

My relationship with marketing and advertising

I am blessed to KNOW my true talents and source of inspiration. To me, advertising is not just about getting things sold for the least possible outlay on marketing: it is about UNDERSTANDING the status quo of a product or service & KNOWING how it can be developed to achieve its full potential. Whenever a team comes up with a truly magnificent idea and it is realized with brilliant design, MAGIC happens. And that magic makes me happy.

Skills and experiences:

Marketing strategy & positioning

As a lead in client service in both the public and private sectors, I have had the wonderful opportunity to write and plan marketing strategies for many companies, both large and small.

Here are 10 of the biggest and most influential projects I have worked on:

1. PetCity brand marketing strategy for Estonia, Latvia & Lithuania

RESULT: PetCity brand guide, CVI, shop manual and marketing principles workbooks for the Baltic States. A new brand was born and has now become one of the leading pet centers in the region.

2. Bang & Bonsomer marketing and re-positioning strategy for 10 operating countries

RESULT: The Bang & Bonsomer group marketing strategy was re-defined based on changes to its business strategy and focus. A more marketing-oriented system was born with clear and simple marketing promise, vision and guidelines for all 10 operating countries. This soon resulted in new CVI, a homepage, expo design principles, catalogue design principles and a general design and marketing system to unify and strengthen all of Bang & Bonsomer's six business units.

3. Estonian Ministry of Education and Research marketing strategy for entrepreneurship program promotion and implementation in all schools around Estonia

RESULT: A paper and a campaign were created to take entrepreneurship further into the Estonian school system and to make it an integral part of learning.

4. Holm Bank re-positioning strategy for Estonia and Latvia

RESULT: Holm Bank brand positioning and guidelines were born with clear and simple definitions of what the bank is about.



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5. International School of Helsinki re-positioning

RESULT: Design guidelines were born to support the school's new directives.

6. Tick awareness campaign marketing strategy in Estonia for Pfizer Pharmaceutical

RESULT: Tick awareness campaigns were launch in two consecutive years to raise awareness of the dangers of ticks in Estonia and to direct people to get vaccinated against tick-borne diseases.

7. DPD parcel machine service marketing strategy from start-up to gaining the desired market share

RESULT: DPD entered the Estonian market with its first parcel machines in 2016. By 2020, the company has achieved its goal regarding market share and parcel machine usage within the target group. This was the result of careful digital media strategising, planning and message implementation.

8. Innove teaching profession awareness campaign marketing strategy

RESULT: More and more people have considered becoming teachers, with the number of applications to universities going. The number of those interested in applying for part-time teaching jobs has also gone up.

9. Telia 5G product marketing content and campaign

RESULT: The Telia 5G hub was launched with carefully drafted content to suit the mindset of people with no technical knowledge. An innovative digital and outdoor campaign was also created and launched.

10. Nordea Bank re-positioning strategy for Estonia

RESULT: Nordea in Estonia was re-positioned as the biggest bank in the Nordic region and the most flexible bank in Estonia: a simple but not especially obvious statement that needed to be made and promoted in Estonia at the time.

In CONCLUSION, creating marketing strategies or giving workshops on positioning or re-positioning can feel like a complicated undertaking. There are a lot of marketing-oriented terminology and methods and processes to follow, BUT I think it is always important to break the terminology down into a really SIMPLE and UNDERSTANDABLE process & content so that the people engaged in it are on the same page with the creator of the strategy. True talent lies in how to make something that seems complicated both CLEAR and SIMPLE.

Marketing action plans

A lot of my work has to do with creating marketing action plans. At some point I have drafted such plans for most of my clients – in total, 40 or 50 plans to date. The only difference between them being their length and depth.

