

ANTONIA AKAI-CASUCCIO

CREATIVITY AND RESULTS

The presentation of merchandise is no longer the act of simply putting product on the floor. Rather, it is about elevating the art of delighting the customer by creating a pleasurable and effective shopping experience.

CAREER OBJECTIVE

To attain a senior-level creative position within a progressive organization that encourages dedication, creativity and forward thinking, and that recognizes those who strive to excel.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- March 2009 –
March 2011
- VISUAL MANAGER – ANTHROPOLOGIE – Toronto, Canada**
- participated in the launch of Anthropologie into Canada as Visual Manager for the Shops at Don Mills location, then opened the Yorkville location, which immediately became and maintains the highest volume position in its district
 - responsible for seasonal floor planning for shop concepts, including placement of fixtures and furniture, home and apparel product, and placement of large and small scale display
 - oversaw and partnered with one display coordinator to build and create all in-store and window displays and signage
 - daily responsibilities included partnering with home and apparel department managers to ensure timely placement of new product receipts into appropriate concepts, and maintaining the integrity of those concepts
 - additional projects included prepping store for television (Sarah Richardson), and magazine photo shoots (Fashion), partnering with local colleges for internship programs and set-ups for customer related in-store events

- July 2005 –
July 2008
- CREATIVE DIRECTOR – TABI INTERNATIONAL – Toronto, Canada**
- began as Visual Planning Manager for 1 ½ years, then promoted to Creative Director in January 2007
 - primary objective of role as Creative Director was to be a key player in the corporate re-branding strategy of Tabi International as a modern mature women's store
 - creation and development of new, high profile flagship store concepts for 2008 and beyond
 - responsible for developing heightened window and in-store styling and propping presentations to reflect new target customers
 - creation, development, purchase and distribution of propping for 110 stores nationwide
 - responsible for selecting and styling all outfitting for magazines, catalogues and media
 - partnered with Visual Merchandising Manager to plan and lead merchandising and visual direction in test store, then create directive for chain to execute
 - special projects include creation of trade show booth to effectively convey Tabi culture and aesthetic in different trade show environments [ICSC, PGA], creative direction for fashion shows, corporate events, new product hangtags and labels, design and development of custom Tabi tartan



- July 2004 – April 2005
- INTERIOR VISUAL MANAGER - HOLT RENFREW, BLOOR STREET - Toronto, Canada
- responsible for planning and implementing all monthly interior visual installations for Holt Renfrew, Bloor Street location
 - partnered with corporate creative services to develop in-store visual themes
 - partnered with events planning to design and implement all in-store designer appearances, trunk- shows, line launches and special events
 - planned and purchased all propping for interior visual installations
 - strategized and scheduled all interior installations and special events with interior visual team and outside vendors
 - oversaw interior visual team of five
- March 2003 – July 2004
- MERCHANDISING MANAGER/STORE DESIGNER – VISTEK – Toronto, Canada
- responsible for creation, design and implementation of Vistek renovation and new store concept
 - oversaw development of in-store marketing materials and evolved new design concepts for in-store signage
 - trained and re-educated management and staff in new merchandising techniques
 - worked on development of a curatorial program for in-store gallery areas showcasing local and international photographers
 - designed and developed complete fixturing package
 - partnered with COO and President to manage store renovation and re-design
 - for renovation, created store plans for construction phasing, painting, lighting allocation, flooring, fixture placement and new merchandising strategy
- March 2002 – February 2003
- FREELANCE GRAPHIC + INTERIOR DESIGN – Toronto, Canada
- freelance computer graphic design for numerous clients including Niagara Skydive Centre Inc.; Sub Urban Designs; Michael Mantzoris Architect Inc.
 - created all marketing materials for grand opening of Niagara Skydive Centre and provided ongoing marketing support through creation of flyers, pamphlets, postcards and mailers
 - freelance interior design consultation for three private residences and project management throughout renovations
 - created and implemented set design for two major events at S.P.I.N. Gallery, Toronto
 - conceptualized and coordinated exterior art installation and event at The Drake Hotel, Toronto
- March 2000 – March 2002
- ZONE VISUAL MANAGER, OLD NAVY – Canada and Manhattan, USA
- worked in the Manhattan corporate offices with the NY Field Visual Merchandising team to create heightened visual presentation directives specifically for the US Flagship and High Volume/High Profile Anchor stores
 - partnered with the New York Product Development team to create new merchandising concepts for presentation to the San Francisco buying teams
 - strategized the visual/merchandising plans to support the initial Old Navy launch into Canada with a same day grand opening of 12 stores
 - responsible for planning and overseeing the openings of two US East Coast high-volume stores, with involvement in the opening of four US East Coast stores which included working with store design during layout and construction phases and following through with construction through to store openings



- March 2000 –
March 2002
- ZONE VISUAL MANAGER, OLD NAVY – Canada and Manhattan, USA (cont'd)**
- responsible for coordination of visual and merchandising direction for initial 12-store launch of Old Navy into Canada in April 2001
 - partnered with store design throughout layout and construction process to ensure appropriate space allocation to each specific business, correct placement of permanent visual elements, and maintained an ongoing review of construction punch-lists through to completion of stores
 - worked closely with the Canadian Zone Vice President and partnered with the Canadian Director of Stores to build the Old Navy brand in a new international market
 - trained and worked with the Canadian District Managers through regular workshops and store walkthroughs, focusing on current merchandising and visual presentation direction, company standards and integrity of execution to ensure clean, consistent, easy to shop presentations in all 17 Canadian stores
 - provided daily/weekly feedback to the US buying team regarding future and immediate merchandise needs, markdown requirements, inventory levels and customer reaction
 - September 2001 to December 2001 responsibility was expanded to include the Chicago and Michigan regions, in addition to the Canadian stores, with a total store count of 97
- October 1996 –
January 2000
- STORE MERCHANDISER, URBAN OUTFITTERS – Toronto, Canada**
- played a key role in the launch of Urban Outfitters into Canada, opening both Montreal and Toronto locations
 - created merchandising directives on a daily/weekly basis for all department managers based on seasonal shop concepts, current business trends, and product sell-through
 - contributed ideas to corporate visual for upcoming merchandising concepts through photos of prototype shops
 - oversaw one display person
 - worked with display person to conceive and prototype new display concepts and to adapt and implement corporate direction relevant to the Toronto market
 - worked with representatives from various record labels to provide in-store music that reflected the tastes and lifestyles of the 'Urban' customer
 - involved Urban Outfitters in local/national charity events including Fashion Cares, Aidswalk and numerous fundraising events for local schools
 - contributed monthly CD reviews to Flux magazine, and monthly fashion and styling notes for Allstylz website using Urban Outfitters product
- January 1993 –
October 1996
- SENIOR VISUAL PRESENTATION TECHNICIAN, CLUB MONACO – Los Angeles, USA**
- responsible for all aspects of merchandising and visual presentation in the three Los Angeles region stores
 - participated in the opening and expansion of the Beverly Hills and Beverly Center locations
 - developed a close working relationship with the Store Managers and Regional Supervisor to implement and ensure a strong corporate image in all three stores
 - provided timely and creative solutions to various merchandising issues
 - worked closely with the West Coast Distribution Manager to affect merchandise flows to stores
 - participated in range-reviews at both the Toronto corporate offices and the New York design studios three to four times per year to affect seasonal buys made specifically for the US West Coast market

