

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE



f.l.t.r.: Fabian Stelzer, Nadine Frommer, Christoph Stelzer. Photo: Goranco Tomeski

dfrost **AGENCY FOR VISUAL MARKETING**

Nadine Frommer, Christoph and Fabian Stelzer founded in June 2008 the agency for visual marketing, dfrost, in Stuttgart and extremely successfully established on the market. Their slogan is: "With love to detail and courage to the new".

STYLE GUIDE: Mrs Frommer, you are co-owner of the agency dfrost. Please introduce in brief your agency and outline your workday?

Nadine Frommer: In case of an agency of our size, the "bosses" still accompany all the processes. No matter if conceptual design or project control is considered, "dfrost" is responsible for all in equal measure. It is important for us to be close to the customers, as in the end it is only their reliance and satisfaction that let us do, what we love.

In general, we believe in plain hierarchies and want to maintain this structure also in the future.

STYLE GUIDE: dfrost works for established labels such as Steiff, Tom Tailor or Tommy Hilfiger. What is this cooperation like?

Christoph Stelzer: We see us as partners of our customers. For us, it is important, that there is one mutual objective and that both sides pull together. Despite all professionalism, it is very important for us to maintain with the people we daily deal with an honest, cooperative and relaxed relationship. It is clear that all that sounds a bit worn out, but actually we are convinced that lost nerves cannot be compensated with money.

STYLE GUIDE: Where do you get your inspirations from?

Fabian Stelzer: We get our inspirations from all over the world. We travel a lot and like to travel. When

going through the world with open eyes, then it offers many impressive details. Of course, there are influences from our friends and colleagues; we work here in a thankful environment. We understand ourselves as networker and participate from our contacts as well as we are prepared to feed our network, too.

Nadine Frommer: There are so many influences for our work: art, culture, the people themselves. We think that it is basically inspiring when looking a bit closer from time to time. Power of observation is important within our sector; it is only this power that allows understanding the correlations.

STYLE GUIDE: With which concepts do you convince your customers?

Christoph Stelzer: It is important for us not to lose sight of our actual job and our actual passion that is to aesthetically express or to shape things. However, there is at the beginning of a conceptual design always the examination of the target group, which shall be addressed.

Fabian Stelzer: It is indispensable for us to understand our customers and their brand. It is important to understand the desires and the mechanisms which are standing behind the needs of the end customer.

Nadine Frommer: Only nice, is not sufficient in our sector, behind it, there is a brutal but very exciting business.

STYLE GUIDE: You are only a very short time on the market. What do you offer to already act that successfully on the market?

Christoph Stelzer: First and foremost, we demand for us to be a strong partner for all tasks at the "Point of Sale". No matter whether a customised store concept, shop window, guidelines for goods presentation or sales promoting actions – this is our terrain. Furthermore, we try to attend to our customers as integrally as possible.

Fabian Stelzer: We understand ourselves as networker and found in the course of time excellent partners. Trying to cover everything in-house, does not seem very meaningful to us, because we already made bad experiences with it. For some tasks there are simply experts – we handle that in an open and honest manner.

Christoph Stelzer: When outsourcing individual service areas, then, however, we accompany the complete process of development and control all processes for the purpose of our customers.

Nadine Frommer: dfrost works interdisciplinarily – by means of that, we are a reliable contact partner for almost all concerns of our customers.

STYLE GUIDE: How large is your team?

Nadine Frommer: Currently, there is a core team of nine employees. We are lucky to be able to well con-

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trol our growth with the aid of our strong network.

Fabian Stelzer: We are prepared for new challenges. However, we advisedly choose our partners and customers.

Christoph Stelzer: It is more important for us to achieve a long lasting relation with our customers and to start projects being strong as regards content and being demanding; it is not the size, but the quality.

STYLE GUIDE: How does in your opinion an event world develop?

Nadine Frommer: We are quite lucky to attend to many customers who already have a strong "heritage". This often offers a coherent basis for the stories which we tell in our worlds. Authenticity and emotionality are an important carrier of our messages – reliance in a brand is today again an important sales factor.

Christoph Stelzer: Of course, a brand might be revolutionised, event worlds are here the first bridges to identification with the product. Basically, the worlds which we create for our customers are always directed to target group. At the beginning there is always the question who I want to address with this action and what reaction do I want to cause in the ideal case?

Fabian Stelzer: Each target group may be reached with its own images, catchwords or mechanisms. In doing so, a message needs not always to be striking and evident.

Also with a reduced and abstract illustration, stories can be communicated to the viewer.

STYLE GUIDE: Do you realise these stories in the shop window and which importance do you attach to the shop window decoration at all?

Nadine Frommer: Good shop windows create with the viewer a strong visual impulse which expresses a lot with regard to a brand and which can communicate values which stand behind the products. The potential customer is emotionalised by that, needs are stimulated and in best case, immediately and directly satisfied in the store.

Christoph Stelzer: Shopping is in our sector only rarely a life-supporting action, but mostly a strongly emotionalised process which is influenced by many impulses. Here we understand the synergy between the window statement and the product presentation still as one of the key impulses.

Fabian Stelzer: Generally seen, in our opinion the shop window and the PoS will in the future have again a much more important role. The virtual communication and presentation more often meet limits.

Nadine Frommer: The consumers again appreciate the significance of a real product presentation and feel the must of being able to feel the products with all senses.

STYLE GUIDE: Which design trends do you see in the future?

Christoph Stelzer: We in general have the opinion that there is no trend of the future, but many different ones at the same time which are changing in shorter and shorter intervals. In our increasingly cosmopolitan society, trends are simply imported from the metropolises of the world...

Fabian Stelzer: ...that is why it is for us that important, to frequently be out on business all over the world to be up to date at the pulse of time.

Nadine Frommer: In addition, trends never have validity for any possible target groups. The key impulses of the advertisement differentiate them depending on age group and social stratum and this will also remain like that. In this respect, the design must adjust to that and also in the future remain versatile.

STYLE GUIDE: Where do you see the main tasks of the future designers for visual marketing?

Christoph Stelzer: The main challenge is probably to be able to early recognise and adopt the trends just mentioned. That applies both for us and our customers who have it integrated into their products. It is important to keep up with the development, but at the same time not to lose sight of the own handwriting.

Fabian Stelzer: Trends come and go in faster and faster cycles; contem-

porary design has therefore shorter and shorter life.

Nadine Frommer: In doing so, we move within an area of conflict where it has to be tried to consistently react on current developments and at the same time not to lose sight of the long-term development of a brand statement.

STYLE GUIDE: One last question, how did the name dfrost originate?

Nadine Frommer: The name stands for Design Frommer and Stelzer...

Christoph Stelzer: ... moreover, it has for us also a philosophic meaning:

to defrost means ‚melt‘ or also ‚de-ice‘ – i.e. to change also a state. 2008 meant for us above all a professional advancement overdue already for a long time. We wanted to change something and above all start some things and projects and to awake them with our fresh ideas!

STYLE GUIDE: Thanks a lot for the conversation. (Interview: Helmut Lippl)



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