

LearnxDesign

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Whose job is it anyway?

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Abstract: *Many undergraduate students struggle to successfully manage the transition from academic study to creative sector employment. Talented graduates with great portfolios don't necessarily connect to meaningful vocational outcomes. A lack of experience in the 'business of design' is often cited as a significant impact on employment decisions made by creative directors. Placements and internships can add valuable commercial experience that offer employers confidence that graduates will add value. Paradoxically, many studios are insufficiently resourced to offer meaningful experiential learning opportunities and frequently, students are poorly prepared to access them.*

Coupled with an international paradigm shift in rhetoric, both fee-paying students and institutional managers are respectively demanding and promising, higher value vocational relevancy from investment in tertiary education. Responding to these challenges, many Graphic Design programmes are not only reevaluating their curriculum and currency of practice, but also seeking greater connectivity vocational support between academy and industry.

This paper case-studies the development of an integrated and experiential teaching model that fosters engagement with Graphic Design industry partners, effectively coordinating and leveraging the power of academic and alumni relationships across a range of professional experiences including non-residential project based learning opportunities and collaborative learning partnerships.

Keywords: *design education, design curriculum, learning collaboration, vocational success*

Introduction

Undergraduate students wake up every morning facing a climate of change, uncertainty and intricacy. Educators wake up facing increasingly diverse students needs, organisational restructuring, curriculum reshaping and portfolio diversification, while Design professionals wake up to global and business challenges in a competitive and challenging marketplace. Are we chasing each others coat tails as we try to establish our own identities and roles in a “supercomplex world” (Barnett, 2000, p.257).

Supercomplexity shows itself discursively through the world of work through such terms as “flexibility”, “adaptability” and (more recently still) “self-reliance” (Barnett, 2000, p.257). Shelly Kramer highlights key attributes for graduates for businesses at Dell’s Think Tank sessions, “It’s important to be resourceful, adaptable, and willing to learn new skills” (Kramer, 2015). These are familiar terms which highlight businesses preferred graduate profile and are also embedded in undergraduate programme brochures and heralded as graduate aims and profiles the world over.

“Increasingly, students are being asked to take on the general capacities (core skills) required by the corporate world” (Barnett, 2000, p.261), before they have even entered the workforce. We know that students are undertaking degrees founded on sound and current pedagogical theories promoting ‘work integrated learning’, ‘experiential learning’, participatory ‘communities of practice’ and multi-modal collaborations.

If we inhabit a “a world in which we are conceptually challenged, and continually so” (Barnett, 2000, p.257) is it any wonder then, that students have uncertainty about the graphic design profession as a whole, including their own (and our) professionalism?

As defined within our Bachelor of Design and Visual Arts programme regulations (Unitec Institute of Technology, New Zealand), we promise to “provide learning experiences that stimulate students to critically reflect on their own practice, and that of others, and which fosters in graduates a commitment to lifelong learning, personal development and the advancement of the creative professions” (BDVA Programme Document 2008, p.15).

So how is it that at the end of every semester we reflect on our value as senior academics teaching undergraduate Graphic Design we are increasingly perplexed by the lack of intention, motivation and professionalism exhibited by our final-year degree students?

Have we become side tracked by the constant renegotiation and ever increasing expectations in our dual role as educator and professional practitioners/researchers? Did we have a misplaced notion that design-led businesses were watching us from the wings, waiting to be offered perfect graduate with “that certain spark” (Beverland, 2012, p.47)?

Were we failing to effectively stimulate our students into being ‘performative learners’, did we care more about their futures; were we more invested in the profession than they were?

Trying to understanding what motivates our student goes hand in hand with the growing interest in the measurement of “learning outcomes” outside the classroom (Hoover, 2009). In his essay *The Millennial Muddle* (2009), Hoover contradicts claims cited by Howe & Strauss in *Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation* (2000).

The authors assigned them seven "core traits": special, sheltered, confident, team-oriented, conventional, pressured, and achieving . . . Their life mission will not be to tear down old institutions that don't work, but to build up new ones that do. (Hoover, 2009)

We wanted to believe it all. However, we were left struggling to equate *Millennials Rising* with the behaviours we were seeing in our students. Hoover (2009) identifies that “a competing narrative about students has developed. In it, more of them were anxious and depressed, and more were as self-centered and demanding as diners in a crowded restaurant”.

Jeannine C. Lalonde’s observation (Hoover, 2009) as assistant hall director at Boston College, was that her job was not only to support students, but also to challenge them.

Yet some students, who seemed to see themselves as customers, did not want those challenges — they wanted problems solved for them. “I was seeing many of these positive things, but I was also confused by all the entitlement I was seeing. (Hoover, 2009)

Perhaps to prepare graphic design students for the ‘business of design’, we would need more effective signposts, with enticing journeys to overtly attractive career destinations?

As educators we know that re-shaping the graphic design curriculum to deliver experiences that meets the needs of all stakeholders is involved and elaborate. With a summer break in hand we could only start “to consider economic, political, historical, social, and cultural factors” (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996) required to underpin the type of substantial curriculum reform required to transform our students learning and development.

