

Digital: It's fast, it's unpredictable and I like it

By [Wilton Ackeer](#), issued by [Rogerwilco](#)

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I've worked in traditional ad agencies my whole career. Now I work at a digital agency. My role is to add a new - better - dimension to their strategic creative value. When I took the job I thought I knew what I was in for, but I was wrong. Very little about the move has been predictable.



Wilton Ackeer, creative director at Rogerwilco

Until now, I have relied on rigorous planning to ensure success. Not so in a digitally-led agency. That's not to say things aren't meticulously thought through or insights-led. However, when I get to work in the morning, I'm unsure what I'll be working on that day. Jobs happen suddenly and at speed. Tomorrow seldom features and there's definitely no such thing as next week. A job briefed at lunchtime is live by the end of the day.

No wonder clients love digital. They can respond immediately to news and events – their own and those happening around them. They can communicate directly with their customers, push sales, pull products, comment, show and tell, and they can do it all in real-time.

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I've learned that real-time is great from an agency perspective too. You can immediately see if you've hit the mark. There's no crossing fingers and waiting to see the effect of a campaign. If it's working, you can immediately ramp it up; if it isn't, you can tweak the creative on the spot or move it to a different platform. You keep monitoring to measure the effect of your changes, and the results are instant. Yes, it's unpredictable, but in a good way.

This scenario couldn't be more different from the world I knew, where you book the best billboard long in advance. You plan the creative, perfect colour, type, photography, and message... only to discover that a competitor is now saying the same thing in a slightly different way.

I never really understood just how liberating the digital world could be for a creative. Scary, too, sometimes heart-stoppingly so, but perfectly in touch with the needs of clients and consumers.

No matter what changes, one thing remains the same: the need for creative excellence – understanding that fast is no substitute for good. As I immerse myself in the digital world and understand digital platforms better, it's clear that the only difference is the medium. It's a big difference but I'm becoming used to the unpredictable nature of digital and, dare I say,

enjoying it.

My job hasn't changed: I'm still responsible for the creative product; it's just that I now find myself thinking even more about the way the work is received. It turns out digital is even more about the customer's experience than anything I thought was customer-centric before.

I have a whole new respect for the digital world. I'm deeply impressed by the team I work with. They can respond instantly and execute flawlessly. And if we can bring the love for big idea thinking into this ever-changing world, then we may just be onto something.

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