

# The Catalogue

THE LATEST FROM CATALYST

P. 05

## Celebrating 16 Years of Catalyst



## In This Issue

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

A DEEPER DIVE

2023 TRENDS REPORT

VOICING VALUES

GOOD MOOD MEDIA™

CELEBRATING 16 YEARS OF CATALYST

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

AWARD WINS

GOLDEN MOMENTS



P. 04

## Voicing Values

“We define passion internally as the desire to do our best and never, ever giving up — but that doesn’t mean we’re in it alone. ”

– KATIE DEGUTIS



# Letter from the President

CHRISTY MCFERREN



Catalyst turned 16 last month, and just like when you get your driver's license, the world of marketing feels like an open highway stretched out before us, evoking the nostalgia of teenage invincibility that drives full-bodied ambition toward dreamy possibilities. In our recent trends report podcast, we sat down with several on our team to discuss the re-emergence of art nouveau and the revival of the sweeping bold-colored stripes and age of Aquarius throwback vibes against the backdrop of the emergence of ChatGPT and AI (and so, so much more). With all the new tech as our vehicle and these art vibes as our music, our imagination-navigation is poised to take us to destinations never seen. It couldn't be more exciting!

**But hold on just a minute there, kids. Who's reminding you to make wise choices, be home by curfew, and warning you not to wreck the car?**

At Catalyst, we have a simple mantra: We live by our values. It's the first line in our Gold Standard, right under Thriving Relationships. Our team is cross-sectioned into Houses according to our values, and roughly every couple of months one of the Houses hosts a team meeting. Last

week, the House of Intelligence hosted us with a theme of "Connecting the Dots." During part of the meeting, we explored ChatGPT and its role in our agency as a component of placing value on intelligence — which, as a word, has a much greater dimensionality lately.

**You cannot be intelligent without being conversant with new tech, harnessing its capabilities while also establishing how it settles with your values, and your value.**

Everyone on our team has used ChatGPT, and we're all fairly impressed with its ability to enhance our workflows and make aspects of our work more efficient.

We have likened using it to the process of writing a paper in high school (to continue on the nostalgia train). You go to the library with a topic in mind, ask the librarian to point you to the section (or good ole Dewey if you're resourceful), and you end up with a stack of books. You thumb through them, add neon sticky bookmarks to the sections you want to use, build an outline, pull in the resources, draft your paper, add your bibliography, and ask a friend to read it. They give you edits, you write more, make sure nothing is plagiarized, add your own thoughts to it, and turn it in. ChatGPT? It's the library, the librarian, the stack of books, the bibliography, perhaps the outline, and maybe even your first draft.

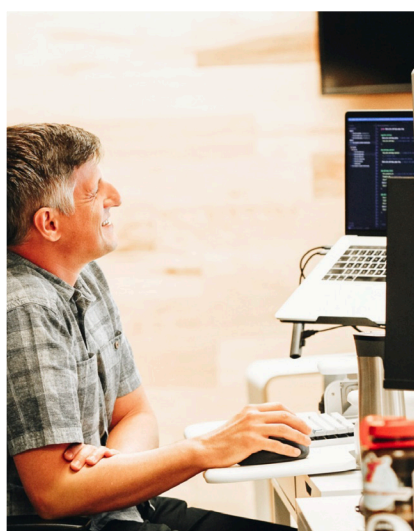
**But you wouldn't turn it in like that, would you? Not a chance.**

Just like on a road trip, you travel through towns in which there are nuances. If you stop and talk to the locals, you start to make connections and learn about these things (alternate routes because there's construction on the other road, historical landmarks, the family that has owned that one house for generations, etc.). These are the bits of anecdotal info that not only get you where you're going, but make the road trip memorable — and human.

For marketers, this is where we find a missing layer from the output of artificial intelligence — it's just that it is what it says it is. There is an air of artificiality about it that is easily recognizable after spending time with the tool — at least to those who spend their lives crafting messaging. Our friend Mike Whaling likened it to a junior copywriter: great bones, just needs some senior muscle.

**Nothing wrong with that unless you stop there and still try to sell your work as original or, worse yet, expect it to be effective for your clients.**

Another one of our Gold Standard principles states, "We create original work



that evokes emotion and inspires action."

Messaging produced by the humans who know will produce results that resonate with audiences in the same way friends share inside jokes and true locals know the town. To be effective in marketing, your audience needs to be moved by your message, and, well, there's something off about using its output directly — it's not just misguided creatively, but morally as well.

So yeah, we're kinda the 16-year-old excited about ChatGPT and AI. They are super cool and we hope they take us good places. But mom and dad weren't wrong — we need to make good choices and not crash the car. Connecting the



dots of new tech with our values system is sure to result in good mood marketing.

**It's spring and it's time for top-down, wind-in-our-hair good vibes with loud music and the foot on the floor!**

Christy McFerren, President

## A Deeper Dive CASE STUDY

When Hollow Creek Condos needed a digital marketing strategy to drive sales for Zilker Flats, their newly renovated condo complex in Austin, Texas, Catalyst developed a successful ad campaign that resulted in all units sold — in less than two months after launch.