Some examples:

- 1. A brief action plan:** The client explains the product or service and I draft a 3-5 page vision of the marketing action that needs to be taken in order to achieve a boost in awareness / sales. This plan includes: 1) background data & analyses of the product or service; 2) descriptions of marketing action, with budgeting; 3) descriptions of results and expectations. A brief version of a marketing action plan is normally needed if a client has not created a marketing strategy or plan or any sort of systematic approach to marketing of their own. Usually these are smaller enterprises with a product to sell or services to offer that are just looking for marketing expertise / consultancy to get started.
- 2. A comprehensive action plan:** The client explains the product / service, already has a marketing strategy and has set definite goals for marketing action. A comprehensive marketing action plan includes: 1) background data & analyses of the client's product / service; 2) background and analyses of competitors' products / services; 3) media expenditure analyses; 4) marketing action is described and defined over time, with budgets; 5) media flowcharts to support marketing action (a detailed channel expenditure overview); 6) descriptions of results and expectations; and 7) descriptions of the methods used to measure the results.

In CONCLUSION, I consider it my greatest strength that I can fully concentrate on and analyze large amounts of information very quickly. This and the fact that I have been doing marketing and advertising for more than 17 years gives me the power to produce thoroughly explained and highly effective marketing action plans in a very short space of time. Ultimately, these plans help my clients prosper.



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Campaign management

Campaign management is something I do on a daily basis. It consists of: 1) understanding what the campaign has to achieve; 2) planning the campaign strategy (messaging & creative, production, media, timelines and budgets); 3) leading the creative team and getting the results approved by the client; 4) producing any material for channels; 5) implementing the campaign and monitoring the results; 6) optimizing the campaign; and 7) conducting the final case study and considering lessons to be learned.

The following have been some of my most influential campaigns:

- 1. The people of Estonia now have less stereotypical attitudes towards gender** – This was a Ministry of Social Affairs of Social Affairs campaign addressing people's mindset towards gender and gender equality issues.
- 2. 5G telco technology is now a little more understandable to the greater public** – This was a 5G campaign for Telia.
- 3. Tick vaccinations have gone up in the last two years** – Campaigns for Pfizer Pharma to get people vaccinating
- 4. It really is possible to make concrete out of beetroot** – Bang & Bonsomer's FIBRY(c) is an MFC made from sugar beet waste. It can be used to replace any polymers of unnatural origins with 100% natural MFC.
- 5. Teachers make tomorrow happen** – Applications to study pedagogy have risen and more and more teachers will be educating children in their homeland.

In CONCLUSION:

I have worked on more public-sector than private-sector campaigns. I think that being able to win public-sector pitches shows great determination on the part of the person that does so, as well as an ability to strategize and analyze, and to optimize small budgets in order to achieve great results. You can find ways to work with even the tiniest budget and still be awarded a gold medal for your greatness. I figure it is really about tackling each and every campaign or project –even something as simple as a business-card order – like another “festival case”.

Identity & branding

Some of the most recent and recognized identity systems I have worked on are the following:

- 1. Növa® caviar identity system** – An Estonian premium caviar brand designed to be sold primary in Japan and Europe
- 2. STAND movement identity system** – A student movement that takes a stand against discrimination
- 3. Alpina® estate identity system** – A new real estate company's brand and identity
- 4. Cuitu® identity system** – A raw feed additive for pet food producers
- 5. PetCity as the biggest identity system** – A pet shop and service center in the Baltic States
- 6. Bang & Bonsomer group identity system** – Main company re-branding and new identity systems for six business units
- 7. International School of Helsinki** – A new identity package and webpage to support their new philosophy of learning
- 8. International School of Estonia** – A modern identity and webpage
- 9. Kohtla-Järve Gymnasium** – A full identity package, including signage

In CONCLUSION:

What I have learned about identity projects is that a new logo is an ecosystem that has to combine the philosophy of the company with the the expectations of its target group and create a differentiation point from competitors. With all this in mind, it has to have strong visual appeal and a strong visual idea as well. Creating a new identity is one of the most subjective fields in advertising, so in the end it quite often comes down to likes and dislikes. As such, it is always best to really get to KNOW your client. Best practice is to work on a maximum of three logo propositions and thoroughly develop a story and visual to explain their concepts.



