



Why Creatives Shouldn't Give a Shit About Social Media

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(Unless, Of Course, They Want a Job)

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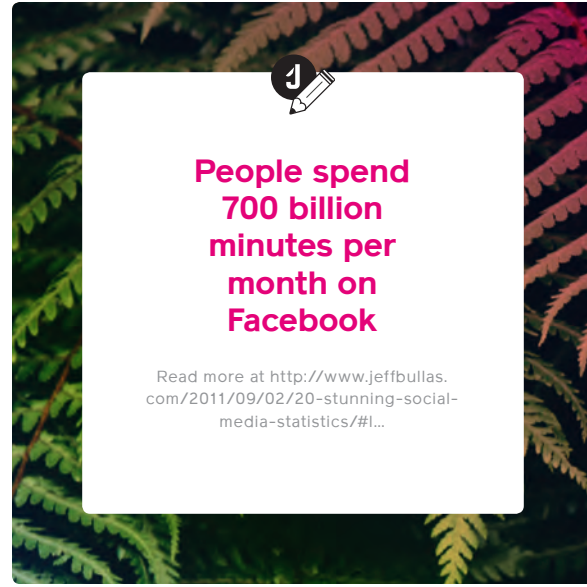
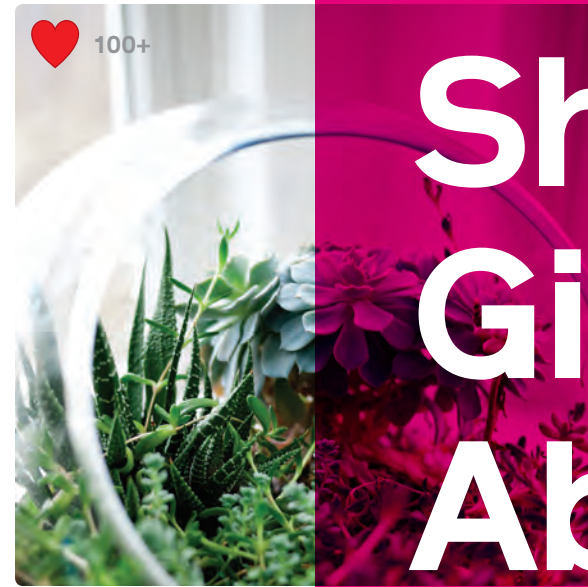
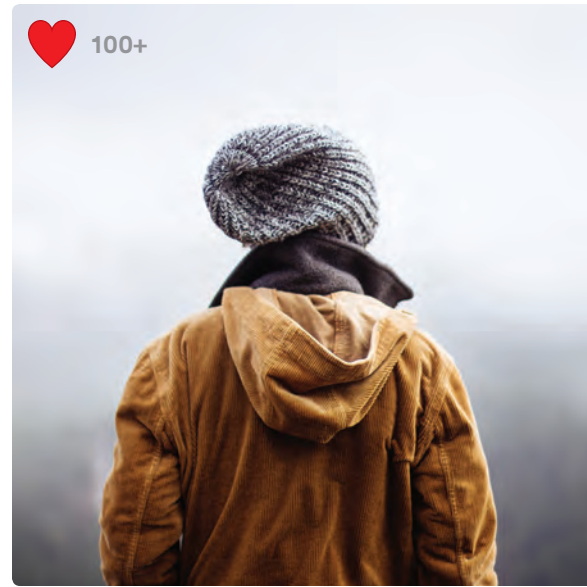


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On the Radar



Applied Arts Design Awards



We tweet great work, pin things we like, read blogs to see what inspires others. When it comes time to unplug and develop an idea of our own, it can be hard to believe we haven't seen it all before. Is the Information Age putting our collective creative consciousness at risk?

I'll tell you two things about Burton Kramer, the graphic designer, ad man and now painter responsible for that much-adored piece of Canadiana, the exploding-circlet icon of the CBC: He prefers speaking face-to-face versus on the phone. And he loves to tell stories.

Unfortunately for him, I found myself about 500 kilometres away from his home, and coming up on deadline with no plans to travel, so a face-to-face — however nice and full of colour it might have been — was out of the question.

Fortunately for me, it didn't stop him from telling me a story. (Or a dozen. I lost count.)

Consider this, one of those quotable anecdotes a journalist just loves because it wraps up the article in a little bow before you even have to write it. **In fact, you don't have to read the rest of the piece at all. You can read the quote below, and move on knowing you learned exactly what it's all about:**

"I recently heard a story about Jack London, the famous author," Kramer tells me over our Skype-powered phone call. "Jack is at some art party and he walks up to a photographer, and says something like, 'Oh boy, I just love your work. You must have a *great* camera!' And then, of course, the photographer stares right back at him and says, 'Oh, well, I just love your stories. You must have a great *typewriter!*'"

"This industry finds itself in an era with almost unlimited new potential to reach audiences, to know exactly where they are, what they are thinking and what they want to buy when we talk to them."

As Kramer will certainly tell you, the creative world is encountering the same misguided notion that led London to make that silly compliment. This industry finds itself in an era with almost unlimited new potential to reach audiences, to know exactly where they are, what they are thinking and what they want to buy when we talk to them. And it's all being done with a set of tools Don Draper could never have imagined.

But it doesn't mean creativity — that unspeakable, indefinable element — is any different than it used to be. Just because creatives have new tools doesn't necessarily mean the natural thing that sets them apart is any less important. Kramer argues there is something ineffable, biological and romantic about the creative mind. Something that exists the same way today as it did when he sketched out that CBC icon on a napkin somewhere, decades ago.



1 **Clients Love Him!
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1 

**DISTRACTIONS
COST AMERICAN
BUSINESSES
AN ESTIMATED
\$650 BILLION
ANNUALLY**

Workplace Options
Jonathan Spira



1 **Stuck in the Designer
Doghouse? Maybe This
Cute Pug Will Cheer
You Up!**

the exploding-circuit icon on the CBC. He prefers speaking face-to-face versus on the phone. And he loves to tell stories.

Unfortunately for him, I found myself about 500 kilometres away from his home, so I had to do a video call. I was a little nervous, but I put a smile on my face — the queue was long.

Fortunately, I lost contact with him.

Considering he's a professional because he writes for the CBC, you can write it. You can write it exactly.

"I recently told me and he love you photog him and typewr

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CONNECTIVITY 36

JUST IMAGINE IF POOR OLD VAN GOGH HAD TO LISTEN TO THE INTERNET TO CHOOSE THE SUBJECTS OF HIS MASTERPIECES

Burton Kramer



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David Chiavegato, a founding partner at Grip Limited in Toronto, tends to agree. He says while tools such as big data, social media and the Internet can be powerful in helping the creative agency gather consumer insights and inspiration, your job hasn't changed — it will always be the same thing. It's simple, he says. You've got to uncover that next great "Big Idea."

"There will never be a substitute for that Big Idea," he says. "I don't care how much data you have. If you're unable to take all those inputs about the consumer and then form it into a larger idea, it's all worthless."

"All of the tech and tools are going to allow for a much richer experience — but it has to be in service of a rich idea."

David Chiavegato, Grip Limited

Still, there are a number of reasons to be giving a little bit more credit to the rapidly expanding set of technologies creative individuals have at their fingertips in our digital, connected world. One of those reasons comes down to basic biology. In the simplest terms, the power technology affords us complements perfectly the biological processes we have come to attribute to creativity.

In "The Science of Great Ideas — How to Train Your Creative Brain," a *Fast Company* article on the topic, we hear from a panel of experts discussing the science behind the kind of good ideas Chiavegato was talking about. In one section, the article quotes advertising exec James Webb Young in his 1939 book, *A Technique For Producing Ideas*, on what he describes as the two principles involved in creating new ideas:

1. AN IDEA IS NOTHING MORE OR LESS THAN A NEW COMBINATION OF OLD ELEMENTS



2. THE CAPACITY TO BRING OLD ELEMENTS INTO NEW COMBINATIONS DEPENDS LARGELY ON THE ABILITY TO SEE RELATIONSHIPS



1 Can Hobo Find a Home In the Year 2015?

**Abcdefghi
jklmnopqr
stuvwxyz
0123456789**

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p. 16



1 Debunking the Myth: Can You Really Win Friends With Salad?

Summarizes *Fast Company's* Belle Beth Cooper, "This second one is really important in producing new ideas, but it's something our minds need to be trained in." She then quotes Young's point: "To some minds each fact is a separate bit of knowledge. To others it is a link in a chain of knowledge."

Essentially what Webb Young argues is that creativity is a process of synthesis and connection making. You are presented with two disparate ideas in order to form a third original one.

Clearly, this bodes well for creatives who now have instant, unfettered access to a world of great ideas, just waiting to be smashed together in the mushy grey matter deep in their skulls.

"There is something ineffable, biological and romantic about the creative mind."

"Coming up with ideas is both easier and harder, now," says Helen Pak, the freshly minted president of Havas Worldwide Canada. "It's easier because you have access to all this amazing info [...] but so much more difficult because the bar is being raised and there are a lot of expectations to be better than all those ideas out there."

She continues, "Everyone has to be as good as that [Jean Claude] Van Damme 'Epic Split' video now."

Pak remembers a time when agencies would wait around eagerly every year to get a "shots reel," a videotape comprising all the best work from around the world. Now, all you have to do is type "YouTube" into your browser, and you're there.

Her insights on the matter come with credibility. Though she is currently helping a chapter of one of the world's biggest media agencies, she spent a year kicking into gear the Creative Shop, Facebook's in-house firm. That role had her liaising with top brands while immersing herself at the centre of the most prolific and advanced social media platform on the planet.

And it was during her time at Facebook that she discovered just why new social technologies are so important to the creative individual.

"Social isn't just social," she says. "It's not just people commenting and posting. It is a very powerful platform where everybody has a voice and suddenly brands don't control their brands anymore...people control the brands and the conversation."

