

IHPDISRUPTION

IN-HOUSE PERSPECTIVES 2018

SEPT 27, 2018 NEW YORK, NY

Disruption

In-house creative leaders and their teams are no strangers to disruption. For many, mindset and workflow disruptions are often imposed on them in the workplace. However, some in-house creative leaders are taking the initiative to adopt effective strategies to navigate their creative teams through the peaks and valleys of disruption.

A crowd of more than 65 professionals working in creative services came together for the **InSource In-House Perspectives 2018** event held on September 27, 2018, at the Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC) located at 81 Barclay Street in New York City. **Disruption: How In-House Leaders Are Creating a Shift in Their Organization and Industry** was the focus of discussion.

Andy Brenits (President, InSource) welcomed everyone who attended the event—in person as well as live streaming via Facebook—in leading a rousing chant of “In House, In-House, In-House.” **Nathalie Heywood Smith** (Director, Memberships, InSource) and **Robin Colangelo** (Vice President, InSource) rounded out the evening in facilitating a lively question-and-answer session and distributing raffle items following four presentations by **Ryan Sutton** (Robert Half Technology and The Creative Group), **Brandie Knox** (Knox Design Strategy), **Ken Carlson** (Williams Lea Tag at Pfizer), and **Rena DeLevie** (Management for Millennials). InSource sponsors including **Brilliant**, **InMotionNow**, and **The Creative Group** representatives were also on hand to offer their suggestions and expertise throughout the evening.



A few of our nearly 100 attendees ready with questions for our featured speakers.

InSource provides the following overview of four presentations:

Go Digital (or Die Trying): Lessons From In-House Creative Teams

Ryan Sutton (district president for Robert Half Technology and The Creative Group) provided his insights and reflections on industry trends, along with metrics that suggest the need for advances in workplace practices.

He discussed the universal nature of (1) everybody works hard and (2) good talent is hard to find.

He offered several tips for building high-performance teams:

- Collaborate across and outside the organization

He gave examples of the need to embrace cross-departmental collaboration, to reach out to other business division to find the most compelling stories, and to partner with agencies to bring stories to life.

- Develop agile, cross-functional teams

He encourages in-house creative leaders and their teams to develop a mindset that is very open to change and transition.

He identified five trends relating to hiring talent for in-house creative teams:

- Be aware that unemployment rates are low and hiring competition is intense
- Hiring for technology, design, and marketing positions is going through profound changes
- Hard and soft skills carry equal weight
- Compensation for in-demand skills is rising
- Make retention of talent as top of mind

He advises everyone to check salaries against going market rates and to recruit and hire individuals within two weeks (not longer).

Brand Activation: Tools for Designing and Maintaining Dynamic Brands

Brandie Knox (founder of Knox Design Strategy LLC) shared remarks about her extensive experience in applying best practices in building a brand from the inside of an organization. She discussed the role of in-house creative leaders in laying the groundwork and claiming accountability for the brand.

She described her approach in working with in-house creative teams, which requires self-care and self-discovery that affects the business



Ken Carlson, creative director at Williams Lea Tag in-house creative and print shops for Pfizer and Minute Maid inspiring attendees about understanding disruption.

at all levels. She conducts internal workshops that explore:

- The nature of creativity is disruption
- Creativity + people = passion
- Energy + engagement = expression

She discussed the need for free expression, meaningful conversations, and mutual understanding as key to building brand loyalty. Identifying both positive brand stories and negative internal conflicts is part of the process. She presented examples of how to better understand personas in both emotional and practical terms.

Support, trust, and commitment from leadership are basic requirements for living the brand. She posed this challenge to all attendees: How will you employ design as a facilitator of engagement in the next week?

Riding the Wave of Disruption

Ken Carlson (creative director/account director, Williams Lea Tag in-house creative and print shops for Pfizer and Minute Maid) gave a presentation of images and storytelling to inspire others to better understand the nature of disruption.

He made it easy for attendees to remember his four takeaway messages:

- This too shall pass—this truth is both a message of caution and hope
- Keep your eyes on the horizon—look for changes in the landscape and avoid tunnel vision
- Build your stable—thoroughbreds alone cannot carry the load when strong workhorses are needed for a heavy workload so “staff to the valleys but also accommodate for the peaks”
- Reach for the stars—explore new areas and develop new skills to grow, and ask yourself and individuals who work on your creative team the question: “What do you want to do that you aren’t doing now?”

In-House Cross-Generational Communication Can Disrupt the Divide

Rena DeLevie (chief compassion officer of Management For Millennials and author of *Compassionate Management: How Ambitious Creatives Become Kick-Ass Leaders* published in 2018 and available at amazon.com) presented an interactive session on the dynamics of relationships in the workplace. According to Rena, the key for in-house creative leaders is to begin with a clear understanding that each individual “wants to be seen, heard, and understood.”



Rena DeLevie, chief compassion officer of Management For Millennials presented an interactive session on the dynamics of relationships in the workplace.

She encouraged attendees to take a look at individuals and ask: "Name the story you're creating about them" and then ask: "Name the story they're creating about you."

She cautioned against using labels about people that disconnect, to lead by example, and to become "good at not taking things personally" in the workplace. She identified flags for attention that include tone of voice, body language, content, and who is speaking.

Her advice on making a mindshift that breaks through obstacles applies this formula for not taking it personally:

- Recognize when we're feeling it personally
- Define the meaning we're applying
- Factualize it
- Move forward

She provided examples of trigger statements:

- "Why is this project late?"
- "I didn't know you were invited to this meeting."
- "With all due respect..."
- "Are you tired?"



Attendees networked and connected over cocktails and food on the balcony overlooking downtown Manhattan.



The evening concluded with a question and answer session with all of our speakers.

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Special Thanks to Our Global Partners and Supporters

InSource greatly appreciates the gracious hospitality of the Borough of Manhattan Community College for providing meeting space for this InSource event in New York City.

We thank **Adobe** (adobe.com) and **Adobe Stock, Brilliant** (brilliant-graphics.com), **The Creative Group** (roberthalf.com), **Dog & Pony Studios** (dogandponystudios.net), **GDUSA** (gdusa.com), **HOW Design Live** (howdesignlive.com), **InMotionNow** (inmotionnow.com), and **Mohawk** (mohawkconnects.com) for their generous donation of sponsorships, materials, and services to support the work of InSource!



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