

Creatively-Driven, Full-Service Advertising Agency



Amber Williams
President

About Glass Agency

We are a creatively-driven, full-service advertising agency. We build long-lasting relationships with our clients based on trust and results. We are not self-serving, we are not client-serving, we are consumer-serving. This means if our work doesn't stand out, it fails. We work hard. We don't hire assholes. And we drink beer together every Thursday at 4pm. Stop by.

Interview conducted by: Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor, CEOCFO Magazine

CEOCFO: Ms. Williams, what is Glass Agency? What is your vision?

Ms. Williams: My vision is that more companies will use fear as a motivator. Not in the way that they copy what they're competitors are doing for fear of not keeping up, but in the way of taking risks in their industry because they fear complacency and stagnation.

CEOCFO: Would you give us an example of how that would play out day to day? What might a client want and how would you move them in a direction that follows your philosophy?

Ms. Williams: It starts with trust. A client trusting that we want to help them take a risk because they'll be a more successful company in the long run. And then providing real evidence – historical data, research studies, etc. – and personal commitment to give them confidence.

CEOCFO: What types of companies typically would be using your services?

Ms. Williams: Companies that have a bad reputation or no reputation. We are very good at turning that around.

CEOCFO: How do you keep it fresh and different for each client? How do you not replicate things?

Ms. Williams: We never start with tactics; we always start with an idea. We find a problem to solve and we commit highly creative people to solving it. Every problem is unique, therefore every solution is also unique.

CEOCFO: What is your geographic reach today?

Ms. Williams: Today, we primarily advertise in the western region of the U.S.

CEOCFO: What might you understand, given your experience on how to engage a consumer that perhaps other advertising agencies do not realize as well?

Ms. Williams: I think there are many great agencies out there that know how to engage consumers. I think the ones that stand out are the more tenacious ones, who fight for an idea and, often, an ideal.

CEOCFO: Where do trends come into play? How do you evaluate the trends and what other people are doing against your gut feeling?

Ms. Williams: Trends can help you be perceived as relevant, today, but then completely irrelevant tomorrow. Trends have a place, but shouldn't be the guiding strategy of a campaign and should be viewed as temporary.

CEOCFO: Why assume that people are paying attention to the television when it is on as often it is just background noise?

Ms. Williams: True, people often have other screens on when they watch television - they're phone, their laptop. And, admittedly, time-shifted TV viewing is growing. But, you still hear conversations about

commercials, Geico's Hump Day, for example. People are still watching and paying attention. And, all those other devices actually give them the ability to engage with TV even more, through social conversation particularly.

CEO CFO: *Do you typically work with a client on a full campaign or might you do TV or print media? What is a usual engagement?*

Ms. Williams: The full campaign.

CEO CFO: *What has changed over time for you in your approach, philosophy and ideas? What surprised you as the agency has grown and developed?*

Ms. Williams: In the midst of so much evolution in technology, I'm surprised that clients still want and will pay for big ideas. But they do.

“Companies that have a bad reputation or no reputation. We are very good at turning that around.” - Amber Williams

CEO CFO: *How do you keep up with new trends and new technology when so much is changing so quickly?*

Ms. Williams: We are just in it all the time. And it doesn't hurt that we employ a good amount of young people.

CEO CFO: *I know Glass Agency was recognized in the Agency 100 Awards. How important is recognition like that for you? How helpful is it business-wise?*

Ms. Williams: Industry recognition is great. I think our employees get the most out of it (as opposed to clients), including me.

CEO CFO: *How might Glass Agency be different a year or two down the road?*

Ms. Williams: Hopefully our client relationships are even tighter and we feel like we've had a positive impact.

CEO CFO: *Why pay attention to Glass Agency?*

Ms. Williams: Because we intend to change the way some businesses are run.

BIO: Amber is president of Glass Agency, an independent advertising agency located in Sacramento, California. During Amber's first two years of leadership, the agency grew by 28% in value and made national headlines when they launched their own advertising campaign to save the Sacramento Kings NBA team from leaving town. In 2012, Glass was named one of Advertising Age's top small agencies in the country for best agency culture. Amber says, "An inspired culture is at the heart of inspired advertising."

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