

CCO's Letter

Adam Holloway
Chief Creative Officer

LIVING, BREATHING, CREATIVITY

How would I describe our year? That's hard as it's been exhilarating, challenging, fun, annoying, surprising, frustrating, rewarding, and downright hair-raising all at the same time. But we ended the year on top.

For one, I took on the role of Chief Creative Officer. I can't tell you how thrilled I am to be able to use this platform to continue driving the creative agenda and ensuring that it remains at the front and centre of our business. Fortunately, I have strong foundations on which to build.



CCO's Letter continued

An ambitious new era

One of the first things I did as CCO was to consider my creative ambitions for the next phase in Emperor's story. Alongside this, I bought together the creative leadership from around the business to actively go about achieving those ambitions. It's early days but we've already made good progress.

Our creative ambitions

To take us forward, we have a three-stage strategy:

1.

Make sure our collective creative energy connects to our ambitions as an agency.

2.

Be recognised as creative leaders in a way that make us feel great about what we do.

3.

Know exactly who we are as creatives; what we believe in, how we work and the principles we live by.

Bigger, faster, better, stronger

Let's talk a little bit about the most challenging hurdle we've had to get over this year: we've grown. And fast.

Although this can sometimes be disruptive and uncomfortable, it also presents our creative partners with some interesting opportunities. Our reporting offer remains fierce with some incredible wins this year. To complement this, our brand, employee and sustainability propositions have exploded with the influx of new talent and opportunities. This means we've had exposure to all kinds of new and exciting businesses in different sectors. We've also got to work on a wider variety of projects and

build strong relationships with a whole new body of clients, all of whom we're proud to be partnering with.

With such a wide variety of skills and specialisms needed, we've spent a lot of time thinking carefully about how we both structure ourselves and grow our creative studios to make them fit for the future.

Our immediate priority is to underpin our strong creative teams with a layer of young and exciting talent. This will allow us to grow and nurture the type of designer we need at Emperor given the unique nature of our offer. To balance this, we are also committed to training and upskilling our existing team, so they are given the opportunity to achieve their own ambitions within Emperor.

Trust = quality creative

The continuing uncertainty around COVID-19 and the rollercoaster of unpredictable lockdowns has been unnerving for many and made team management more challenging. We're still experimenting with what hybrid and blended working look like, but I think this will be an iterative process that will take time and patience.

One thing for sure is that presenteeism is a thing of the past and trusting both our people and our teams to decide how and where they use their time has been great for creativity. Throughout it all, the quality of our ideas, writing and craft has never been better. I couldn't be prouder. However, one thing we do need to look at is how we share all this with the wider world, so that we are recognised as creative leaders in a way that makes us feel great about what we do.

Our amazing output is the result of having a shared belief around what good looks like. We haven't formalised it yet, but as a leadership team we've recently been interrogating exactly who we are as creatives to make sure our collective energy connects to our ambitions as an agency. This is

an important piece of work as it will ensure that both our partners and our clients understand exactly what we believe in, how we work and the principles we live by.

Watch this space, it's going to be another extraordinary year!

Adam Holloway

CCO

We give youth a chance

Despite a challenging period with little opportunity to work in the office, we were determined to help young people access the world of work through a number of different initiatives. These included:

- **13 internships** across our UK hubs.
- **Mentoring delegates** from the Aleto Foundation, Salford University, Sheffield University, Kerning the Gap, Edinburgh College Graphic Design course, One Million Mentors and Mentor Me, a partner of onHand.
- **Supporting a Two+Two event**, which brings together creative and marketing students.
- **Partnering with LDN Apprenticeships** and welcoming two apprentices to the team for 18 months.
- **Celebrating World Youth Skills Day** in July by collaborating with the Aleto Foundation on its 'When creativity meets business' workshop - where our senior leaders were able to connect with amazing young delegates.
- **Working with Daydream Believers** at Edinburgh College to create new content for its website. Daydream Believers brings together creative professionals and secondary school pupils to help them develop essential skills such as creativity, critical thinking and problem solving.



PLEDGE