

John Forsht

SENIOR BRAND & CREATIVE EXECUTIVE

📞 831 869-9829

✉️ johnforsht@outlook.com

📍 Monterey CA,

🌐 [LinkedIn]

Dear Hiring Manager,

I became a designer because I love solving problems creatively and helping ideas come to life. Today, I still approach every challenge through that same lens, whether I'm refining a logo, shaping a brand, or leading a team of designers, marketers, photographers, videographers, writers, and digital content creators.

Before I was leading creative organizations, building brand strategies, or transforming marketing operations, I was a designer, obsessed with typography, composition, color, and the little details that most people never notice but somehow always feel. That foundation has stayed with me throughout my career. Even today, whether I'm reviewing a logo, walking through a photoshoot, evaluating packaging, or looking at a website, I still see the work through a designer's eyes first.

Somewhere along the way, I realized I enjoyed building creative teams just as much as creating the work itself.

I've had the privilege of leading multidisciplinary creative teams spanning graphic design, branding, photography, video production, social media, web design, UX, email marketing, content development, and creative operations. Together, we've transformed brands, modernized marketing organizations, and built the systems, workflows, and collaborative culture that allow exceptional creative work to happen consistently.

What I enjoy most is helping talented people do their best work. Creative leadership isn't about sitting in an office approving layouts. It's about staying connected to the work, understanding the challenges your team faces, and creating an environment where creativity can thrive. I'm just as comfortable discussing brand strategy with executive leadership as I am art directing a photoshoot, reviewing concepts with a designer, or brainstorming ideas around a conference table.

One area I'm especially interested in right now is the impact AI is having on creative organizations. I enjoy exploring emerging tools and finding practical ways they can increase team capacity, improve efficiency, and accelerate content development. The ability to do more with the same resources is a meaningful advantage, but successful implementation still requires creative leadership, strategic thinking, and sound judgment. Used thoughtfully, AI becomes a powerful force multiplier that helps teams move faster, innovate more freely, and deliver greater impact without compromising quality or authenticity.

I'm drawn to organizations that value creativity, innovation, collaboration, and continuous improvement. What excites me most about a new opportunity is the chance to help strengthen a brand, elevate creative capabilities, and build an environment where great work can flourish. I would welcome the opportunity to learn more about your team and discuss how my experience can contribute to your success.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to speaking with you.

Warm regards,

John Forsht



John Forsht

SENIOR BRAND & CREATIVE EXECUTIVE

Creative leader, brand builder, and organizational developer with a passion for design, storytelling, innovation, and helping teams accomplish exceptional work at scale.

Brand Builder • Creative Leader • Digital Transformation
Team Development • Marketing Innovation

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Senior Brand & Creative Executive with **31 years of experience** spanning agency and corporate environments, including **21 years of leadership** experience driving brand strategy, creative direction, digital transformation, integrated marketing, and creative operations for Excelligence Learning Corporation, a **\$500M+** leader in educational products serving educators nationwide through brands including Discount School Supply, Really Good Stuff, Steve Spangler Science, and Colorations.

A designer by training and creative leader by practice, combining expertise in graphic design, visual communications, brand identity development, customer experience, and marketing strategy with proven success building high-performing teams and scalable creative organizations. Recognized for transforming a catalog-centric marketing operation into a fully integrated multi-channel ecosystem encompassing e-commerce, website UX, email marketing, social media, Amazon marketplace merchandising, educational publishing, photography, video production, and direct marketing.

Known for balancing creative excellence with operational discipline, building collaborative teams, implementing scalable workflows, and leveraging emerging technologies—including generative AI—to improve efficiency, expand content capabilities, and strengthen customer engagement.

SIGNATURE CAREER ACHIEVEMENTS

Colorations® Brand Transformation

Led creative development and international rollout of the Colorations® “The Art of Learning™” brand platform, unveiled at the 2018 NAEYC Annual Conference and implemented across more than 1,200 products, packaging systems, catalogs, websites, and marketing touchpoints.

Discount School Supply Rebrand

Directed the 2016 rebrand of Discount School Supply, creating the visual identity system and brand framework that continues to define the organization’s market presence today.

Digital Commerce Transformation

Helped evolve Excelligence from a catalog-centric organization into a modern multi-channel marketing ecosystem spanning e-commerce, digital acquisition, website merchandising, email marketing, social media, and Amazon marketplace sales.

Organizational Development

Built and led a 25-person agency-style Creative Services organization supporting all customer-facing communications across multiple national brands and revenue-generating channels.

Studio Development

Designed and launched a professional two-bay photography and video production studio, enabling scalable in-house content creation and support for approximately 150 new product introductions per month.

Creative Operations Transformation

Researched, selected, implemented, and administered Wrike as the central operating platform for Creative Services, establishing standardized workflows, project visibility, asset archiving, resource planning, and operational consistency that enabled significant departmental scale and efficiency.

☎ 831 869-9829
✉ johnforsht@outlook.com
📍 Monterey CA,
Open to On-site and
Hybrid Opportunities
🌐 [LinkedIn]

CORE COMPETENCIES

Brand & Creative Leadership

- Brand Strategy & Positioning
- Creative Direction
- Graphic Design
- Art Direction
- Brand Identity Development
- Rebranding & Brand Refresh Initiatives
- Visual Systems Development
- Packaging Design
- Customer Experience Design
- Visual Storytelling
- Photography Direction
- Video Content Direction

Marketing & Growth

- Integrated Marketing Campaigns
- Product Marketing
- E-Commerce Merchandising
- Website Strategy & UX
- Digital Customer Acquisition
- Email Marketing
- Social Media Strategy
- Content Development
- Catalog Marketing
- Direct Mail Marketing
- Promotional Marketing
- Customer Engagement

Leadership & Operations

- Team Leadership & Development
- Creative Operations
- Workflow Design & Optimization
- Vendor & Agency Management
- Budget Administration
- Cross-Functional Collaboration
- Project Management Systems
- Marketing Innovation
- Technology Adoption
- AI-Assisted Content Development

John Forsht

SENIOR BRAND & CREATIVE EXECUTIVE

Creative leader, brand builder, and organizational developer with a passion for design, storytelling, innovation, and helping teams accomplish exceptional work at scale.

