

Gary Steffins

web: www.garysteffins.com **tel:** 678-860-7120 **e-mail:** gary@climbmonkey.com

Award winning web designer and creative director. Client experience ranges from commercial, government, hollywood and game applications; known for decision making abilities, business acumen, change management skills, goal attainment and customer management. Effective at articulating complex design and development methodologies to all levels of professionals with the goal of effectively translating client requirements into engaging user freindly experiences. Precision-centered, with hands-on knowledge of design best practices, research methodologies, and a history of delivering projects to timely completion and client satisfaction.

Key Qualifications

Design Standards Social Networking **Relationship Building** Consulting
Customer Management Presentations Identity Development and Branding Budgeting
Development Knowledge **Project Management** Risk Assessment Scheduling
Usability Team Leadership Motivation CMS **Experience**

Professional Experience

President & Executive Creative Director

2005-present | DeepBlue.com - Atlanta, GA DeepBlue is a creative web design and development agency that provides digital solutions for meaningful brands. Clients range from commercial businesses, government agencies and non-profit organizations worldwide.

- + Responsible for quality of final creative web site design and development.
- + Establish business strategies and development practices.
- + Consultation with clients to develop overall concept and goals for web site design and identity.
- + Work with project managers to assure project plans are maintained.
- + Overseeing information architecture, user interactive experience, and usability standards.
- + Training, supervising and art direction for design team and interns.

Creative Director

2000-2005 | ICON One Source, Inc d/b/a BlueDarter Solutions. - Atlanta, GA BlueDarter Solutions specialized in enterprise website design and development as well as intetegration with customer relationship management (CRM) software.

- + Project management, implemented a web site development process for web design projects.
- + Developed and maintained a system for production schedules and budgets.
- + Creative direction for all branding, company collateral and online services.
- + Concept development, web site design and information architecture for all clients.
- + Trained, supervised and provided art direction for junior designers and interns.
- + Introduced computer based training for CRM division.
- + Co-developed SQL and Coldfusion property management application

Multimedia Division Manager

1998-2000, Stephen Fuller, Inc. - Atlanta, GA

A full service architectural firm that specializes in providing proportion and fine details to make architecture not only special and unique, but also build able, affordable and functional.

- + Designed company e-commerce website, tripling floor plan sales.
- + Developed multimedia cd-roms for community development projects.
- + Designed and built kiosks and video presentations for builders' home shows.
- + Published, Parkside Collection, coffee table book, winning 2000 Georgia publishing award.
- + Designed commercial and residential large-scale vision books, company brochures, site signage, and advertisements.

Designer Lead

1997-1998, Thomson Financial Publishing. - Atlanta, GA

Since 1972, thousands of professionals in business, government, law and academia rely on us for the most authoritative, timely and practical guidance available. We help professionals do their jobs better by providing authoritative information and analysis they can trust.

- + Designed and edited advertisements using QuarkXpress, Photoshop, Illustrator, and traditional paste-up for US and international financial institutions in a fast paced

EDUCATION, AWARDS & ACCOLADES

1990-1994, College of Charleston, B.A. Psychology, Minor in Communication.

Studies focused in mass media, communication, visual perception, motivation, advertising, human interaction, and consumer habits.

1996, The Art Institute of Atlanta, Quark Xpress 3.3 certificate

2010, **ADDY Silver**, Tennessee Aquarium web site

2009, **NAGC Gold Screen Award**, DISA.mil and BRAC relocation portal

2005, **NAHB Pillars of the Industry Award** for Gables.com

1999, **North Georgia Printers first place award** for ParkSide Collection, a full color architectural book.

1989, **North Georgia Tri-County first place** in fine art.

1989, **FCHS Certificate of Honor** in Art.

2013, **Awwwards.com nominee**, DeepBlue.com

<http://www.awwwards.com/best-websites/deepblue>

2011, **Top 10 List**, DeepBlue.com

<http://top-10-list.org/2011/02/01/top-10-web-design-companies-in-the-world/>

2011, **20 Awesome Website Development Companies**, DeepBlue.com

<http://slodive.com/inspiration/showcase/20-awesome-website-development-companies/>

THE DECATHLON

Project Description

Wall Street's premier athletic event. The Decathlon's participants take the athletic and fund raising challenge very seriously, matching the founder's passion for athletic competition and performance-based fundraising. This year's goal was to raise \$500,000 to benefit Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. Participants compete in ten athletic competitions, setting a performance goal for their featured event, which determines individual donations.

Challenges and Objectives

The first two years were sponsored and benefitted the Lance Armstong Foundation. Due to negative press, around alleged doping, the founders decided to benefit the Memorial-Sloan Kettering foundation. Losing the marketing muscle of Nike would require much more in-house work to meet the donation goals.

Realizing in late 2010 there was backlash against the financial industry, we had an opportunity to give Wall Street a means to receive positive PR. Getting executive level participation would help overall corporate donations as well as trickle down to individual professionals. The financial industry is very competitive and we wanted to foster that competitive drive. We had 3 months to get a new site up and running to start driving registrations.

The Solution

First we decided to start from scratch for the website and evolve the identity. I wanted to change the previous "heavy" feel to a bright open design utilizing previous years photography to create a dramatic contrast. I wanted to create a set of icons that complimented the new logo, taking cues from the athletes, creating an identity that participants would feel they were participating in a top level athletic competition. For development we chose Wordpress as the backbone to jump start programming and reduce upfront costs, although most of the site was going to require all new functionality and heavy customization.

