

AUGUSTUS "A.J." RUSSO

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY & SKILLS

Marketing and communications leader skilled in crafting compelling narratives that connect with B2B and B2C audiences. A strategic storyteller adept at building brands, fostering collaboration, and positioning teams for success.

Brand Development
Creative Direction
Experiential Design

Content Creation
Content Strategy
Strategic Storytelling

Community Outreach
Public Relations
Strategic Partnerships

Cross-Functional Collaboration
Market & User Research
Strategic Planning

WORK EXPERIENCE

Marketing Director

Dec 2023 - Aug 2024

Apple Industries, Greenvale, NY

- Developed and refined sales presentations and marketing materials for branded photo booth solutions, emphasizing revenue potential and customer engagement to drive adoption in venues such as cinemas, retail spaces, cultural attractions, amusement parks, and sports arenas.
- Partnered with globally recognized brands, including Marvel Studios, MLB, NASCAR, Netflix, Regal Cinemas, Sony Pictures, and The Walt Disney Company, to plan and execute experiential marketing activations that provided guests with memorable keepsakes, reinforcing brand associations long after the live experience.
- Developed comprehensive marketing strategies by analyzing market trends, identifying key opportunities, and addressing barriers to growth. Drove a 25% increase in press coverage, amplifying brand awareness through industry articles, panel discussions, and targeted online advertising, positioning the company as the market authority in its product category.

Chief Creative Officer

Apr 2009 - Jun 2023

AMI Entertainment Network, Trevese, PA

- Spearheaded the creation of AMI's corporate brand identity, shaping its visual style and messaging to clearly communicate its mission and value in the music jukebox and out-of-home advertising industries. This initiative was pivotal in expanding the network's reach, securing a presence in 30,000 venues with a 95% retention rate.
- Led data-driven marketing strategies, analyzing customer engagement to optimize content and promotions. Used A/B testing and behavior data to increase user retention and drive 650M micro-transactions annually.
- Collaborated with major record labels to create digital marketing campaigns that showcased new music releases. By integrating edutainment and promotional giveaways, these efforts boosted engagement with promoted content by 15% and grew AMI's social media presence by 60K followers.
- Managed internal communications and mentored cross-functional teams across art, content, marketing, product design, and engineering, driving alignment and collaboration that helped secure industry accolades, including AMOA Manufacturer of the Year and two-time Innovator of the Year Award finalist.
- Led ideation and execution of multi-channel marketing across digital and print, maintaining a comprehensive design system to ensure brand consistency across a large portfolio of B2B and B2C product brands, including hardware, software, and mobile applications. These efforts enhanced brand recognition and consumer engagement, leading to over 2.5M app downloads.

- Designed the UI and user experience for the AMI Co-Pilot app, enabling jukebox installers and venue staff to monitor financial performance, adjust device settings, and deploy digital signage. The app drove a 152% increase in local business marketing across the network.
- Designed the UI and user experience for the AMI Music app, allowing smartphone users to browse music on jukeboxes nationwide and pay for song selections with virtual funds. The app featured anonymous music selection and personalized recommendations, generating \$5M in recurring monthly revenue.
- Designed the user experience for the NSM Atom touchscreen jukebox, the UK's fastest-selling jukebox in 50 years, making song and music video search more efficient and expanding music discovery through curated recommendations.
- Managed licensing and product design for Tap TV, an interactive trivia and promotional platform for commercial venues. Directed art, content, and engineering teams to develop social games with real-time leaderboards and competitions, allowing patrons to team up and compete against venues nationwide.

Creative Director

Mar 2006 – Apr 2009

Merit Industries, Bensalem, PA

- Directed the visual design of advertising and marketing collateral, as well as UI/UX design, for Megatouch, a gaming system for bars and social venues that pioneered touchscreen entertainment before the advent of the smartphone. Collaborated with international partners on localization strategies to drive sales across 30 countries and contribute to 5.5 billion annual plays worldwide.
- Established a unified creative services team, streamlining operations across three previously fragmented teams. Improved project turnaround time by 35%, reduced revision cycles by 40%, and ensured high-quality design across all projects and touchpoints.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts in Integrative Arts

Penn State University, University Park, PA

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Softball Chairperson & Coach

Sept 2021 – Present

Whitpain Recreation Association, Blue Bell, PA

- Expanded a youth recreational program from under 60 to over 300 girls (ages 6–16) by leveraging strategic outreach, community partnerships, and skill-building initiatives. Strengthened engagement through social media storytelling, email marketing, and advocacy, resulting in a 275% increase in volunteerism and securing over \$30K in sponsorships.
- Founded Whitpain United, a travel softball program dedicated to empowering young female athletes through structured training, mentorship, and a culture of unity and teamwork, fostering resilience, confidence, and collective growth both on and off the field.
- Designed and launched playwra.com as the central hub for marketing, registration, and fundraising for multiple community programs, including recreational sports, competitive travel, and adaptive programs for special needs athletes, managing over \$1M in annual registration fees and donations.