Our scenario

By the close of the academic year in 2012, we were made acutely aware of the international paradigm shift in institutional rhetoric, both fee-paying students and tertiary managers respectively demanded and promised, higher value vocational relevance from investment in tertiary education.

Responding to these challenges we identified the need to develop a teaching model that could provide high quality collaborative and vocational experience for our students. One that evaluated curriculum and currency of practice, but also sought greater connectivity and vocational support between academy and industry.

Acknowledging that the “desire for a new partnership between education and professional practice is an on-going and relevant discussion that continues to intensify” (Buchanan, 1998), we set about developing a blended learning and teaching model that sought to engage our students, modified conventional course structures and re-positioned “the general metaphor of the studio” (Clinton & Reiber, 2010) cited in Cennamo & Brandt (2012, p.842).

Recognising that teaching and learning is a continuous journey which need not be “formalized within a timeframe of a formal education but as a constant state of being”, liberates both educators and students. The idea that the ‘studio’ experience “can be like a nested network on its own, connecting institutes, profession, business and society.,” offers new and ‘fluid’ counterpoints to evolve and deliver curricula, ones which connect and motivate our students for a “supercomplex world” (Pos, n.d.).

The Rhetoric: The fundamental transformation of Higher Education

As design educators we are continuously challenged by emergent transformative practices of the creative industry. It is self-evident that a multitude of internal and external, local and

global economic, structural, social and cultural influences and policies that are shaping our design programmes. The “higher education sector is undergoing a fundamental transformation in terms of its role in society, mode of operation, and economic structure and value” (Ernst & Young, 2012, p.4).

Significant change to undergraduate programmes is routinely orchestrated and aggressively actioned with universities in Australasia responding to the “need to significantly streamline their operations and asset base, at the same time as incorporating new teaching and learning delivery mechanisms, a diffusion of channels to market, and stakeholder expectations for increased impact” (Ernst & Young, 2012, p.4).

Like many American counterparts, our institution is adopting a more fluid and flexible model of tertiary education delivery, “it’s estimated that adjuncts constitute more than forty per cent of all instructors at American colleges and universities”. Our reality was already a restructured department with significantly reduced tenured appointments, with “the rest ... filled by “experts” drawn from industry” (Cumming, 2013).

In this type of shape shifting environment, how could we form a teaching collaboration between academy and industry that embraced some of the principals of ‘convergence’ (the coming together of students, staff and professionals across faculties to work on projects, undertake research and learn from one another) without undermining the value of tenured roles?

To ensure that we didn’t exploit our “experts” and peers from creative industry and practice, we needed a value proposition that could meaningfully engage and collaborate with the profession in a way that wasn’t founded on recruitment or economic transaction.

For our sector partners (many of whom were successful alumni), the value proposition was one of manifold reciprocity. Industry professionals could directly shape curricula and inform assessment, influence student experience and capability development, and allow the ‘preflighting’ of potential graduates for internship and employment opportunities.

What are creative industries looking for?

According to the New Zealand Government, career opportunities for our students were looking relatively positive, “Two years after completion of a Bachelors degree in graphic and design studies, 72% of graduates were employed and 17% were in further study. This compares to 64% employed and 30% in further study for all graduates with a bachelors degree” (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, 2015).

But what did the future needs of the creative industries look like in New Zealand? The common finding and signal for the creative industries by the Alliance Sector Skill Council, (2011) was the call for graduates with “hybrid skills” (as cited in Creative Arts Qualification Review Needs Analysis Report, 2013).

These hybrid-skills (Alliance Sector Skill Council, 2011) included:

- Multi-skilling (understanding different technology platforms and their impact on content development and digital work flow and new approaches to working in cross-functional creative/technical teams within and across companies);
- Multi-platform skills (having the creative and technical skills to produce content for distribution across all potential platforms and the ability to understand and exploit technological advances);
- Management, leadership, business and entrepreneurial skills;

- IP and monetarisation of multiplatform content (understanding intellectual property legislation to protect from piracy, exploiting intellectual property internationally to take advantage of emerging markets);
- Sales and marketing;
- Diagonal thinking skills;
- Creative skills;
- Archiving of digital content.

Clearly new initiatives in education were going to be required — and we would be playing catch-up. Internationally, institutions and programmes were already leading collaborative inter- and multi-disciplinary studio environments and projects demonstrating a new level of integration that superseded both the liberal arts and specialised discipline models.

Collaboration in various forms (inter-, multi-, trans-disciplinary) claimed to be the preferred working model for future designers (e.g. Bennett, 2009; Ligon & Fong, 2009; Davis, 2011; Hunt, 2011). This begs the questions: What kind of designer is needed? More specifically, what depth or breadth of knowledge does the industry require of a young designer or design graduate to successfully participate in a contemporary work environment? And, furthermore, how can they be educated? (Fleischmann, 2014)

Trying to bridge the gap

Was it time for our specialist degree in Design and Visual Arts to be replaced by a new award that responded to new discourses, technological developments, social and environmental responsibilities?. Our institution and senior management certainly believed so, they had introduced a Bachelor of Creative Enterprise (BCE). Perhaps this new award could preserve the value of specificity and provide a multi-disciplinary design education that better serves employees needs for graduates with ‘hybrid skills’?

