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# MICHAEL JANDA

EXECUTIVE LEVEL CREATIVE LEADER

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**Address and phone number  
available upon email request.**

me@michaeljanda.com  
www.michaeljanda.com

## **TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:**

I am an executive level creative leader with more than 20 years of experience in both in-house creative departments and agencies working with some of the greatest brands in the world.

I founded the creative agency, Riser, in 2002. Riser was a nationally recognized agency creating high-profile work for clients including Disney, Google, ABC, Fox, Warner Bros., NBC, TV Guide, National Geographic, YouTube, and numerous other notable companies. Producing topflight work with exceptional customer service, Riser grew significantly including annual revenue increases of 94% in 2006, 33% in 2008, 36% in 2011 and 117% in 2012. Our three year growth rate of 235% in 2013 resulted in a ranking on Inc. 5000 (#1657). Riser's work quality and successful business practices yielded some of the most coveted awards in the industry including Webbys, FWA, Awwwards, AIGA and Addys. Riser is also one of Utah's most decorated Best of State award winners with 16 medals and one Best of State Statue.

In 2015, I sold Riser to a competing Utah marketing agency named Eli Kirk where I became one of four partners at the agency and its Chief Creative Officer. Following the acquisition I orchestrated a rebrand of the agency as EKR. With our new brand in place and following a revised strategic direction for the company, EKR realized 42% annual revenue growth in our first year as a combined agency and our 70% three year growth resulted in a listing on the Inc. 5000 in 2017 (#4018) and 2018 (#4769). In collaboration with the other partners, we successfully migrated Riser's clients and acquired new notable clients including Google, National Geographic, ABC, Intel and Netflix.

In addition to my robust experience managing creative and marketing teams, I am the author of the book, Burn Your Portfolio: Stuff they don't teach you in design school, but should. Since its publication in 2013, Burn Your Portfolio has been one of the top selling books in the industry and has been published in English, Russian, Chinese Traditional and Chinese Simplified. Burn Your Portfolio's success has resulted in opportunities to be a keynote speaker at AIGA, Advertising Federation and University events across the nation. In addition to these events I was a keynote speaker at HOW Design Live in Atlanta in 2016 and Boston in 2018, the headline speaker at the 2018 Behance Portfolio Review in Moscow and a keynote speaker at a national event for Mercedes-Benz.

Since 2007, I have served as an advisor to several agencies helping them position themselves in their market, develop business systems and navigate growth. Additionally, I spent five years on the advisory board of Stevens-Henagar College and four years on the advisory board of the Art Institute of Salt Lake City.

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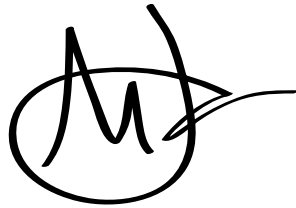
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My work and business have been featured by Print Magazine, HOW Magazine, Utah Business Magazine and BusinessQ Magazine, where I donned the cover of the December 2012 issue highlighting their article for “Utah’s Coolest Entrepreneurs.”

On a personal note, I live in Utah with my wife and three sons. We are “beach people” and regularly find ourselves laying in the sun at our favorite place on earth, Kauai’s north shore. During my early 20’s I lived in Colombia for two years and speak fluent Spanish. I play guitar and piano. I bench pressed 300 pounds on my 40th birthday. I’ve been to the top of Machu Picchu. I hold a first degree black-belt in karate and I have a multigenerational, genetic love for the Chicago Bears.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'M' and 'J' intertwined, with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Michael C. Janda

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# MICHAEL JANDA

EXECUTIVE LEVEL CREATIVE LEADER

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I am a veteran creative leader with more than 20 years of in-house and agency experience. Following service as a Senior Creative Director at Fox Studios, I founded the award-winning creative agency, Riser. In 2015, I sold Riser and became a partner of EKR where I served as its Chief Creative Officer for two years. I have a proven track record of growing businesses through marketing and creative services.

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- EKR**  
**Provo, Utah**  
Partner &  
Chief Creative Officer  
2015 – 2018
- Following sale of my agency, Riser, became partner of acquiring agency, Eli Kirk.
  - Orchestrated rebrand of the company as EKR.
  - Strategized with other partners on company direction, policies, practices leading to 42% annual revenue growth in 2016 and three growth rate of 70% in 2017 which resulted in a ranking on Inc. 5000 in both 2017 (#4018) and 2018 (#4769).
  - Transitioned Riser clients to EKR and assisted in closing new clients including Google, ABC, National Geographic and Netflix.
  - Implemented systematic proposal and contracting processes resulting in improved scope accuracy, pricing and adherence.
  - Collaborated with other partners to mentor, train and manage 76 person team.
  - Guided company to 17 Best of State Medals and 1 Best of State Statue.
- RISER**  
**Pleasant Grove, UT**  
Founder, CEO &  
Executive Creative Director  
2002 –2015
- Grew from single freelancer to full-service creative agency employing 72 team members over the lifetime of the company.
  - Expanded client list to include Disney, Google, Fox, NBC, ABC, Warner Bros., YouTube, National Geographic, HBO, Kraft Foods, Pepsi, Hulu, Sony, FX Networks and others.
  - Navigated agency through 1,653 completed projects across 13 years.
  - Negotiated and fulfilled monthly retainers with NBC, AOL, TV Guide and ABC Family.
  - Fulfilled single project engagements ranging from \$5,000 to \$540,000
  - Generated a 31% average annual profit margin over 13 years with no unprofitable years.
  - Navigated company through extreme annual revenue growth including 93% in 2006, 33% in 2008, 36% in 2011 and 117% in 2012. Three year growth rate of 235% in 2013 resulted in a ranking on Inc. 5000 (#1657).
  - Implemented policies for sales, human resources, accounting and production.
  - Received notable industry and business awards including Webby Awards, FWA, Awwwards, AIGA, Addy, Promax/BDA and Utah's Best of State (x17).
  - Recognized for personal business achievements as one of "Utah's top 40 Under 40" and "Utah's Coolest Entrepreneurs" in BusinessQ Magazine.
  - Purchased, designed and managed the construction of a beautiful studio space.
  - Orchestrated sale of Riser in 2015 to a competing agency, Eli Kirk.
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**FOX STUDIOS****Century City, CA**

