

# Supporting the Creative Industries of Massachusetts

CreativeNEXT Listening Tour Summary Report



## INTRODUCTION

This report provides an overview of the CreativeNEXT listening tour, an event series which engaged the creative industries of Massachusetts throughout the summer of 2012. The purpose of these roundtable events was to evaluate the needs and opportunities that exist within the creative industries and to provide insights to guide the development of the Massachusetts Creative Economy Council's priority focus areas. The Patrick-Murray Administration's Creative Economy Industry Director Helena Fruscio and the Massachusetts Creative Economy Council reached over 580 businesses, organizations, and individuals during the twenty-one events and discussed the growth and sustainability of the creative industries and their future in Massachusetts.

Additionally, the CreativeNEXT tour:

- **Gathered Input:** Engaged individuals working in the creative industries in a discussion about needs and provided an opportunity to be "part of the solution".
- **Collected Data:** Polled the industry about the size and scope of their businesses and organizations.
- **Mobilized Support:** Provided an opportunity for community leaders and business support organizations to engage with the creative industries.
- **Enhanced Visibility:** Increased profile of the creative industries across the Commonwealth.

## BACKGROUND

### What are the creative industries?

In Massachusetts, the creative industries include the many interlocking industry sectors that provide creative services or create and promote intellectual property products. For the purposes of the CreativeNEXT listening tour the businesses (for-profit), organizations

(not-for-profit) and individuals (sole proprietors) were divided into the following categories:

**Advertising and Marketing:** Advertising and marketing agencies and professionals

**Architecture:** Architecture firms and architects

**Visual Arts and Craft:** Museums, galleries, curators, artists, and artisans

**Design:** Industrial, interior, graphic, fashion firms and designers

**Film, Media, Entertainment:** Film, TV, radio, and video game businesses and talent

**Music and Performance:** Venues, producers, and performers

**Publishing:** Content creation, editors, writers and distributors

### **What is the Massachusetts Creative Economy Council?**

The Massachusetts Creative Economy Council, an advisory Council to the Legislature and the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development, was called to action by a law signed by Governor Deval Patrick on October 8, 2008. Its legislated purpose is to develop a statewide strategy for the enhancement, encouragement, and growth of the \$1 billion creative economy industry, which employed over 100,000 Massachusetts workers, according to New England Foundation for the Arts (2007).

On May 17, 2012, the Council adopted new Grounding Principals to guide Council priorities. The Grounding Principals are:

1. **One Cluster:** Priorities should have an effect on the creative industries as a whole.
2. **One State:** Priorities should have an effect on the creative industries statewide.
3. **Industry Focus:** Priorities should be centered on the needs of the creative industries.
4. **Achievable:** Priorities must have a clear goal and measurable results.
5. **Outcome Based:** Priorities should have a tangible finishing point with a deliverable.

To root the priorities of the Council in the needs and opportunities within the creative industry (Grounding Principal #3), the Council voted to embark on the CreativeNEXT listening tour to hear directly from the business owners, directors, and employees running and operating businesses and organizations within the creative industries. The Council agreed that the findings from the CreativeNEXT tour will inform the Council's priorities, and Working Groups will be formed around the top priorities identified as part of the listening tour.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The goal of the CreativeNEXT tour was to reach a diverse group of at least five hundred companies, organizations and individuals within the creative industries throughout the Commonwealth. The events were broken into three categories, **Regional Events** focused on a geographic region of the state (defined by Massachusetts Office of Business Development), **Community Focus Groups** invited participants in a specific municipality, and **Industry Focus groups** included members of a single industry within the creative industries. The following are the CreativeNEXT events event that took place throughout the summer of 2012. A breakout of each category is as follows:

## **Regional Events**

Berkshires  
Cape Cod  
Merrimack Valley  
Metro West  
North Worcester  
North Shore  
Pioneer Valley  
South Coast  
Worcester

## **Community Focus Groups**

Boston  
Greater Boston  
Haverhill  
Palmer

## **Industry Focus Groups**

Architecture  
Design  
Fashion  
Film, Media, Entertainment  
Marketing and Advertising  
Music and Performing Arts  
Publishing  
Visual Arts and Craft

The events were hosted in collaboration with regional and industry partner organizations, each of which is invested in the growth and development of the creative industries in Massachusetts. Partner organizations secured dates and venues, generated contact lists, and promoted the events. The partner organizations were: AHA! New Bedford, Artisans Asylums and Union Square Main Streets (Somerville), Berkshire Creative Economy Council, Boston Society of Architects, City of Holyoke, Cape Creative and the Arts Foundation of Cape Cod, Creative Economy Association of the North Shore, Cultural Organization of Lowell, Creative Haverhill, Fenway Alliance and Fort Point Arts Community, Fitchburg State and the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission, Grub Street (Boston), MITX and the Ad Club (Boston), Metro West Chamber, Stage Source (Boston), Design Museum Boston, Mass Digi, Massachusetts Artists Leadership Coalition, Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Massachusetts Production Coalition, and Worcester Cultural Coalition.

An online event was created for each stop on the tour using eventbrite.com and hosted in a central account by the Creative Economy Industry Director. In addition to providing information about the event, this system was used to identify the attendees as businesses/organization/individuals within the creative industries or creative industry supporters. This provided an opportunity to include parties interested in supporting the creative industries, but allowed for a survey specifically geared toward the businesses, organizations, and individuals within the creative industries participating in the tour. Host partners used this system in the promotion of the events and were given access to view attendee lists. Beyond promotion, this central account enabled the Creative Economy Industry Director to support and simplify event preparation tasks for the hosting partner organizations and also ensured all of the data was collected consistently.

In order to increase the visibility of the CreativeNEXT events and attendees Facebook albums and a Pinerest page were created. To view images from each even go to: [Facebook.com/CreateMA/](https://www.facebook.com/CreateMA/) and [Pinterest.com/CreativeNEXT](https://www.pinterest.com/CreativeNEXT).

## **Mixed Method Approach to Data Collection**

### **Quantitative Data Collection**

In Massachusetts, as in other states, creative industries data is difficult to collect. To establish an initial dataset that can be used to inform the Council's priorities moving forward, quantitative data was collected through survey questions within the event RSVP management system. Overall, 582 companies, which far exceeded the RSVP goal,

signed up to participate in the 21 events in the CreativeNEXT tour and each submitted data along with contact information. The businesses, organizations, and individuals within the creative industries were asked the following questions:

1. Is your business: For-Profit, Not-For-Profit, or Sole Proprietor?
2. How many people are employed by your business (Full Time Employees)?
3. Are you presently hiring?
4. What industry are you in?
5. How long have you been in business?
6. What is the main market for your creative good or service?

### **Qualitative Data Collection**

Qualitative data was collected at each of the listening tour events in multiple ways: First, the creative industry participants completed a form, with open ended questions, at the end of each of the listening tour events. The form asked the following questions:

- **Competitive Advantage:** What sets your business apart from other businesses?
- **Opportunity:** What is the biggest opportunity for your business to grow?
- **Support:** When you think of organizations that support the development of your business what is the first one that comes to mind? Why?
- **Mentors:** Do you have access to business mentors to help your business grow? Y/N. If no, are you looking for one or are you interested in finding one? Y/N
- **Support:** If you were seeking additional support for your business what would you look for?
- **Barriers:** What are the biggest barriers to that growth?
- **Additional Thoughts?**

Second, qualitative data was collected through notes from the discussion happening on the day of the event. Each event started with an overview of the creative industries and the purpose of the CreativeNEXT Tour. Then participants introduced themselves and answered the questions, "What sets your business/organization apart; what makes it awesome?"

The conversation was led by the following discussion guide:

- Where are the opportunities to grow?
- What is the biggest thing happening in your industry right now?
- How are you trying to change your business to keep up with changes?
- What support is needed to grow?
- Are there major barriers to the growth of your business?
- What's NEXT for you, your business, and your industry?
- How can we help?

Third, feedback shared throughout discussions at each of the CreativeNEXT events was evaluated by identifying the major theme predominant in each statement, suggestion, or idea. The number of times a theme was mentioned throughout the events was counted. (For example "Networking" was mentioned thirty-five times in twenty-one events). The themes, along with strengthening recommendations, are outlined in the findings section of this report.

Qualitative data, including overall discussion themes and written suggestions submitted via forms, is available in the Appendix.

Lastly, address information for each of the registered participants was collected through the RSVP management system. Using the work address of the businesses, organizations, and/or individuals Maps were generated in Google Fusion. Maps were generated from information of 84% of the RSVPs due to incomplete address information.

## Findings

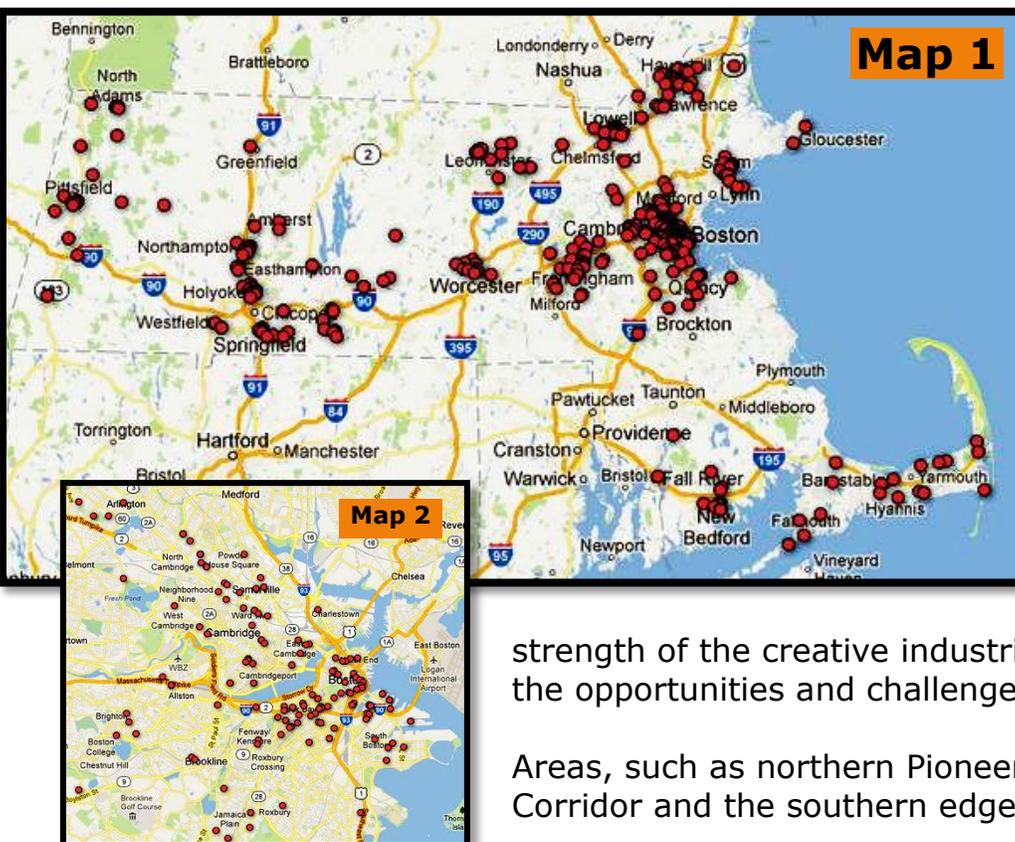
The findings in this report focus on the overall themes that arose throughout the CreativeNEXT listening tour and focus on the similarities of the suggestions across industries and across regions.

In Massachusetts the creative industries are a diverse group of businesses, organizations and individuals, each yielding particular insights and ideas. Also, the creative industries of each region had unique needs and opportunities. Distinctive characteristics were apparent at every event, but the synergies are reflected in the findings and will help to guide priorities for the sector statewide. For a more detailed description of the findings from specific events, please see full results in the Appendix.

## A Snapshot of the Creative Industries in Massachusetts

The goal of the CreativeNEXT listening tour was to reach 500 businesses, organizations, and individuals in various geographic locations across the Commonwealth within all of the creative industries – striving for representation in all regions and industries.

Consideration was also paid to the diversity of the businesses in respect to the type, size, length of time in business, major markets and hiring capacity.



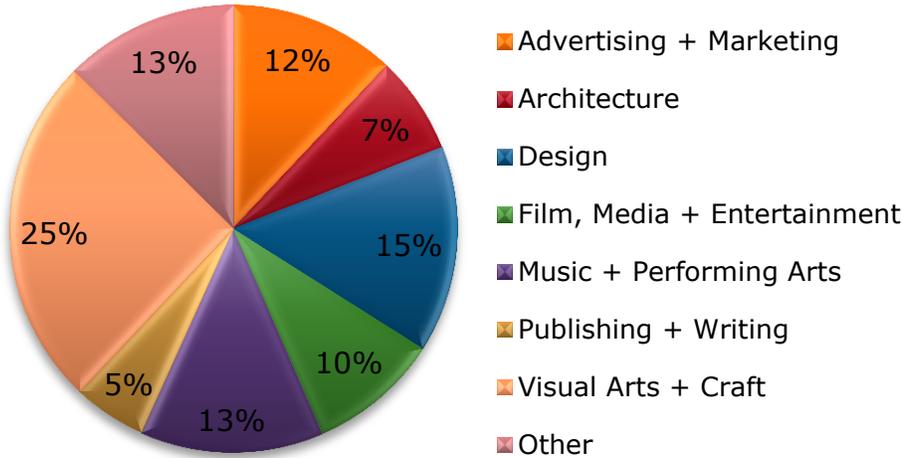
As shown in Map 1, a regionally diverse group of businesses and stakeholder participated in the listening tour.

Participants were broadly dispersed across the state, which resulted in unique perspectives on the

strength of the creative industries within each region and the opportunities and challenges in each region.

Areas, such as northern Pioneer Valley on the Route 2 Corridor and the southern edge of the interstate 495

**Chart 1: Industry Representation**

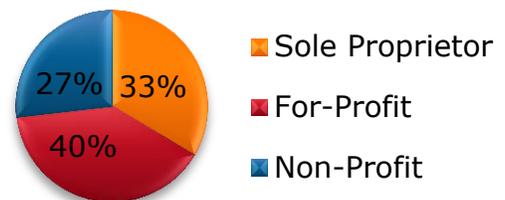


across to the South Shore were underrepresented in comparison to the other regions of the state. The Pioneer Valley and South Coast events were meant to represent these areas, but attendance was low in comparison to other listening tour events. Additional events in these areas are being considered.

The CreativeNEXT tour strove to reach all industries within the creative industries. As shown in

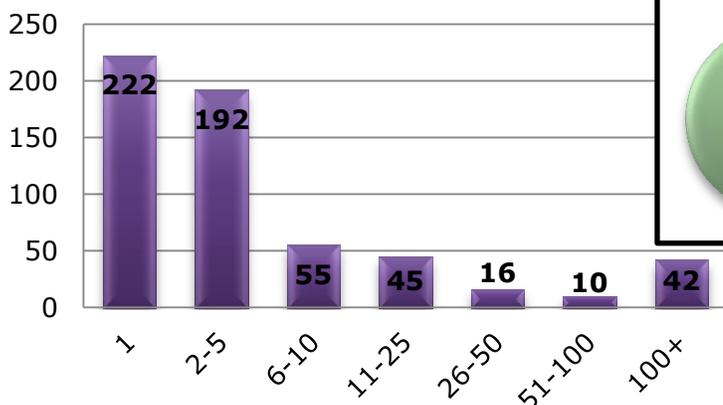
Chart 1 one-quarter of the businesses and organizations that participated in the tour identified themselves as "Visual Arts and Craft". This category includes a range of businesses and organizations from museums to individual artists to community arts groups and had the largest representation. Most of the other industries, including: Advertising and Marketing, Design, Film, Media and Entertainment, Music and Performing Arts, and Other, each represented 10 to 15 percent of the survey respondents. Finally, Architecture and Publishing sectors had the lowest representation among creative industry sectors. Industry Focus Groups were hosted in both Architecture and Publishing sectors, but it is possible that fewer participants in these areas attended regional and community events in comparison to the other events.

**Chart 2: Type of Business**

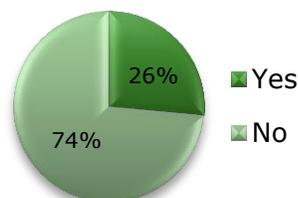


The types of entities that participated in the tour, were For-Profit, Not-For-Profit, or Sole Proprietor within the creative industries. As shown in Chart 2, each type of business was well represented, with slightly more For-Profit businesses (40%) and fewest Not-For-Profit organizations (27%) attending.

**Chart 3: Number of Employees**



**Chart 4: Hiring**

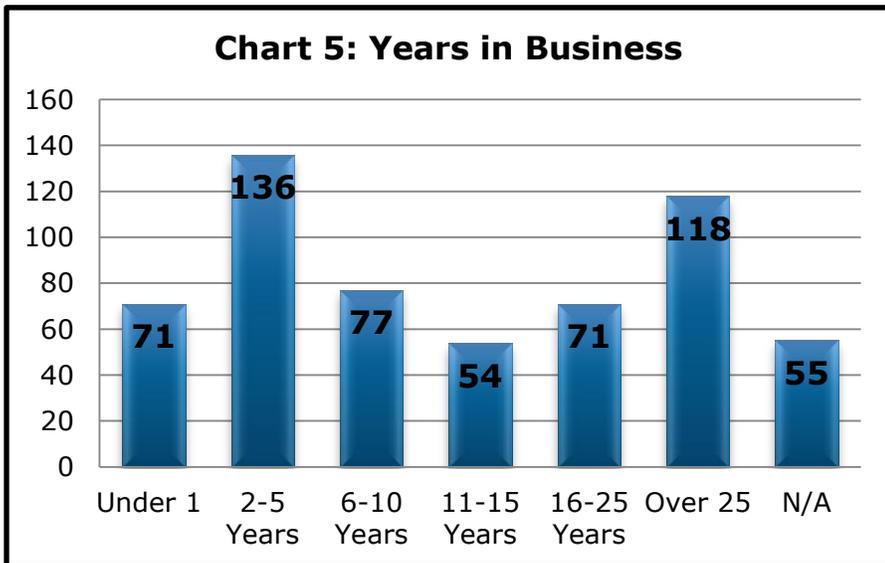


To evaluate the diversity of the size and scope of the businesses and organizations the number of employees, length of time in business, and major markets were considered. Over 70%

of the businesses and organizations had five or fewer employees, as shown

in Chart 3. Over 25 percent of the businesses and organization surveyed said they were presently hiring at the time they took the survey, as shown in Chart 4.

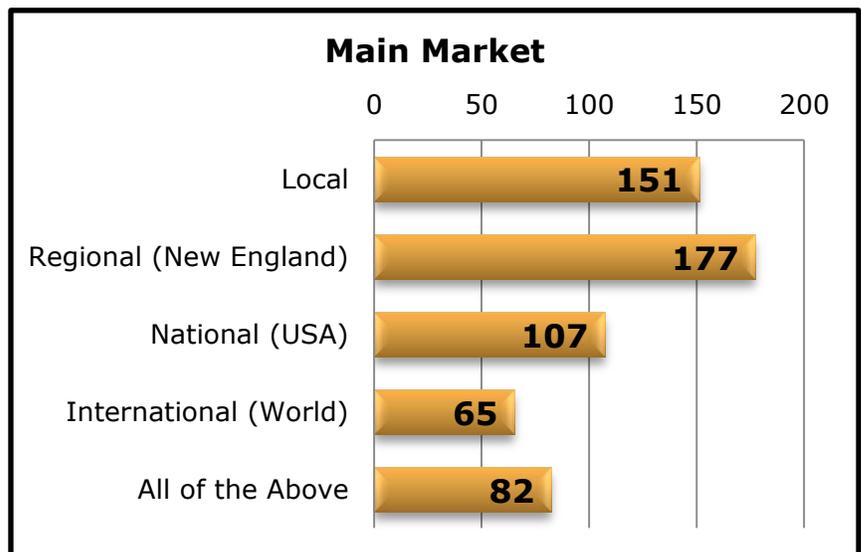
This information could be interpreted in two ways: first that the creative industries do not have hiring capacity at this time, and second that the businesses and organizations that were able to attend events tended to be smaller in size with less capacity to hire.



The length of time that organizations and businesses had been operating was evenly distributed from new under five years to established, with over 16 years of operation. As shown in Chart 5, over one-third of the businesses and organizations surveyed had been in business for between one to five years, just over one-fifth had been in business between six and fifteen years and approximately one-third had been in business over 16 years. This shows that some

of the businesses included in the CreativeNEXT listening tour have been in place for over a decade, while some are still in start-up phase. With such a large number of entities distributed throughout different phases in the business cycle it was important to highlight the resources that had been used by the sector, the challenges that different sub-industries have experienced, and the opportunities that participants found along the way.

Over 55 percent of the businesses and organizations were focused on local or regional markets and over 40 percent reported a national, international, or all market environment, as shown in Chart 6. This means that slightly more



than half of the businesses were operating on a local or regional scale and slightly less than half had a broader market throughout the world and nation. These trends influenced some of the themes identified in the listening tour events, specifically in marketing, talent, and business models.

## **Strengthening the Creative Industries of Massachusetts**

Even with over 580 individuals participating in the CreativeNEXT events, from different creative industries, in different regions of the state, common themes could be extracted from the discussions that took place at each event. Below are the top ten themes for strengthening the creative industries in Massachusetts that were apparent across the Commonwealth.

### **Top Ten Themes for Strengthening the Creative Industries of Massachusetts**

#### **1. NETWORKING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

The most mentioned concern from the participants in the tour was networking, both among businesses, organizations, and individuals within the creative industries, and between the creative industries and other key industries within Massachusetts. There seemed to be isolation of the creative industries in almost every community, both rural and urban. Sometimes the issue was in a single industry within the creative industries, for example in the architecture focus group it was mentioned that architects mainly attended events in their specific industry. Other times, like in the Pioneer Valley, it seems like there was a desire for networking within the creative industries. Since the CreativeNEXT event a "Plug into the Creative Valley" event has been connecting and networking the creative industries in the Pioneer Valley. As for cross industry networking, the focus was on highly visible Massachusetts industries including: technology, healthcare, manufacturing, food/restaurants, finance, bio-tech, life science, and clean energy. The main request was to provide opportunities for the creative industries to engage with these industries, in formal and informal settings.

#### **2. ACCESS TO CAPITAL**

The second most requested item was discussed in many forms from "financing", to "grants", to "investors", and sometimes simply "money". Many attendees were not aware of funding or financing options, or which best suited their needs and present business situation. There also seemed to be a need for training specifically geared towards business and financial planning, which prevented access to most of the funding options available. (Also see #7, Training).

#### **3. MARKETING**

Marketing came up in almost every event during the tour. The discussion focused on marketing of the individual businesses/organization, building client base, and the need to connect with marketing expertise. There was often a debate over in-house marketing vs. hiring a firm, if hiring a firm then how to evaluate the firm, which led into a discussion about budget for marketing, social media and PR.

For example in the Performing Arts Focus Group, the use of social media was discussed as an engagement tool. Questions arose: "How much is too much when posting?", "Will people still buy tickets if you post the content?", "How do we meet the expectations of audiences via social networking?", and "Where do people find news?" The basic summary is that businesses and organizations were spending more time on publicity and marketing, without the same results.

On various occasions the companies requested a “Buy Local” incentive or campaign geared towards key industries and big business, (see #1 for list of potential industries). Many of the businesses and organizations mentioned they rely on “Word of Mouth”, above other forms of marketing.

#### **4. INDUSTRY VISIBILITY**

At many events the “branding”, “image”, and “message” of the creative industries and the sub industries was a topic of concern. Unlike marketing, this concern was a collective concern, focusing on the creative industries as a whole, not the individual businesses. Sometimes this concern centered on a brand and a consistent message, other times data and counting the impact of creative industries. Some campaign ideas were suggested, “Buy Creative Local”, “Made/Designed in Mass”. The goal was always to tell the world (and potential clients) “the creative industries are here in Massachusetts”.

#### **5. TALENT AND WORKFORCE**

The discussion around talent changed slightly from event to event, but generally focused on internships and the competition for talent. Access and connections to interns in specific fields came up frequently in communities across the state. There was awareness that they could approach the various colleges in the area, but many of the participants had not taken the time to do so, or did not “have the time” to pursue. Secondly, competition for talent took different angles depending on where the discussion was held. In Greater Boston the competition was with cities around the nation and globe, access to young entry level talent, but less access to middle and upper management. In other parts of the state the discussion was around retaining talent at all levels and competition with larger cities. Also, having a “one stop” for interns and job posting seemed of interest to the businesses.

#### **6. MENTORSHIP**

Access to specialized expertise came up frequently in meetings. When asked about business support systems, attendees sometimes stated they were happy with the services, but they would like someone with intimate knowledge of their specific industry. They wanted someone willing to share insights and best practices. Sometimes this conversation overlapped with the discussion of networking (#1). Other times the participants felt as if the creative industries were less willing to share knowledge, “Everything is a big secret”, from what to charge, who to contact (#1, Networking), where to go (#10, Space).

For example, in the Fashion Focus Group one attendee started their businesses in Massachusetts, but it didn’t take off until it moved to New York City, where they felt they had more, easy to find support. It was harder to find the visible support system locally – suppliers, critics, packaging, and mentors.

This theme also overlaps with the fourth theme, industry visibility, but centers around having visible access points to mentors willing to share that expertise.

50% of the businesses said on the form they would be interested in finding a business mentor.

## **7. TRAINING**

This request was similar to mentorship (#6), but tended to focus more on business and financial training: preparing business plans, financial documents, sales, and projections. The businesses were requesting training on “how to run a company”. Discussion also focused on marketing, use of social networking, and brand development (#3, Marketing).

## **8. VALUE**

Many of the participants mentioned the difficulty of quantifying the value of their goods and services when speaking to potential clients. (Also see #7, Training) The concept of “case studies” applying measures (mostly monetary) to help value the work of the creative industries came up in multiple events. For example in the Design Focus Group, the issue was not always finding clients, but having clients “realize the value of custom design, instead of grab and go solutions from online companies”. In the Cape Cod meeting the discussion turned to the need for a creative “translator” to help non-creative companies understand the value of design.

## **9. BUSINESS MODEL**

This discussion directly overlapped with the discussion of value (#8), training (#7) and mentorship (#6), but focused specifically on appropriately monetizing goods and services and developing a full business model around that monetization. This discussion also suggested the need for the creative industries to be more “entrepreneurial” and working to evolve with the marketplace. This topic came up at many of the event, but was most apparent in the Publishing Focus Group, where the discussion focused on the evolving business model of publishing and distribution routes for content. The authors have more options (ie. self-publishing or the internet), but they need the advice on how to most effectively reach the consumer. There was general consensus that exploration and access to expertise is needed.

## **10. SPACE**

Participants also expressed the need for two different kinds of space: “Think Tank” space for the creative industries to find resources and network, and functional space for work, live/work and performance, etc. The “Think Tank” idea came out of multiple events, from Haverhill, to Worcester, to the Berkshire, to Boston. The desired was to have meeting space, acting both as an incubator and a focal point for the industry, gathering businesses and resources under one roof. The functional work space was primarily a concern in greater Boston. Additional space discussions surrounded the reuse of empty space for the creative industries, and code barriers.

# APPENDIX

Below are the notes compiled from each event in the CreativeNEXT tour. The notes include the "Overall Themes" which summarize the discussions held at each event and then go into the written answers to the form handed out to participants. The notes are organized in alphabetical order by event category: Regional Events, Community Focus Groups, and Industry Focus Groups

## REGIONAL EVENTS

### CreativeNEXT Berkshire Review

The CreativeNEXT Berkshire event was held on August 7, 2012 hosted by Berkshire Creative.

#### Overall Themes

- Sustainability of a two month boom in the summer, need for a coordinated arts calendar or arts night. Competition vs. collaboration, sharing of clients to make a full service business – network of creative, development of markets in Albany, Boston, and regionally (can't sustain on Berkshires alone)
- Importance of visibility – Leslie Ferrin Example of 10,000 Squirrel Statues that sold as a result of a feature in a national art magazine, feature on Etsy
- Discussion around businesses operating locally, but having a national market
- Evolving Business Model – need for expertise, advice and support, from the non-profits or the online businesses
- Difficulty of the permitting process, regulations making it cost prohibitive to rehab old buildings in the area
- Talent – challenging to find and/or attract talent with specific skills, focus on web programming. Also, middle level talent is looking for the "next step" and they can't always find it locally
- Developing case studies to evaluate the effects of the creative industries in regions and on business partnerships
- Training on marketing for small businesses
- Mentorship – fieldtrips to regions or businesses with similar scope – model/idea share

#### Competitive Advantage

- Specialization: "We offer something no one else does"
- Location, affordable real estate, near major markets (NYC)
- Strong design-based in market research, customer-centric

- Network of creative, experience

## **Opportunity**

- Existing base of clients, associates, and referrals – leveraging past work
- Conversion to digital platforms, the internet, viral response
- Forming creative partnerships to meet specific client needs
- Generating new product lines and opening new markets in surrounding areas, new business models

## **Support (Organizations)**

- Berkshire Creative
- Berkshire Visitor Bureau
- Mass College of Liberal Arts and Williams College
- Berkshire Hills Internship Program
- City government
- Mass Small Business Development Centers

## **Mentors**

- Two thirds of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- One third said they already have a business mentor.

## **Additional Support**

- Funding of workforce training in rural communities
- Communicate and market Massachusetts as a creative state hospitable to artists and creative businesses, money to market business outside of state
- Development of case studies
- Mentors, advice, leadership/management mentors, business development
- Think Tank for creative industries

## **Barriers**

- Identifying expertise, funding, time
- Access to capital, finances, budgeting
- Seasonal nature of business
- Finding appropriate talent, retention

The CreativeNEXT Cape Cod event was held on July 25, 2012 hosted by Cape Creative and the Artists Foundation of Cape Cod.

### **Overall Themes**

- Signage and marketing dominated most of the conversation, lack of visibility
- Need for marketing expertise, classes
- Live/Work Spaces, affordable housing for potential year-round residents
- Need for a creative "translator" to help non-creative companies understand the value
- Alternate "investments" in the arts, and a creative industries "bond"

### **Competitive Advantage**

- Unique programming, scope of services, innovative vision, methodology, client experience
- Connections and partnerships
- Experience and perspective

### **Opportunity**

- Expanding services and building
- Expanding business connections, specifically with the for-profit businesses
- Trained instructors
- Need for more performing arts spaces and centers

### **Support (Organizations)**

- Cape Cod Chamber
- Arts Foundation of Cape Cod
- Local Banks

### **Mentors**

- One seventh of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- Six seventh said they already have a business mentor.

### **Additional Support**

- Connections and partnerships with for-profits and not-for-profits
- Marketing, development and board development
- Regional clearing House for creative
- Marketing channels for small creative businesses
- Access to grants, (raised by lottery, license plate)

## **Barriers**

- Slow Economy, small market
  - Access to capital, finances, budgeting (more generally money)
  - Affordable housing for potential year-round residents
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# **CreativeNEXT Merrimack Valley Review**

The CreativeNEXT Merrimack Valley event was held on August 7, 2012 hosted by Cultural Organization of Lowell (COOL).

## **Overall Themes**

- Making the creative industries more entrepreneurial, business Model discussion: pre-order, crowd-sourced, etc. Mentioned the Sandbox's pitch contests
- Developing the appropriate, clear pitch for creative businesses/organizations, show the value of the creative industry, connect with non-creative companies
- Need for technology and equipment
- Space development

## **Competitive Advantage**

- Specialization: "We offer something no one else does", "uniqueness of product"
- Experience in top marketing, customer service, understanding and follow-through, sharing best practices with client base
- Internet-based business model, used new, social, and crowdfunding media,
- Unique brand, "International brand", "Strong environmental value proposition"
- High quality, great design
- Talent

## **Opportunity**

- New product lines
- The internet, ability to sell internationally, social media, networking
- Visibility and press connections
- New markets: wholesale, gift shows, expanding to new municipalities, partnerships

## **Support (Organizations)**

- COOL
- Community Banks
- Press

- Social Media connections
- City government
- Alliance for Community Media
- Etsy.com

### **Mentors**

- Half of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- Half said they already have a business mentor.

### **Additional Support**

- Selling venues
- Contracts with area businesses
- Local production guide
- Financial support
- Expertise, learning to build the elements of a business
- Marketing/advertising support
- Interns

### **Barriers**

- Distribution outlets
- Visibility
- Location
- “proportional scaling”, being able to sustain growth
- No local central resource for filmmakers

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## **CreativeNEXT MetroWest Review**

The CreativeNEXT Metro West event was held on on July 31, 2012 hosted by the Metro West Chamber.

### **Overall Themes**

- Advertising help, market research, how to reach the consumer, press attention
- Competition between state’s, RI is actively courting businesses, procurement process onerous
- Connecting with local network

### **Competitive Advantage**

- Experience, "Experience married with creativity and great customer service", "Large firm experience", "Strong marketing and sales background allows us to offer more than merely technical skills"
- Unique offerings, the local perspective, also local and national clientele
- Flexibility, ability to work on projects with varying budgets, but remain authentic to the clients

## **Opportunity**

- Increased visibility for the creative industries through marketing, branding, and identity development.
- Repeat business, local businesses
- Online sales
- New and improved venues

## **Support (Organizations)**

- Metro West Chamber
- Metro West Tourism and Visitors Bureau
- Score
- Local Foundations
- Schools
- Media (Boston and regional media)

## **Mentors**

- Two thirds of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- One third said they already have a business mentor.

## **Additional Support**

- Advice and marketing, technical assistance
- Access to capital, investors
- Create a category for creative businesses so they aren't in the "other" category
- Marketing and PR help, online web development, opportunities to demonstrate business's abilities
- Affordable work space, venues
- Connections to talent and interns
- Educational and consulting services

## **Barriers**

- Slow Economy
- Access to capital, finances, budgeting

- Lack of exposure to relevant players and stakeholders
  - Need access to marketing expertise, lack of media interest in Metro West
- 

## CreativeNEXT North Shore Review

The CreativeNEXT North Shore event was held on July 31, 2012 hosted by Creative Economy Association of the North Shore (CEANS).

### **Overall Themes**

- Internships, training of talent, attraction/retention of talent
- Operationalizing the creative industries
- Marketing, linked messaging, making "design focused" businesses more visible and quantify their change ie Target
- Access to international markets, tradeshow, etc.

### **Competitive Advantage**

- Location
- Customer Service, uniqueness of business, "out of the box alternative"
- Specializing on small to mid-size businesses
- "Level of talent", diverse teams of creative and programmers

### **Opportunity**

- Collaboration in and among the creative industries and within industries
- New products, "creativity software"
- Niche local markets that are presently underserved
- Subscriber base, repeat clients

### **Support (Organizations)**

- Salem State Enterprise Center and Small Business Development Center
- Mass Office of Travel and Tourism
- Mass Department of Transportation
- Regional Chambers and Tourism Orgs
- Greater Lawrence Community Action Council
- Score

### **Mentors**

- One half of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- One half said they already have a business mentor.

## **Additional Support**

- Interns and talent
- Advice on marketing, more tourism marketing
- Data to support the creative industries

## **Barriers**

- Slow Economy
- Finding appropriate talent
- Location, traffic density
- Access to capital, finances, budgeting

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# **CreativeNEXT North Worcester Review**

The CreativeNEXT North Worcester County event was held on July 31, 2012 hosted by Fitchburg State and the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission.

## **Overall Themes**

- Access to new markets, visibility of the businesses, PR and Marketing
- Business mentors, resource sharing with Score and the CDC.
- The main street in Fitchburg – development and traffic, also live work spaces

## **Competitive Advantage**

- Uniqueness of offerings, “we are the only...”, serving a specific need of their communities
- Experience and talent, “eye for design”, “style” ,versatility, technology
- Fast turnaround time, one-to-one approach, “willingness to go the extra mile in collaboration with my clients”

## **Opportunity**

- The Internet
- Freelance opportunities
- Expanding local market, retail space, “Our success depends on the growth and success of other local business around us”
- Networking, collaboration regionally, connect local businesses to shared resources
- Reuse of empty spaces

## **Support (Organizations)**

- Fitchburg State University

- John Appleseed Trail Association
- City of Fitchburg
- Gardner Chamber of Commerce
- Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Twin Cities development Corp
- Rollstone Studios

### **Mentors**

- One third of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- Two thirds said they already have a business mentor.

### **Additional Support**

- Affordable office space, venues and exhibition space
- Networking opportunities
- Workshops: Grant-writing, sales, mechanics of running a business, marketing
- Access to capital, grants
- Reuse of empty spaces

### **Barriers**

- Slow Economy
- Finding appropriate talent
- Location, "low traffic on main street"
- Access to capital, finances, budgeting

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## **CreativeNEXT Pioneer Valley Review**

The CreativeNEXT Pioneer Valley event was held on July 24, 2012 hosted by the City of Holyoke.

### **Overall Themes**

- More opportunity, need for business growth and start-up's in the Valley
- Visibility of the local industry, "Buy your creative local", specifically connecting to more CEOs
- Support for marketing, developing new marketplaces

### **Competitive Advantage**

- Flexibility, ability to work on projects with varying budgets, but remain authentic to the clients, individualized service, "business growth has been successful by listening to what clients needs."
- Specialization: "We offer something no one else does", ie. focus on architectural color or expertise in landscape architecture and planting design.
- Commitment to innovation and creative something new and unique.
- Strong long lasting client base, growing reputation, impressive list of media and creative contacts, collaboration, approachable and accessible to a diverse population.

## **Opportunity**

- Expanding local market, retail space, tradeshow, diversify industries
- Business Planning
- Networking, collaboration regionally, connect local businesses to shared resources
- Marketing, outreach and advertising, "Buy Local"
- Connecting with additional clientele/customers, creating more small businesses, generating interest from larger corporations
- A few businesses mentioned "they don't want to grow" as their answer to this question.

## **Support (Organizations)**

- Pioneer Local First
- Valley Venture Mentors
- Chamber of Commerce
- Woman's Business Owners Alliance
- New England Museums Association
- Education Institutions
- City Government
- Local business network
- Google

## **Mentors**

- One third of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- Two thirds said they already have a business mentor.

## **Additional Support**

- Marketing help, online web development, opportunities to demonstrate business's abilities
- Connections to talent and interns
- Connections to potential clients, networking
- Access to capital
- Educational and consulting services
- Business model development, structure, financial, budgeting

## **Barriers**

- Slow Economy
- Finding appropriate talent
- Lack of exposure to relevant players and stakeholders
- Need access to marketing expertise
- Access to capital, finances, budgeting

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# CreativeNEXT South Coast Review

The CreativeNEXT South Coast event was held on August 16, 2012 hosted by AHA! New Bedford and UMass Dartmouth, College of Visual & Performing Arts.

## **Overall Themes**

- UMass Dartmouth, College of Visual & Performing Arts
- Talent attraction/retention, struggles and opportunities
- Involvement of community in non-profit's, decline in support
- Need to diversify income streams, strategic partnerships, providing real value for clients
- Desire to have both industry and local mentorship, people who know the industry and people who know the community

## **Competitive Advantage**

- Specialization: "We offer something no one else does"
- Quality, affordable
- Location, affordable

## **Opportunity**

- Expansion of offerings
- Not looking to grow
- Space expansion

## **Support (Organizations)**

- UMASS

### **Mentors**

- Two thirds of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- One third said they already have a business mentor.

### **Additional Support**

- Advertising/Marketing
- Funding

### **Barriers**

- Advertising/Marketing
- Space
- Money

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## **CreativeNEXT Worcester Review**

The CreativeNEXT Worcester event was held on August 14, 2012 hosted by Worcester Cultural Coalition and Mass Digi.

### **Overall Themes**

- Diversifying revenue streams: new content, products, etc. Word of mouth is the best system for finding new clients
- Development of a network of creative businesses, offering full service support
- Good support systems in the Cultural Coalition, Chamber and SCORE, networking into other businesses
- Space development: incubator and/or co-locating, working on making an district around the Hannover Theatre.

### **Competitive Advantage**

- Specialization: "We offer something no one else does", usually with a local bent
- Service, "Big agency services and talent for small businesses"

### **Opportunity**

- New markets and audiences, Boston
- Expanded online and social media presence
- New clients
- Diversified revenue

## **Support (Organizations)**

- Worcester Cultural Coalition
- Chamber
- Mass Production Coalition
- SCORE
- Communications Club

## **Mentors**

- None of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- All said they already have a business mentor.

## **Additional Support**

- Venues, incubator space
- Exposure to CEOs and larger corporate businesses

## **Barriers**

- The economy
  - Lack of opportunities to meet fellow creative
  - Lack of marketing ability/knowledge, access to expertise
  - Financing
  - Locations
- 

# **COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUPS**

## **CreativeNEXT Boston Review**

CreativeNEXT Boston was held on July 25, 2012 hosted by the Fenway Alliance & Fort Point Arts Community.

## **Overall Themes**

- Obstacles of receiving payment for services provided, contact negotiations, appropriate value.
- Access from smaller creative businesses to the larger business, for expertise/networking
- One place (virtual, physical, print?) for creative to access information and resources
- Made in MA or Designed in MA campaign

## **Competitive Advantage**

- Use of both left and right brain
- Flexibility, specialized designers, skill sets, business knowledge
- Business, creativity, and technology integrated
- Act as an incubator for new work
- Location

## **Opportunity**

- Connecting with more arts and design employers/individuals to mentor students
- Networking, connecting to more clients, build more diverse relationships
- Partnerships, locally, nationally and internationally

## **Support (Organizations)**

- Fenway Alliance
- Fort Point Artist Collaborative
- Design Organizations, Design Museum Boston and AIGA
- Craft Coops

## **Mentors**

- Two thirds of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- One third said they already have a business mentor.

## **Additional Support**

- Talent: administrative support, access to interns, business managers,
- One stop "Clinic" for Creative industries to access resources and information, counseling on business and professional development, access to interns
- Access to capital
- Workshops on grant writing and business practice, financial planning
- Networking
- Affordable office space

## **Barriers**

- Slow Economy
- Lack of exposure to relevant players and stakeholders
- Need access to marketing expertise
- Access to capital, finances, budgeting

The CreativeNEXT Greater Boston event was held on August 23, 2012 hosted by Artisans Asylum.

## **Overall Themes**

- Venues and places to perform
- Need of mentorship within the creative industries, help with developing a pitch, rates, analytics etc. Everything is "secret". Need help on the business end, financials etc.
- Zoning and permitting issues in space redevelopment and public event space
- Value of the work – asking businesses to do work for free for "exposure". Need for fair trade means fair trade.
- Local first
- Resource sharing

## **Competitive Advantage**

- Unique perspective on interactive design and narrative technology
- Loyal customer base
- One of a kind, custom garments, specifically for client's body and style
- Industry contacts, education, diverse skills, creativity
- Unique, "No one does what we do"
- Wide range of design work from print to web and everything in between
- Quality, knowledge and experience in a niche market
- "We are still in the process of leaning that"
- High quality, stunning design, applying technology and product design to a stagnant industry (coffee)

## **Opportunity**

- Expanding our consulting by partnering with larger companies
- City and state RFPs (giving a young creative company a shot)
- Used to be open for a portion of the year, but now open year round
- Local networking
- Mass Film Tax Credit

## **Support (Organizations)**

- Artisans Asylum
- Local colleges and universities
- SCORE
- None
- Office of Strategic Planning, city of Somerville

## **Mentors**

- Half of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- Half said they already have a business mentor.

### **Additional Support**

- Marketing, promotion advice
- Investors, distributors, producers
- Networking
- Connecting with mentors
- Research Data
- Financing
- Affordable accountant services and legal consultants

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## **CreativeNEXT Haverhill Review**

The CreativeNEXT Haverhill event was held on July 26, 2012 hosted by the Creative Haverhill.

### **Overall Themes**

- Directory of creative offerings
- Networking, a time and place to meet
- A place to meet and innovate
- Listings of marketplaces for creative goods
- Access to interns and young talent
- Access to expertise and mentors
- Marketing: Do it yourself vs. hiring someone. Firms can work with any budget

### **Competitive Advantage**

- Flexibility patience, work with a range of clients, , full service offerings
- Uniqueness of offering, long time experience and expertise, "Our services help clients grow their businesses."
- Able to work cross discipline and on multiple platforms., ie. "software and web development, eCommerce, online catalogs, etc."
- Flexibility, ability to work on projects with varying budgets, but remain authentic to the clients, individualized service, "business growth has been successful by listening to what clients needs."
- Specialization: ie. focus on architectural color or expertise in landscape architecture and planting design.
- Commitment to innovation and creative something new and unique.

- Strong long lasting client base, growing reputation, impressive list of media and creative contacts, collaboration, approachable and accessible to a diverse population.

### **Opportunity**

- The Internet, expanded web presence, ecommerce
- Conferences and retreats, "great way to find new clients".
- Development of new offerings
- Expansion of the economy, more small businesses

### **Support (Organizations)**

- Chamber of Commerce
- Creative Haverhill
- Local TV and media
- Business owners
- None

### **Mentors**

- Three fifths of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- Two fifths said they already have a business mentor.

### **Additional Support**

- Marketing and PR services, cross marketing with similar business/organizations
- Connections to talent and interns
- Opportunities to showcase skills
- Opportunities to distribute products more widely, and/or a local option
- Connections to potential clients, networking
- Access to capital, for micro enterprises
- Space, ie. Incubator, gallery, studio, marketplaces
- Educational and consulting services

### **Barriers**

- Slow Economy
- Access to knowledgeable mentors
- Access to capital, finances, budgeting
- Need access to marketing expertise, "It is difficult to spread information, given the various manners in which people receive their information"
- A time and place to network and meet potential clients

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# CreativeNEXT Questions Palmer Review

The CreativeNEXT Greater Palmer event was held on July 10<sup>th</sup> 2012 hosted by the Quaboag Hills Chamber of Commerce.

## **Overall Themes**

- Marketing support
- Foot Traffic
- Having personal relationships with their costumers and tailoring their services around what the costumer wanted.
- Need networking with other artists/creative businesses.

## **Competitive Advantage**

- Individual attention to customer and their needs "personalized to every costumer".
- Knowledge of the local community.
- Unique business in the area.

## **Opportunity**

- Expand marketing "use the internet for national exposure, sales and new revenue".
- Local revenue
- Growing awareness/education of creative industries in community
- Partnering with other creative businesses
- More gallery shows

## **Support (Organizations)**

- Quaboag Hills chamber of commerce.
- Monson Arts Council
- Mass Cultural Council
- National Association of Quick Printers
- American Institute of Architects
- Internet
- Pioneer Valley Photographic Artists

## **Mentors**

- Half of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- Half said they already have a business mentor.

### **Additional Support**

- Marketing/Advertising Help
- More Galleries and Companies to market work.
- State Promotion of visual arts.
- Website Development
- Receiving Timely LEEDs
- More communication/networking for artists.
- Financial Help/ Grants
- Low cost loans

### **Barriers**

- Local Economy/Distance
- Bad Economy
- Need more time to Market
- Community perception of art
- Finances
- Lack of New Events

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## **INDUSTRY FOCUS GROUPS**

### **CreativeNEXT Advertising & Marketing Review**

The CreativeNEXT Advertising & Marketing event was held on August 2, 2012 hosted by The Ad Club and MITX.

### **Overall Themes**

- Talent, retention-gap education/first job/next step-talent is looking for the next "big thing"
- Our competitive edge: knowledge, intelligence, close to Europe
- Design in MA campaign, overall branding of the state/city, "mighty little city"
- Connecting to industries: bio, financial services, incentives for brands to buy local
- Opportunity: national conferences, people coming to study
- Difficult to hire full time, have made the transition to contracts

## **Competitive Advantage**

- Full service agency with a small agency mindset, ability to provide a full-scale integrated service from PR and research to digital and paid media.
- Creativity with an entrepreneurial spirit
- Relationships with clients, focus on small business marketing
- Industry expertise, focus on turning new work into marketing tools that build brands
- Social Marketing, but understanding of the entire online marketing cycle
- Work at the speed of culture
- Employees, our people, social reach

## **Opportunity**

- Converting a singular line of service into a fully integrated account, ie. Moving a traditional PR person to full content program
- Regional expansion, connecting with growing small businesses
- Digital exploration, being nimble to try alternative methods
- Social communications continue to reshape how brands interact with consumers
- Top talent, with specific skills to ensure we continue to meet business needs/growth

## **Support (Organizations)**

- MITX
- Ad Club
- Talent Agencies
- Independent Agencies
- Chamber of Commerce
- Boston Society of Architects
- Consumer Tech

## **Mentors**

- One third of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- Two thirds said they already have a business mentor.

## **Additional Support**

- Affordable office space
- Seasoned creative and marketing recruiters
- Tax credits to hire full time staff
- Scaling business

- Deepen visibility into major Mass-based brands and how we could work together

## **Barriers**

- Visibility with regional companies
- Getting top talent (design/web)

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# CreativeNEXT Architecture Review

The CreativeNEXT Architecture event was held on August 16, 2012 hosted by Boston Society of Architects.

## **Overall Themes**

- Change from having FTE's to contract employees based on jobs. Work extremely hard to stay within the Labor laws surrounding Independent Contractors. (Can be a challenge).
- Role of government in providing opportunities for new/emerging firms to compete for government funded projects.
- Diversifying offerings: editorial, curatorial, book development. Field is highly competitive.
- Fostering growth of the young talent coming out of schools.
- Networking of the industry among the creative industries and in the startup businesses.
- Boston's brand being intellectual and thoughtful.
- Need of case studies to value design, make it more accessible for those not in design
- Difficulty hiring people in mid-level positions, easier to find entry level, loss of a generation of architects due to the recession, fewer students, fewer new license

## **Competitive Advantage**

- Design service – visualization - process
- "Out-thinking" or "out-strategizing" the more established firms
- Specialized expertise and accessibility
- Listening to clients, efficiency of scale, sensitivity to context
- Passion and attention to design excellence
- Great ideas, effective public outreach

## **Opportunity**

- Quality of life impacts
- Hire Talented architects
- New construction
- Networking
- Really examine every opportunity – there are lots of great opportunities out there.

### **Support (Organizations)**

- Boston Society of Architects
- Schools, colleges

### **Mentors**

- Three quarters of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- One quarter said they already have a business mentor.

### **Additional Support**

- Promotion, exposure, value of design NOT educate clients
- Opportunities to make connections abroad
- Connect with creative businesses
- Expertise and advisors
- Connections to investors and real estate developers
- Contacts within government
- How staffing companies can assist with niche specific hiring and payroll service (IC regulations)

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## **CreativeNEXT Design Review**

The CreativeNEXT Design event was held on July 26, 2012 hosted by Design Museum Boston.

### **Overall Themes**

- Visibility/Campaign, image problem for the industry
- Opportunities in other industries: Food, restaurants hospitality, architecture, financial, manufacturing, bio tech, life science, clean energy, tech
- Open Source opportunities to provide value to potential clients, more networking and opportunities to connect with CEOs
- Need of numbers to quantify the effects of design, case studies (perhaps in the form of video?)

- Opportunities to collaborate: generalists vs. specialists and the evolution of the design practice, problem solvers

## **Competitive Advantage**

- Blending of creativity and computer science – “cross roads technologies”
- “Left-Right Brain Thinking”, “Speak the language of business in the design industry and vice versa”,
- Experience, talented creative staff, tons of experience, trend insights, committed to quality, “translating insights to tangible results”
- Services fully support the creative process for small businesses, can work cross industries

## **Opportunity**

- Visibility of the design industry in Massachusetts/New England
- Healthcare industry, same sex market, textiles, electronics,
- Penetrating new product categories, selling both products and services,
- Exposure and connections to talent and projects, expanded presence on west coast
- Start-up community “They rarely know how to market or visually represent/brand themselves, design can help!”, small businesses
- “New business!”, exposure and visibility for design
- Use of technologies, Online

## **Support (Organizations)**

- Design Museum Boston
- Venture Café
- Girls in Tech
- Startup Weekend
- Design Schools
- Research facilities
- Industrial Design Association (IDSA)
- International Assoc. of Lighting Designers
- Center for Women in Enterprise
- None
- “SBA?, but seems too ‘old school’”

## **Mentors**

- Half of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- Half said they already have a business mentor.

## **Additional Support**

- Create a good compelling buzz/campaign that the creative services are here in Massachusetts
- Business education, "How to run a company", advising
- Sales/Marketing/Business Strategy support
- Research
- Better ways to networking, not just to meet clients, but other freelancers
- Marketing help, online web development, opportunities to demonstrate business's abilities
- Connections to talent and interns

## **Barriers**

- Finding clients, also having clients "realize the value of custom design, instead of grab and go solutions from online companies"
- Access to capital, finances, budgeting
- Finding appropriate talent

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# **CreativeNEXT Fashion Review**

The CreativeNEXT Fashion event was held on August 9, 2012 hosted by Massachusetts College of Art & Design.

