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Willoughby Design Expands Ownership to Include Next Generation

Revitalized brand and Web site showcase commitment to innovative design

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – For Willoughby Design, 2008 and the company's 30th anniversary marked the start of a yearlong evolution toward a brand poised for growth. Willoughby Design recently expanded its ownership to include members of a newly created leadership team and unveiled its new, dynamic Web site.

Founded by Ann Willoughby in 1978, Willoughby Design is a brand design and innovation firm made up of strategists, designers and writers. After 31 years of running all aspects of the business, Willoughby has created a legacy plan and expanded the company's leadership team to include:

- Megan Semrick, vice president, brand innovation
- Zack Shubkagel, vice president, brand experience
- Katy Briggs, vice president, brand strategy

Through varied skill sets, strengths, areas of expertise and specific industry and category experience, Willoughby's expanded leadership team brings a diversity of approach and knowledge to the innovative work Willoughby Design creates for its list of nationally recognized clients.

Over the past year each member has taken on larger roles in the company, assuming greater responsibility for the day-to-day management of the business. As part of this increased role, Willoughby expanded the ownership of Willoughby Design, Inc. to include Semrick, Shubkagel and Briggs with a plan over time for each of them to receive additional shares in the company.

“Our team is stronger with this group of leaders than it was with one person managing all aspects of the business,” said Willoughby, president and chief creative officer at Willoughby Design. “We look forward to continued growth and success with this expanded ownership team in place and a clear plan for the future.”

In addition to expanding ownership, Willoughby Design also launched its new Web presence. Using principles preached to its clients, the Willoughby Design team took a clean, minimalist approach to the redesign of www.willoughbydesign.com.

“When designing the site we focused on bringing a dynamic and easy-to-use experience to the user,” said Briggs. “Our team conducted in-depth research to determine the best ways to bring our brand to life on the Web and we’re very pleased with the end result, which includes an enhanced news room, and an innovative look book feature.”

“My Look Book” allows a visitor to select work from Willoughby Design’s extensive portfolio to create and download a custom look book. The site also showcases the design firm’s refreshed brand identity.

“Willoughby Design has always been committed to the attributes of integrity, respect, value, quality, collaboration and innovation,” said Semrick.

When redesigning its brand identity Willoughby Design considered all of these attributes.

“From the Willoughby brandmark, with its hand-drawn, stylized letterforms, to the Willoughby Design Barn symbol, which symbolizes the firm’s passion for innovation and sustainability the updated brand reflects our values and positions the company for future success,” said Shubkagel.

About Willoughby Design

Willoughby Design is a strategic brand design and innovation firm. Founded in 1978, the company lists among its clients Hallmark, Peruvian Connection, Hershey’s, Wonder Bread, United Nations and the Kauffman Foundation. The Kansas City-based firm is a member of AIGA, the professional association for design, and the American Advertising Federation. Willoughby is also a certified Women Owned Business. More info: www.willoughbydesign.com.

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