

RICKY SMITH

Creative Director | Graphic Designer

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SUMMARY

Multidisciplinary storyteller with 10 years of progressive experience across print, digital, and motion. A creative self-starter known for bringing energy, originality, and strategic thinking to every project. Proven ability to build cohesive campaigns, mentor student teams, and elevate brand storytelling across platforms. Consistently delivers content that drives measurable engagement, with social campaigns earning thousands of interactions across TikTok and Instagram.

EDUCATION

University of Kansas

Bachelor of Science, Journalism and Mass Communications (Strategic Communications/Media Arts) — 2025

Bachelor of General Studies, Film and Media Studies — 2018

Minor in Creative Writing/Entrepreneurship

RECENT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Marketing Manager

[KU Recreation Services](#) January 2025-Present

Supervision/Organizational

- Led and mentored four student staff members, designers, and video editors to ensure timely, on-brand execution of multi-platform campaigns.
- Provided creative direction on typography, layout, and messaging tone to maintain brand consistency across all student-produced media.
- Acted as a liaison between six programs gathering and communicating feedback to ensure cohesive branding and messaging.
- Ensured tight deadlines and made quick revisions were met
- Used OptiSigns for displays, TV signage around the Ambler Student Recreation Fitness Center (ASRFC)
- Organized/archived files for easy access including videos and photos of the programs and facilities
- Contacted vendors to find the best rate for promotional materials

- Conducted interviews to see what students truly valued when it comes to promotional materials, activities and the overall recreational experience.
- Managed **100+ projects**, ranging in scope from urgent announcements to multi-month promotional packages for special events.

Analytics

- Compared to the previous **90 days** the content I produced/directed for Instagram had a total of:
 - **270,000 Impressions (291.2% Increase)**
 - **5,912 Interactions**
 - **2,766 Followers (5.9% Increase from previous 90 days)**
- Increased registration for the most recent event through direct marketing when informed of low registration rates. Increasing the participants from 0 to 6.

Design/Video Production

- Redesigned the ASRFC overall visual identity, including templates, color palettes, and typography.
- Created various digital assets, including social media graphics, video production, animation, and promotional visuals
- Created brochures, flyers, and signage for campus events and programming, balancing print clarity with on-brand design.
- Produced more than **50 videos** for social media and YouTube, including: tutorials, social trends, promotional, and event recaps

Lead Student Creative/Adobe Tutor

[JSchool Tech](#) KU School of Journalism and Mass Communications| August 2023– January 2025

- Led content creation and grew social media presence, achieving **22.4K** views and a **2,576% increase** in views across Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube from Aug. 27–Nov. 24, 2024.
- Redesigned the brand's visual identity, including logos, color palettes, and typography.
- Designed various digital assets, including social media graphics, animations, and promotional visuals.
- Directed the other student employees to create cohesive branding
- Tutored students on Adobe Creative Suite, WordPress and other applications and digital content creation techniques.

Video Editor

[KU School of Journalism and Mass Communications](#) | December 2023–June 2024

- Edited a series of videos for an environmental journalism project, transforming raw footage into compelling narratives.
 - Developed a cohesive storytelling structure by splicing B-roll, interviews, and voiceovers to enhance viewer engagement.
 - Performed voiceover
 - Animated motion graphics
 - Collaborated with environmental journalists to align the visual storytelling with investigative reporting and key messages.
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FREELANCE PRODUCER (2018-Present)

Content Creator

Ricky Smith Productions (2018-Pres)

- Created a variety of content showcasing my skills and interests, including graphic design, animation and nostalgia.
- Increased my social media presence (Instagram, TikTok) in the past 90 days has seen significant growth
- [TikTok](#)
 - Over **1.6 Million views** on TikTok (**+18,986.5%** increase)
 - Nearly **170k Interactions** (Likes, Comments, Shares)
 - More than **3,000 Followers** (**+1,2468.2%** increase)
 -
- [Instagram](#)
 - Nearly **1 Million views** on Instagram (**+6,502%** increase)
 - Nearly **77k Interactions**
 - Over **1000** follower increase (**162.4% Increase**)
 - Over **400,000 accounts** reached

[“All Reading is Good Reading”](#) – Summer Reading Campaign

Lawrence Public Library | 2022

- Produced and directed animated content, created digital and print materials for a community-based campaign.
- Designed, wrote, storyboarded, animated, voice acted
- Completed the short under a tight deadline, completing the project in just four days.
- Engaged the local community through social media and experiential media, contributing to increased awareness and participation.

“Milberger Pest Control to the Rescue!” – 50th Anniversary Campaign

Milberger Pest Control | 2018

- Wrote, produced, directed, and animated characters for a campaign featured on HGTV and local TV networks in the Kansas City marketing area.
- Created and designed assets for both television and digital media, effectively communicating brand messaging and expanding the company’s reach.

“Which Meal Plan is Right for You?” – Orientation Meal Plan Guide Video

The University of Kansas, Kansas Memorial Union | 2018

- Wrote, produced, directed, animated, and performed characters for a video aimed at helping students select the right meal plan.
- Designed and created all animated visuals, contributing to the video’s use on social media and during the university’s 2018 orientation.

CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT

The Agency/Steam Whistle Creative | KU School of Journalism and Mass Communications| 2023-2025

- Led a student-ran agency and led a creative team in producing client campaigns, branding materials, and visual assets.
- Managed the development of platform logos, mock-ups, and promotional materials, collaborating across teams to meet client objectives.
- Oversaw the creative process from concept through execution, ensuring alignment with project goals and deadlines.
- Collaborated on redesigning The Agency’s website

The National Student Advertising Competition (University of Kansas)

AT&T & Tide Campaigns (2023–2024)

- Designed and directed creative content for multi-platform campaigns targeting Gen Z audiences.
- Created social graphics, brand identities, motion graphics, and print collateral for national campaign submissions.
- Campaigns received strong engagement in testing and were selected as finalists in regional NSAC judging.
- Collaborated with copywriters, strategists, and media planners to present to national brand teams.

SKILLS

Design & Media: Over 10 years of experience with the Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Premiere Pro, After Effects, Audition), Procreate, Toon Boom Harmony, photography

Web, CMS, Marketing: Wix (10 years), WordPress (2 years) , Basic HTML/CSS, content layout, CMS update, Excel, CMS, Hubspot, OptiSigns

Print Design: Brochures, rack cards, programs, flyers, large-format posters

Motion Content: Social video, videography, hand-drawn animation, motion graphics, digital signage

Strategy & Support: Brand development, accessibility, campaign direction, student mentorship

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Tensie Film Awards: Best Comedy (2018), Best Animation (2017)