Nelton E. Castro

ART DIRECTOR/GRAPHIC DESIGNER

DC, MD & VA

Creative and collaborative Visual Consultant with 15+ years of experience helping brands bring big ideas to life through thoughtful, impactful design. Whether leading teams, building brand identities, or creating content across digital and print—from social media and infographics to short animations and presentations—I bring a strategic eye and a hands-on approach to every project. I'm passionate about storytelling that connects with people, inspires action, and makes complex messages easy to understand.

Experience

Freelance Graphic Design Consultant

Creative Circle & The Creative Group

Metro DC Area
Jun 2016 - Present

Provide visual/graphic design services for a wide gamut of PR, advertising agency, corporate, NGO, association and government clients, for on-site to remote assignments. Manage clients from initial meetings to final implementation of the work product. Design and create unique project documentations, such as proposals, estimates, statement of work and creative briefs. Gather and analyze project requirements and goals for visual design projects. Conceptualize and present design solutions. Educate clients on the creative process and dependencies, such as brand messaging, information architecture, sustainability and technology. Projects have included identity design/campaign, information graphics, website/blog User Interface (UI) design, social media campaigns, print collateral, conference/annual meeting branding/support materials.

Art Director

Edelman Digital

Washington, DC
Aug 2014 - May 2016

Provides beautiful and innovative creative solutions and design for the Digital Practice, acts as an ambassador for a new way of doing business at Edelman—one that wins better clients, more opportunities and increases revenue. Cultivates successful working relationships within and outside the Digital Studio. Marries concept with strategy for innovative creative solutions. Leads the creative discussion as a strategic advisor for internal and external clients. Studies social media channels, their trends, their effectiveness then leverages projects to capitalize on the strengths of those channels.
Client work includes, but not limited to: Aimmune, American Hearth Association, AztraZeneca, Blumberg, BSA | The Software Alliance, Chevron, Dannon, ETS-GRE, Exxon, Flumist, Government of Japan, GlaxoSmithKlien, Grocery Marketing Association, Intermune, Kelloggs, Koch Industries, Shell, Smarter Fuel Future, US DOT, and Video Game Voters' Network.

Freelance Graphic Designer

Nelton Castro Design

Germantown, MD
Nov 2010 - Aug 2014

Manage clients from initial meetings to final implementation of the work product. Generate project documentations, such as proposals, estimates, statement of work and creative briefs. Gather and analyze project requirements for visual design projects. Conceptualize and present design solutions. Educate clients on the creative process and dependencies, such as brand messaging, information architecture, sustainability and technology.

Projects have included identity design/campaign, website/blog User Interface (UI) design and promotional holiday typographic applications for a variety of clients from small Internet startups to local public schools and businesses.

Art Director

NavigationArts

McLean, VA
Sep 2006 - May 2008

Conducted visual audits, collected and analyzed client requirements for visual design solutions of the UI. Conceptualized, created and presented, new design directions for clients of various types such as technology companies, non-profit organizations, medical research groups, universities and public sector. Collaborated with other members of the User Experience (UX) team: engineers, project managers, information architects and other designers to create effective and intuitive UI that reinforced the client's brand messaging. Trained incoming designers and contractors to the project workflow within NavigationArts' processes. Educated clients on the creative processes and how they are dependent on variables such as brand messaging, information architecture, sustainability, and front-end/back-end technologies.

Senior Freelance Graphic Designer

OgilvyPR World Wide/Aquent

Washington, DC
Nov 2005 - May 2006

Collaborated with various teams of creative directors, art directors and in-house designers to create and deliver visual solutions for new or existing PR campaigns, brand extensions, and other collateral projects, such as brochures, booklets, direct mail collateral, event collateral, stationery, advertisements, website banners, graphics and banner ads. Clients included: Unilever, FEMA, National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), and US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Senior Graphic Designer

CoStar Group

Bethesda, MD
Nov 2003 - Jul 2005

Conceptualized and executed original designs for annual reports, direct mail campaigns, company quarterly and monthly publications, national/regional/industry advertisements, software manuals, brochures, promotional collateral, event logos/identities and trade show banners. Coordinated projects such as printing and fabricating with various types of vendors.

Creative Design Consultant

Various Clients*

Metropolitan Washington, DC
Mar 2003 - Oct 2003

Managed ongoing projects and project extensions that required conceptualizing and executing original designs for logos/identity, website UI, quarterly reports, report presentations and print collateral.

Projects were created and produced for the US Department of State Domestic Operations, Multi-Employer Property Trust, Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project, US Fish & Wildlife Services/Habitat Conservation Plans, DesignFish.com and United Negro College Fund.

*Clients included: General Data Systems, Dennis & Sackett Design, Inc., DesignFish, Madison Design Group/RGM Graphics and The Association for Financial Professionals.