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Signage

Campaigns come and go, but signage is there for at least 5-10 years. As such, it represents permanent value. Also, there are so many varieties and options you can come up with using modest materials. Take for example a simple sticker – if designed well, even it will work wonders as signage as an integral part of interior design. A typical signage project plays out like this: 1) a meeting with the client and architects to map out the signage placement based on architectural drawings, the result being a “mothership” Excel file with a description of the exact location, measurements, descriptions of materials, a description of the creative content, budgets and the timeline; 2) based on the Excel file, the designing of the signage files; 3) approval by the client; 4) a thorough description for the producer of the files about the materials, location and implementation; 5) monitoring the implementation of the materials and mapping out any shortcomings on site; and 6) sorting out the shortcomings ASAP after implementation.

The signage projects I have worked on include:

- 1. PetCity service centers** – More than 30 centers, with approx. 100-200 signage elements per center
- 2. Pärnu Vocational School** – A large school with more than 400 different signage elements
- 3. Kohtla-Järve Gymnasium** – A medium-sized school with more than 200 different signage elements
- 4. Metalli House** – A small office building with more than 10 signage elements
- 5. Tallinn TV Tower** – A multi-story signage project involving many special solutions and more than 300 different signage elements
- 6. Tallinn Central Hospital** - A multi-story signage project involving many special solutions and more than 300 different signage elements

In CONCLUSION:

Signage is about creating meaningful & beautiful environments. Functional and well-designed signage can change a rather boring building into a modern, vibrant powerhouse. My suggestion is to never underestimate the impact of great design in signage: celebrate it and surround yourself with smart beauty.

Digital campaigns

Digital campaigns are where control freaks really get some satisfaction! You can test your banners and messages and check that you have the most effective one out there. You can test and control your channels and use only those that produce the most results. You can also utilize all of your knowledge and experience from past campaigns, thereby driving up efficiency and ultimately achieving the same results with less outlay OR achieving better results with the same outlay.

Examples of digital campaigns I have worked on:

- 1. Home3 (various online campaigns)** – A good learning curve here was that re-designing the campaign landing page dramatically affected the results of the campaign.
- 2. Poliis.ee** – This is the If Insurance online insurance brand, which focuses on cheap insurance prices and online sales. During the Creatum period we enjoyed excellent cooperation with them from 2009-2018: in total, nine years of brand-building. During that time we devised 5-6 digital campaigns a year, closely monitored the results and optimized each campaign while it was ongoing.
- 3. Holm Bank digital campaigns** – This is a more recent experience and resulted in online sale campaigns for the bank’s products. The challenge was maintaining the quality of the banners, as we had to have eight campaigns go live simultaneously, so the number of banner formats and files was not in the hundreds, but in the thousands. As such, it required an effective monitoring and quality system with which to keep control. It also represented a good case study to learn from regarding the kinds of creative solutions that work and those that don’t. All in all, it is very useful for a digital brand to experiment and utilize what it has gained from past campaigns.

In CONCLUSION:

The digital world is evolving all the time. It is essential to have a good digital agency as a media partner for digital campaigns. It is all about wanting to make an impression and being prepared to deal with lots of details to ensure that impression is made. Digital is really about constant work: it never stops. There is always something to optimize and results to follow and conclusions to draw and changes to make. On the creative side of things, clear, well-designed solutions work. Sometimes video content works better than animated banner content; sometimes it’s the other way round. Color in digital is GOOD, because you stand out in the myriad of messages and banners. GOOD COPY in digital is ESSENTIAL, because you only get 2-3 seconds of attention for you banners, and if they have too much text on them, look boring or are mediocre in some other way, then bye-bye sales results! Complicated, fuzzy, overly long, boring or broken banners are, needless to say, a bad thing.