The first 3 months the site went live with only one goal, to drive registrations. We made registering an easy and fun multistep wizard. After registration was closed, we rolled out the donation portion of the site. Sponsors were incorporated, from giveaways to workout plans developed by Equinox. This was the first year that there were betting donations involved, over/under and sliding scale. New tools were developed to show potential donation limits. To foster executive competition we decided to have multiple age groupings, with winners in each and an exclusive the Executive level. Each group would have top overall athlete, top event athlete and top fund raiser. To foster competition among the firms we decided to have matchup bets of firm against firm and inter-firm rivalries. And for prospective donators we created a featured stories list to increase non-participant related donations. This would lead to top company event winners and fundraising bragging rights.

For marketing we branded Twitter and Facebook, utilizing API's on the website. Several Flash and static banners were designed to drive both registration and placed on financial related websites.

www.thedecathlon.org

Company: Wowza Technologies / DeepBlue.com

Role: Creative Direction, Website Design, HTML/CSS Prototyping, Flash Advertisements

Timeframe: 8 months

The Results

Each main phase of the site was launched on time. The Decathlon met its registration quota and through the 3 months of donations and the day of the event was able to raise \$499,244.00, less than a thousand dollars from its goal. Under Armor supplied Decathlon branded shirts, hats and shorts, the site was featured on Bloomberg news, the result was more publicity and twice the fundraising than the previous year. We ended the project with a post-event website and a project I can be proud to have been a key participant.



Project Description

In July of 1970, the White House and Congress worked together to establish the EPA in response to the growing public demand for cleaner water, air and land. Today, the EPA employs 17,000 people across the country, including our headquarters offices in Washington, DC, 10 regional offices, and more than a dozen labs. The epa.gov website is the largest and most visited environmental website in the world, ranking #6,440 in the world according to current Alexa traffic rankings. In 2008 we were contacted from a previous DOD client to redesign the EPA's website.

Challenges and Objectives

The website serves so many purposes and audiences, with over a million pages of content dating back to 1997. When we were contacted for "help" we were inheriting a very dated website design, no clear navigation schema, several versions of the site design and styles maintained by headquarters and ten regional directors. Our goal was to create a new way to navigate the site, reduce confusion by guiding audiences and bring the site design up to current standards and compliance guidelines.

The Solution

We met with the EPA web team for a two day workshop with one goal, redefine the navigation and information buckets. We defined the most used content areas and due to no CMS backbone, we would have to roll out updated content in a phased approach. We decided all the content could be grouped into 4 main buckets, Learn The Issues, Science & Technology, Laws and Regulations and About EPA. This was a drastic departure from the previous non-main navigation website structure of hundreds of links on the homepage.

After deciding which content to start with I left D.C. and proceeded on creating wireframes for the homepage, key landing pages and three subpage template types. For this site there was still too much content they wanted to present, so we decided to utilize javascript accordions to reduce clutter and concentrate on clear headlines. I produced each page style as html/css templates along with a robust style guide for EPA worldwide to adhere to. The site went live with about fifty new pages using the new navigation structure. For the next two years the sites content was migrated to the new theme.

The Results

The new website was well received by previous administration. When the new administration came in headed by

www.epa.gov

Company: DeepBlue.com

Role: Relations, Information Architecture, Creative Direction, Website Design, HTML/CSS Prototyping and Template and Standards Development

Timeframe: 5 years (multiple phases)

Lisa Jackson, they approached us again to help solve content and design issues. We decided to take a microsite approach based off the current design, with specialized content sections using larger photography and removing the previous background art. The goal was to really reduce the heavy content, which is an ongoing task. For the past two years we have been asked to create web solutions for several special projects, including Hurricane Katrina relief, The Gulf Spill, Mrs. Jackson's personal blog, EPA's 40th anniversary site, and in 2011 a Spanish microsite, Intranet design, and MyEPA. My design work and collaboration have earned an ongoing healthy relationship with the EPA upper management.

TENNESSEE AQUARIUM

Project Description

The Tennessee Aquarium, located in Chattanooga, Tennessee, is one of the largest freshwater aquariums in the world and has received the highest customer satisfaction ratings several years in a row. The Tennessee Aquarium's River Journey and Ocean Journey buildings are home to more than 12,000 animals including fish, reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates, birds penguins, butterflies and more. We were contracted in 2009 to completely redesign the website experience.

Challenges and Objectives

This website had a small web team behind it that had been managing static pages since 1998. One of their objectives was to move to a CMS. We had several vendors demo their products and chose Sitefinity, this would be our first Sitefinity project. We wanted to create a very custom design utilizing the most current web strategies. The aquarium itself is the centerpiece of downtown Chattanooga, part of our objective was to attract Tennessee residents as well as drive traffic from Atlanta and the southeast as a vacation destination.

The Solution

Prior to a three day workshop I had done a speculative design, the design itself hit the mark and we spent our time refining and defining navigation and content to migrate as well as how to migrate their ecommerce. The site build was a challenge, but resulted in several customized AJAX modules, video streaming and webcams, making the site very interactive. We launched the site with several viral campaigns at the site time to boost visitation.

The Results

The Tennessee Aquarium website won an ADDY award for design in 2010. The goals of the site to encourage and increase local and national visitation, educate and entertain it's public were significantly achieved from previous benchmarks. In 2011 we created a mobile website version powered by the CMS and are currently working on an iPhone App. In January of 2012 I worked with their web team to make site customizations based on user feedback and wish-list items they had internally, giving the site a functional and design facelift.

www.tennis.org

Company: DeepBlue

Role: Information Architecture, Creative Direction, Website Design, HTML/CSS /jQuery Prototyping and Template and Standards Development, Project Management

Timeframe: Phase I: 6 months, Phase II: 1 month, Phase III: April 2013 -current