Senior Graphic Designer/Art Director

Centers for IBM e-business Innovation:: Washington, DC

Washington, DC
Aug 2000 - Jan 2002

Analyzed, strategized and defined brand solutions for various types of interactive projects. Collaborated and lead creative team to maintain a high level of visual and navigational quality during the integration of designs to production. Created visual and branding directions of websites and stand-alone demos/cds for graphic design studies, presentations and graphic design solution documents (style guides).

Clients included: IBM Global Services/e-Clinical, NASCO - Healthcare Services Corporation, Baptist Health - Jacksonville, U.S. Department of Commerce - BuyUSA.com, Raytheon, State of Ohio Portal, Anthem Healthcare and NAVICP.

Senior Graphic Designer

LISBOA, Inc.

Washington, DC
Jun 1998 - Jul 2000

Strategized and defined solutions for clients in collaboration with account executives and the creative team. Lead team to design, execute and present original concepts. Collaborated and managed print and web vendors for projects such as brochures, booklets, stationery, ads, packaging, posters, banners, websites, screensavers and presentations. Supervised consultants, freelancers and interns on all project types.

Clients included: Bell Atlantic (pre-Verizon), Sprint–Wyoming Relay, Fannie Mae Foundation, US Department of Justice, US Environmental Protection Agency, Hispanic College Fund, Image Medical, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Weber Shandwick, US Department of Transportation.

Graphic Designer

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO (AFSCME)

Washington, DC
Mar 1992 - Jun 1998

Conceptualized, executed and presented original print-based designs to other internal departments, AFSCME affiliates and other national/state/local labor union groups across the country. Collaborated with the art coordinator to create and implement event identity for AFSCME's biennial convention on all collateral materials, as well as environmental design of conventional hall. Coordinated with subcontractors on projects such as logos, brochures, booklets, stationery, advertisements, posters, signage and banners.

Freelance Art Director/Graphic Designer

The Creative Group

Metro Washington DC area
Jun 2016 - Present

Create and manage clients' projects from initial meetings to final execution of the work. Generate project documentations, such as proposals, statement of work and creative briefs. Gather and analyze project requirements for visual design projects. Understand the client's decision-making heirarchy and strategize positive outcomes. Conceptualize and present design solutions. Educate clients on the creative process and dependencies, such as brand messaging, information architecture and technology.

Projects have included event identity design/campaigns, complex infographics and promotional holiday projects for a variety of clients from national associations to local public schools and businesses.

Clients Include: The Creative Group, Ketchum Inc. Resonance Campaigns, The Aluminum Association. Stratacomm, District Sports, MakingCents International and Reingold, Inc.

Graphic Designer

Supon Design Group (now Supon Creative)

Washington, DC
Sep 1990 - Mar 1991

Conceptualized, executed and presented original designs for clients such as: World Wildlife Fund, AARP, along with a wide variety of Washington-based associations, organizations and companies. Produced traditional mechanical boards and worked with outside vendors and subcontractors.

Education

B.S. Advertising Design

University of Maryland, College Park

College Park, MD
Aug 1985 - Dec 1990

Design Internship at Supon Design Group, Washington, DC
Member of the Filipino Cultural Association, College Park MD
Student member of the Art Director's Club of Metropolitan Washington

Interactive Multimedia Certificate

George Washington University

Washington, DC
Feb 1999 - May 2000

Completed courses covering HTML/Website design, professional 3D applications, Director, Premiere and Flash.

Awards

Awards

Gold/Silver Award
VGVN/Start Democracy Branding
2016 AMERICAN ADVERTISING AWARDS - DC

Bronze Award | Consumer Healthcare Products Assoc.
Stop Medicine Abuse Campaign: Check Your Shelf Infographic
2014 Web Health Awards

Citation of Excellence
2000 American Advertising Awards
Ad Club of Metropolitan Washington

Award of Excellence
various AFSCME publications
1995, ILCA Publications Award

Award of Excellence
The 42nd Annual Show and Exhibition
1990 Art Directors Club of Metropolitan Washington

Technical Skills

Technical Skills

Extensive knowledge of Apple and Windows computer systems; extensive knowledge of Adobe CS5, QuarkXPress, Acrobat, Dreamweaver, LinoType FontExplorer X Pro, HandBrake; traditional mechanicals and electronic prepress; working knowledge of Adobe Flash, Director, Premiere, AfterEffects, Apple Final Cut Pro, Final Cut Express, iMovie , iPhoto, iDVD, Pages, Microsoft Word, Excel, Powerpoint, Pantone ColorMunki Design, HTML, Toast Titanium, Parallels; editorial, technical, and computer illustration; color and black-and-white photography.

Highly knowledgeable in troubleshooting computer hardware and software issues.

Very good hand skills for packaging/signage/point-of-purchase display mockups, physical presentations and craft-related knowledge for a variety of materials and substrates.