Meanwhile, we were interested in a new approach to professional practice based inputs, one that would intrinsically develop and flex students ‘hybrid skills’ through integral relationships with professionals in their workplace, participating in their methodologies, projects and critique. Friedman (2012) argues “that design graduates need two kinds of education: ‘One is specialty training in the advanced skills of a specific design practice. The other is a broad training that involves the kinds of thinking and knowledge designers need for a wide range of professional engagements’ ” (as cited in Fleischmann, 2014).

If economic structures, IT and business models had been the recent driver of curricula change, how could we incorporate the types of provocations and thinking that Sarah Stein Greenberg’s was sharing in *Radical Ideas for Reinventing College, From Stanford’s Design School* (2014) which place students at the centre of change?

Trying to measure the gap

The *Mind the gaps: The 2015 Deloitte Millennial Survey* seeks to highlight the discrepancy between what business values, skill sets and attributes our graduates believe they bring to employers after graduation and what capabilities business want in employees.

With the obvious exceptions of academic knowledge or intellectual ability, Millennials say they were stronger on “soft” attributes such as being professional, hard-working, flexible, and in possession of integrity and maturity. They were not as confident in their technical or specific business skills, including financial, economic, and general business knowledge; the ability to challenge or disrupt current thinking; the ability to create opportunity; sales and marketing; and similar talents. (Deloitte, 2015)

Recent graduates agree that upon graduation they did not have the “full range of skills, personal qualities, and experience” that today's employees and organizations require. Only 28 percent of Millennials feel that their current organizations are making “full use” of the skills they currently have to offer (Deloitte, 2015).

Reporting such as this triangulates with current reporting parallels across both international and New Zealand business contexts and further highlights employee needs for ‘hybrid skills’, that are “a combination of technical, business, creative and interpersonal skills to have the ability to successfully understand, navigate, use and meet the requirements of the current environment (NZQA National Qualifications Services, 2013).

When Millennials were asked what skill sets they would emphasise if they were leading businesses and hiring it was interesting to note that they would focus on “softer” and personal skills which aligns with the qualities that Millennials believe they brought to the table. “So, despite their acknowledgement that this may not be what businesses currently value, Millennials would overstate the merits of “personal traits such as integrity”, “flexibility and team working”, “professionalism” along with “creative thinking” (Deloitte, 2015).

The Deloitte Executive Summary (2015) recommendations propose that closer relationships between academics and business would potentially clarify assumptions on the currency of educational content and re-calibrate the location of students at the centre of change.

Location, location, location: situated graphic design education

As academies grapple with the hydra-like conditions impacting the future scope of graphic design education, there have been a number of innovative models trialed, that are useful to introduce.

Many of the initiatives we examined had resources and networks in place to cultivate collaborative inter- and multi-disciplinary studio environments and projects that went beyond our initial ambition to situate graphic design education within professional domains of practice, to “actively encourage students to develop empathy, optimism and integrative thinking” (Edwards-Vandenhoeck & Sandbach, 2013).

Cross-institutional collaboration such as *Global Studio* which involves teams of students from a UK University and international Universities, “the *Global Studio* responds to shifting trends taking place in design practice with regards the emergence of globally networked organisations and the inherent shift in ways of working” (Ghassan & Bohemia, 2013).

Responding to alumni calls to address a need “for more integrated, interdisciplinary, and hands-on educational experiences for students” (Shadinger & Deborah, 2014), North West Missouri University introduced their *Knacktive* model which employs highly selected groups of undergraduate students to “replicates the intense teamwork atmosphere of a technology-

oriented, professional marketing communication agency” (Shadinger & Deborah, 2014). During the *Knacktive* experience, student-led teams conduct market research, analyze data, write creative strategies, and ultimately develop an integrated, digital, marketing communication campaign and promotional materials for a ‘real-world’ client. While University of Western Sydney (UWS) *Rabbit Hole* aligns closely with the intent we had to develop a model that “incorporates participatory design methods and work integrated learning” and facilitate a studio experience “that is both student-centred and client-focused, with the teaching team providing opportunities for students to work on real life design projects with community bodies and industry partners, with an emphasis on design advocacy and professional engagement” (Edwards-Vandenhoeck & Sandbach, 2013).

The rise of professional vocational training

Whilst we have identified situated learning models that straddle and negotiate the interdependence of education and research/industry, we pondered what other models challenged or augmented the traditional location of graphic design education within the academy?

In a *Network society and a sustainable design education*, Pos argues that:

ambitious students and young designers make use of the global network by studying abroad or applying for apprentice worldwide. Their mobility by using the digital or the (public) transport network makes them like ‘journeyman’ in the medieval guild system. A professional whose work isn’t at mastery level yet and travels to gather experience in a wide range of his profession. (n.d.)

While what briefly follows below is in no way a definitive record, our initial survey of subscription models within private practice reveals a wide range of online, web-based, blended and face-to-face offerings marketed within the spectrum of professional vocational training.

