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THREE QUESTIONS

Rhea N. Bernard

Exec masters solving advertising's puzzle

Janel Patti always wanted to work in media.

The North Brunswick resident's earliest dreams were to be a radio personality. It was clear early on, however, that she didn't have the voice for it. She then turned her attention toward advertising, the industry that has been the focus of her career for the past 16 years.

Patti is executive vice president and creative director at The Marcus Group. Based in Little Falls, the firm offers advertising, public relations and crisis communications services to clients ranging from health care and financial services to real estate, utilities/energy and nonprofits.

Designing and copywriting are part of what Patti enjoys the most about her job. Viewing each project as puzzle, she enjoys organizing the messages and images and putting them together in a way that attracts people's attention and reflects the personality of the brand.

Patti spoke to The Star-Ledger about the advertising industry.

Q. How has the company grown since your start with The Marcus Group?

A. When I started at The Marcus Group I was the only graphic designer. It was a design department of one for awhile.

Over the past 13 years, we added and expanded our creative services. We now provide full in-house design and production services for all types of media including print, outdoor, online and broadcast as well as media buying and planning services.

Q. What advice would you give someone looking to enter the advertising field?

A. Be prepared to work. And



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check your ego at the door. A lot of people think it's easy. The truth is, most of what you need to know isn't covered in the classroom. There's no course on what to do if your client hates the initial concepts. You also need to understand the business aspects. Even designers need to understand the role graphics play in the grand scheme of things.

It doesn't matter how good it looks if it doesn't get results. Lastly, no matter how talented you are, or how many awards you've won, it's tough to please everybody. Every client has different tastes and expectations.

Q. What is the most memorable account you've worked on?

A. The Provident Bank. I've had the opportunity to work on the widest range of projects from statement stuffers and signage to full ad campaigns, radio, internet, direct mail and even packaging. Designing for multiple mediums is the best kind of challenge.

Please submit suggestions for "Three Questions" to rbernard@njlns.com. may be reached at