**328,206**  
TOTAL IMPRESSIONS

**12.29%**  
AVERAGE CTR

**\$.55**  
AVERAGE SMM COST PER CLICK

**81%**  
OF WEB TRAFFIC ATTRIBUTED TO SEM

READ MORE

## 2023 Trends Report

In the world of marketing, trends move fast. Oftentimes, the only way to stay ahead of the curve is to learn from the past while simultaneously staying prepared for what's next.

We're excited to announce the release of our 2023 Trends Report, our second annual compilation of industry forecasts and marketing predictions spanning the digital space, graphic design, hospitality, and several facets of the real estate industry. From ChatGPT to climate change, affordable housing options, the appeal of "unretirement," and more, this report is packed with more than 45 notable forces to keep an eye on this year — whether you own a community or are just experiencing them as a consumer.

Throughout this Trend Report, you will pick up on a tension between chaos and order, hardship and joy. The push and pulls of these trends set the tone for 2023 and, hopefully by the end of it, marketers and audiences alike will emerge with new, innovative frameworks for how we see culture and the ever-evolving world we live in.



READ MORE



# Voicing Values

LESS TO-DOS, MORE TA-DAS



By Katie Degutis  
Vice President of Operations

Have you ever woken up in the middle of the night remembering something you forgot to do, so you end up tossing and turning for hours? Maybe you keep a notebook nearby to jot down those late-night ideas. No? Just me? Over the years, my role at Catalyst has changed numerous times, but one thing has always remained a constant: I love the feeling I get from checking something off my to-do list. It's a little serotonin boost that I can't get enough of. Unfortunately, that's also

led me to times where not getting everything done weighs on me in a way that I can't quite vocalize — abject horror and disappointment come to mind.

Growing up, my dad ran his own business and now my brother does the same, so I've seen my fair share of late nights and stressed-out last-minute changes to plans. But at the end of the day, they both loved the business, and I always assumed that dedication and hard work were directly related to their passion for their respective industries. To me, passion = giving up your life + overcommitting your time. Boy, was I (thankfully) wrong.

With the help of my team at Catalyst, I've realized you can be passionate about your work without it being all-consuming. We define

passion internally as the desire to do our best and never, ever giving up — but that doesn't mean we're in it alone. Our team is so quick to jump in and help each other, whether the task at hand is something in their wheelhouse or not. And knowing I can lean on my fellow teammates has probably saved my sanity in ways I haven't even realized yet.

It's easy when you're working with your head down or going from meeting to meeting to forget about the big picture. You're so busy checking off the to-do list that you don't realize all the amazing work being accomplished around you. Luckily, our weekly Gold Standard nominations honoring one another and celebrating wins are such great reminders to step back and look at the wins — the

ta-das. Follow that up with our weekly good news where people bring in both their business wins for the week and personal news, and it's the best reminder that you can love and succeed at your job while still having outside passions and hobbies.

I will probably always keep a running to-do list both for work and personally. But thanks to the team that I'm lucky and honored to be surrounded by, I know I have support to get those items done, and that they don't all have to be done right now. If only I could convince the team to come help with some of my weekend chores, but alas. For now, I'm opting to focus less on the to-dos and more on the ta-das.

Write article for *The Catalogue* — check. Ta-da!



# Celebrating 16 Years of Catalyst

A VERY SWEET ANNIVERSARY

On March 18, Catalyst officially celebrated our 16th anniversary! The Austin team celebrated with cake, balloons, and of course, an impromptu food fight. This milestone wouldn't be possible without our hardworking team members and long-lasting client partnerships. Here's to many more years of creating award-winning work and Gold Standard goodness!

# International Women's Day

LADIES OF THE LYST LUNCH

In March, the women of Catalyst (fondly referred to as the Ladies of the Lyst) gathered for our first celebration lunch to celebrate International Women's Day. The time was filled with good food, plenty of laughs, and time for reflection on our passions (both within and outside of the workplace), and we're excited to make it an ongoing tradition in the future!

As a women-led company, Catalyst is dedicated to celebrating, supporting, and recognizing women in the workplace — beginning with our very own. See below to meet the talented individuals who are leaving their marks in the marketing industry.



CHRISTY MCFERREN *President*

KATIE DEGUTIS *Vice President of Operations*

MELISSA CORNINE *Vice President of Client Strategy*

LAUREN GOODMAN *Creative Director*

KRISTY JOHNSON *Director of Brand Strategy*

ALLISON DIEP *Brand Strategy Manager*

LYDIA BECKER *Digital Strategist*

PATSY MUNIZ *Operations Manager*

HALEY DRINKWATER *Senior Brand and Interactive Designer*

AMBER PASQUARELLI *Visual Designer*

HILLARY BROOKS *Designer and Social Media Strategist*

CARMEN ERDIE *Web Developer*

## Good Mood Media™ LISTEN NOW

This season on the Good Mood Marketing™ podcast, our hosts were joined by industry experts who shared their thoughts on the future of real estate marketing, crafting a social media presence, leveraging key insights from other industries, and more. Haven't had a chance to listen recently? Hit play and get started now!