The adoption of non-credentialed skills is being met by a significant number of learning communities for creators, Skillshare.com pride themselves on nearly “1 million skillshare students” with a mission statement set on “dismantling the traditional barriers to learning so that anyone, anywhere in the world, can learn whatever they set their minds to” (Unlocking the World's Creativity, 2015).

The pedagogical platform for many of these these initiatives is varied when reviewing *Udemy* for PC Magazine, William Fenton touches on some of their distinctive characteristics:

Online education suffers from something of an embarrassment of riches. With platforms as varied as Khan Academy, Udacity, Coursera, and edX, learners can enroll in just about any course that sparks curiosity, and often at no cost. But what about learners who also want to share their expertise? Whereas platforms like Coursera and edX curate courses from universities, and Udacity and Khan Academy host their own content, Udemy (free) is unique because it allows any user to act as either learner or instructor. (2015)

Meanwhile, Australian-based design school Tractor (<http://www.tractor.edu.au>), “an independent design school created by designers for designers”, is leveraging their relationship with The Design Kids (<http://thedesignkids.com.au>), an active online design community of

30,000+ 'emerging' Australasian designers, who work with students and graduates to offer industry knowledge, exposure and opportunities through events and online resources.

In contrast independent named designers are leveraging their brands to offer alternative vocational educational experience ranging from James Victore web presence (<http://www.jamesvictore.com>) to the bespoke co-located studio-based experience offered at Studio Catherine Griffiths (<http://www.catherinegriffiths.co.nz>).

Then there are well-known marquee graphic designers unflinchingly sharing their perspectives on education and practice through internationalised professional conference programmes and web-forums, arguably the most well known being Stefan Sagmeister.

Not that global reach is required to project firm opinions, Holger Jacobs (both professor of typography and principal of Mind Design, <http://www.minddesign.co.uk>), offers frank insight into a range of designerly concerns and provocations regarding preparation for industry.

Why do so many graduates still feel the need for more experience? Are the colleges not responsible for preparing students for 'real life'? Small studios are not a training camp for the big world . . . Forget about internships, get real, find some clients, start working, start making mistakes, start enjoying your achievements. (Jacobs, 2011)

LiveStudio: An emerging pedagogy

Our role in LiveStudio has been to re-set the conditions for 'experiential learning' and to facilitate student negotiation of the effectiveness of their individual practice. Students are evaluated not on what they know about a particular subject/discipline but the manner in which they practice it. Ongoing formative feedback operates throughout the LiveStudio course of practical study which provides opportunity and incentive for students to become self aware and responsible for their own insights.

Blended learning modes of delivery including web-based forums, face to face meetings, small group tutorials, site based presentations and peer-to-peer critique facilitate continuity and engagement for independent learning.

Studio Practice: Graphic Design & Animation, is the Level 7 undergraduate course (BDVA) that provides the pedagogical platform for LiveStudio. This 30 credit, practitioner focused course is predicated on the belief "that acquiring knowledge through practice is dispositional. This performative knowledge is in part, acquired through practice, through repetition and imitation and active experimentation. Practical knowledge is acquired as much by example as by discursive instruction.

Thus while the programme not only aspires to relevance in addressing the accelerating changes faced by 'networked' society it also aims to frame a heuristic learner-centred pedagogy in which students take responsibility for their direction of personal development. By means of the project-method a highly motivated 'focal' interest ensures practice with those particular 'subsidiary' application and skills necessary for a holistic project resolution." (BDVA Programme Document, 2008, p.17)

Socio-cultural theories continue to underpin new developments in teaching and learning, which reaffirmed the type of pedagogical experience a 'live studio' model needed to foster. John-Steiner & Mahn (1998, p.16) focus on three central tenets from Vygotsky's complex legacy, social sources of individual development, semiotic mediation, and genetic analysis,

“and have presented an argument for viewing learning as distributed, interactive, contextual, and the result of the learners' participation in a community of practice.”

Communities of practice are of course not isolated; they are part of broader social systems that involve other communities (as well as other structures such as projects, institutions, movements, or associations). So the social world includes myriad practices; and we live and learn across a multiplicity of practices. (Wenger, 2010, p.3)



Figure 1 Students pitch design concepts to Special Group creatives, Heath Lowe & Emma Kanuik. Source: K. Meek.

The principles and structure of ‘communities of practice’ supported the ambition we had for a tripartite collaboration between academic institution, the design profession and our students that would authentically foster professional cross-sector contexts for student development.

LiveStudio: Testing a framework

With an emphasis on co-participation and cooperative learning we adopted small collaborative groups and maintained project-based web platforms accessible to peers, staff and design studio partners throughout the duration of LiveStudio. Web-based forums were used for online critique, feedback and resource hosting using web-based tools such as WordPress, Pinterest, Moodle, Instagram and Facebook.

“Students are required to give oral presentations on their projects,” engage more in group feedback to foster collective knowledge and “attend to their written communicative `skills’ and develop self-monitoring capacities” (Barnett, 2000, p.261).

