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JEFF ZACHOWSKI

CREATIVE DIRECTOR. FAN. COLLECTOR.

TRADING CARD & PACKAGING DESIGN

VISION ... Seasoned creative expert with a passion for sports and entertainment properties and extensive experience generating trailblazing trading card product concepts and designs that are innovative, eye-catching and consistent with the strategy of brand and licensing partners.

LEADERSHIP ... 12+ years industry experience executing business objectives and leading diverse personalities in fast-paced, deadline-driven environments, as well as driving cross-functional processes and collaboration.

SOLUTIONS ... Critical thinker with a demonstrated talent for solving problems in a thorough and systematic manner, as well as assessing risk factors and proactively identifying potential hazards.

CAREER SUMMARY

TOPPS® The Topps Company, Inc. - New York, NY
2009 - Present

CREATIVE DIRECTOR - Sports & Entertainment Brands

2016 - Present

Lead the Sports & Entertainment Design and Packaging departments to create products that engage and excite collectors while balancing creative vision, brand guidelines, and prepress and print production requirements. Oversee a team of 15 creatives, including art directors, senior designers, graphic designers and packaging designers, working closely with the brand team, project management, production managers and print vendors to build and innovate industry-leading trading card products.

- Orchestrated department's transformation from a minimal staff of art directors that outsourced the majority of design work into a fully in-house design team that produces 100% of trading card and packaging designs for the company's \$300MM+ Hobby/Retail business and provides a variety of graphic services to the E-Commerce and Marketing groups. Established internal infrastructure to meet the business's design needs, recruiting highly credentialed talent, implementing best practices, and increasing quality of work while realizing cost savings of 45% YOY.
- Spearheaded creative on the inaugural edition of Topps Transcendent Collection Baseball, perhaps the most disruptive (and expensive) trading card product of all-time. Devised the product's premium metal briefcase-style packaging and conceived and executed the product's distinctive, high-end design and print. The Transcendent brand has generated \$20MM+ in sales since its launch in 2016.
- Concepted, tested and implemented new print technologies for Topps Chrome Black Baseball, an all-new, print technology-driven addition to the Topps Chrome product portfolio in 2020. Chrome Black was extended to Topps' Star Wars line of products for CY22.
- Developed a unique project allocation model, utilizing data-driven analysis to quantify workload and ensure projects stay on deadline. Measure of at-risk projects was reduced by 77% YOY following the model's initial implementation.

ART DIRECTOR - MLB & NFL Brands

2012 - 2016

Designed and set creative direction for a multitude of products across Topps' portfolio of MLB and NFL licensed trading card products. Managed the design process from concept to completion, providing inspiration and guidance to a team of external and in-house designers, translating product briefs into well-crafted card designs while meeting strict deadlines and budgets.

- Led product development and design of pioneering brands including Topps Five Star, Topps Inception and Topps Definitive Collection.
- Created the Topps Strata Clear Cut Autographed Memorabilia card, which featured a first-of-its-kind multi-layered card construction and set a new standard for innovation in the category.

ASSISTANT BRAND MANAGER - NFL Brands

2010 - 2012

Built a wide array of products comprising the company's portfolio of NFL brands, representing \$30MM in sales. Held ownership of product subject lists and autograph/memorabilia budgets. Partnered with the NFL brand manager on product ideation, content and configuration. Coordinated cross-functionally across multiple departments and worked closely with art directors on card design approvals and sales art for solicitation. Mentored and facilitated the promotion of junior team members.

CAREER SUMMARY (CONT.)

SPORTS EDITOR - NFL Brands

2009 - 2010

Managed and edited the team's digital library of images, selecting photography for use in product, solicitation materials, packaging and promotions. Recognized by Beckett Media for the best photography in the hobby for 2010 Topps Football. Administered \$300K budget for the company's NFL photography demands and coordinated media credentials and travel logistics for our staff of 20+ photographers.

GRAPHIC SERVICES ASSISTANT - MLB & NFL Brands

2009

Supported the Graphic Services department, primarily responsible for digital retouching and color correction on NFL and MLB trading cards. Built a comprehensive digital archive of the company's 38,000 unique MLB base cards from 1952-2009 as part of the Topps Million Card Giveaway.

PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE

2004 - 2009

WEB DESIGNER & CONTENT CREATOR - Hot Stove New York Weblog

2006 - 2009

Developed and launched this weblog devoted to pro sports in the New York metro area. Created the visual design of the website, including original logos and other graphic elements. Analyzed the effectiveness of online promotions based on web metrics. Led a staff of ten freelance writers.

DESIGNER & ILLUSTRATOR - Freelance

2004 - 2009

Created illustrations for a varied client list, including Fantasy Flight Games and The Topps Company.

EDUCATION

Tufts University - Medford, MA
Cum Laude, May 2004
B.A., Communications &
Media Studies



ADVANCED SKILLS



Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Acrobat, After Effects)



Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, MS Teams)

TEAM FANDOM