Senior Creative Director

2000 – 2002

- Acted as part of the senior management team to strategize and execute on corporate initiatives to expand reach of Fox Kids and Fox Family brands.
- Led design, editorial and development teams (40+ people) to execute on the creation of television show websites, games and interactive advertising.
- Implemented and managed production and approval processes.
- Created robust style guides for FoxKids.com and Fox Family interactive brands.
- Ideated advertising placement strategies and creating sales collateral materials.
- Negotiated contracts and managed external creative agencies and freelancers.

**FUTECH INTERACTIVE****Phoenix, AZ**

Creative Director

1998 – 2000

- Original creator, designer and developer of oKID.com one of the world's first fully interactive website destinations for kids.
- Hired and managed design, content and technology teams (20+ people).
- Provided creative direction, design and production management of all online games, cartoons, content and user interface environments.
- Provided technology strategy for development and hardware.
- Prepared and delivered presentations to investors and affiliate partners.



Google



NETFLIX

hulu



Disney

You Tube



RADIO Disney

FOX

HBO



Tropicana

abc family

BRATZ

FOX KIDS

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**BURN YOUR PORTFOLIO, A BOOK BY MICHAEL JANDA (2013)**

In 2013 my book, Burn Your Portfolio: Stuff they don't teach you in design school, but should, was published by Pearson Education. Burn Your Portfolio teaches the real-world practices, professional do's and don'ts, and unwritten rules of business that most creative professionals only learn after putting in years of experience on the job. Since its release, Burn Your Portfolio has been published in English, Russian, Chinese Traditional and Chinese Simplified and is one of the top selling design books in the creative industry.

**Publisher:** Pearson Education**Paperback:** 400 pages**Languages:** English, Russian, Chinese Traditional, Chinese Simplified**Booksellers:** Barnes & Noble, Amazon and many others**ISBN-10:** 0-321-91868-1**ISBN-13:** 978-0-321-91868-0

## TESTIMONIALS

“From both a personal and professional perspective, Mike Janda is simply one of the best people I’ve worked with. His pride in his work is unparalleled, as is his flexibility and professionalism. As a vendor contracted by ABC.com, he’s guided his team through tight deadlines and shifting specs to produce top-flight work, creatively and technically strong. Mike is a go-to guy.”

— Larry Terenzi, Associate Director, ABC.com

“Michael Janda and his agency are a pleasure to work with. They deliver excellent work with zero complications- there’s no agency with a better work ethic and customer service attitude. 100% of their work has been done remotely, and we’ve never had any issues with communication or delivery...my go-to agency when I need something done well and done right– highly recommended.”

— Marc Siry, SVP, Media Product, NBC Universal

“Michael and his company Riser are not only super-creative, they are total professionals. Communication is a big reason why Michael and his team are so successful at what they do. They are good at not only listening to a client who is not a designer and is trying to convey the details of a project, but also on working with the client to get the job done well, on time, and also on budget.”

— Melissa Van Meter, VP, Marketing & Advertising, TV Guide Network

## ADVISORY BOARDS & COMMITTEES

For more than ten years I have brought value to several organizations in an advisory capacity. My contributions include consultation and training in business, finance, marketing, operations, customer service and curriculum.

- Thrive Creative Group (2007 – Present)
- Stevens-Henagar College (2011 – 2016)
- Art Institute of Salt Lake City (2010 – 2014)

## KEYNOTE & PUBLIC SPEAKING

- Student Lectures: Numerous national universities including Southern Mississippi University, Utah Valley University, Brigham Young University, Austin Peay State University, Middle Tennessee State and others.
- Industry Keynote: HOW Design Live 2016 and 2018
- Behance Portfolio Review Moscow 2018
- Corporate Keynote: Mercedes-Benz 2016
- National Webinar: Graphic Artists Guild 2014
- Numerous AIGA Events and Ad Fed Events

## NOTABLE RECOGNITION

- Print Magazine
- HOW Magazine
- BusinessQ Magazine Cover
- BusinessQ 40 Under 40
- Utah Business Magazine

**Inc.**  
**5000**



**HOW**

**THE**  
**WEBBY**  
AWARDS

**AIGA**

**FWA**

**PRINT**



**AAF**

## HIGHLIGHTED AWARDS

- Inc. 5000
- Webby Awards
- FWA Award
- Awwwards
- Addy Awards
- AIGA Awards
- Utah’s Best of State x35

## EDUCATION

Indiana University, 1996  
Bachelor Degree, Studio Art

## PERSONAL

- Married 22 years, three sons
- Playing Guitar and Music
- Travel and Beaches
- Weightlifting and Exercise
- Black Belt in Karate
- Fluent in Spanish and English