Students also enrol into 15 credit *Practice in Context* course and are required to produce a research methods framework which informs a ‘Project Document’ that is a critical component of LiveStudio coursework. Parallel guest speaker programmes were introduced to expose students to research methods and social and cultural contexts.

“The notion of experiential learning, which is embedded within Studio learning, is predicated upon the practical integration of pure and applied knowledge and the interdependence of theory and practice” (BDVA Programme Document, 2008, p.13).

Introducing LiveStudio 1.0

LiveStudio is an initiative developed to facilitate engagement with design sector industry partners, coordinating a range of professional experiences ranging across work integrated learning (WIL), internships, negotiated studies, studio collaborations, through to project partnerships.

LiveStudio connects students to a network of work integrated learning experiences through external partnering. Partnering is initiated, brokered and coordinated through the extensive and long standing contacts and connections held by academic staff. The development and maintenance of industry relationships is integral to establishing the currency of LiveStudio and is an ongoing dialogue.

Learners are exposed to the processes, conventions and systems of industry professional practice through experiencing project work-flows driven by industry professionals and supported by academic staff.

LiveStudio non-residential structure allows for industry partners to contribute in a hands-on way (but on their own terms) to the active development of work-ready creative talent through learning experiences, contribution to assessment and moderation processes and identification of potential interns or future employees.

As academics this model allows us to research and rethink the future of practitioner (graphic design) focused education as we test a model that challenges ‘the gap’ between academy and industry. LiveStudio also allows staff to be seen externally as professionally credible and to demonstrate currency within the creative industry sector. Enabling staff to further develop active stakeholder partnerships and opportunities for ongoing professional development and insight.

In 2013 and 2014 we selected LiveStudio partners from our network of professional relationships established from either our role as educators or from our research and professional “networks” (Rost, 2011). All of the partners we approached were interested in an open and inclusive educational structure which located the centre of learning within their design-led studio.

We were cognisant of the fact that we needed to pitch an “open structure” (Rost, 2011) that allowed partners to embed their own creative processes, content and methodologies. One that worked within business time frames, at their workspace, and with the hope that we could offer a tangible value exchange beyond investing in emerging designers and giving back via alumni connections.

LiveStudio partners

Industry partners, largely drawn from alumni, were invited to work on a schedule of industry focused projects through a programme of non-residential learning partnerships. Our partners developed ‘real world’ briefs in consultation with academic staff, engaged in an iterative series of reviews and student critiques.

Introducing LiveStudio to students in the first week of our semester revealed several key findings. Firstly, that the majority of our students had selected graphic design because Visual Arts and Design had been the subject they had performed best at in secondary school and secondly because they perceived it as a subject where they didn't have to read or undertake written exams. In both 2013 and 2014, barely 10% of our students had been to visit a design-led studio and only seven could name their dream studio job. By getting them to identify their strengths and interests we were able to place the students into the following practice/content areas; Brand Identity, Editorial Design, Interactive Design, Illustration and Motion Graphic Design.

- 2013 Industry Participants 2013 (teamed with 53 GDA students)
Fairfax Media, Inhouse, Federation, gardyneHOLT, Special Group, Waxeye, Fuman, Supply.
- 2014 Industry Participants (teamed with 43 GDA students)
Special Group, Waxeye, Fuman, Supply, Milk, Threaded, AS Colour.

The LiveStudio process

Through a process of self-identification of personal and professional design interests, student were assigned to a LiveStudio groups. Unless otherwise told, they were working as a group of individuals, contributing to a 'community of practice' and responding to a brief as determined by their design agency partner.

Students were encouraged to; research the design agency they were going to; check out the location on a map before the day; take a pen and notebook; dress appropriately; ask questions, be themselves and be on time and perhaps consider bringing morning tea!

The development of a LiveStudio *Project Document* was initiated as a durable record of learning and was designed to ensure that all participating students acknowledge and understand the process and design methodologies implemented by our retrospective industry partners. Students were required to construct and design a definitive record of all creative phases and embed a reflective and reflexive discourse that communicates ideas, content, context, research and outcomes.

The *Project Document* draws from core design methodologies accounting for all phases of the project; including:

- Overview: Project Background, Client Background,
- Brief: Design Requirement, Design Deliverables,
- Research: Target Audience, Sector Insights (visuals),
- Brand: Purpose, Attitude, Positioning (keywords), Brand Story, Single Organising Idea (SOI), Moodboard (visuals),
- Design: Concepts, Artwork and Application.

Aside from briefing sessions and initial partner meetings students overall process involved:

- 2 weeks set for preparation of research into moodboards
- 4 weeks set for initial design concepts (2 of these are a mid-semester study break),
- 3 weeks set for preparation of finals,
- 1 week set for final production for assessment.

LiveStudio Case Study: Special Group (2013)

Special Group is a creatively led independent advertising and design agency based in New Zealand and Australia (<http://www.specialgroup.co.nz>).

Creative Director: Heath Lowe & Senior Designer and Alumni: Emma Kanuik

INDUSTRY BRIEF

Pineapples Pineapples Pineapples! Our challenge is to create the identity for the pineapples that are Good for the land, good for the growers, and good for you!

