

Justine Conklin • Creative Manager – Art Director

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OFFERING

Award-winning design and creative professional with a significant track record of innovation, product development and sales-generating packaging design for B2C and B2B industries including pet products, tourism, and manufacturing. Holder of several patents for pet toy designs, earned numerous industry, editor's choice and retailers' awards for product re-branding, new product launches and package redesign. Highly experienced in brand and logo development, marketing collateral, trade show graphics, video, photography, design software and staff development/management. Creative leader that drives revenue, reputation and retailer share through compelling, dynamic design.

EXPERIENCE

OurPet's Company, Fairport Harbor, Ohio

Creative Manager - promoted from Graphic Designer, 12/2006-Present

OurPet's Company is a category leader in solution-oriented, consumer pet products and holds over 100 patents for innovative products. With annual revenues of \$24M, OurPet's has a growing presence in Pet Specialty, Mass and Grocery retailers in the U.S. and internationally.

As manager of the Creative Department, partner with key members of Sales, Marketing and Senior Management to develop and enhance brand identities, design packaging, marketing collateral and award-winning products. Support new and existing brands and efficiently manage projects and 3 direct reports on a budget of only \$45,000 while developing over 200 new skus in 2 years. Influential in growing the business from \$9M to \$24M over 6 years through branding, package design and new product development.

Responsibilities

- Develop creative concepts, brand identities, corporate identity, packaging, marketing collateral, trade show graphics, advertising, sales presentations, web graphics and all other creative needs
- **Budget management** – manage a team of 3 designers, designing for a portfolio of 18 brands and over 600 skus with a budget of only \$45,000
- Print, web, product and large format graphic design
- Photography, photo manipulation, videography, video editing and photo/video shoot direction
- Manage creative assets, internal and external creative resources and vendors
- Manage new product development for 6 consumer brands
- **Inter-departmental coordination** - interact with employees at all levels from the distribution center to c-suite

Achievements

- **Cost reduction** - Reduced packaging costs of our flagship brand by 50%, increasing profit margins by 3%
- **Re-branding** - Successfully re-branded and re-designed Play-N-Squeak[®] cat toy packaging, product and collateral, resulting in a **60-70% annual increase in sales each year from 2007-2010**, vaulting it to the number one cat toy at WalMart Stores. Through new innovations in 2010, gained placement of 9 sku's at Petco, the #2 national Pet Specialty retailer
- **Process improvement** – implemented a system for requesting creative projects through our company sharepoint system, allowing employees to request a creative project, improve efficiencies by providing the ability to assign, track and update projects in the system and provide visibility to marketing and senior staff
- **Brand development** - Conceived, designed and re-launched heritage cat toy brand, Cosmic Catnip[™], including new designs, branding and messaging. Gained placement in Petco and PetSmart (*top two U.S. pet specialty retailers*), PetValu, the #1 pet specialty retailer in Canada and Pets At Home, the largest pet specialty retailer in the United Kingdom. **Reduced the sku count by 40% while nearly doubling revenues.**
- **Highly efficient, with strong organizational and time management skills** – able to manage a heavy workload including all graphic design and creative services while leading the development of 2 new brands, developing and launching 163 new products over a 6 month period
- **Talent development** - Initiated a graphic design internship program which allowed us to work with new talent prior to hiring full time while exposing our creative and marketing team to a fresh perspective, current trends in design and new ideas with each new intern
- **Product management** – Communicate directly with vendors in India and China during the new product development process. Work with Quality Assurance to ensure product meets internal and retailer standards
- **New product development** - Managed the new product development for top 6 brands representing 72 percent of revenue and developing more than 200 skus in 2 years. Grew the Play-N-Squeak brand from 9 to over 50 skus, and revenues from \$1M to \$4M in 3 years

EXPERIENCE

cont.

Awards

- 2011 Pet Products News (*trade publication*) retailers' top pick for **Cosmic Catnip re-brand**
- **Won best cat product**, SuperZoo 2010, awarded by buyer attendees (*Pet industry trade show*)
- **2008, 2009, 2010 editor's choice award winning product** for *Cat Fancy Magazine*, *Pet Products News Magazine*, *Dog Fancy Magazine* and *Pet Business Magazine* (*consumer and trade publications*)
- Featured in **Package Design Magazine's** Sustainability issue, December, 2008 for re-design of Play-N-Squeak® branding and packaging
- **Awarded numerous patents** or patents pending for pet toy designs

Little Pond Graphic Productions, Burton, Ohio

Graphic Designer, 2001-2006

Boutique design studio with clients in the tourism, manufacturing, farm, food and Non-Profit sectors. Clients have included KraftMaid Cabinetry, Ashtabula, Geauga and Lake County Tourism Boards, and the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo.

Promoted from Assistant Designer to Graphic Designer. Responsibilities included identity development, helping to guide the creative vision and develop new business

- **Worked closely with clients** in many industries including Geauga, Lake and Ashtabula County Tourism boards, manufacturing, industrial supplies, boutique shops, hospitality and the Geauga Park District
- Key team member on the Geauga County Tourism Visitor's Guide, **winner of the 2007 Ohio Travel Association Ruby Award**
- Created new brand identities and collateral pieces including logos, brochures, promotional flyers, advertisements, catalogs, tour guides, booklets and various promotional items for travel and tourism, manufacturing, fashion, events and entertainment, farm and building materials industries
- Photography, photo manipulation, photo shoot direction, image prep
- Created packaging mock-ups for photo shoots and sampling
- Point-of-purchase retail display development and prototype construction

Graphic Design Assistant, 1998-2001

Performed a supporting role as assistant designer, implementing the creative vision of the creative director and assisting designers to ensure on-time delivery of projects

- Assisted creative director with print design projects including advertisements, business cards, illustration and catalog layout
- Photography, photo manipulation and image prep
- Proofed and prepped files for print and web

EDUCATION

Kent State University; Bachelor of Art, Fashion Design

Second place in national design competition

Second place in the American Cancer Society's Cinderella design competition

SOFTWARE

- Mac OSX Server, Mac and PC Platforms
- Adobe InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator, Acrobat, PageMaker and Quark Express
- Adobe Muse, Dreamweaver, Fireworks and Flash
- Microsoft Office Suite, including Word, Excel and Powerpoint
- FTP software including Fetch and Cyberduck
- iMovie and Apple Final Cut Pro video editing software

AFFILIATIONS

Member, American Institute of Graphic Artists

Member, International Society of Glass Bead Makers