

ADVERTISING STAR



McKee Wallwork Cleveland Media Buyer: Amy Rounds

[By Robin Salisian]

McKee Wallwork Cleveland media buyer Amy Rounds discovered her passion for advertising after her best friend recruited her to work on his campaign. Her mission? To plan the “media” portion of the ad.

“I had no idea what that meant,” admits Rounds. However, she persevered, created her first media plan, and succumbed to her “I kind of like this ‘media’ stuff” epiphany. She landed herself an internship with a local agency.

Rounds’ first job outside of college, however, was managing the marketing efforts for a local jewelry store. There, she thrived, enjoying her numerous responsibilities from event planning to media buying. And while she had to learn everything on her own, she reveled in that learning experience.

“That experience led me to the conclusion that I really wanted to be on the agency side and that media was what I particularly enjoyed,” says Rounds.

A New Mexico native and a communications graduate from the University of New Mexico, Rounds decided New Mexico was where she’d stay.

“Since I’m from [here] and began my advertising career here, I was pretty familiar with [McKee Wallwork Cleveland’s] work, and I actively pursued a job with them. MWC is one of the largest agencies in the state, and the partners are all well respected. I knew even before I started that it would be a perfect fit.”

“When I was interviewing with Steve McKee we discovered that I used to dance for the same ballet company that his daughters dance for,” Rounds continues. “I later

learned that before I was hired Steve was asking around the dance studio to make sure I checked out. Luckily, my former ballet

instructors gave him the green light!”

And almost three years later, Rounds continues to prove that McKee’s decision was right.

According to the agency’s website, “We could have easily set up shop on the 74th floor of some glass building, but we didn’t. In doing so, we broke the rules of where an ad agency should be, and it’s this rule-breaking mentality that we bring to the work we do. We’ll try anything to help your brand, and sometimes that means doing something that’s never been done before.”

McKee’s rule-breaking mentality has worked, landing them jobs with clients such as Heritage Hotels, Mr. Rooter, and Blake’s Lotaburger, “a 78-unit hamburger chain in the mold of In-n-Out Burger and White Castle.”

Currently, Rounds is the agency’s media buyer.

“I handle most of the print and online buying for the agency, so most of my responsibilities fall within these two specialties,” says Rounds. “I usually have two or three large projects I’m planning. For instance, right now I’m working on a comprehensive online and print campaign for the Albuquerque Convention & Visitors Bureau. I’m also working on two online projects for the New Mexico Department of Health’s Tobacco Use Prevention and Control program. These types of projects consume most of my time. I also

Q. What do you do for fun?

A. I have two German Shepherd dogs that I love spending time with. I am also a big fan of Sudoku and jumping on trampolines.

Q. What CD is in your CD player right now?

A. *Fine Frenzy*, James Blunt’s new CD, as well as Red Hot Chili Peppers, Feist, Snow Patrol, and Mariah Carey’s Merry Christmas album.

Q. What was the last magazine you read?

A. Since I do most of the magazine buying within the media department, I read a lot of magazines. Most recently I read *Fortune*, *Vanity Fair* and *Nylon*.

Q. What is your favorite TV show?

A. I’ve found that having a DVR has revolutionized my TV habits. I would say that 99% of my TV viewing is from my DVR. That said, I have a lot of favorites. First and foremost would probably be *The Dog Whisperer* closely followed by *Gossip Girl*. I am also a regular watcher of *The Young & the Restless*, *Run’s House*, *Nip/Tuck*, *The Office*, *Friday Night Lights* and *America’s Next Top Model*.

Q. Who is your role model?

A. I don’t think just one person is my role model. However, there have been a number of people that have significantly inspired me including Alex Bogusky, Sally Hogshead, and Cesar Millan.

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like to make sure I'm reading most of the magazines that pass through the agency. Needless to say, I have a large stack of magazines piling up on my desk at any given moment."

Much of the clientele at MWC, like the Albuquerque Convention & Visitors Bureau and the New Mexico Department of Health's Tobacco Use Prevention and Control program, range from healthcare and tourism to "very niche business-to-business clients," a variety Rounds finds exciting.

"One of the things I love about McKee Wallwork Cleveland is the variety of clients and scope of projects we get to work on," she continues. "Clients like ACVB and TUPAC always lend themselves to fun, exciting projects that get a lot of recognition. However, we also have very niche business-to-business clients that are truly unique. For instance, one of our clients, Süd-Chemie, specializes in packaging desiccants (the things you get in your prescriptions, for instance, that warn you: 'Do Not Eat'). Not necessarily the most glamorous client per se, but they're a global company that has

definitely expanded my experience. Being able to work on a variety of projects keeps things interesting."

But among her current projects, one of her favorites includes a campaign for Taos Ski Valley. Unique in many ways, Taos Ski Valley is a "world-class, privately-owned ski resort" exclusively for skiers. The campaign focuses on the sport of skiing and the beauty of the mountain. It's about reconnecting with oneself.

"It was our first project with them, and the whole thing just worked — from the strategy to the execution. We really tapped into the essence of Taos and were able to utilize their very small budget to the fullest."

Rounds is a child of the millennial generation. "We grew up with TV as our babysitter and with MTV in elementary school. We could proficiently type 80 words per minute by age 10, were web-surfers by age 12, had pagers by 13, and had cell phones by 14. And when multimedia is not provided, we're bored," writes Rounds. How then does she view the advent of TiVo and the Internet? Practically.

"I think the point here is that advertising is in a constant state of change at a rate faster than we've ever experienced. As advertisers, we need to embrace this truth."

And Rounds has her own truths to offer, including this: "I would tell anyone getting into any career to make sure it's what they love. It seems obvious enough, but it always surprises me how many people are in careers they hate. If you're passionate about something, people will notice."

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Taos Ski Valley
www.skitaos.org

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