ELEMENTS REQUIRED:

- Identity for All Good Pineapples, considering type, colour, graphics and the ability to tie in with the All Good Umbrella.
- Label to appear on individual pineapples.
- Street poster or posters to communicate this new product.
- Tee-shirt.

WHO WE ARE TALKING TO:

- Existing All Good customers, who appreciate the fair trade principle.
- Likely to be a female household shopper.
- New customers who do not yet know of, or purchase All Good produce.

CREATIVE BRIEF SUMMARY:

- GET: Health and ethically conscious consumers.
- WHO: Appreciate 'good' produce and the All Good attitude.
- TO: Buy All Good's pineapples.
- BY: getting them excited about how tasty and delicious these pineapples are; as well as communicating the "good for the growers, good for the land and good for you" message.
- LIKE THIS: Attitudinal, innovative, exciting with a clear message.

MANDATORY:

- Must use the All Good Logo.
- Must work along side the All Good Banana's branding.

STUDENT PROJECT RESPONSE



Figure 2 All Good Pineapple brand ideation. Souce: J. Body.

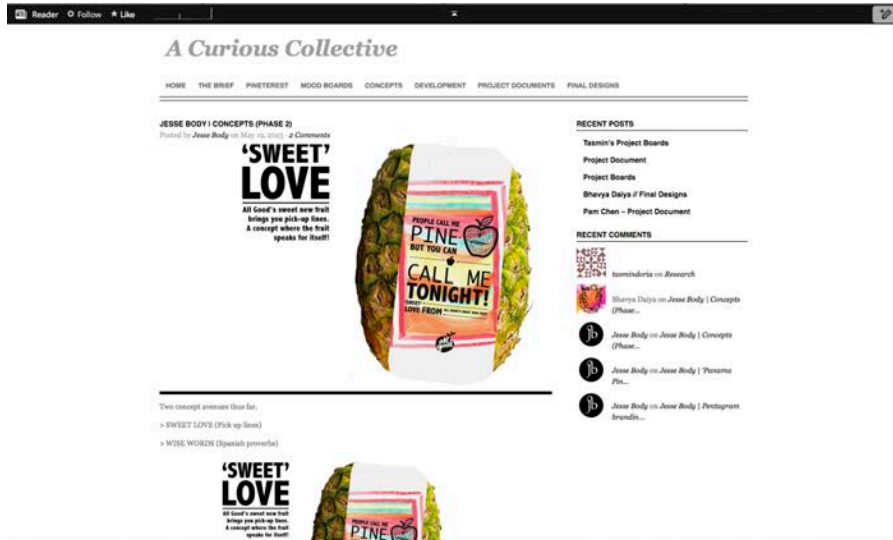


Figure 3 Online community of practice feedback. Souce: J. Body.



Figure 4 . All Good Pineapple packaging treatments. Souce: J. Body.

LiveStudio Case Study: Annabel Langbein (2014)

Milk is a strategic design communications agency. Their work changes outcomes for businesses and their brands (<http://www.milk.co.nz>).

Creative Director and Alumni: Ben Reid

INDUSTRY BRIEF:

Annabel Langbein is a New Zealand celebrity cook, food writer and publisher. She is also a regular radio guest and TV presenter, and has fronted her own TV series, Annabel Langbein The Free Range Cook, which launched on the TV One network in New Zealand and now screens in over eighty countries. She is known for promoting organic food, primarily using seasonal ingredients and is a member of the Sustainability Council of New Zealand.

CREATIVE OUTPUT

- Explore the Annabel Langbein brand architecture and brand language (style, voice, design, illustration, photography)
- Ensure your creative and narration captures and evokes Annabel's values (A free range life).
- Apply to a range of everyday home-wares products (Demonstrate how you might brand actual product, packaging, what materials you might use – think of economics and sustainability).

This is a range with critical commercial viability milestones – the product needs to sell. Use your own intuitive self-assessment and interrogate your work: Does it communicate, would I buy this, do I love it, is it distinctive, is it appropriate to its price point, and does it seem right for the Annabel Langbein brand.



Figure 5 LiveStudio project team being briefed in by Milk's Creative Director, Ben Reid. Source: K Meek.

