

DRAKE NEWKIRK

CREATIVE DIRECTOR | BRAND & DESIGN LEADER

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Creative Director with 15+ years leading brand, digital, and integrated campaign work for financial, CPG, entertainment, and social-impact clients. Expert in building scalable design systems, elevating creative operations, and directing cross-disciplinary teams to deliver culturally resonant work with measurable business impact. Deep experience integrating AI-accelerated workflows into concepting, design, production, and creative operations to increase speed, quality, and personalization.

AI-DRIVEN DESIGN SYSTEM

Generative Concepting & Visualization — Midjourney, Firefly, Runway, Figma AI for rapid ideation, moodboards, storyboards, and visual exploration.

AI-Driven Design Systems — Token automation, component generation, and scalable UI patterns using Figma AI + design ops tooling.

AI-Assisted UX & Product Design — Wireframes, prototypes, user flows, and interaction concepts accelerated through AI tools.

Content Scaling & Personalization — Automated asset versioning, social content variations, and audience-specific creative using AI pipelines.

Creative Operations Automation — Workflow automation, QA checks, content tagging, and production efficiencies using AI-powered tools.

Motion & Video Prototyping — Runway + Firefly for motion tests, animatics, and rapid client-ready prototypes.

CORE CAPABILITIES

Creative Leadership · Brand Strategy · Design Systems · Digital Campaigns · UX/UI · Creative Operations · AI-Integrated Workflows · Visual Storytelling · Cross-Functional Collaboration · Stakeholder Management · A/B Testing · CRO · GA4 Analytics

Tools: Figma (Design Systems + AI), Adobe CC, WordPress/Drupal, HTML/CSS, GA4, Runway, Firefly, Midjourney

Skills: Creative Direction; Brand Strategy; Design Systems; Visual Storytelling; UX/UI Design; Product Design; Figma; Adobe Creative Cloud; HTML/CSS; CMS (WordPress/Drupal); Responsive Design; Prototyping; Interaction Design; Accessibility (WCAG); Design Ops; Creative Operations; Team Leadership; Cross-functional Collaboration; Client & Stakeholder Management; Campaign Strategy; Digital Marketing; Social Creative; Content Strategy; Experiential Design; AR/AI Ideation; DEI-Centered Design; A/B Testing; Analytics (GA4); CRO; Project Management; Agile/Scrum; New Business Development.

EXPERIENCE

Creative Director — Independent Studio / Fractional

MANTI KI Creative, Philadelphia, PA

2020–Present

Architect of culture-shifting campaigns that fuse bold design, strategic brand vision, and social relevance to drive engagement and measurable outcomes.

- **Led brand, digital, and campaign development** for Campari, Comcast, Ardent Credit Union, NBC XL, Santa Familia Tequila, WNBA, and others.
- **Built a scalable digital practice, directing multidisciplinary teams** (design, development, strategy, content) to deliver integrated campaigns across web, social, and experiential channels.
- **Directed the Ardent Credit Union 2025 campaign** — redesigned conversion funnel, launched targeted social creative, and produced measurable lifts in traffic, engagement, and conversions.
- **Developed culture-forward, DEI-centered creative** that increased brand lift and audience engagement across digital ecosystems.
- **Integrated AI into the full creative lifecycle, including:**
 - AI-generated concept boards and visual directions (Midjourney, Firefly)
 - Figma AI for component creation, layout exploration, and design system scaling
 - Runway for motion prototypes and rapid client approvals
 - Automated asset versioning for social campaigns
- **Reduced concept-to-delivery timelines by 30–50%** through AI-accelerated workflows and creative ops improvements.

Senior Vice President, Creative Director, Digital

LevLane Advertising, Philadelphia, PA

1998–2021

Pioneered digital transformation for legacy brands—fusing storytelling, technology, and design to unlock growth and redefine client engagement.

- **Founded and scaled LevLane's digital practice** by building integrated UX, content, and technology teams and leading multimillion-dollar pitches, transforming digital into a core revenue driver and delivering **\$10M+** in annual digital revenue (**20–40%** of firm revenue).
- **Founded and scaled the agency's digital practice, transforming it into a core revenue driver generating \$10M+ annually (20–40% of firm revenue).**
- **Led multimillion-dollar pitches and secured long-term partnerships** that expanded agency market presence and client lifetime value.
- Built and mentored a high-performing team of creatives, developers, and strategists (6+ direct reports).
- **Produced interactive content (touchscreens, animated video, experiential assets)** that elevated brand narratives and deepened engagement.
- **Introduced early AI-assisted workflows in concepting, prototyping, and content development**, laying the foundation for scalable creative operations.

- **Implemented data-driven creative testing and optimization** using GA4, A/B testing, and CRO frameworks.

Creative Director

Brown Girl Gifts, Philadelphia, PA

2011–2015

- **Founded and built a culturally resonant lifestyle brand** rooted in inclusive storytelling.
- **Designed and launched cohesive brand identity and product** lines across apparel, home décor, and accessories.
- **Secured retail partnerships (including Wegmans)** and improved online conversion and retail sell-through.
- **Used early generative tools** for pattern exploration, product visualization, and rapid prototyping.

Senior Manager, Creative Services

CoreStates Financial Corporation, Philadelphia, PA

1995–1998

Senior Manager, Creative Services – Graphics, Video, Multimedia & Photography. Led multidisciplinary creative departments with a team of 15, driving innovation across brand development, user experience, and multimedia production.

- **Led a 15-person creative organization across graphics, video, multimedia, and photography**, streamlining workflows and raising production quality for enterprise initiatives.
- **Led a 15-person creative organization** across graphics, video, multimedia, and photography.
- **Partnered with software teams (including Microsoft)** to reimagine offline financial applications for web portals, improving UX and usability.
- **Delivered brand identity systems and experiential assets for high-profile events**, driving +60% attendance/brand impressions and 81% retail sell-through.
- **Streamlined production workflows** and introduced early digital automation tools to improve creative throughput.

INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

Behavioral Change • Construction • CPG and Food Service • Energy, Environmental • Financial • Fitness • Franchise • Healthcare • Human Resources • Insurance • Non-Profit • Manufacturing • Merchandising • Municipal • Real Estate • Retail • Sports and Entertainment • Technology • Transportation

EDUCATION

University of the Arts – Visual Design • Art Institute of Philadelphia – Design Communications • Temple University/Tyler School of Arts - Graphic Design, Photography • Philadelphia College of Art - Visual Communications

AFFILIATIONS

PIDC, Marketing Board Member • Institute of Advanced Advertising Studies (IAAS) – Mentor