

Michael Wekall

Creative Director

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Creative director and brand storyteller who turns wild ideas into things people actually watch, from international documentaries to a viral campaign that convinced Taylor Swift to fly to Auburn for a surprise concert. I build story-driven campaigns that move audiences and move numbers, and I taught myself to code along the way because storytelling deserved better tools.

SKILLS

Creative Direction & Strategy: Brand Storytelling, Visual Storytelling, Concepting and Ideation, Campaign Development, Creative Brief Writing, Narrative Development

Production & Craft: Video Production, Post-Production (DaVinci Resolve), Documentary Production, Motion Graphics, International Production Logistics

Leadership: Cross-Functional Team Leadership, Stakeholder Coordination, Budget Management (\$500K+), Timeline and Production Management, Team Mentoring

Technology: AI Workflow Automation (Claude API, Gemini API), React, TypeScript, Node.js, D3.js Data Visualization

EXPERIENCE

Founder and Creative Director 11/2022 – Present
Backyard Creative Atlanta, GA

Creative direction, concepting, and video production for organizations ready to tell better stories.

- Developed a storytelling script process built around the right questions before you hit record, boosting client video conversion rates by 40%, then built it into an interactive strategy application
- Produced a fundraising campaign for Boys and Girls Club of Atlanta that raised \$50,000 for community programs
- Led concept development and production for a nationwide FCA video campaign across multiple platforms
- Built an AI pipeline that reduced client research and competitive analysis from days to minutes
- Developing a video content and podcast strategy for Radical Mentoring (31K+ lives reached, 700+ partner organizations), with a sustainable monthly production model

Creative Project Manager 05/2022 – 07/2022
PullSpark

- Led creative production and visual storytelling for a \$500K+ event with 8,000 attendees across multiple venues
- Directed a 6-person video team (3 production, 3 post-production) to deliver 3 major event videos in 3 months
- Coordinated 13 stakeholders across vendor, venue, and production teams while owning the full timeline and budget

Director of Video Production, promoted to Interim Communications Director 08/2012 – 05/2022

Johnson Ferry Baptist Church

Marietta, GA

Creative leadership for a media operation producing original video weekly for an audience of 7,000+.

- Directed documentary productions across 10 countries, managing international logistics, local crews, and post-production delivery (nearly lost a camera to a monkey in Kenya)
- Developed the visual storytelling framework for weekly productions, from conceiving through final delivery across multiple formats
- Led a full organizational brand campaign (Vision/Mission rollout) with a cross-functional team of designers, project managers, and videographers
- Built and mentored a production team of 4 from the ground up over a decade
- Oversaw all internal and external communications during interim director period, including campaign development and brand messaging
- Produced annual broadcast specials for distribution on 2 local television stations

Interactive Content Producer Syrup Marketing

06/2010 – 08/2012

- Produced and edited 15+ branded videos including interviews, animation, and title sequences
- Managed multimedia campaigns across social and digital platforms, increasing client engagement 25% over 12 months

Co-Creator

01/2010 – 04/2010

A Hug From Taylor Swift

- Co-created “A Hug From Taylor Swift,” a viral campaign that convinced Taylor Swift to fly to Auburn University for a surprise acoustic concert, built from scratch with a Flip camera, a dot-com, and homemade T-shirts
- Grew an 8,500-member community, produced all video and social media in real time, and organized a 350-person auditorium fill in under 2 hours; national coverage on MTV, Ryan Seacrest, and CMT

EDUCATION

BA History, Auburn University. Somehow ended up here. War Eagle.