STUDENT PROJECT RESPONSE

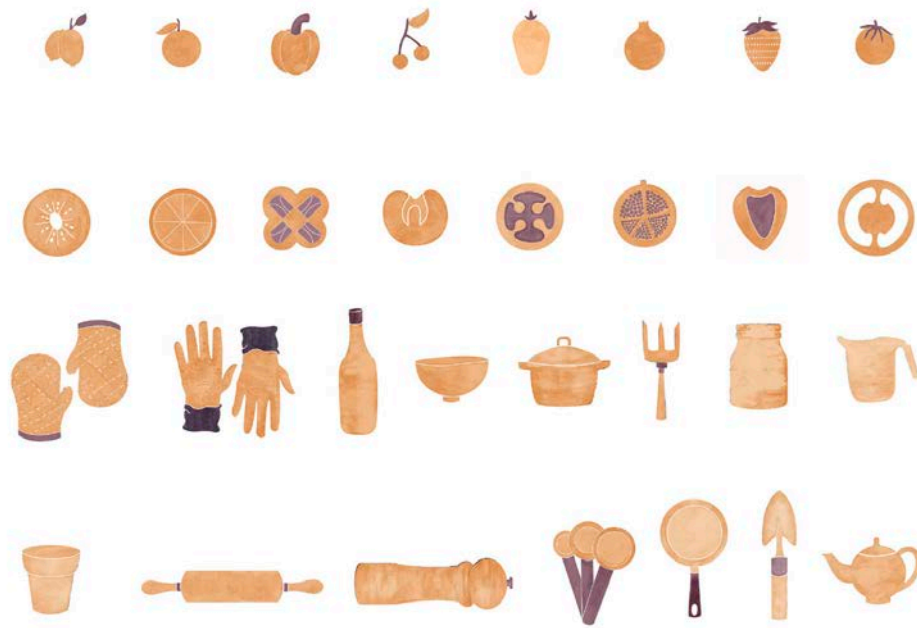


Figure 6 Annabel Langbein pattern concepts. Source: A. Apercho.



Figure 7 Annabel Langbein magazine and web landing page concepts. Source: A. Apercho.

LiveStudio: Student Reflection

A small scale online survey study was conducted seeking feedback from students on the most valuable aspects of working with a LiveStudio project. Student respondents highlighted aspects such as 'preparation for the real world' and 'development of time management skills', an 'increased work ethic', along with 'professional networking opportunities' that could extend beyond graduation.

Tellingly, students often questioned whether they were prepared for 'industry centred learning' and felt it was 'a large shift'. One that challenged their confidence and ability to manage timeframes, to develop the 'empathy' skills needed to design solutions that met the needs of their client, audience and target market.

There was value placed in receiving critique and constructive feedback from industry partners, but this new level of accountability coupled with a lack of 'real world experience' left many feeling 'lost and uncertain' calling for 'more frequent updates, meetings and emails'.

On reflection, students identified and described how commercial and professional priorities fostered new attention to research, timely execution of concepts and communication to clients as a positive creative shift in their design ability.

Several students commented on the transference of professional experience to their freelance work and how the incorporation of LiveStudio project outcomes into their portfolio enhanced their ability to get work.

When asked how the LiveStudio programme could be improved, students wanted to see situated learning imbedded earlier in their degree. With requests to incorporate 'professional conduct', 'industry based expectations', 'becoming better thinkers and makers', and to 'decide whether or not graphic design is the right calling for them' into the course.

Feedback suggests that students wanted more frequent updates from studio partners and clearer milestones as they struggled to 'set goals' for themselves, which left them feeling a more open to critique or unrealistic expectations.

More general feedback included learning to 'fit in', 'earning trust', 'keeping up with tasks', 'quickly learning new technical skills' and 'knowing the most efficient way of accomplishing things' along with 'being decisive in decision making'.

A number of our students subsequently gained substantial internships with LiveStudio partners. At completion students cited learning industry standards, processes and techniques, responding to fast deadlines, incorporation of feedback into design and need to ask questions and keep learning as core learning experiences they took away from their internship.

When asked to look back and identify the 'real' value of their internship, students noted that it 'reaffirmed their career aspiration in graphic design', 'improved their communication and technical skills', and 'enabled the development of professional networks'.

LiveStudio: Academic and Industry Reflection

From an educational perspective we are positive about the feedback from students who worked within the LiveStudio framework. Our intention to provide high quality collaborative and vocational experiences that fostered greater connectivity between students, academia and industry had motivated and engaged our students. Evidence from formative assessment

events to summative (end of semester) grades revealed improved performance and increased student retention.

In critique sessions, we noticed how the adoption of communities of practice galvanised students and increased 'peer to peer' mentoring and knowledge transfer. Students were now sharing research methods and actively participating in brainstorming and critique sessions.

Blended learning modes of delivery provided motivation for independent learning and we witnessed the emergence of "self-reliance" (Barnett, 2000, p.257) as students now had a richer range of forums with which to stay connected. This range of delivery approaches was more sympathetic to the diversity of student schedules and supported increased administrative and communication channels for collaborative learning.

The 2013 LiveStudio 'communities of practice' groups had been required to manage and publish Wordpress blogs to account for and share their process with peers, partners and lecturers. While the blog was a requirement in 2014, it was heavily impacted by staff resourcing issues, as this modality challenged our students and required close tutor supervision.

Noticeably, participating Industry partners across both case study years, were disappointed with the levels of professional engagement and group collaboration in 2014, leading us to re-assess the importance of online collaborative spaces and contribution to communities when working with non-residential industry partners.

The relocation of formal presentation and critiques into professional domains of practice necessitated new levels of communication, execution and presentation strategies. We witnessed the early development of 'soft' attributes, as students gained new levels of respect for receiving and responding to critical feedback.