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Public procurements

I have taken part in around 100 public procurements in the course of 13+ years. The process with public procurements is as follows: 1) the pitch documents are delivered via the public procurement registry and have to be downloaded from there; and 2) these must be read and evaluated so that you can decide whether to participate in the procurement. There are a number of factors to consider here: a) the budget and conditions of participation; b) the requirements of the team and agency; c) the theme of the procurement and your previous experience of handling similar projects; d) how the procurement is written – if it is too detailed and too directive, then there is reason to assume that the organizer already has a partner they want to work with OR yes, they might just be very well informed. If you decide to participate, then the following steps are: 1) briefing the creative team and partners, which normally takes place in a meeting at which all of the parties involved go through the whole project, the project lead defines the budget split between all parties (depending on the nature of the pitch and the aims of the campaign in question), allocates tasks to all parties and sets deadlines; 2) work then begins, with each party developing their part of the project, the creative team developing the creative concept and preparing design layouts to support it, the media team developing the media strategy and flowcharts and the PR team developing the PR strategy and action plan; 3) the project lead collates all of the input from the parties involved into a unified proposal and sets the general budget, timeline and project forecasts. The “package” is then ready to be uploaded to the registry. As you can see, there is a lot of preliminary work to be done in order to participate in public procurements – normally about two weeks of work. The good thing is that if you are successful, then you have already worked out most of the solutions and you just need to make final fixes to your initial plans, which will then be ready to be implemented.

Examples of public procurements I have worked on:

- 1. Ministry of Rural Affairs: Open Farm Days, five consecutive years**
- 2. Ministry of Rural Affairs: Open Fish Farm Days, four consecutive years**
- 3. Ministry of Rural Affairs: Estonian Food promotional campaigns**
- 4. Estonian Defense Forces: Campaigns for the Scouts Battalion, Defense Forces Academy and Special Forces Unit**
- 5. Ministry of Social Affairs: Campaign on attitudes towards gender stereotypes**
- 6. Ministry of Social Affairs: Campaign warning of dangers when working abroad**
- 7. Ministry of Social Affairs: Campaign for evaluating workplace dangers**
- 8. Estonian Science Agency: Year of Science campaign**
- 9. Innove teachers campaign, two consecutive years**
- 10. Estonian Academy of Security Sciences recruitment campaigns**

In CONCLUSION:

Public procurements usually involve big issues that are important to society. So if you are smart & lucky enough to win such a pitch, chances are the next campaign you do will be noticed and remembered – and perhaps it will change how people think or feel about a given issue in society.

Webpages

Digital is the future and the future is digital. There’s no way around it. Marketing expenditure on digital branding and homepage development, e-commerce and digital campaigns has only gone up in the last 10 years and will continue to do so. COVID-19 also provided an additional kick-start for a variety of digital services. The process is as follows: 1) creating a wireframe – interviewing the client regarding their needs and wishes, as well as problems and challenges, the aims of the future website, specific functionalities, the target group, target group actions models and so on. This involves studying the websites of the 10 main competitors around the world (preferably awarded websites for UX and IU) and the latest UX and UI case studies and trends (since there is always something new in digital and you have to stay up to date at all times). In content analysis, prioritization is everything. A finalized wireframe means that the client has all the necessary information mapped out in a no-design environment, giving them a clear understanding of what is where and why. In addition, a good wireframe has pointers towards what the design solution will be (colors, hints and links to existing webpages that act as a source of inspiration, fonts and video content); 2) based on the confirmed wireframe, the design team starts working on the design; 3) approval of the client follows; 4) I forward the confirmed design files to the coding partner; 5) the coding partner has the development html page approved by the client, and I support the process; 6) the final webpage is tested on all platforms and resolutions and final bugs are fixed; and 7) we’re done!

Examples include:



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1. [Bangbonsomer.com](#) – 2022
2. [Eurogum.dk](#) – 2022
3. [Kirantofoods.dk](#) – 2022
4. [Softcom.ee](#) – 2022
5. [Alpina.estate](#) – 2022
6. [Vabadusevalvur.ee](#) – 2021
7. [Justiits.ee](#) – 2021
8. [kathleennaglee.com](#) – 2020
9. [bbcomposites.ru](#) – 2020
10. [õpetaja.eu](#) – 2019
11. [ishelsinki.fi](#) – 2019
12. [puugioht.ee](#) – 2019
13. [nutiakadeemia.ee](#) – 2018
14. [oma.ee](#) – 2017
15. [bangbonsomer.com](#) – 2017

In CONCLUSION:

The aspect I like most in developing webpages is actually the very start of the project: I really enjoy the wireframing process and developing the first design layouts for a new webpage. This is the phase in which anything and everything is possible and exciting, modern, beautiful designs are born. I love to present website visions to clients and I really love seeing that certain sparkle in people's eyes, showing that they like what they see. Besides the design, I also enjoy the thought process when developing websites: I think COPY is very important, I KNOW that strong, brief, catchy opening page testimony can be the very thing that actually turns the target group on or off the webpage. It is about saying who you are and what you do in just one sentence. This may seem easy, but it seldom is. A lot of preliminary work is required to really nail down that core statement.

