

**Hamilton College
Office of Communications & Development
Creative Services**

Title: Creative Services Production Manager

Reports to: Director of Visual Communications

Overview:

The Production Manager is central to the work of all members of the Creative Services team. He/she must possess the ability to see the “big picture” while anticipating print needs, developing schedules for projects both large and small, and understanding how electronic communications integrate with the overall process. Because of the fast-paced, deadline-driven environment, the Production Manager must set priorities while maintaining flexibility in his/her approach since the job will continue to evolve as communication needs change, especially in light of changing electronic communications. Careful attention to detail at every stage of the production process, from inception to delivery, is critical. The Production Manager also keeps campus clients apprised of the status of their communication projects.

The Production Manager must be experienced in developing comprehensive print specifications and fully understand all printing and mailing capabilities in order to identify vendors, recommend solutions, communicate progress and evaluate results that ensure projects are produced on time, within budget and reflect the College’s standards for quality. Key to this position is the management of two databases: a job-tracking database that maintains all major details of each project, and a digital photo database that organizes the Creative Services digital images (currently over 65,000). Management includes oversight, input, and regular review and modification in order to ensure that this information is optimized for maximum usability.

Responsibilities:

- With Creative Services colleagues, develop production schedules that include deadlines for copy, design, proof approvals, etc., to ensure on-time delivery. Serve as liaison with campus clients, apprising them of the steps necessary to meet deadlines and prompting those responsible for copy, photographs and proofing/approvals
- In addition to schedules for short-range projects, take the lead in identifying/adding annual projects to the schedule and alerting those responsible of impending deadlines
- Develop detailed printing specifications and bid requests to ensure quality standards, cost effectiveness and on-time delivery of all print publications; with Director of Visual Communications, develop specifications for major four-color publications
- Evaluate printers’ quotes, award print jobs and coordinate contractual agreements with vendors. Monitor and report on vendor quality and performance, and review and process invoices to ensure accurate billing. Resolve basic vendor issues. Serve as the Creative Services liaison with the campus Print Shop
- Maintain and continue to evaluate the Creative Services database that tracks all communications (print and electronic) and serves as a “master schedule.” Key information for each project includes production schedules/deadlines, print specifications, costs, quantities, Creative Services point-person(s), etc.
- As the primary manager of the Portfolio photo catalog, perform monthly maintenance; organize high resolution photo files on the server; move photos into the database assigning the appropriate information to the files; respond to photo requests and/or supply support to others when they need assistance with the catalog. Oversee student photo intern. Take the lead on long-range strategies to address digital storage issues
- Convene weekly production and deployment meetings where Creative Services colleagues review jobs currently in process or on the immediate horizon
- Ensure that all necessary approvals/sign-offs of publications have taken place, and, if not, coordinate with clients prior to gathering and releasing files to the printer

- Review digital proofs and communicate adjustments/changes directly to the printer. With Director of Visual Communications, review digital proofs for major four-color publications and supervise four-color printing and press approvals
- Confirm delivery times and locations with campus client and/or mail house prior to a job's delivery; communicate delivery instructions with vendors
- With Director of Visual Communications, coordinate the production of campus plaques, banners, etc. and fulfill requests for the College logo and/or wordmark
- Create hardcopy and digital job folders, assign job numbers, move files to the appropriate folders to ensure proper archiving of projects
- Coordinate photography for annual events (Reunions, Commencement, Fallcoming/Family Weekend, etc.) and special assignments
- As necessary, assist with formatting/typesetting for both print and Web communications
- Keep apprised of relevant trends in the printing industry (i.e., capabilities of area printers, paper availability, etc.) and changing postal regulations
- Promote the services and expertise provided by Creative Services, including championing "green" options for printing, achieving shared economies of scale, etc.
- Order photos and coordinate framing for citations and other special awards
- Become familiar with the *Hamilton College Editorial Style Guide* and make basic edits to copy as necessary
- Pursue opportunities to expand job-related skills (workshops, seminars, online training, etc.)
- Make reasonable effort to become involved in the Hamilton community
- Other duties as assigned

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree in information technology, communications, print/Web management or a related field, plus a minimum of three years' experience in print production and/or purchasing of print for diverse communications projects. An equivalent combination of education and experience may be acceptable
- Thorough knowledge of project management and print production, including developing print specifications, negotiating with vendors, creating production schedules and trafficking all phases of production
- Demonstrated proficiency in using, analyzing and optimizing databases for effectiveness and efficiency
- Excellent understanding of the print process — file preparation, two-/four-color printing, ink types, paper types/weights and printing equipment (web, sheet-fed, etc.); competence with press approval of print work
- Understanding of mailing practices/requirements, including postal regulations
- Excellent problem-solving and time-management skills. Must be self-motivated, organized, detail-oriented and possess the ability to handle multiple projects simultaneously
- Clear and consistent communication skills for persuasive and effective interaction with a wide range of campus clients and external vendors
- Must develop proficiency in Extensis Portfolio (photo database), FileMaker Pro (job database) and SiteManager (Hamilton's Web content management system). Working knowledge of InDesign and Acrobat Pro. Must be familiar with FTP sites, print-ready PDFs, etc.

Updated: April 15, 2012