

Creative Director, Brand Builder, Designer, Speaker, Blogger, Crazy One.

I'm the son of a Creative Director who started his education in creativity and design growing up working in my father's advertising agency. As a designer, I have 20+ years experience creating the strategy, concepts, and designs for award-winning integrated global advertising campaigns, building multiple global Fortune 500 brands and creating innovative digital experiences. As a leader, I have 15+ years leading agency and client-side teams that combine creativity, business strategy and political skill to create innovative, world-class work that changes industries and companies.

My clients have included American Airlines, W Hotels, Disney, ExxonMobil, Acura, Old Navy, Nationwide Insurance, Verizon, St. Regis Hotels, Subaru and many others. My work has received over 150 international awards, my app designs have been named as one of the World's 100 Greatest Apps, Apple has featured my work in 9 keynotes, 4 TV commercials, on Apple.com, in Apple Stores and more. As a result, I've partnered with Apple, Google, IBM, Adobe and others to design some of the first experiences on Apple Watch, iOS, Google Glass and more.



2nd Generation Creative Director

I'm the son of a creative director with over 15 years experience leading world-class teams to create innovative ideas and then using my creative, business and political skills to sell those ideas. I care deeply about my teams and creating a culture where every creative can have their process understood, valued and grown.



Team and Thought Leader

I have a proven track record of building and leading world-class teams that find unique insights to influence consumers, drive revenue and meet business goals. I also have extensive experience with Design Thinking using agile methodologies including co-creating a unique version of Design Thinking with IDEO.



Innovative Senior Designer

I'm a hands on designer with 20+ years experience creating the strategy, concepts and designs for award-winning integrated global advertising campaigns, building multiple global Fortune 500 brands and innovative digital experiences. I've partnered with Apple, Google and Adobe to create some of the first experiences on Apple Watch, Apple iOS, Passbook, Google Glass and more.



Award Winner

My work has been recognized with over 150 major design awards including Canne Cyber Lions, Webby Awards, Web Awards and others. Apple has featured my work in 9 keynotes, 4 commercials, in Apple Stores, Apple.com, the iTunes App Store and their Human Interface Guidelines.



Professional Experience

Sep 2015
Present

● SVP, Global Head of Design Citi - New York, NY

Leading multiple global design studios of over 100 people creating global experiences in digital, branding, social, mobile, advertising, and bank branches for the Citi FinTech, Citi innovation labs and core business groups. Helped to introduce, lead, manage and champion a unique version of Design Thinking with agile methods created through a partnership with IDEO. Helped lead the creation of the Citi Design Principles and Design Ethos which govern all global design work. Created a new culture for the design teams with clear standards for coaching and leadership that focused the teams, helped manage the career development of cross-discipline resources and created much-needed motivation and inspiration. Helped to create a unified digital design language that will unify customer experiences across web, iOS, Android and Apple Watch.

Jun 2015
Sep 2006

● Vice President and Senior Creative Director, Global Digital Brand Design and Innovation

Starwood Hotels and Resorts - New York, NY

Led digital design, content and film & video teams for global brand design across all 10 of Starwood's brands as well as leading design across all media for the Starwood Preferred Guest loyalty program. Notable innovation included Aloft in SecondLife, the state aware design of the SPG smartphone and iPad apps, SPG Mobile Check-in and SPG Keyless Entry for iPhone and Apple Watch.

*"At Starwood Stephen was the vanguard for our thinking"
- Frits Von Paasschen, former Starwood CEO*

Clients: St. Regis, W Hotels, Le Meridien, Sheraton, Westin, Element, Aloft, Four Points, The Luxury Collection, Starwood Preferred Guest, The Tribute Collection, SPG Pro and Starwood Corporate.

Aug 2006
Jan 2003

● Interactive Creative Director

Temerlin McClain (McCann Worldgroup) - Dallas, TX

Managed and developed a high level creative teams who created the creative strategy, executions, brand strategy, concepting and visual design for online advertising, web site design and mobile.

Clients: American Airlines, Exxon Mobil, Subaru, Sprint, Toshiba, Texas Instruments, Texas Tourism, Nortel Networks, Adams Golf, University of Houston, Verizon Superpages.com, VanCliburn Foundation, Bell Helicopter,, oneworld airline alliance, Mariloff Diamonds Planet Cancer, IgoUgo.com and Nationwide Insurance

New business won: Venetian Hotel and Casino, ExxonMobil, Verizon SuperPages, Sprint Business solutions, oneworld global airline alliance and others

Jan 2003
Jan 2002

● Freelance Creative Director and Senior Designer

Managed, directed, and consulted with high-level creative teams for a wide variety of ad agencies and corporate clients. Work included creative strategy, concept, visual design and brand development for print and web.