What I have learned is that in some cases I have underestimated the coding process and the time it takes. Creative agencies tend to have a slightly off-grid view of some webpage projects, meaning that designers from creative agencies (including my own) want to create tailor-made visions of how the webpage feels and flows. The challenge is to find a solution that is creative and highly usable but will not hinder the coding process.

Service design

The inspiring part of service design is UNDERSTANDING complicated service processes and products.

Some of the service design projects I have worked on are the following:

1. **telia.ee/5g** – This project was truly amazing, because Telia gave us free rein in creating content for this 5G HUB. I received around 40 documents from Telia, processed all of them, understood what 5G technology is all about, asked Telia questions if I didn't get certain technical descriptions, wrote the HUB wireframe based on this information and directed the designer to create visual translations of the 5G technology's capabilities.
2. **International School of Helsinki learning philosophy video** – A visual and animated explanation of what the new learning philosophy of the school is
3. **Kathleen Naglee consultancy proposition templates** – Content development (5-10 pages) for consultancy service propositions
4. **FIBRY(c) product video** – A five-minute video explaining how MFC actually works
5. **Ekospray(c) case studies** – Case study templates to explain how Ekospray foam insulation actually works

In CONCLUSION:

I feel that service design is a growing part of the design and advertising industry. People need a clear visual message to reduce the understanding curve of difficult service processes. The faster a company sells its process to its customers, the better chance they have of seeing off their competitors.



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Print

Over the past few years there has been a saying among advertisers that print is dead. Well, it isn't. Sure, when you compare print advertising expenditure to digital advertising expenditure, then yes, there are big differences, and print has been in decline for many years. But there remains a special place for print ad campaigns and a special use for them. If your target audience is, for example, B2B and the target group is readers of B2B newspapers, magazines and so on, then a print ad campaign could be a good solution for you. A print ad is something you look at and read and take your time over, whereas an online ad is something that passes by quickly.

I have also led some large-format book projects. Usually these have been history books for our clients, image books and the like.

Some examples of books made during my Creatum period are as follows:

- 1. Tallinn TV Tower image book (80 pages)**
- 2. Bang & Bonsomer history book (60 pages)**
- 3. East Tallinn Central Hospital history book (150 pages)**

In CONCLUSION:

If you are thinking about running a print ad campaign, try to come up with something interesting. For example, think about placing the ad in print upside down, or about negotiating a special format with the newspaper, a format that has never been used before, or about working with the newspaper and having your ad supported with an investigative article or by gluing a sample of your product to the ad making a sensory ad using perfumed print or publishing a quiz about your products and offering a prize for people who solve it or reserving the bottom bleed area of the newspaper and printing something on each and every page or... There are hundreds of ideas for things you can do in print. Don't just make another boring ad. Make something interesting.

Video

There is rising demand for high-quality video content for branding and social media use. The saturation of information has created a situation where video has become the focal point of attention. New LED screen technologies make it possible to film the tropics in Tallinn or create an alien world for your brand.

Examples:

- 1. Five short stories for Holm Bank in 2021**
- 2. Three short ad videos for Home3 in 2021**
- 3. An epic brand video for Növa 2021 in 2022**
- 4. A hard-rock recruitment video for College of Justice in 2021**
- 5. 'Slices of life' concept video for Narva College in 2022**
- 6. Episodes for the International School of Helsinki in 2022**

Others

- Research & research aid
- Consultancy
- Radio
- Outdoor
- Expo solutions
- Other marketing- & advertising-related activities



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