"Agencies [must] start reinventing how they interact with consumers. And that in itself has blown open a vast new field of creativity."

And this doesn't just mean that brands are being forced to create more transparency or start listening to their consumers more. It has changed the playing field entirely, demanding agencies start reinventing how they interact with consumers. And that in itself has blown open a vast new field of creativity, Pak says.

For example, when I mentioned to her the new pre-roll spots Geico debuted this spring — the "unskippable" and hilarious four-second ads airing on YouTube — she told me that was exactly her point.

"That's what we call 'media deliberate,'" she says. "They were really conscious of how people engage with pre-roll [knowing that everyone skips as soon as possible]. And now everybody is talking about it."

These headlines are guaranteed to make you turn your head and say "what?"

Shut up and take my money! The best underrated typefaces that are guaranteed to give you instant street cred in the office.

Is tight kerning making your layouts look fat?

Want to concept faster with improved results? Learn the secret to better brainstorming ideas in half the time!

PMS 185 as you've never seen it before and 3 amazing new swatches that will blow your mind.



12% of American adults have used their smartphone in the shower.

Mobile Consumer Habits, Harris Interactive/Jumio 2013

"Never in a thousand years would you think people would be talking about a pre-roll spot, but it worked!"

In all, Pak says this points to a major shift that creative firms need to be aware of — otherwise they might fade away into obscurity. So whether the technological innovations actually help you be creative or not, it would be wise to start thinking creatively about them, in new and "media deliberate" ways, if you are seeking success in the industry.

Chiavegato knows all about exploring the potential of a medium. As the co-creator of "The Bud Light Institute" ads, a lot of his good ideas end up selling suds. He was one of the creatives behind the script of Kokanee's full-length branded content film "The Movie Out Here" that gained some social lift (and a Cannes Lion) a few years ago when it was released.

But he says we are focussing on the wrong point here. This modern era isn't really about "more technology." In a way, it's about less. What is happening is that with all the insights and connections we can wrangle, advertisers are actually injecting more humanity into their work — and that is what is making all the difference.

"You know, if I had to choose, I'd go way back to Bill Bernbach, widely recognized as father of modern advertising," Chiavegato says, discussing the creator of those iconic VW spots and founding partner of DDB. "I think advertising before Bill Bernbach was a lot of very rational, formulaic approaches to talking to consumers...what he did was inject humanity, and wit, humour and real consumer insights into the campaigns. It was conversational, it was human, it felt like a real person talking to you."

He says a similar approach is happening today, powered by the immediacy of consumer feedback and the presence brands occupy on networks such as Twitter and Facebook.

He hammers home his original point once more, though. Regardless of how human and connected you can now get, you better make sure your message has a compelling idea behind it.

"For thousands of years, we've been engaged and interested in stories. I think all of the tech and tools are going to allow for a much richer experience — but it has to be in service of a rich idea. Otherwise it is just tactics and gimmicks."

Getting back to the phone call with Kramer, his advice to creatives is simple. It takes hard and steady work to do your job, no matter what technology you have at your disposal.

"I think the idea that new technology makes people more creative is horseshit," he says. He also warns that as consumers get more voice and sway over brands, the dreaded "creative by committee" effect will explode. "Just imagine if poor old Van Gogh had to listen to the Internet to choose the subjects of his masterpieces."



BuzzPuzz Search #36

Can you find all the buzzwords in the word scramble below?

S X I B Y X T H N C
 U Y S I A X E A X R
 A M Z N N O G P E X
 T M S T O B A T V M
 A N A E I E R I I S
 D O U G T H E C T L
 G I T R A T V S C Z
 I T H A S E E M A E
 B A E T I D L O O X
 X V N I L I A E R P
 O O T O A S J A P O
 V N I N C T V E E M
 R N C B O U O D J C
 E I Y N L O M I T O
 S R F E F M N G E L
 P E F W W I I I L L
 O W T S N L C B B A
 N G N J S L H A A B
 S N E A Y E A K N O
 I I M C N N K I R
 V K E K E I N B A A
 E N G I R A E K T T
 Q I A N G L L V S I
 O L G G Y S N G U O
 L P N T P T W T S N
 K E E H V E T L S X
 A E Z Q I C C Y W C
 J D V E R N H S S Z
 K U H C A Q Q A K I
 F U B Z L G M G C V



This Illustrator Updated His Portfolio. You Won't Believe What Happened Next!



Spoiler alert: He got some work.



So, here is your TL;DR — something you already got up top with that typewriter story.

**IF YOU WANT TO GET A
JOB IN THIS INDUSTRY,
YOU'VE GOT TO GET
USED TO FANCY, GLOBAL,
DIGITAL "TYPEWRITERS."
BUT YOUR IDEAS WON'T
MEAN SQUAT UNLESS
YOU'RE BEING CREATIVE.
AND FOR THAT, WELL,
YOU ARE ON YOUR OWN.
JUST LIKE WE'VE BEEN
FOR THOUSANDS OF
YEARS.**