Clients: EDS, i2 Technology, U.S. Air Force, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (M.A.D.D.), Pizza Hut, TGI Friday's, Mattress Firm, Subaru, Toshiba, Tribal DDB, Brann Forbes, Pyro Brand Development, and Temerlin McClain

Dec 2001
Aug 1999

● Interactive Creative Director

Vertis Digital Solutions Group - Dallas, TX

Managed and worked with high level creative team of art directors, writers, and information architects. Work included creative strategy, concept, visual design and brand development for a wide variety of clients.

Clients: Serta, Disney, Motorola, AMD, Intel, Price Waterhouse, Honda, Acura, Toyota, American Dairy Brands, Garden Ridge

New business won: Serta, Intel, Honda & Acura Motors, GardenRidge, and Disney/Buena Vista Home Entertainment.

Aug 1999
Apr 1997

● Creative Director

The Fowler Group - Dallas, TX

Managed and developed a high level creative team of art directors, writers, and information architects by defining the vision, direction and goals. Develop team members by identifying and providing the needed training, coaching and mentoring. Worked to create top level creative execution, creative strategy, brand development, concepting, visual design for a wide variety of clients.

Apr 1997
Birth

● Designer, Art Director, 3D Animator and Junior Letterpress Operator

Pittsburgh, PA

I was literally born into design and advertising with a father who was a creative director and a mother who was an artist. I learned typography on a cast iron letterpress in the basement of our house and I've been working as a designer since I was 13. I cut rubylith, studied Computer Graphics at Syracuse, worked as a 3D animator and then blended all of those skills into my digital work.



Education

Syracuse University

College of Visual and Performing Arts - Studied Computer Graphics

Carnegie Mellon University

Pre-college certificate (completed in high school) - 2 year pre-college certificate in Fine Art and Computer Graphics



Accomplished International Speaker

I also work to share what I have learned with the international creative community through my podcast, blog and speaking engagements. I've taught small sessions for companies like IDEO, Apple, GE, Adobe, L'Oreal and Saatchi to large international keynotes alongside speakers like Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak and Zappos.com CEO Tony Hsieh to guest lectures at Yale, Parsons, Princeton, and SVA. I've been named an Adobe MAX Master speaker as one of the top 20 speakers at the conference for both 2015 and 2016. Those sessions received an average score of 4.9 out of 5 from over 1,000 session attendees.

- **Adobe MAX 2015** – *Beyond the Lightbulb: How to Concept, Design and Prototype Great Ideas* (scored 4.98 out of 5 by attendees)
- **World Usability Day** – *Building Brands with Every Interaction*
- **IDEO Lunch and Learn** – *Wearable Technology Design Trends*
- **Engage: NYC Digital Storytelling Conference 2015** – *Inside Successful Interactive Storytelling*
- **NICE Interactions 2014** – *Keynote: Social Media Is Real But Is It Its Own Channel?*
- **Usability Experience Professionals Association International** – *Putting the Brand at the Center of UX Design*
- **Adobe MAX 2014** – *The Crazy Ones: How to Be a Leader Who Inspires Creativity and Innovation* (scored 4.87 out of 5 by attendees)
- **Digital Design and Innovation Summit 2014** – *Why State-aware Design Is Going To Change Mobile Forever*
- **Online Marketing Expo Barcelona 2013** – *Opening keynote: Agile is the New Smart*
- **The Mobile Marketing Conference** – *Best Practices in Mobile Web Design*
- **FUSE 2010** – *Memory Loss and Hamburger: Getting the Best From In-house Design Teams*
- **Guest lecturer** at Yale, Princeton, School of Visual Arts Masters in Branding Program and Parsons The New School for Design.

ADOBE MAX 2014

"The best, most inspiring session at Adobe Max.

This is a talk that all creative leaders and aspiring leaders should be aware of. There is nothing, that I have heard, directed towards leaders in the creative industry that is as powerful as this session."

SCORED THE SESSION 4.98 OUT OF 5 BY SESSION ATTENDEES

NICE INTERACTIONS 2014

"This keynote was simply amazing.

LOVED the presentation theme, and Stephen was totally genius. I appreciated his well thought reflexions, sense of humour and deep knowledge and experience. I'm going to take lots of his nuggets of info in my life, professional et personal. Thanks for this great time!"

For a complete list of the events I have spoken at, attendee reviews and upcoming talks please go to StephenGates.com



Recent Press

My work has been featured by over 300 international press outlets across top-tier national, tech, travel and broadcast press. Notable coverage included The New York Times (print and online), CNN, WIRED, Fast Company, USA Today, CNBC, China Daily, The Wall Street Journal, TechCrunch, MacWorld, TODAY show, Re/Code and Financial Times, among many others.

- **New York Times** - *For Some, iPad Pro Can't Match PC Strengths* [Read the article](#)
- **Fast Company** - *Your Next Innovative Idea Could Be A Restaurant Visit Away* [Read the article](#)
- **Mashable.com** - *The Workspaces Of Men Who Are On Their Game* [Read the article](#)
- **Digital Arts** - *11 inspiring quotes from leading creatives at Adobe Max 2014* [Read the article](#)
- **TIME** - *Tim Cook Just Revealed More Apple Watch Secrets* [Read the article](#)
- **Fast Company** - *Starwood's App Driven vision for the hotel of the future* [Read the article](#)
- **Engadget** - *Starwood's app for Google Glass will let you search and book hotels* [Read the article](#)

For a more complete list of personal and professional press please go to StephenGates.com

“Stephen is an innovator, visionary and evangelist that any team would want on the front lines.”

- Selection announcement for the OMMA Magazines Online Marketing All-Star

Webby Awards

(3 nominees and 10 honorees)

2016 – LeMeridien.com – Best Use Of Photography honoree
2015 – SPG Android App – Travel App honoree
2014 – SPG iPad App – Travel App honoree
2012 – W Hotels – Best Home Page honoree
2012 - W Hotels iPhone App – Travel App honoree
2009 – The Luxury Collection – Travel honoree
2008 – Lemeridien employment site – Employment finalist
2008 - StephenGates.com Blog – Personal site honoree
2007 – Nationwide Insurance – LifeComesAtYouFast.com – Insurance finalist
2007 - St. Regis employment site – Employment honoree
2006 – WhyYouFly.com – Airline honoree
2005 – Subaru All-Wheel Drive microsite – Automotive finalist

International Academy of Digital Arts & Sciences member
Webby Awards judge 2010 - present

Cannes Cyber Lions

2006 Silver - American Airlines “We Know Why You Fly”

Mobile WebAwards

2013 -SPG iPad App – Best Hotel app - SPG iPhone / Android App – Outstanding App
Mobile WebAwards Competition Judge 2011-present

Communication Arts

Site of the Week: Subaru All-Wheel Drive Microsite and WhyYouFly.com

ACM SIGGRAPH

1995 Computer Graphics Pioneer Award Winner (1 of 7 awarded worldwide)

Apple

Apple has featured my work in 8 keynotes, 4 commercials, in Apple Stores, on Apple.com, in the iTunes Store and in their Human Interface Guidelines

Business Insider

SPG App named one of the World's 100 Greatest Apps

Adobe Site of the Day

(5 awards)

LuxuryCollection.com, IgoUgo.com Worldly Traveler Trivia Challenge,
Subaru All-Wheel Drive Microsite, LifeComesAtYouFast.com, WhyYouFly.com

TIME Magazine

Future of Advertising Issue - Nationwide Insurance Life Comes at You Fast Times Square

L2 Digital Index Prestige Hotels

Helped lead Starwood digital team to take the top 6 spots in the 2015 survey

OMMA Magazine All-Star

Chosen by the editors as one of three 2009 Online All-Stars for Marketing

Addy Awards

(19 awards)

2006 - Gold Local, Gold Regional, Best of Show Regional - Verizon Superpages.com
2005 - Silver National, Gold Regional, Gold Local - American Airlines Web/Online Campaign
2004 - WhyYouFly interactive campaign Bronze, FlyYouFly.com and Need-Desire.com

Internet Advertising Awards

2008 - Best Hotel & Lodging Rich Media Campaign - SheratonPlay.com
2007 - Best Site -Nationwide Insurance - Life Comes at You Fast Times Square Site
2006 - Best Search Engine Online campaign - Verizon Superpages “We know around here”
2006 - 2014 Competition and Best of Show judge

OMMA Magazine

Helped lead t:m interactive to Agency of the Year: Gold

WebAwards

(24 awards)

2012 – StarwoodHotels.com – Outstanding Corporate Site
2010 -Westin.com and StRegis.com - Standard of Excellence
2008 - LeMeridien, Aloft, Element, SheratonWave.com, StephenGates.com Blog - Standard of Excellence, SPG The Lobby blog - Outstanding Website
2004 - 2015 Competition and Best of Show judge

Adobe

Featured in Adobe CS5 customer success story and Creative Voices videos

For a complete list of awards and recognitions please go to StephenGates.com