Industry partners quickly identified the students in each group that were invested and responsive, these students were committed and eager to impress. Notably, in several instances strong initial concepts were presented by outlier learners, who were unable to resolve their ideas or manage an iterative progression systematically — a source of frustration for both industry partners and educators.

The intention of re-situating the learning environment in a professional domain was to encourage the unlocking of student performance from institutional administrative boundaries to open, free-flowing engagement aligned to our industry partners workflows. However, we frequently observed that the reality of a modular multi-course academic schedule curtailed this mode ideal, leading us to question the value of timetabled learning.

In the essay *Network society and a sustainable design education*, Pos argues "that the phenomena of the design-education based on a local institute with a hierarchical program structure and fixed time of study is an outdated concept. 21st century education can thrive from a fluid and dynamic non-linear and non-hierarchical network (n.d.)."

Interim provocations and speculative thinking

LiveStudio occupies a teaching space that sits between tutor-led design education and student-led design education (Ghassan & Bohemia, 2013), whereby the tutor is an active conduit facilitating learning experience from multiple viewpoints – translating, interpreting, dissecting, repeating, promoting, listening, inquiring – supporting decision making, fostering design process and feedback.

LiveStudio primarily centres on students taking responsibility for their own decisions through self-reliance and collaborative peer engagement. We construct this approach to give learners the opportunity of “dealing with uncertainty”. LiveStudio seeks to model the professional demands of “normal chaos” that are characteristic of contemporary studio design practice, but frequently found students struggling to navigate competing interdependent demands of communication, design process, problem solving and time-based tasks (Ghassan & Bohemia, 2013).

In reflection, are we now poised to develop a multi-disciplinary model that responds to business and institutional desire to foster ‘T shaped’ people more adaptive, collaborative and resilient to real world environment and an uncertain future?

A similar question has been anticipated in *Design futures—future designers: give me a ‘T’?*, while testing the POOL Model framework, an alternate learning and teaching model developed to facilitate the education of the T-shaped design student (Fleischmann, 2014, p.7). Fleischmann asks if undergraduate students can “learn the skills required for effective collaboration and thus develop a broad understanding of other disciplines while simultaneously continuing to develop their discipline-specific skills”.

CEO of IDEO, Tim Brown, has detailed his desire to only employ graduates with “nascent T-shaped potential”. According to Brown, T-shaped people have two kind of qualities:

The vertical stroke of the ‘T’ is a depth of skill that allows them to contribute to the creative process . . . The horizontal stroke of the ‘T’ is the disposition for collaboration across disciplines . . . T-shaped people have both depth and breadth in their skills. (Hansen, 2010)

In *Why we should talk to our neighbour*, Dauppe (1995) anticipates a similar need for greater development in graphic design education by recommending improved grounding in cultural and media studies, giving students the best chance of engaging in new discourse, that often speaks of social responsibility and ethical awareness.

Alternatively, could the establishment of a commercial studio staffed by academics, graduates and interns (albeit driven by 21st century pedagogical needs) offer graphic design services to internal and external clients? Powered by our Institution and partnered through academic, industry, and cultural linkages, this model would pursue both an academic research agenda and be a community facing, socially responsive project centre.

Professional vocational education is big business, LinkedIn recently announced its purchase of Lynda.com for \$1.5 billion in April 2015 (Sawers, 2015). Many of these options offer a membership based economic structure which must be an attractive option for students seeing the value of learning but set on bypassing significant or unsustainable student debt. Is membership based learning the future economic paradigm for education with associated badging acting as a discrete back channel to industry endorsement and ongoing professional development?

Or in stark contrast, given the challenges of delivering engaging education models to Millennials, should we dispense with timetables, campus based learning and face-to-face engagement and allow students to be at the centre of control to freely navigate powerfully disruptive offerings from the online learning sector.

Could the future of design education be as Pos (2011) suggests, “within a network-based structure, with talented people making use of all the connections and learning as well as teaching within fluid communities” with “the idea that education is not an isolated and

formalized state or commercial ‘product’, but part of the daily routine and incorporated within the networks of local and global society”.

High profile and venerable institutions globally are beginning to future-proof their legacies through speculative thinking. Specifically, can the on-campus experience be kept relevant in an era where online learning is becoming increasingly disruptive? Sarah Stein Greenberg, executive director of Stanford Design School, introduces one such provocation with *Open Loop University*, what would happen if we give “students six years of college to use whenever they wanted throughout their adult life” (Vanhemert, 2014)?

Speaking of the results of a purposeful year long workshop where staff and students authentically collaborated on behalf of the institution, Greenberg says, “We need to be training our students not just to expect that they will be society’s leaders, but also to be our most creative, daring, and resilient problem solvers” (Vanhemert, 2014).

When envisioning future developments beyond LiveStudio, we find ourselves immersed in new types of speculative thinking that both challenges and informs key aspects of our role as educator and practitioner.

LiveStudio presupposes that New Zealand educators can be leaders in designing emergent pedagogy for the creative industries. However, to explore and create new initiatives, the tertiary sector will need to have confidence to research and invest in the specificity of the local context, alongside integrating the best of international innovation.

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