LEARN MORE

### Featured Episodes

 *Making Residents the Hero with Mike Whaling, President and CEO, 30 Lines*  
LISTEN NOW

 *Quiet on Set with Tony Sousa, VP of Operations, RPM*  
LISTEN NOW



Good Mood Marketing™ Podcast



The Lone Star Podcast





# Award Wins

## CELEBRATING TOGETHER

We're taking a look back at a year's worth of marketing accolades! From corporate websites and integrated campaigns to social feeds and style guides, our team has continued striving toward our Gold Standard of award-winning creative — and celebrating these wins with our partners, as well.



## INTERNET ADVERTISING COMPETITION

### 2023 OUTSTANDING WEBSITE

Banyan Equity Partners

### 2023 BEST REAL ESTATE INTEGRATED AD CAMPAIGN

The Future Lives Here Scholarship



### 2022 PLATINUM IN STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

genFT Campaign

### 2022 PLATINUM IN STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS: BRANDING

BridgeWalk Brand Guide

### 2022 GOLD FOR WEBSITES: B2C

Presidium Berkshire Website

### 2022 HONORABLE MENTION FOR SOCIAL CAMPAIGN

Catalyst Social Media



### 2022 GOLD FOR CAMPAIGNS: MARKETING EFFECTIVENESS

Cyber Monday 2021 Campaign

### 2022 SILVER FOR INTEGRATED CAMPAIGNS

Cyber Monday 2021 Campaign

### 2022 SILVER FOR GENERAL WEBSITES: CORPORATE

Campus Advantage Corporate Site



### 2022 OUTSTANDING WEBSITE

Wrenstone at the Highlands Website

### 2022 OUTSTANDING WEBSITE

Summit Place Website



### 2022 GOLD FOR CAMPAIGNS: INTEGRATED CAMPAIGN

Cyber Monday 2021 Campaign

### 2022 GOLD FOR GENERAL: REAL ESTATE WEBSITES

Waterloo Austin Website

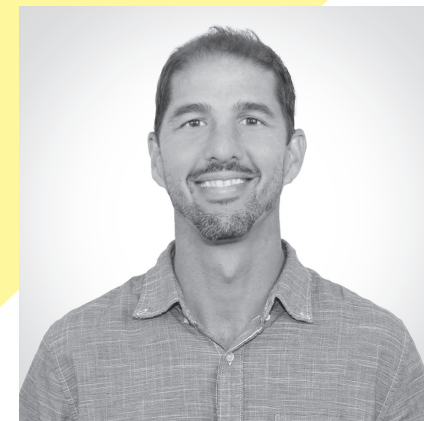
### 2022 GOLD FOR GENERAL: REAL ESTATE WEBSITES

303 Flats Website



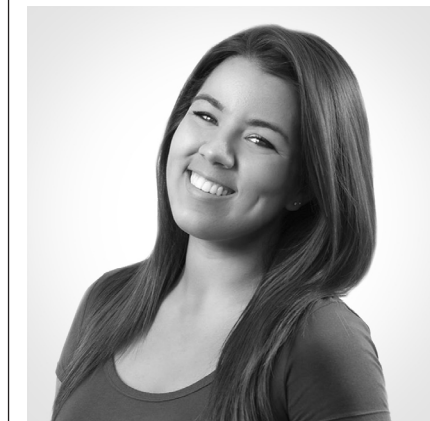
## Golden Moments

### CATALYST TEAM NOMINATIONS



### Steven Jetton

“Giving a POWERFUL CREATIVE nom to Steven this week for all his work on the new Campus Advantage website! Steven is always so skilled at making designs come alive on the screen, and this one looks exactly like what I’ve been imagining in my head since this rebrand started. He was quick to make edits, answer questions, and collaborate when last-minute changes were requested. And always with a great attitude!”



### Lauren Goodman

“Between the newsletters, spring campaign, and brand refresh, Lauren has had a full plate these past two weeks. She stayed cool, calm, and collected, and leads her team by example. I also heard she crushed the nonprofit branding presentation this week!”



### Carmen Erdie

“Carmen had a task-filled week but still willingly stepped in to assist with email deployments for the latest portfolio-wide campaign. She stayed in communication with me on edits for two major website builds and ticket after ticket that I sent her way. Not to mention the oh-so-fun alt text tasks! Thanks, Carmen!”

## What Is the Gold Standard?

[READ MORE](#)

## Upcoming Conferences

**AIM Conference**  
May 7–10, 2023

[SCHEDULE A MEETING](#)

**NAA Apartmentalize**  
June 7–9, 2023

[SCHEDULE A MEETING](#)



○...● CATALYST

# Get In Touch

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