

ZACK DARLING

MARKETING STRATEGIST | BRAND ACCELERATOR | RETAIL INNOVATOR
DESIGNER | FABRICATOR | EVENT PRODUCER | INTERNATIONAL DJ



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As a proven growth driver in high performing industries, Zack Darling collaborates within creative and strategic teams as a leader, marketing executive, and experiential designer to enhance brand value and drive sales. Specializing in purpose driven ventures, regulated industries, lifestyle brands, consumer packaged goods, sustainable enterprises, and live events, Zack supports growth through omni channel brand strategy, public relations, campaign planning, retail marketing, experiential design and fabrication, digital solutions, and tactical execution for B2B and B2C brands.

Zack is an award winning brand builder with decades of experience in strategy, development, experiential design, and fabrication for industries such as lifestyle products, hospitality, apparel, wellness, luxury goods, solar energy, beer and wine, beverage, food products, restaurants, hydroponics, music festivals, venues, artists, architects, nonprofits, and cannabis.

Zack has served in executive leadership positions for sixteen years, working directly with founders, board members, and investors. He is an awarded designer and board member of trade, civic, industry, and nonprofit organizations.

EXPERIENCE

ZACK DARLING LLC

2023 // CURRENT

Independent branding and marketing consultant supporting technology hardware, CPG, music venues, packaging, creative agencies, retail display fabricators, trade shows, and multi-state cannabis brands. I provide strategy, design direction, fabrication oversight, and brand development for purpose-driven companies. ([link](#)) ([capabilities deck](#))

THE SIMPLE LUXE BUILDS / SALES ENGINEER

2025 // CURRENT

I bridge design strategy with fabrication execution for custom bars, carts, backdrops, trade show booths, and branded installations. I translate concepts into engineered build plans, assessing materials, structure, and production methods while collaborating with design and fabrication teams. I develop pricing and fabrication strategies, oversee projects from concept through installation, and support scalable, high-quality manufacturing across the event rental, trade show, and brand activation sectors. ([link](#)) ([capabilities deck](#))

PALM HOUSE HOSPITALITY / PROGRAMMING DIRECTOR

2024 // CURRENT

Programming Director for Vintage Space at the Flamingo Resort and Spa. I book 8+ shows per month and lead creative direction for concerts, DJ nights, and pool parties. I manage talent booking, ticketing, production, and on-site logistics while coordinating with venue management and marketing to grow the brand and position Vintage Space as a leading North Bay music venue. ([link](#))

WONDERWORKS FABRICATION / CO-FOUNDER

2023 // CURRENT

Co-founder of a 3,500 sq. ft. fabrication studio specializing in commercial builds, custom signage, prototypes, and sculpture work. Supporting retail marketing, trade show displays, and large-scale installations with in-house production capabilities. ([link](#))

TURN / FRACTIONAL DIRECTOR OF RETAIL MARKETING

2024 // 2025

Contract Director of Retail Marketing for Turn, a top-selling cannabis vape brand. Led dispensary partnerships, retail display design and fabrication, vendor management, trade show booth builds, event execution, and retail marketing programs as an integrated member of the team. ([link](#))

MAMMOTH DISTRIBUTION / DIRECTOR OF RETAIL MARKETING

2022 // 2023

Directed retail marketing for one of the nation's largest vertically integrated cannabis companies. Oversaw retail strategy for seven brands across 500+ stores. Designed flagship displays, supported Heavy Hitters' launch into New York, and produced more than 50 retail activations across California and Nevada, including MedMen store takeovers in greater Los Angeles. ([link](#))

CANNACRAFT / VICE PRESIDENT OF RETAIL MARKETING

2020 // 2023

Led a 30-person marketing and creative team for California's leading house of cannabis brands. Oversaw retail marketing across nine brands and eight retail locations. Drove launches of new product lines, a new beverage brand, and more than 150 retail display programs, events, and trade show activations through integrated creative, R&D, trade marketing, and media production. ([link](#))