## **Overall Themes**

- Starting a Fashion Business in Boston: started the business in Mass, but it didn't take off until it moved to NYC, more supportive and a place to "make a dream happen", hard to find the visible support system – suppliers, critics, packaging, mentors. The support systems in Boston/Mass are more set up for tech than fashion
- "Design District" or more visible space for the Creative industries
- Access to funding is the key to the success of the industry: if the designers don't have financial backing they can't make their products, lack of awareness of real manufacturing cost (start-ups), buy fabric with cash.
- The artist mentality vs business mentality: "You have to sell what you make". Mentorships and/or incubator.
- Retail: Fashion Truck – went mobile because of the retail costs, Newberry St – rent cost priced out and closed most boutiques.
- Sales training, presentation training
- Networking with people outside of fashion, matchmaking. Need of a grassroots network of the people running creative businesses

## **Competitive Advantage**

- Service of independent/emerging designers nationwide, offering small to midsize production and consulting services to successfully launch collections
- For profit, environmentally sustainable and socially responsible enterprise
- Product lines and custom service
- Mother/Daughter niche
- Mobile-I can go to my customers
- Specialization: "I offer something no one else does"

## **Opportunity**

- Design District
- Big department stores nationwide
- Developing new product lines
- Green product lines
- Export to growing countries

## **Mentors**

- Half of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- Half said they already have a business mentor.

## **Additional Support**

- Money, working capital
- Strategic partnership
- Marketing/PR

## **Barriers**

- Access to capital
- Financial/business expertise

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# **CreativeNEXT Film Review**

The CreativeNEXT Film event was held on Aug. 15, 2012 hosted by MA Production Coalition & MA Film Office.

## **Overall Themes**

- Democratization of production: lowering of costs and availability of equipment has changed the field

- Focus on Interactive, desire to overlap with videogame, mobile, and design companies
- Adopting a “yes” attitude for all types of clients, diversifying offerings to suit client’s needs, say yes first and figure it out later.
- Use and connection to the start-up, tech scene in Massachusetts, more entrepreneurial and support Film start-ups.
- Discussion around the fact companies must have “new media” products and offering, but this aspect of the business is not monetized yet, they are seen as a value add, but clients aren’t willing to pay
- “This is show business, no show hobby”, the business aspect of the industry must be developed as a key focus.
- Connecting to new young and emerging talent from schools.
- Development of proper metrics to measure the Tax Credit’s effects on the industry, major growth, “miracle grow”, meet/talk to legislators. Inventory/Map of industry
- What’s next: look at the industry in comparison to other well developed industries, ie. Life Sciences/Clean Tech, use the industries as mentors for the film industry. See the whole industry as one business and start to evaluate its maturity. Manage growth in a sustainable way.

### **Competitive Advantage**

- Constantly adapting to new media
- Experience –Broad, participate in many industries, cross pollination,
- Experience –Been in business a long time, depth of knowledge,
- Depth of talent
- National Clients
- Location

### **Opportunity**

- TV networks
- Feature film work
- Online
- Collaboration with innovative people

### **Support (Organizations)**

- Mass Film Office
- Mass Production Coalition
- LEF Foundation
- The tax credit
- FILMA – Film it Locally, Massachusetts

## **Mentors**

- Two thirds of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- One third said they already have a business mentor.

## **Additional Support**

- Expertise
- Access to studio executives
- Keep the tax credit
- Independent Financing Sources
- A conduit for creative businesses to post their needs
- A program like Mass Challenge for creatives

## **Barriers**

- Funding
- Perceptions of the tax credit
- The economy
- Access to credit

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# **CreativeNEXT Performing Arts Review**

The CreativeNEXT Performing Arts event was held on August 20, 2012 hosted by Stage Source.

## **Overall Themes**

- Use of social media – development as an engagement tool. How much is too much when posting? Will people still buy tickets if you post the content? Expectations of audiences? Where do people find news? (So many outlets now). Result is spending more time of publicity, without the same results. Also the connection to grants.
- Shift of non-profits to more earned income and corporate giving to arts organizations, no giving policies
- Financing the creative industries – including non-profits arts organizations. Even with proper financials and projections, still no funding, too high risk.

## **Competitive Advantage**

- Supporting working artists in their process
- Original work, unique

- Information sharing
- "Premier Presenters"
- Understanding of many forms of art (theatre, music, visual) and functions (development, marketing)

### **Opportunity**

- Leverage technology
- Development of new products
- The dance community (social dancing)

### **Support (Organizations)**

- Stage Source
- Arts and Business Council
- Boston Opera House
- The restaurant community
- Foundations

### **Mentors**

- None of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- All said they already have a business mentor.

### **Additional Support**

- Help to spread to word about productions
- "We don't know how big our sector is"
- Funding
- Marketing
- Access to space
- Cost of doing business is very high

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## **CreativeNEXT Publishing Review**

The CreativeNEXT Publishing event was held on July 23, 2012 hosted by Grub Street.

### **Overall Themes**

- The evolving business model of publishing and distribution routes for content. There was general consensus that this needs to be explored more and they need access to expertise.

- The authors have more options (ie. self-publishing or the internet), but they need the advice on how to most effectively reach the consumer.
- The need to connect more fully with the strong technology industry in Boston/Massachusetts, was an important thread that ran throughout.
- The need for branding and marketing of the industry.
- Publishers as “venture capital for books”

### **Competitive Advantage**

- “Author centric”, help writers explore the many options of publishing
- Provide a marketplace for writers
- Provide technology that helps to promote and sell books
- Produce a “TED-like” experience for public to experience author’s works
- Literary Magazine that produces exclusively in audio form

### **Opportunity**

- Boarder distribution channels and publicity
- Providing additional services to authors to connect to the marketplace
- Connecting with more progressive publishers and tech companies, via start ups, mobile apps, video, etc.
- ebooks and other digital media

“This industry is rapidly changing, so the best way to support creative in this industry is to support innovation coming from both within and from outside.”

### **Support (Organizations)**

- Grub Street (mentioned multiple times)
- Penn New England
- National Endowment for the Arts
- WBUR

### **Mentors**

- Two thirds of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- One third said they already have a business mentor.
- Additional comments mentioned the need for authors, contemplating so many options for publishing need the expertise and mentorship.

### **Additional Support**

- Expertise to explore the evolving business models of the field

- Capital, grants, and loans
- Exploration of new markets including ebooks and other digital opportunities +

## **Barriers**

- Crowded Marketplace
  - Old ways of publishing competing with the new distribution routes
  - Limited capital and grant support (mentioned multiple times)
  - Advice on appropriate business model (mentioned multiple times)
- 

## **CreativeNEXT Visual Arts and Craft Review**

The Visual Art and Craft CreativeNEXT event was held on on August 22, 2012 hosted by Massachusetts College of Art and Design and the Massachusetts Artists Leadership Coalition.

## **Overall Themes**

- Proper valuing of creative industries services, it is a "big secret" what everyone is charging. Do we have "Professional Standard Rates"?"
- Difficulty in knowing how to comply with regulations and sales tax
- Resource sharing between businesses – artmorpheus, assets for artists, etc.
- Need for networking and proper networking for the creative industries

## **Competitive Advantage**

- Sustainably sourced, super-high quality
- Connection between design and art
- Knowledge, experience, expertise in my craft
- Developing lines of fashion accessories

## **Opportunity**

- Penetrating the national markets and community markets
- Word of mouth referrals
- Wholesale
- Local shops and boutiques

## **Support (Organizations)**

- Furniture society
- Etsy.com
- Mass Art

## **Mentors**

- All of the Businesses said they would be interested in finding a business mentor.
- None said they already have a business mentor.

## **Additional Support**

- State/Federal regulations for launching a home based business – guidelines to follow
- Money to expand my business (marketing)
- Networking
- Marketing
- Sourcing materials
- Mentorship
- Funding