



AUTODESK UNIVERSITY 2015

AV11365

Beyond the Pixel: Pitching Visualization Creatively

Rodrigo Lopez, Chief Creative Officer
Neoscape

Ryan Cohen, Managing Director NY
Neoscape

Learning Objectives

- Learn how to develop a creative brief and understand why you need one
- Learn how to understand your audiences and their trigger points
- Discover where (and when) to seek inspiration
- Learn how to prepare and present a creative pitch

Description

In the world of architectural visualization, pretty pictures are no longer sufficient. The expectations of our clients—including architects, developers and real estate marketing agencies—are driven by those of their main audiences: end-users and decision-makers who are accustomed to being captivated by content that not only looks compelling, but also connects with them on an emotional level. Whether communicating the vision for a large mixed-use master plan or capturing the intricacies of material and detail in a private residence, the story behind each pixel is essential. In this talk we will delve into the art of developing and pitching creative with particular focus on architectural visualization. We will offer a look at how Neoscape has been developing creative for both still imagery and film for the past 20 years. Following this, we will open up a general discussion on the value of creative, sources of inspiration, clients' needs, and much more.

Your AU Experts

*As chief creative officer of Neoscape, Inc., **Rodrigo Lopez** assumes creative leadership across the Boston and New York studios and serves as a steward for the Neoscape brand. He has been with Neoscape since 2000, and he spearheads Neoscape's commitment to visionary creative and inspired innovation, guiding the studio's teams for branding, design, visualization, film, and interactive as they craft branded experiences for the built environment. A leader in his field, Rodrigo is a frequent speaker at industry events. He recently served as a panelist for NAIOP's Millennial House Hunt event, led a talk entitled "Why Stories Matter" for Boston Design Week 2015, and discussed the value of branded visual experiences at*

the 2014 d2 Conference. Rodrigo's passion for storytelling and film extends well beyond the doors of Neoscape's studio. He is currently writing, directing, and producing a short film, At Dawn, a dystopian coming-of-age tale.

*With Neoscape since 2005, **Ryan Cohen** leads the New York studio, constantly pushing technological, creative, and artistic limits to achieve the most beautiful and impactful pieces possible. His background in architecture, balanced with an established artistic expertise, is reflected in all aspects of his work, each piece deftly choreographed for its intended audience. As managing director, Ryan oversees Neoscape's creative teams, ensuring that all assets—from 3D illustrations and films to visual identity and print design—tell a cohesive project story.*

Ryan has directed creative efforts for most of the studio's high-profile projects including full marketing campaigns for One Hudson Yards, 229 West 43rd, 680 Madison, The Mansion on Madison, and River Point—to name a few. He has also overseen visualization efforts for One Soho Square, 200 Lafayette, Walker Tower, NY Presbyterian, Chelsea Market, One Vanderbilt and 75 Rockefeller Center in New York City. Additionally, Ryan previously served as president of the New York Society of Renderers, a non-profit organization dedicated to fostering collaboration between rendering professionals.

Ryan received his Masters of Architecture from UCLA, and a Bachelor of Arts from Union College.

Neoscape Introduction

Neoscape is an award-winning creative studio that specializes in marketing for architecture and real estate. Founded in Cambridge, MA in 1995, during the very early days of digital visualization, Neoscape began working with architects and developers creating rich visual content for design presentations and marketing. Over the past 20 years the studio has grown to offer a wide spectrum of services, crafting branded experiences for discerning clients around the world. Neoscape currently has studios in Boston and New York.

Open Forum

In an effort to contextualize aspects of this presentation, as well as inspire more active participation from the audience, we'll use the following questions to gain insight into their current creative environment and the challenges faced:

What type of work are you producing, and for whom?

How do you handle the discovery phase?

Do you have a structured creative process?

Where do you go for inspiration?

How do you present your ideas and communicate intent?



Understanding Projects

Before kicking off any assignment, no matter how large or small, it is essential for us to immerse ourselves in the project as quickly as possible. We deploy a wide variety of processes depending on the specifics of the project, and the make-up of the client team. From intense day-long workshops to a quick phone conversation, it is crucial for our team to be keenly aware of the parameters driving each and every project so that we can align our efforts.

Once the intake is collected we work swiftly to compile it all into Project Briefs. These documents become the essential guide to each and every project, outlining hard facts as well “soft” intel (i.e. client personalities, previous experience with team members, etc.) Ultimately the Project Brief should provide as many benchmarks as possible in order to make an often ultra-subjective process as logical as possible.

- **The Challenge: everyone wants to be different. What does that mean, really?**
- **Demystify the creative process for non-creatives**
- **Be curious!**
- **Assess the landscape to identify differentiators**

Cultivating Ideas

Once the Project Brief has been created and vetted with all the stakeholders, it's time to explore creative concepts for the project. Independent of the assignment this process is structured the same way. First the project brief is shared with the team prior to a brainstorm session. The brainstorm lasts one hour. It starts with a recap of the brief and to set goals and expectations to the team. The next 30 minutes is about looking at inspiration and throwing out ideas. Each team or team member is then given a few minutes to present his or her idea to the group. Once ideas begin to form we check them against the project brief to make sure the ideas will hit our goals. The last 5 minutes are used to make decisions on what direction to take and to establish action items for individuals to help build and structure the comprehensive idea into a meaningful way that can be smartly communicated to the client.

- **“Creativity is the power to connect the seemingly unconnected”**
- **Move beyond the obvious**
- **Iteration is essential – don't fall in love with ideas too quickly**
- **“Seeing isn't just looking. It's also positioning yourself for prime views.”**



Crafting A Story

A creative concept is only as great as the way it is presented and ultimately pitched to the client. Clients tend to be on a different wavelength so it is very important that the idea is put together in the clearest way possible. There is no silver bullet for this portion of the process. The important part is that you put in the time and think it through and that it is crafted with as much care as the final product. Once a draft is created it is once again checked against the brief and shared internally to look for holes or ways to better communicate the idea.

- **Why do stories matter?**
- **Connect with people – storytelling is fundamentally human**
- **A story is like gravity**
- **Jet fuel for presentations**

Selling It

Lastly, it is time to pitch the idea to the client. Beyond how great the idea is that you've come up with, all the hard work prepares you to give a confident, charismatic presentation. By now you know the project brief and all the pertinent information inside and out – you're the expert. This knowledge allows you to think on your feet if directions change based on new stakeholders or new information that has evolved since the initial intake. The appropriate people and reference materials are brought to the presentation to support the concept. The goal of the pitch is to make the stakeholders feel comfortable with the idea and more importantly the team. The concept will most likely bend and evolve but you are selling the process and the team so that no matter what direction the concept goes the client feels confident they are going to get the best results in the end.

- **Entice people to follow you on an adventure**
- **Hitch your idea to success**
- **The Three Elements of Persuasion**
- **Practice, practice, practice!**

