolving market and budgetary demands
- Ensured brand consistency by managing global creative workflows and asset distribution in Adobe Workfront

Additional Experience

Owner-Operator—Black Dog Dzine (Boston, MA) 10/2003–Present

Lecturer, College of Professional Studies—Northeastern University (Boston, MA) 1/2020–12/2022

Promotions Manager / Senior Art Director—The Boston Herald (Boston, MA) 10/2004–6/2011

Art Director—Gravitate Design (Long Island, NY) 10/2003–10/2004

Art Director—Strategic Insights (Raleigh, NC) 10/2000–10/2003

AWARDS

- 6 ADDY awards for excellence in design
- Society of Newspaper Design Award of Excellence
- Pica Award for excellence in design

EDUCATION/CERTIFICATION

- Graphic Design—MA, *Suffolk University* (Boston, MA)
- Graphic Design, Political Science—BA, *State University of New York (SUNY) at Geneseo* (Geneseo, NY)
- Semester Abroad—*Oxford University, New College* (Oxford, UK)
- Google UX Design Professional (expected completion: 8/2025)