

DEREK ERNST

Graphic Designer · Brand Strategist · CX Expert
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[LinkedIn](#) | [Portfolio](#)

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Graphic Designer and Brand Strategist with 6+ years of design experience and 10+ years in customer experience. Executed 1,200+ annual marketing projects at Venture Commercial Real Estate and 1,600+ across a full career spanning commercial real estate, healthcare, nonprofit, education, consumer services, and creative agency environments. Developed and implemented brand systems, corporate guidelines, multi-channel campaigns, and print production workflows, consistently delivering at enterprise scale while building the kind of client trust that turns single projects into long-term partnerships.

CORE SKILLS

Graphic Design | Brand Identity | Brand Guidelines Development | Creative Concepting & Campaign Direction | Typography & Layout | Print & Digital Design | Large & Small Format Print Production | Marketing Collateral | Copywriting & Marketing Copy | Photography | Social Media Strategy | Social Media Content Creation | Social Media Management | Presentation Design | Project Coordination | Client Communication | Stakeholder Management | Vendor Relations | Remote Collaboration

TOOLS & SOFTWARE

Design: Adobe Illustrator | Adobe Photoshop | Adobe InDesign | Adobe Acrobat | Adobe After Effects | Adobe Express | Adobe Bridge | Adobe Font | Figma | Canva | DaFont

Web: Squarespace | Wix Studio | Adobe Portfolio | Adobe Dreamweaver

Email Marketing: Constant Contact

Presentation & Video: Microsoft PowerPoint | Loom | Zoom

Productivity: Microsoft Word | Microsoft Excel | Gmail | Google Calendar

Project Management: Airtable | Wrike | Asana

Collaboration: Slack | Microsoft Teams | Dropbox | Box | Google Drive | OneDrive

Mapping & Research: QGIS | CoStar | Google Maps | Google Earth

Production Equipment: Canon Large Format Printer | Industrial Laminator | Industrial Cutter

Social Media: Meta Business Suite

AI Tools: Claude (Anthropic) | ChatGPT (OpenAI) | Adobe Firefly | Adobe Photoshop Generative Fill

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Brand Designer & Strategist | Derek Ernst Designs

Dallas/Fort Worth, TX (Remote) | Feb 2025 – Present

A solo creative operation running at two speeds. Enterprise-level brand compliance for Methodist Health System and ground-up brand architecture for a startup, building their complete visual identity and guidelines from scratch. Serving healthcare, real estate, nonprofit, education, consumer services, and agency sectors across multi-sector client pipelines, deploying 40+ high-impact assets monthly.

- Managed 8-10 concurrent client projects, producing 100+ monthly assets without dropping the standard, ensuring every deliverable met brand specifications and client expectations through final delivery.
- Partnered with 8+ executives, stakeholders, and vendors to execute client growth initiatives, keeping each brand's integrity intact from brief to final delivery regardless of industry or scope.
- Sustained 98%+ on-time delivery across three project management platforms, owning every timeline, revision cycle, and touchpoint with precision.

- Cultivated 15+ stakeholder relationships that accelerated approval timelines by 25% and consistently turned one-time projects into long-term partnerships.
- Developed scalable brand guidelines and reusable asset systems across 30+ weekly deliverables, cutting production turnaround by 20%+ and building brand foundations clients could grow from.

Graphic Designer | Venture Commercial Real Estate

Dallas, TX | Aug 2021 – Mar 2025

Stepped into a solo brand function, rebuilt it from the ground up, and scaled it into a full department. Managed 60+ staff and broker relationships and became the visual voice behind multi-million dollar strategies for Raising Cane's, Academy Sports + Outdoors, The Star, and Legacy West, including global conference execution.

- Directed 1,200+ annual marketing projects across a nationwide commercial real estate portfolio, owning every deadline and deliverable without compromise.
- Produced 500+ geospatial design maps and high-impact collateral, including websites, emails, offering memorandums, and presentation materials that elevated brand visibility and accelerated leasing performance for premier Class A properties.
- Led a company-wide rebrand from concept to execution, bringing consistency to 200+ annual property listings and reducing creative revisions by 20%+.
- Established workflow structure and production processes that reduced bottlenecks and kept a high-volume creative operation running efficiently across cross-functional teams.
- Managed \$10K+ in department budgets and vendor relationships, optimizing spend and keeping production uninterrupted across high-volume campaigns.

Graphic Designer (Internship) | The Reese Collective

Charlotte, NC (Remote) | Aug 2020 – Aug 2021

- Conceptualized and executed print and digital assets across a fast-paced, multi-project workflow, developing brand-aligned creative that strengthened audience engagement and client positioning.
- Implemented brand standards across all deliverables while producing retouching, visual refinement, and production-ready work that minimized revision cycles and met every deadline.
- Collaborated with leadership to develop and refine creative solutions, translating strategic direction into polished, high-impact deliverables on time and on brand.

Graphic Designer (Internship) | Rumor Media Advertising Agency

Houston, TX (Remote) | May 2020 – Aug 2020

- Conceptualized and produced strategy-driven graphic and illustrative concepts for print and digital advertising platforms, balancing creative vision with measurable business objectives.
- Developed advertising assets aligned with brand positioning and campaign goals, contributing to elevated brand presence and improved marketing performance across channels.
- Spearheaded brainstorming sessions with original concepts that shaped campaign direction and strengthened overall team creative output.

EDUCATION

AA — Digital Art and Design — Dallas College

Dallas, TX | Jan 2018 – Dec 2021

BA — Sociology — North Carolina State University

Raleigh, NC | Jan 2006 – Dec 2010