

ADVERTISING STAR



At Brownstein Group, President Marc Brownstein Leads by Example

[By Robin Salisian]

At only three years old, Marc Brownstein had already attended his first client meeting. True, it was his father who brought him, but that experience served as a catalyst for greater advertising endeavors—such as creating a billboard at the age of 13 for his father’s ad agency, graduating from Penn State with an advertising degree, and becoming president of Brownstein Group.

Nepotism, however, at what was then Brownstein Advertising wasn’t favored. Being cute at three and creative at 13 by no means granted Brownstein an immediate high-level position after college.

“My father would not let me come work for the family business until I completed grad school,” says Brownstein. “So, I ‘attended’ Ogilvy & Mather in New York, where I further learned the craft. Two to three years of grad school quickly turned into eight, and my father wondered if I would ever come back.”

Finally, in 1989, Brownstein left New York for Philadelphia and joined his father as executive creative director (and later as president). The two then renamed the company Brownstein Group.

Back in 1964 Marc’s father, Berny Brownstein, had waved goodbye to NY Ayer (an ad agency where he received big-time experience), ventured out on his own, and started Brownstein Advertising. “Nearly 42 years later, Brownstein Group still stands for the things Berny established from day one: creativity and integrity,” writes Marc on the company’s website.

Today, the ad agency offers a myriad of services. From advertising to design to public relations to brand strategy, Brownstein

Group “obsessively” cares for its clients and prides itself on “making sure [its clients’ brands] get the four-star treatment across the board.”

Q. What do you do for fun?

A. Anything with my family and kids. I enjoy coaching my kids’ sports teams, biking, golfing, and playing tennis. Working out keeps your ideas fresh.

Q. Throughout your lifetime, what movie have you watched the most?

A. *Mrs. Doubtfire*; my kids were addicted to it growing up, and now I can’t even say the title of the movie without getting a twitch.

Q. What was the last book you read?

A. *First, Break All the Rules* by Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman.

Q. What music is on your iPod/in your CD player right now?

A. Jimi Hendrix, The Doors, Earth, Wind & Fire, Crosby, Stills & Nash; modern rock—Foo Fighters, Tool; hip-hop—Kanye West.

Q. If you had an extra hour in the day, what would you spend it doing?

A. I would spend an additional half hour with my kids and an additional 30 minutes working out.

And who has received such treatment? Brownstein Group’s clients include The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, Martin Guitar, Siemens Medical Solutions, [Kyle’s Treehouse](#), [SuperPretzel](#), and Microsoft, among others.

SuperPretzel’s campaign, however, is the one Marc Brownstein is proudest of.

“It is the first of its kind as well as the first advertisement we ever ran on YouTube,” he says. “[Plus,] the ad received 600,000 views in the first 48 hours.”

As president of Brownstein Group, Brownstein “is responsible for setting the overall strategy of the company. He ensures that the company has the right people in the right positions [and] is responsible for ensuring that the company executes on his commitments.”

“Marc’s the kind of person that makes me sick,” writes Brownstein’s vice president, Jill Kauffman. “And I mean that in the most complimentary way. You know the type: president of a cool company before the age of 40; an amazingly dedicated husband and father; sits on a gazillion boards and do-good-type committees; and, the real clincher, works out at the gym every day before work.”

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"But that's what makes Marc such a great president," she continues. "He's the kind of person you want to be. He leads by example."

So where does this lead-by-example president stand on hot topics such as TiVo?

Advertising, according to Brownstein, "will focus more on driving traffic to an Internet site...ads will be less specific in nature since you can no longer predict when a viewer will watch their recorded shows. For example, Campbell's will no longer be able to rely on reaching the hungry viewer during the six o'clock hour." Why? Because "[v]iewers may record the programs and watch them after they have already eaten."

Recently, the company was selected as "Agency of Record for the 2008 Philadelphia International Auto Show and Black Tie Tailgate Preview Gala," for which it will "provide advertising and public relations support in partnership with the automobile dealers association of greater Philadelphia."

"It's a singular honor," Brownstein says. "There's great potential in this well-established and highly regarded event, and we're determined to make 2008 the best year yet for Philadelphia's International Auto Show."

And on August 6, 2007, Brownstein had the privilege of appearing on NBC10's *All That & More* with Tracy Davidson, where he not only discussed up-and-coming technologies in out-of-home marketing but also showcased "an interactive storefront advertisement that BG's fingerprint interactive and direct division created for Microsoft."

From the board room at three years old to the president's office of Brownstein Group, Brownstein has proven that nurturing a youthful passion for advertising pays off. And while "Marc's the kind of person that makes [Kauffman] sick" (in the most complimentary way), he's also the guy who leads by example. Remember that when *you're* dreaming of running an ad agency—that and Brownstein's advice:

"Be battle ready. Advertising is not for the thin-skinned. It's dynamic and is changing every day. If you're open to new thinking, then advertising might be right for you. But if you're set in your ways, you should not consider the field. If you can think on the fly, you will have a better shot at success in the industry."

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www.brownsteingroup.com

Ogilvy & Mather
www.ogilvy.com

Philadelphia International Auto Show
www.phillyautoshow.com

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