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LinkedIn: Rita J. Harbie

U.S. National
Born & Raised in Miami
Living in Beirut

I got an education.

American University of Beirut – Bachelor of Arts in Political Science - 2012

I like it when work
takes over.

Associate Creative Director

Interesting Times – 2017-Present

Pernod Ricard - Absolut - Lebanon

- Conceptualized, strategized, executed, and led the agency's largest campaign yet: Absolut Civil Love.
- Created a solution to bring inter-faith civil marriage the closest it has ever been to Lebanon (in a nation where civil marriage is illegal). This was inspired by Absolut's mission to promote free & equal love.
- My solution was the discovery of a legal loophole: to officiate civil marriages in international waters, only 12 miles off the coast of Lebanon on the Civil Love Boat, where Lebanese marital law no longer applies.
- Won the agency's first international award - Cannes Lion.
- Created 17.69% market share increase for Absolut Vodka in Lebanon and increased brand love by 78% with over 3 million in engagement and 30 million in views & impressions.

Abu Dhabi Digital Government - UAE

Dubai Tourism - UAE

- Conceptualized and led the pitch presentations which won Interesting Times both businesses in 2020.

Red Bull - MENA

- Led & directed regional Red Bull campaigns and event communications.
- Despite taxes in the region doubling the price of Red Bull, sales saw an increase in 12% by 2019.

Cadillac - GCC

- Created a social media campaign and series of films that increased Cadillac sales in the UAE and KSA by 32%.

Red Bull MOBILE – Oman

- Launched Red Bull MOBILE in Oman and made it the leading telecom service for Omani youth with 84% voting that it is the “coolest” telecom community.

Senior Copywriter

Interesting Times – 2014-2017

Ooredoo - Kuwait

- Managed & led creative teams in Dubai and Kuwait, while headquartered in Beirut, to handle the agency's largest account.
- Repositioned Ooredoo as one of the leading telecommunications companies and increased brand love by 64%.

Copywriter

Interesting Times – 2014-2015

P&G Herbal Essences - Arabia

- Conceptualized and executed an Herbal Essences campaign for the Gulf region that brought the first-ever virtual, interactive live concert to Saudi women at a time when they could not attend musical concerts.
- The website experience saw over 550,000 visitors and made it the trending topic in the region in under 45 minutes.

Junior Copywriter

Interesting Times – 2012-2014

Volvo - Lebanon

- Was the creative lead of the Volvo account and created one of the agency's largest campaigns: Only the Lonely.
- The campaign led to an increase in showroom visits by 550%.

Writer & Website Editor

Time Out Beirut Magazine – 2009-2010

- Part-time work during my university studies at Time Out Beirut Magazine. I single-handedly managed the website's content to ensure it was up to date with all the latest events.
- Researched for, and co-wrote, the Little Black of Beirut citing all of Lebanon's businesses, shops, and services.

I've got side hustles.

Co-Founder

Public Interest Design - Levant - 2014 - Present

Co-founded Lebanon's first human-centered design NGO that employs design-thinking to enhance urban experiences and create shared value in Beirut. Organized a series of hackathons, workshops, and festivals.

Creative Consultant

IZEM Design Agency - 2015-2017

Creative and consultant at a local design, technology, and fabrication agency. Conceptualized a series of products to be designed, engineered, and produced by the agency.

Brand Consultant

Innovation Factory Beirut – 2016-2017

Branding and marketing consultant at Innovation Factory Beirut where individuals, start-ups, and businesses would co-work, create, and fabricate prototypes and products using state-of-the-art digital fabrication machines.

I've had shiny moments.

Awards Won:

Cannes Lion 2019 – Bronze Prize [Agency's first international award]

MENA Effies 2019 – Gold Prize

MENA Effies 2015 – Bronze Prize

Pikasso D'Or 2019 – Grand Prix & Gold Prize

3 Shortlists in Cannes Lions 2019

5 Shortlists in Dubai Lynx 2019

1 Shortlist in New York Festival Advertising Awards 2019

Lecturer & Speaker:

American University of Beirut - Media & Communications Lecturer - 2018-2019

Invited Dubai Lynx Festival Speaker – 2020

I'm quasi-quadrilingual.

I think and function in English. But I also know Spanish & Arabic and am learning French.