



MARCUS TOLBERT

Copywriter

Creative director with 17 years leading copy-led teams across agency, in-house, and consultancy environments. Built and run pods of 8 to 22 writers and designers serving Fortune 500 brands in tech, automotive, and QSR. Equally comfortable in the pitch room, the edit bay, and a Q4 budget review.

Location

Austin, TX

Phone

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Email

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Education

B.A., Journalism, Northwestern University, 2007

VCU Brandcenter, Copywriting Track, 2009

Key Skills

- Creative department leadership
- P&L and account growth
- Hiring and team development
- Brand platforms and positioning
- Integrated campaign vision
- New business pitching
- Production oversight
- C-suite partnership
- Agency operations
- Coaching ACDs and CDs

Professional Experience

Group Creative Director, Verdane Creative Partners, Austin, TX

2020 - Present

- Run a 22-person creative department across two offices, with annual billings of roughly \$18M.
- Led the global launch of an EV sub-brand, with the hero film earning 47M paid views and lifting test-drive bookings by 22% in the launch market.
- Rebuilt the agency's creative review process, shaving an average of 11 days off campaign turnaround.
- Won and grew the QSR account from a single project into a retainer worth \$4.2M in year two.
- Hired and developed three associate creative directors, two promoted from senior copywriter inside 18 months.

Executive Creative Director, In-House, Lumitrace Software, Austin, TX

2017 - 2020

- Built the in-house creative function from three contractors to a 14-person team covering brand, campaigns, and product marketing.
- Owned voice and creative for an IPO roadshow that contributed to a \$1.6B raise.
- Set the brand system and launch campaign for a new developer product line that hit ARR targets two quarters early.
- Partnered with the CMO on annual marketing planning and presented creative at four board meetings.
- Cut external agency spend by about a third by bringing campaign work in-house.

Creative Director, Holloway & Pike, Chicago, IL

2014 - 2017

- Led copy and concept on accounts in finance, telecom, and CPG, with a creative pod of eight.
- Concepted the Super Bowl spot that landed the agency in USA Today's top 10 ad meter that year.
- Sold through a long-form brand documentary that earned a Cannes shortlist in Branded Content.
- Built the agency's first formal portfolio review program for junior staff.

Associate Creative Director, Copy, Brightline & Co, Chicago, IL

2011 - 2014

- Led copy on a national telecom account, partnering with an ACD art director on integrated campaigns.
- Wrote and produced the brand anthem that opened the account's flagship Q4 push.
- Coached a team of five writers and ran the agency's weekly book club for craft development.

- Helped win three new business pitches as the copy lead in the room.