SAMANTHA HORNING

CREATIVE DIRECTOR | BRAND STRATEGY, INTEGRATED MARKETING & STORYTELLING

CONTACT ME

PHONE: 908-720-4597

EMAIL: sam@horningmedia.com

samhorning.com

Plainfield, NJ
United States

EDUCATION

NEWARK SCHOOL OF FINE AND INDUSTRIAL ART
Advertising Design & Art History

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

SILVER DAVEY AWARD
Art Direction
Teach Me Something (2026)

COMMUNICATOR AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
Graphic Design
Teach Me Something (2026)

17 NEW JERSEY PRESS ASSOCIATION AWARDS
Publication Design, Graphic Design & Advertising Campaigns (1999-2008)

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Creative Director and integrated marketing leader with 20+ years of experience shaping brands, developing integrated campaigns, and creating audience-centered experiences across print, digital, social, web, video, out-of-home, and experiential channels. Proven record of translating organizational goals into impactful creative strategies that increase engagement, elevate brand visibility, and drive measurable results. Recognized for building collaborative partnerships with executive stakeholders, marketing teams, agency partners, content creators, and production teams to deliver cohesive, high-performing campaigns from concept through execution. Experience spans higher education, publishing, economic development, nonprofit organizations, and consumer-facing brands.

CORE EXPERTISE

Creative Strategy • Brand Development & Positioning • Creative Concept Development • Art Direction • Visual Storytelling • Editorial Leadership • Content Strategy • Integrated Marketing Campaigns • Marketing Communications • Digital & Social Marketing • Content Development • Public Relations • Audience Engagement • Experiential Marketing • Cross-Functional Leadership • Team Leadership • Creative Project Management • Vendor & Agency Management • Budget Oversight • Production Management

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

CREATIVE DIRECTOR | March 2026 – Present
GRAPHIC DESIGNER | December 2020 – February 2026
CREATIVE CONSULTANT | April 2016 – December 2020

Berkeley College

- Served as a trusted creative partner to Berkeley College for more than a decade, supporting institutional branding, enrollment marketing, academic programs, advancement initiatives, and major events.
- Provide creative leadership across institution-wide initiatives, partnering with marketing, communications, enrollment, web, and social teams to create a cohesive brand experience across channels.
- Lead creative development for integrated marketing campaigns across print, digital, social, web, video, email, and out-of-home media to support enrollment growth, academic visibility, and institutional brand awareness.

- Co-developed and launched Berkeley's multi-tier institutional marketing campaign, creating distinct but cohesive branding for Berkeley Kept Their Promise, I Can See Your Potential from Here, and People Behind the Promise.
- Led creative development and brand strategy for the award-winning Teach Me Something podcast in partnership with iHeartMedia.
- Develop social-first campaigns, creator partnerships, event branding, and audience engagement initiatives that increase institutional visibility and strengthen community connections.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Downtown Westfield Corporation | January 2023 – July 2025

- Directed organizational strategy, marketing communications, economic development initiatives, and stakeholder engagement for a downtown district representing more than 300 businesses.
- Developed integrated marketing campaigns across digital, social, public relations, email, print, and experiential channels, contributing to nearly 25,000 additional annual visitors.
- Brought social media management in-house, reducing annual expenses by $20,000 while increasing organic followers by more than 10%.
- Developed a localized Small Business Saturday campaign that became a model adopted by the Union County Department of Economic Development.
- Managed a $420,000 annual budget and led volunteer committees focused on promotions, design, organizational development, and economic vitality.

FOUNDER & CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Horning Media LLC | January 2009 – Present

- Lead a multidisciplinary creative studio delivering brand strategy, integrated marketing, editorial design and, engagement solutions, guiding client projects from positioning and concept development through production and launch.
- Art direct, design, and produce Jersey's Best for NJ Advance Media, overseeing approximately 144 pages per edition across multiple annual issues.
- Partnered with Palm Beach State College communications leadership to develop institutional campaigns and launch PBSC Today.
- Founded and published BluPrint Quarterly, a full-color community publication distributed to 55,000 households, leading a four-person team and overseeing editorial planning, design, production, advertising, and distribution.
- Directed the transformation of Downtown Linden's Special Improvement District into Uptown Linden through brand identity development, marketing, and website creation; helping establish its brick-and-mortar location; and supporting programming for its downtown amphitheater.

GRAPHIC DESIGNER & ART DIRECTOR
The Star-Ledger / NJ.com / NJ Advance Media | July 1999 – December 2008

- Led art direction, visual storytelling, editorial design and production for consumer and niche publications including The Bridal Planner, New Jersey Sophisticate, and Streetscapes.
- Contributed to the organization's transition from traditional print publishing to digital-first media; earned 17 New Jersey Press Association Awards for publication design, advertising campaigns, and visual communication.

TECHNOLOGY AND PLATFORMS

ADOBE CREATIVE CLOUD
InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator, Express

AI & GENERATIVE TOOLS
ChatGPT, Adobe Firefly, Midjourney

EMAIL MARKETING PLATFORMS
MailChimp, Constant Contact

PRODUCTIVITY AND PRESENTATION
Microsoft 365, PowerPoint, Google Workspace

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

NOBLE DESKTOP
Video Editing & Motion Graphics Certificate