



BRUCE BRACKEN

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CREATIVE DIRECTOR – AI-NATIVE BRAND & PRODUCT STORYTELLING

Creative Studio Leadership · Copy & Art Direction · Brand Campaigns · AI-Native Video

"He had an uncanny ability to translate complex concepts into narratives that connected deeply with audiences – and in doing so, set a new standard for what enterprise storytelling could be."

– Jennifer Chernicky, Founder & CEO, Hangar Studios

"He led with clarity, trust, and a strong sense of purpose. He gave the team ownership of our work, encouraged new ideas, and always balanced vision with practicality."

– Robert Petrillo, Podcast Producer (Direct Report)

SUMMARY

Creative director and AI-native storyteller who builds story systems for new creative platforms – video, film, photography, podcasting, social, interactive, and generative AI. My work sits where technical truth becomes creative feeling: making complex products understandable without making them smaller. At Microsoft, I bootstrapped a global content and digital-experiences portfolio from zero to 25+ properties, generating \$59M in attributed Azure Consumed Revenue at 116:1 ROI and 2M+ views and listens while building the in-house studio, team, standards, review cadence, and operating model behind it.

Now a daily AI practitioner and founder of an AI-native creative platform, actively using Runway, Veo, and other frontier tools to explore how generative video, motion, and storytelling move from concept to production.

CORE CAPABILITIES

Creative Direction & Quality Bar – Sets the creative vision and quality bar across brand, web, product education, video, motion, photography, social, events, and visual digital experiences. Directs big organizing ideas that travel across campaign, product, social, and video surfaces – from hero films and executive series to product explainers, motion graphics, campaign assets, and platform-native social video.

Copy, Art Direction & Brand Platform Thinking – Works across both language and visuals – concepting ideas, writing headlines, titles, messaging, and creative briefs; shaping tone and cultural point of view; producing graphics; directing motion/video; and building brand-platform ideas that can carry across channels.

AI-Native Creative Production – Hands-on practitioner across Runway, Veo, Claude, GPT, Gemini, Deepgram, ElevenLabs, Pyannote, and generative video and audio models – prompt systems, agentic workflows, rapid concept iteration, storyboard and style-frame exploration, and human-in-the-loop quality control. Pioneered Copilot-integrated production at Microsoft, cutting cycle time 30–50% while holding editorial quality.

In-House Creative Studio Building – Builds creative organizations in ambiguous environments – studio model, standards, review frameworks, operating rhythms, quality benchmarks, vendor and freelance systems, and talent – without letting process slow the work.

Creative Team Leadership & Player-Coach Execution – Built and led a 15+ person creative team – producers, video editors, cinematographers, motion designers, art directors, writers, designers, and audio engineers – while still concepting, writing, producing, directing, editing, and giving sharp feedback when the work demanded it.

Studio, Agency & Production Leadership – Leads the blend of in-house, freelance, agency, studio, and production-crew resources – briefing talent, managing scopes and budgets, protecting the creative bar, and delivering brand campaigns, advertising, product education, events, video, and social assets on time and on plan.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

ARTWELL.AI | Snohomish, WA

2025 – Present

Founder & Principal Architect

AI-native story engine – sole creative director, designer, and builder from concept through product, brand platform, interface, narrative voice, AI workflow, and public point of view.

- **Designed and built the complete brand and product experience** – created the Artwell and Maritide marks, the visual language, interface, narrative voice, content system, and product-story platform – a full, repeatable identity built solo on the principle that AI should amplify human creativity, not replace it.
- **Builds hands-on with frontier creative AI tools** – uses Runway, Veo, and other generative video, voice, and audio tools inside a broader multi-model workflow; designs agentic pipelines, LLM-as-judge evaluation, and human review so AI-supported work remains auditable, original, and emotionally clear.
- **Builds responsible AI into the creative workflow** – transparency surfaces, consent patterns, evaluation loops, and editorial quality controls that keep originality, accuracy, and voice visible as AI generates more of the work.
- **Publishes a cultural point of view on the AI creative frontier** – tracks new models, creator workflows, audience behavior, and category narratives through essays, product direction, brand thinking, and creative workflow choices.

MICROSOFT | Redmond, WA

2008 – 2025

Head of Narrative Strategy & Digital Experiences | Senior Executive Producer (2018 – 2025)

Built Microsoft's global content and digital-experiences portfolio from concept to industry leadership – 25+ properties across Azure, Security, AI/Copilot, M365, Windows, Executive Communications, flagship-event content, and product education.

- **Built an in-house creative studio and operating model from the ground up** – production standards, creative-review rhythms, responsible-use review practices with Legal and Brand, content calendars, vendor model, and a 15+ person creative team – proving in-house could match top studios while staying close to product and engineering.
- **Bootstrapped the portfolio into a high-impact creative engine** – generated \$59M in attributed Azure Consumed Revenue at 116:1 ROI; presented creative strategy, performance, and ROI to CVP and VP leadership. 2M+ views and listens, 78% average completion rate, and 4.9/5 audience satisfaction.
- **Creative-directed brand campaigns, advertising, and product education** – personally wrote copy, headlines, messaging, titles, and creative briefs while directing video, motion, graphics, launch assets, executive series, social systems, and product explainers; partnered with agencies when scale or reach demanded it.
- **Built a scalable campaign-amplification system** – PR kits with ready-to-post social copy, audiograms, images, titles, and descriptions handed to guests and partner teams, removing the friction of self-promotion and increasing how often content was marketed through executive, partner, and product-team channels.
- **Led budgets, resourcing, and production partnerships** – managed a \$1.6M+ annual production budget with agency, vendor, freelance, and studio partners; negotiated per-episode costs from \$7K–\$20K to \$2K–\$3K and reduced total production costs 60% while scaling output.
- **Pioneered AI-augmented creative operations** – the earliest practical Copilot integration in Microsoft's content organization, cutting production cycle time 30–50% while holding the editorial, product-accuracy, and brand-safety bar; adopted across multiple teams as the reference model for AI-enabled creative.
- **Directed high-visibility executive and product storytelling** – partnered directly with Ann Johnson, Scott Hanselman, Mark Russinovich, and Sherrod DeGrippe on executive narrative and on-mic coaching; produced work across Azure, Security, AI/Copilot, M365, Windows, and product teams; properties ranked in the global top 3% of 3.5M podcasts.

Senior Video & Digital Media Producer (2008 – 2018)

Visual storytelling for Office, Windows, HoloLens, and Skype for Business.

- **Shipped 50+ major multimedia projects annually** – hero launch films, product explainers, interactive demos, motion graphics, event content, and visual documentation for flagship launches including Office 365 and Windows 10.
- **Established Microsoft's in-house production studio** – green-screen and blue-screen stages, live-action recording space, podcast booths, camera / lighting / audio systems, and custom edit workflows that supported video, photography, audio, product demos, and event content.
- **Owned the visual quality bar** – authored Microsoft's video and audio production standards and best-practice guides; produced 200+ Office videos at a 75% average helpful rating (individual ratings as high as 88%).

INDEPENDENT CREATIVE PRACTICE | All-Nighter Productions • Life Happens Photography

- **Filmmaker – writer/director** – Monster Mash, a 48 Hour Horror Project award winner screened at 12 film festivals nationally; won Best Director, with nominations for Best Horror Short Film, Best Screenplay, and Best Sound Design. Commercial and narrative film projects.
- **Documentary filmmaker** – Water for Good, shot in the Central African Republic, capturing the story of bringing clean water to remote communities; the work drove nonprofit visibility and fundraising.
- **Photographer** – Life Happens Photography: portrait, event, and documentary photography.
- **Voice actor** – commercial and narrative voiceover work; independent podcast host (Luminaries in the Dark – People’s Choice Podcast Award).

EARLIER CAREER | Engineering Foundation

- **Senior Software Engineer, Amazon** – built core search and infrastructure services across AWS and Search Platform during Amazon’s foundational scaling; reduced search latency 40% in production.
- **Senior Software Engineer, Microsoft** – designed and developed desktop Sidebar Gadgets in Windows Incubation, shipped in-box with Windows at consumer scale – front-end and back-end, design through development.

RECOGNITION

- **Three consecutive Microsoft Annual Connect “Exceptional” Rewards (2023–2025)** – strategic business impact.
- **People’s Choice Podcast Award** – Luminaries in the Dark, competing against NASA, FBI, and federal-agency productions.
- **Best Director – 48 Hour Horror Project** – Monster Mash; screened at 12 film festivals nationally with nominations for Best Horror Short Film, Best Screenplay, and Best Sound Design.
- **Microsoft OneWeek Hackathon Grand Prize (2,200 teams)** – ALS Eye Gaze Accessibility Project with Steve Gleason; directed, shot, and edited the winning film end-to-end in under two days. Also won the Microsoft Tech for Good Award.
- **Microsoft Cloud Marketing SNAP Award Finalist** – Excellence in Security Storytelling.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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| • Visual Storytelling 1 & 2 – Alex Buono | • Directing for Film • Acting for the Camera – John Jacobsen |
| • Directing Through Motion – Vincent Laforet | • Documentary Filmmaking 1 & 2 – Seattle Film Institute |
| • Cutting Edge – Adam Epstein | • The Voiceover Workshop 1 & 2 – University of Washington |
| • Sound Advice – Frank Serafine & Mark Lewis | |
| • Private Voiceover Study – three years | |

EDUCATION

University of Memphis – Bachelor of Arts, English (Creative Writing) • Minor: Computer Science