Brand Builder • Creative Leader • Digital Transformation
Team Development • Marketing Innovation

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Leadership & Organizational Development

- Built and led a full-service agency-style Creative Services organization of more than 25 professionals, including dedicated teams supporting print design, web design, content development, email marketing, social media, photography, video production, and production services.
- Managed five direct-report team leaders responsible for specialized creative disciplines and department-wide execution.
- Partnered with executive leadership, marketing, merchandising, product development, e-commerce, and sales teams to align creative initiatives with strategic business objectives.
- Managed relationships with external agencies, freelance talent, photographers, writers, production vendors, and national print partners.

Brand Strategy & Creative Direction

- Directed creative strategy and execution across all customer-facing marketing channels, including e-commerce, catalogs, direct mail, packaging, social media, digital advertising, email marketing, photography, video production, and educational publishing.
- Led the 2016 rebrand of Discount School Supply, creating the visual identity system and brand framework that continues to define the organization's market presence.
- Directed the international rebrand of Colorations®, launching the The Art of Learning™ brand platform at the 2018 NAEYC Annual Conference and implementing the new identity across more than 1,200 products and marketing touchpoints.
- Established and maintained brand standards, visual systems, creative direction, and design quality across multiple national brands.
- Provided strategic oversight for graphic design, visual communications, packaging design, brand development, and customer-facing creative experiences.

Digital Transformation & E-Commerce

- Helped transform Excelligence from a catalog-centric organization into a modern multi-channel marketing ecosystem supporting digital commerce, customer acquisition, and integrated brand experiences.
- Directed the 2018 redesign and modernization of the company's e-commerce platform, partnering closely with developers and business stakeholders to create an enhanced user experience and merchandising environment.
- Supported the organization's expansion into Amazon marketplace sales through development of merchandising standards, digital content strategies, and product presentation systems.
- Oversaw complete website creative and user experience support, including homepage merchandising, landing page development, promotional campaigns, online merchandising, and content strategy.
- Directed email marketing initiatives including promotional campaigns, lifecycle marketing, triggered communications, and customer retention programs.
- Led creative support for both paid and organic social media initiatives, digital acquisition campaigns, and online customer engagement programs.

☎ 831 869-9829

✉ johnforsht@outlook.com

📍 Monterey CA,

Open to On-site and
Hybrid Opportunities

🌐 [LinkedIn]

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

EXCELLIGENCE LEARNING CORPORATION

Monterey CA,
Kansas City KS,
Shelton CT

Senior Creative Director

2008–2026

Creative Director

2006–2008

Art Director

2005–2006

Excelligence Learning Corporation is a \$500M+ educational products company serving educators nationwide through leading brands including Discount School Supply, Really Good Stuff, Steve Spangler Science, and Colorations.

EGENDORF MORRISON CREATIVE MARKETING SERVICES

Philadelphia, PA

Art Director

1995–2005

Egendorf Morrison Creative Marketing Services was an award-winning Philadelphia-based agency providing integrated marketing, branding, advertising, direct mail, and corporate communications services. The agency partnered with commercial real estate organizations and financial institutions.

John Forsht

SENIOR BRAND & CREATIVE EXECUTIVE

Creative leader, brand builder, and organizational developer with a passion for design, storytelling, innovation, and helping teams accomplish exceptional work at scale.

Brand Builder • Creative Leader • Digital Transformation
Team Development • Marketing Innovation

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Creative Operations & Innovation

- Researched, selected, implemented, and administered Wrike as the central operating platform for Creative Services, creating standardized workflows, resource management systems, asset archiving, approval processes, and project visibility that enabled significant organizational scale and consistency.
- Developed workflow systems and operational processes that improved collaboration, project management, resource allocation, and production efficiency across the department.
- Managed departmental budgets related to creative production, freelance services, agency partnerships, photography, video production, and studio operations.
- Maintained a growth mindset and practical approach to innovation, continuously exploring emerging technologies and creative tools to enhance productivity, expand content capabilities, and improve team effectiveness.
- Actively researches and evaluates AI-powered creative tools and emerging technologies to identify practical applications that increase creative capacity, accelerate content development, and support organizational goals.

Publishing, Production & Content Creation

- Directed production of 13 annual catalog titles ranging from 60 to 400 pages with circulations ranging from 75,000 to more than 100,000 recipients.
- Developed comprehensive catalog production calendars coordinating all milestones from planning through final file delivery.
- Established a reputation for flawless execution and operational reliability, maintaining a record of never missing a catalog production deadline throughout a 21-year tenure.
- Managed relationships with major national printing partners including Quad, RR Donnelley, and LSC Communications.
- Designed, outfitted, and launched a professional two-bay photography and video production studio supporting approximately 150 new product introductions per month.
- Built internal photography and content production capabilities that expanded creative capacity while reducing reliance on external production resources.
- Developed and maintained a local talent and model database supporting ongoing photography and video production requirements

☎ 831 869-9829
✉ johnforsht@outlook.com
📍 Monterey CA,
Open to On-site and
Hybrid Opportunities
 [LinkedIn]

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA)

Visual Communications / Graphic Design

Art Institute of Philadelphia
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Additional Studies

University of the Arts

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania