

D. V. HARI KRISHNA

Creative Director & Copywriter

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ABOUT

Creative Director & Copywriter with 20+ years leading ideas, campaigns and teams across the UAE, MENA and India. Known for conceptual clarity, high craft, cultural intelligence and fast, insight-driven problem solving.

I've built brand platforms, led award-winning integrated campaigns and driven regional creative thinking across banking, FMCG, entertainment, hospitality, automotive, telecom and lifestyle categories. Skilled at cracking big ideas fast, elevating daily briefs, shaping tone of voice, directing production, mentoring teams and client presentations with clarity and impact. Experienced in both global network agencies and agile team environments.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Freelance - Creative Director / Copywriter

2012 – Present

Partnering long-term with DDB, BBDO, TBWA, Ogilvy, Nomads, Science & Sunshine, Y&R & others. Known for fast onboarding, high-craft ideas, pitch leadership, integrated thinking, tone-of-voice development, and 360° execution across TV, digital, social & brand systems.

DDB:

- Multi-year Emirates Airlines work (MENA & Africa)
- Bollywood Parks Dubai & Dubai Festival City Mall pitch wins
- Launched Pepsi "Union Cans"
- Led Neutrogena, ADIB Spice Card campaigns
- Created Cheetos Flavor Wars Social campaign with films; Afia Oil & Activia TVCs; Saudi Tourism
- Tone-of-voice + Creative lead for Gazaar

- Long-term social calendars for Citibank, MG Middle East, Al Safi, California Garden, Americana

BBDO:

- Pepsi, Snickers
- Social for One&Only Resorts, Skydive Dubai, Deep Dive Dubai, XPark, XDubai, XLine, Dubai Eats, Dubai Fitness Challenge

Ogilvy/OgilvyOne/Geometry:

- Coca-Cola ATL/digital/events
- RSA Insurance digital & ATL campaign
- Dove in-mall activations

Science & Sunshine:

- Launch of Netflix The Fastest (KSA)
- Social for MDLBeast (KSA)
- Opel campaign

Nomads:

- EAHM & Jotun (TOV & content revamps)
- Dubai Properties "Welcome Back Home" Airport campaign
- Mudon

JWT Dubai: Creative Director

2007 – 2011

Promoted rapidly (Sr. CW - ACD - CD) within two years. Regional creative lead across the GCC & MENA, driving major banking, FMCG & tech accounts delivering award-winning, integrated campaigns for HSBC, Nestlé & Nokia.

- HSBC MENA: Led flagship campaigns including "What Type Are You?" (Grand Prix), HSBC Sale, Airport branding
- Nestlé Kit Kat Chunky: Viral relaunch with films crossing 1M+ YouTube views
- Nokia Music Store (UAE): Full 360° launch including on-ground activation with Kylie Minogue
- Major pitch wins: Audi, Abu Dhabi Film Festival, Air Miles, Khalifa Institute

- Leadership: Managed & mentored a 10-15 member team across copy, art, design & digital
- Global representation: Represented Middle East at HSBC (Paris) & Nestlé (London) global brand workshops
- Creative problem-solver: The "firefighter" creative - cracking stuck briefs, breathing new life into accounts, elevating daily work, and driving cultural + creative momentum across the agency

Contract Advertising: Creative Supervisor

2006 – 2007

Creative hotshop environment; strengthened visual craft, design sensibility & integrated thinking across pan-India campaigns.

- Cadbury Eclairs Crunch - 360° launch (TVC, print, outdoor, radio)
- HSBC Campaigns (Brand & NRI), Asian Paints, Shoppers Stop
- Himalaya Outdoor - ABBY Gold, AAAI Gold
- Deepened visual thinking, design sensibility, research-driven refinement, & integrated craft

McCann Erickson: Copywriter

2005 – 2006

Poached for a strong national portfolio and early awards. McCann sharpened my strategic discipline through its planning-led culture, deepening my insight-driven storytelling.

- Western Union - AAAI Gold, ABBY Gold; shortlisted internationally
- Campaigns for Saffola, Tata Indicom across print, radio, outdoor, corporate films
- Strengthened strategy-first thinking, consumer insight mining, and multi-category problem solving
- Collaborated with planners & multiple art directors; delivered high-quality work under tight timelines

Ogilvy: Copywriter

2003 – 2005

Strengthened long-copy craft, emotional storytelling and conceptual thinking while working across multiple teams and categories. Built the ability to switch voices quickly, collaborate across disciplines and deliver high-quality work under pressure.

- Campaigns for Dove, Maharashtra Tourism, Ponds, Tehelka, HLL Detergents
- Work featured in Lürzer's Archive & The Work
- Conducted interviews with leading Indian thinkers for Tehelka (Khushwant Singh, Kuldip Nayyar etc.)
- Sharpened long copy, print craft, big-idea thinking and insight-driven storytelling
- Delivered integrated print, radio, editorial and tourism work across multiple teams

Leo Burnett: Copywriter

2001 – 2003

Joined at Rs. 3,000 after rejecting a record corporate package to chase ideas. Promoted 3 times in 6 months. Built foundational craft, speed, discipline and idea-driven thinking across some of the agency's busiest accounts.

- Tide: AAAI Gold/Silver/Bronze; ABBYs; Featured in Archive, The Work; Global LB 7+ & 8+ scores
- Work across Coca-Cola, Tide, Dabur, Airtel Magic, SAB, Philips, Benetton
- Mastered headline craft, producing high-volume conceptual routes under tight timelines
- Delivered print, radio, outdoor, retail and DM campaigns with consistent quality
- First radio spots for Airtel Magic (Brand Ambassadors: Shah Rukh Khan & Kareena Kapoor)

AWARDS




Dubai Lynx


5× Silver, 5× Bronze, 75× Shortlists




MENA Cristal

Grand Cristal, Grand Prix, multiple category wins


 New York Festivals
Silver, Finalist

 Cannes Lions
Finalist


 One Show
Finalist

 Effies
Silver

 Epica
Silver & Finalist

 AAAI & Asia Pacific
Finalist

 ABBYs
2× Gold, 1× Silver, 1× Bronze, 2× Finalist

 Leo Burnett Global
Multiple 7+ & 8+ ratings

 Publications
Work published in Lürzer's Archive, Communication Arts, The Work

EDUCATION



PG Diploma in Advertising & Public Relations
Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), Delhi
Scholarship Recipient



B. Com (Economics Hons)
Prana Nath College, Odisha

SKILLS



Creative Direction

Copywriting

Brand Strategy

Integrated 360° Campaigns

Film/TVC Development

Social & Digital Content

UX-Friendly Copy

CMS & Web Content Systems

Tone of Voice Development

Concepting & Storytelling

Production Oversight

Presentation & Pitch Leadership

Team Leadership & Mentoring

Portfolio and references available upon request