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FOCUS

Executive Leadership
Marketing Strategy
Creative Direction
Sales Engineer
Strategic Account Manager
Product & Packaging Design
Brand Strategy & Architecture
Display Design & Fabrication
Trade Show Design & Execution
Go To Market Strategy
Experiential Event Production
Copywriting & Naming
Public Speaking & Workshops
Photography & Direction
PR & Communications
Drone Pilot & Aerial Video
Music Production & DJing
Stage & Environment Design
Corporate Social Responsibility

TECHNOLOGY

Adobe Creative Suite
AI Design Workflows
Generative AI Systems
AI Prompt Engineering
3D Modeling & Rendering
Content Management
CRM Platforms
Project Management Systems
Digital Asset Management
Marketing Automation
Google Analytics
Shopify & E Commerce
Spreadsheets & Data
Agile Workflows
Communication Systems
Programmatic Ads
Budgets & Forecasting
ERP, Margins & COGS
Cloud Systems
Google Workspace
Mac OS / iOS
Drone Pilot

EXPERIENCE

KUSHCO HOLDINGS / DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY 2018 // 2020

In 2018, my marketing agency, The Hybrid Creative, was acquired by KushCo Holdings. While continuing to run the agency, I also served as Director of Corporate Responsibility, advancing sustainability, social equity, and community engagement. During this time, we launched several eco-friendly packaging initiatives, including biodegradable and compostable plastics. ([link](#))

THE HYBRID CREATIVE / CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER / FOUNDER 2014 // 2019

Founded as the cannabis-focused division of ZDCA, The Hybrid Creative grew into one of North America's leading cannabis, CBD, and hydroponics agencies, launching and scaling over 60 brands through strategy, design, and messaging. Operating with a 26-person team across Santa Rosa and Los Angeles, I led the agency's growth and eventual acquisition, gaining deep experience in entrepreneurship and executive leadership within a rapidly evolving industry. ([link](#))

ZDCA DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT / CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER / FOUNDER 2009 // 2019

I founded and led ZDCA, Sonoma County's premier creative marketing agency, growing it from a home-based startup into a 26-person firm with offices in Santa Rosa and Los Angeles. We built campaigns and web solutions for sustainable brands, expanding into green energy and organic agriculture while becoming early Shopify Plus partners. Under my leadership, ZDCA earned repeated recognition as the North Bay's Best Creative Agency, driven by a culture of innovation, purpose, and impact.

WANDERLUST FESTIVAL / RESIDENT DJ 2017 // 2020

For three summers, I toured internationally with Wanderlust Festival as a resident DJ, specializing in yoga classes, late-night after-parties, silent discos, meditations, pool parties, and brand activations. Being part of the Wanderlust community and contributing to an international festival of health, humanity, and self-discovery was a cherished experience. ([link](#))

BURNING MAN / NORTH BAY REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE 2004 // 2012

For eight years, I served as the Regional Contact for Burning Man, supporting regional art projects, coordinating logistics, and organizing North Bay events such as Pre-Compression, Decompression, and the Film Festival. It was an honor to help grow such a transformative cultural movement. ([link](#))

HARMONY FESTIVAL / NIGHT SHOWS LEAD PRODUCER 1999 // 2012

I was the lead producer for all of the night concerts for the 35,000 person Harmony Festival. I led a dynamic team that created world-class, large-scale experiences for audiences of over 5,000 inside Sonoma County's largest indoor venue, The Grace Pavilion. Our signature production, the Techno-Tribal Dance was an immersive concert blending electronic music, cirque performance, dynamic stage design, spectacular lighting, live bands, and curated vendors. We transformed the venue into a fully realized world of sound and spectacle. ([link](#))

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HONORS & AWARDS

NORTH BAY BOHEMIAN / ZDCA
“Best Digital Creative Services”
Awarded 7 consecutive years

US CONGRESSIONAL RECOGNITION

US Congressional recognition for
sustainable business practices
and contributions

NORTH BAY BUSINESS JOURNAL

/ 40 Under 40
Recognized as top 40 under 40
entrepreneurs in the North Bay

NORTH BAY BOHEMIAN

BEST DJ IN THE NORTH BAY
I have won the Best DJ in the
North Bay award multiple times.

VOLUNTEER & ADVISOR

SANTA ROSA JUNIOR

COLLEGE / BOARD OF
ADVISORS - INDUSTRY CHAIR
2016 - Present // Graphic Arts
Curriculum Advisory Committee

SOMO VILLAGE

/ COMMITTEE
MEMBER 2016 - Present // Public
Arts Committee

THE CANNABIS TRAIL

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
2019 - 2023 // 501c3 Nonprofit

CALIFORNIA CANNABIS INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

COMMITTEE MEMBER
2019 - 2021 // Events Committee /
Intellectual Property Committee

CITY OF SANTA ROSA

/ COMMITTEE MEMBER
2017 - 2019 // Arts In Public Places

SANTA ROSA METRO CHAMBER

COMMITTEE MEMBER
2016 - 2018 // Marketing and
Promotions Task Force Member

LITTLE TRIBE CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION

/ CO-FOUNDER
2013 - 2017 // 501c3 Nonprofit

EXPERIENCE

DECADANCE / CO-FOUNDER, EVENT DIRECTOR, DJ

2004 // 2012

I co-produced Santa Rosa's top night club event for electronic dance music
for 8 years. It set the standard for what has become a thriving local music
scene. ([Link](#))

KRCB FM PUBLIC RADIO / RADIO SHOW HOST

2006 // 2008

I hosted a weekly radio show for two years called “The Chill Room”. It featured
an eclectic mix of chill electronic music. As a public radio enthusiast and it was
an honor to support my local community in this role.

EARTHDANCE FESTIVAL / ART DIRECTOR

2001 // 2011

I had the honor of designing marketing materials for Earthdance Festival for 10
years. Earthdance is a global festival uniting communities worldwide through
music, intention, and a shared mission of peace. ([Link](#))

URSA MINOR ARTS & MEDIA / CREATIVE DIRECTOR

2005 // 2007

Ursa Minor was a full-service multimedia agency, film studio, and recording
studio based in Marin County, CA. The company served international
thought leaders with socially impactful websites, marketing campaigns, and
media production for authors, visionaries, cultural influencers, musicians,
and events. ([Link](#))

GREENFIELD GRAPHICS / CREATIVE DIRECTOR / CO-FOUNDER

1997 // 2007

My first entrepreneurial venture began in 1997 as an event flyer and concert
poster design firm. We grew into a seven person agency with a central office
in downtown Santa Rosa, CA. We became the first EPA-certified “green”
graphics company in the U.S., helping pioneer sustainable business practices
that are now industry standards. ([Link](#))

ALLEGRA PRINT & IMAGING / LEAD DESIGNER / PRE-PRESS MANAGER

1998 // 2000

I ran the design and pre-press department for a full service offset and digital
printing shop. This is where I mastered print pre-flight skills that continue
throughout my career.

WILIE FOX PUBLICATIONS / LEAD DESIGNER

1995 // 1997

I worked as the lead designer of a book publisher. We published 6 books per
year that required significant variable data dynamic content.

MENDOCINO COLLEGE EAGLE NEWSPAPER / EDITOR IN CHIEF

1994 // 1995

I served as Editor-in-Chief of the Mendocino College Eagle for two
semesters, where we exposed corruption, tackled environmental issues,
amplified underrepresented voices, and stirred things up on campus. That
experience launched my path as a designer, journalist, writer, and publisher.

TESTIMONIALS, REFERENCES AND PUBLIC SPEAKING HISTORY AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST