

This is
INITIALS CX

What we do. And how we do it.

Welcome



I genuinely believe that Initials CX is a pretty unique place to be. It's an agency that has been restless since its inception and thankfully continues to be. I've been told not to use the word 'restless' as it has 'negative connotations' but I just don't see it like that, restless is good. It's why we reinvent ourselves about every 4 years, keeping an eye on our relevance to the industry and our clients' needs.

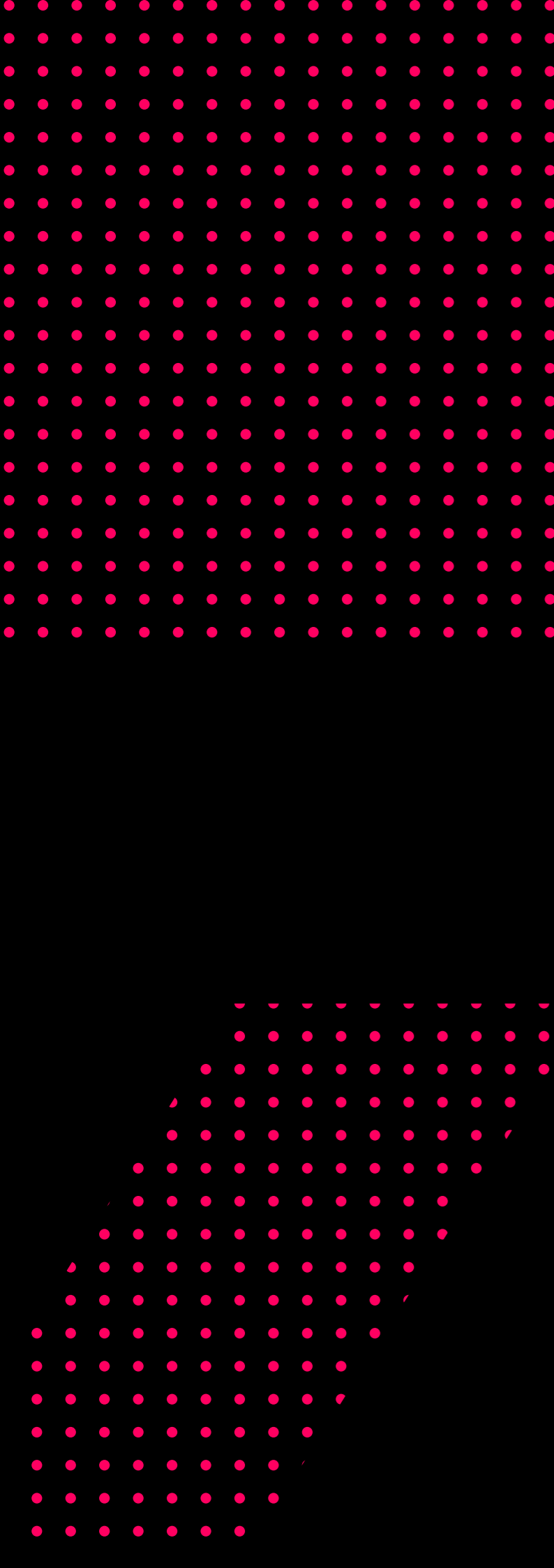
Constantly learning and adding expertise from all sorts of sources to our team and their knowledge – I think it keeps us young. We are not scared of making mistakes and we encourage everyone to take the metaphorical step forward. You'll soon find out if it's the wrong direction and then you can correct it and advance, but inaction, apathy and the status quo, these are the things that terrify us.

Despite our restlessness there remains a familiar way of life within the agency. It is something we hear from colleagues who have left us and moved on to new places, that Initials CX is a family, a place where people are supported, encouraged and respected but also a place of fun, with a healthy level of micky-taking taking place – people who take themselves too seriously tend not to work here.

With all that being said, we take our jobs and the work we do for our clients incredibly seriously and indeed, personally. There is never a week that goes by where people haven't gone over and above to perfect what they are working on, to make it unique, to make it different, to make it work! It is this innate characteristic of our people that drives this business on and will continue to with your help for many years to come.

Whether you are just joining us, as a colleague or a client, or you have been with us for a while and just need a sense of re-purposing, this is a window into how we think things should be at Initials CX. If you think it should be different then please reach out and speak to someone because we are always up for change.

Thank you



Finding your way around

Who we are	6
<i>Our areas of expertise</i>	8
<i>Meet some of the team</i>	10
<i>Our journey so far</i>	14
<i>Our clients</i>	16
What we do	18
<i>CX</i>	20
<i>Our work</i>	22
The Initials Way of Life	25
<i>Our vision</i>	26
<i>Our mission</i>	28
<i>Our thinking</i>	30
<i>Our central belief</i>	32
<i>Our values</i>	34
<i>Our EVP</i>	36
<i>Our behaviours</i>	38
<i>Talk it out</i>	40
<i>The perks</i>	42
<i>OpenBlend</i>	44
<i>Sustainability</i>	46
<i>Flexible working</i>	48
<i>What our staff think</i>	50



Who we are



Customer experience agency

Founded in 2006 and based in central London, we are one of the UK's most highly regarded independent agencies.

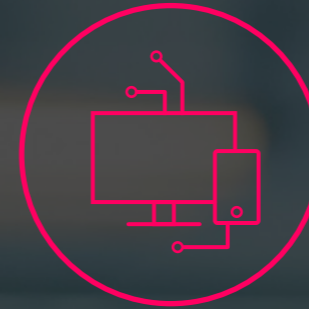
Award-winning

With a team of around 50 people, we harness our collection of personal strengths to deliver considered, inventive and ambitious work that gets noticed, across all of our disciplines.

Local and global

We consult and activate both in the UK and all over the world. Our revenue split is 50% UK/50% Global.

Our **areas** **of expertise**



Digital

The Labs team pretty much see the world in 0 and 1s, working with clients to understand their challenges and create consumer-inspired digital solutions, be that campaign driven activations or full blown digital transformations. The Labs team will ensure the best technology and channel is used to achieve the best outcome.



Client Services

They look after the commercial and project delivery sides of the business. Their ultimate aim is to make money from making our clients look great, whether that's through brand development, content creation, retail activation or the use of technology.



Strategy

The planning department exists to provide the focus and insight needed to make our creative campaigns and executions effective. We employ tools and research to help us understand how customers or consumers think and then develop simplified offerings that give brands relevance and distinctiveness within their competitive set. This process directly informs our creative brief and sets the tone for creative development and campaign ideas.



Creative

A powerful team of designers, art directors and copywriters, our creatives use the thinking and insights from planning, add a dollop of expertise from the Labs team and apply their own creative energy to work up the perfect solutions to a brand's challenges. From brand creation to TV spots, shopper campaigns to social content, from UI design to experiential we deliver work that demands attention and shapes the way people think and behave.

Meet some of **the team**



Dominic Murray
Head of Digital

From an early age I was always interested in the latest gadget! When I received my first mobile phone I was hooked.

Technology, and understanding its potential from a consumer engagement perspective, was where I wanted to be, and it still gives me the same excitement today as it did almost 25 years ago.



Matt Hopkinson
Head of Creative

A self-confessed lover of 'the sell'.

I'm not sure there is anything more inspiring than knowing whatever you put on that blank sheet of paper in front of you could have the power to move millions of people.



Julie Sexton
Client Services Director

An accidental marketer who stumbled into an account exec job to avoid becoming an accountant and then never looked back. Love working on all our food and drink brands in the office almost as much as I love eating and drinking outside of it.



Simon Callender
Chief Strategy Officer

I've always been driven by an eclectic curiosity and a need to find out not just what makes brands successful but also how people tick.

Having worked on over 150 client businesses over 25+ years I still love being hands on helping to shape the thinking and ideas that power successful campaigns. Experience has shown me the same challenges do keep coming around and while the communications landscape is constantly changing, human motivations remain the same.



Chris Perowne
Head of Design

I work with a team of exceptionally talented designers to turn creative ideas into reality across our full range of clients and media. I love craft in all things visual - particularly typography, illustration and brand building.

I'm proud to have grown my career at Initials and have been part of the journey for nearly 15 years.



Sadie Majer
Head of Copy

From cracking the big idea to crafting the smallest details, I love making words matter. And I mean the all-consuming, movie kind of love.

Because whatever else changes in the world, the power of language won't. Whenever anyone asks what I do, I tell them I write words to make people feel things and do things. Which sounds both ominous and a bit wafty. But when it's done right, it's actually a pretty great reason to get up every day.



Josh Tilley
Strategy Director

My first interaction with brand strategy was at JWT's grad scheme when I was told I would be an average account manager, but 'Have you heard of planning? - You'd be great at it'.

Fast forward to now, and I'm still as fascinated by strategy and how things work - from consumers' interaction with brands, making businesses work better, exploring new places and cultures, and how to keep my 1980s sports car on the road.



Abby Karet
Group Account Director

Being a shopaholic and a social butterfly, after university I believed I had landed my dream job at a shopper marketing agency working with iconic booze brands like Perrier Jouet and Absolut. Fast forward 12 years, and I still believe it, working with amazing brands across multiple channels, alongside a fantastic team!

Meet some of **the team**



Simon Smith
Operations Director

The tallest member of the agency with a undoubtable passion for organised and organising chaos. For me it's all about the team and the variety of skills within that team which enable us to create and deliver amazing work that really can impact people's lives.

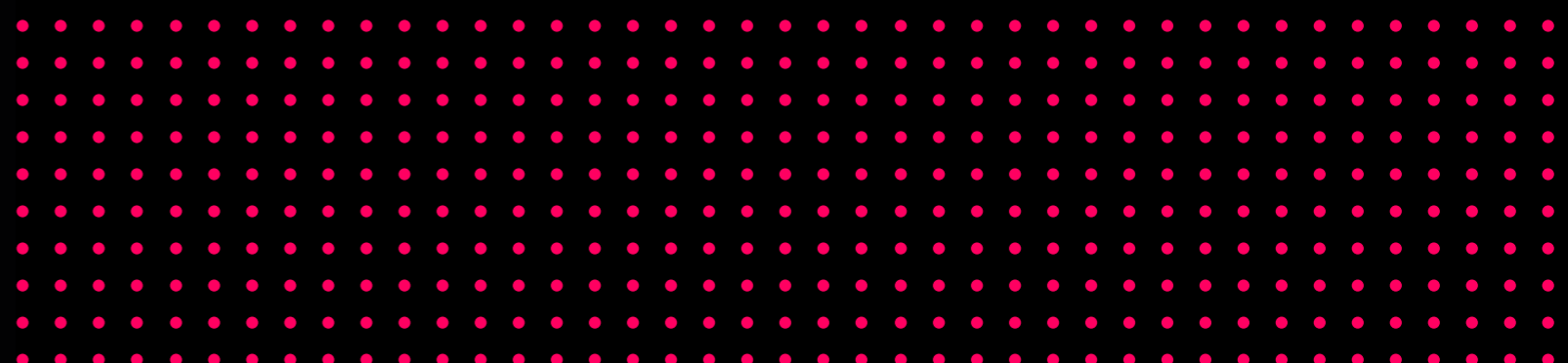


Annie Little
Strategy Director

My purpose is to make brands relevant to their target audience. And coming from a product and service design background, I have a penchant for it.

In my opinion a mind-blowingly creative campaign is no longer enough, we must craft marketing initiatives that directly connect with a specific audience.

And it's my job to ensure a brand's offer, campaign & marketing initiative meets the needs and desires of potential consumers. You will find me tucking into a trend report over lunch or quizzing a colleague as to why they selected that particular meal deal. I love to observe, review and understand people's behaviour.



Our journey so far

2006

Jamie & Richard launched Initials above The 100 Club, Oxford Street
Won first client: Greene King



2007 Won biggest client: PepsiCo

2008

Won Cadbury: Created Easter Egg Trails with The National Trust
Won MCCA Best New Newcomer



2009

Created Trident Beyonce Campaign – O2 Concert for 10,000 winners
Won Sainsbury's: Active Kids account



2010

Recruited Experiential team
Doritos ID3 Launched – Immersive content experience



2011

Awarded IPM best agency of the year
Moved to Dorland House, Lower Regent Street
Recruited strategy team



2012

Created Sainsbury's Pandamonium in the Park – Family festival for 11,000 visitors
Olympics in London - £1m plus campaigns for Samsung, Sainsbury's and Cadbury
Recruited Digital team



2013

Won Peugeot – Created 'Let your body drive' campaign
Moved to Swallow Place, Oxford Circus + Recruited Shopper team
Secured Philips Global



2014

Created Cadbury's Joynormous campaign – their most successful on pack ever!



2015

Won FCA: Launched new Fiat 500 and Jeep Renegade



2016

Created Walkers Crisp Sarnie Club
Won Heineken UK – created The Strongbow Yard at festivals



2018

Initials LABS launches
Secured McLaren Automotive



2019

Moved to Lion Court, Holborn
Won Britvic
Launched Operational Leadership Team (OLT)



2020

Featured in Campaign's best experiential campaigns of the decade: Doritos Dodgeball and ID3

pladis

2021

'Work where you work best'
The ultimate flexible working policy launches
Won Pladis and Diageo

2022

Agency restructure and introduction of new value;
Entrepreneurialism
Won OneFamily our first Financial Services Client



2023

Opened up our office space to be shared with like-minded companies
Heavy investment in in-housing our digital development team.



2024

Maintained 80% plus pitch-win ratio and added Pilgrim's Europe to our pillar client list

Our clients

Rather than just show you a page full of logos, we thought we'd share a few examples of what the people behind some of our brands have to say about us...

"It's been a real pleasure to work with the team at InitialsCX on the development of the first ever PEPPA PIG Theme Park Blueprint.

The task wasn't without challenge as the project demanded a fully collaborative approach involving various cross-functional departments within Merlin Entertainments, a key external stakeholder and different time zones.

Client Services and Strategy Planning at InitialsCX were amazing in coordinating and leading stakeholder meetings, distilling the input and responding to a number of change requests along the journey. I particularly appreciated their ability to rethink initial approaches but also to push back on and challenge client views in order to achieve a bigger and better outcome."

Global Brand Director
Merlin Entertainment



"Just want to say a BIGGGGGGGGGGGG THANKKKKKKKKKK YOUUUUUUUUUUUUUU to you all for your hard work and commitment to this project. Could not have done this without you. Thanks a lot for being great partners!!"

Creation Lead,
Philips



"I just wanted to let you know how brilliantly the team continue to be. I just can't speak highly enough of the quality of work and impeccable client service."

Marketing Director,
Nature's Bounty



"When exploring new agencies for experiential and digital I thought there would be none better than you guys."

Senior Marketing Manager,
Lay's



"Your creativity combined with strong, considered and attentive Account Management has continually proven itself invaluable – particularly with being able to still produce strong output whilst often working within our tight timelines."

Shopper Marketing Lead,
PepsiCo



**We're a
total customer experience agency
created for today's world.**

What we do

We take all we've learnt about consumer behaviours offline, and fuse it with the tech-led reality of now – to make sure the brands we work with engage people the right way, and ultimately get chosen.

And while the work we make constantly evolves in line with the world around us, it spans four main pillars of expertise: Brand Development, Content Creation, Retail Activation and Technical Solutions.



**Brand
Development**



**Content
Creation**



**Retail
Activation**

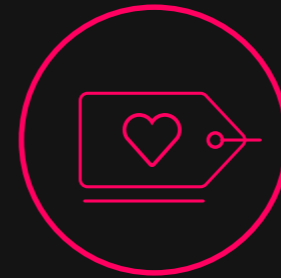


**Technical
Solutions**

**Consumers don't think
in channels.**

This is why we believe a channel agnostic approach is vital. We have four key areas of expertise which are fully interconnected.

No matter which area of the agency you've joined, you'll have the opportunity to broaden your expertise.



Brand Development

Engineering • Purpose • Design



Content Creation

Advertising • Social • Experiential



Retail Activation

Shopper • Social & E-comm • Amazon



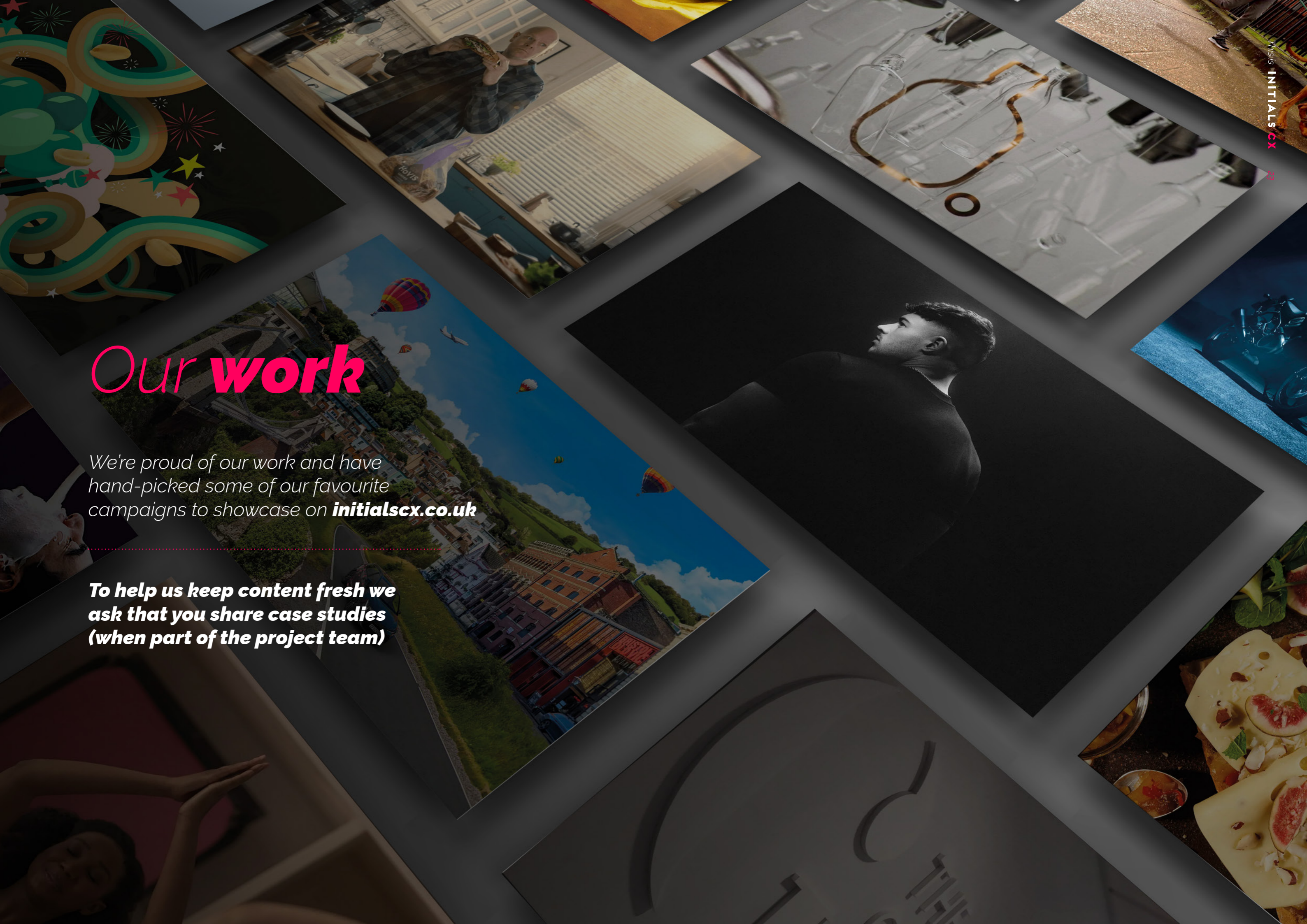
Technical Solutions

UX/UI • Design • Build

Our work

We're proud of our work and have hand-picked some of our favourite campaigns to showcase on initialscx.co.uk

To help us keep content fresh we ask that you share case studies (when part of the project team)





**THE INITIALS
WAY OF
LIFE**



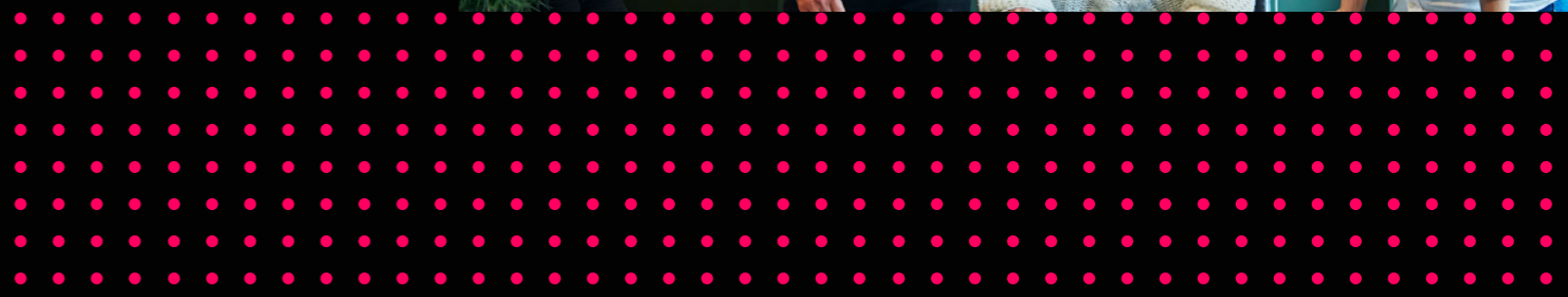
Our vision

*To leave
the world
wide-eyed
and
inspired*



We provide **elevated thinking** for brands aiming to thrive in a challenging and ever-changing world.

Our **mission**

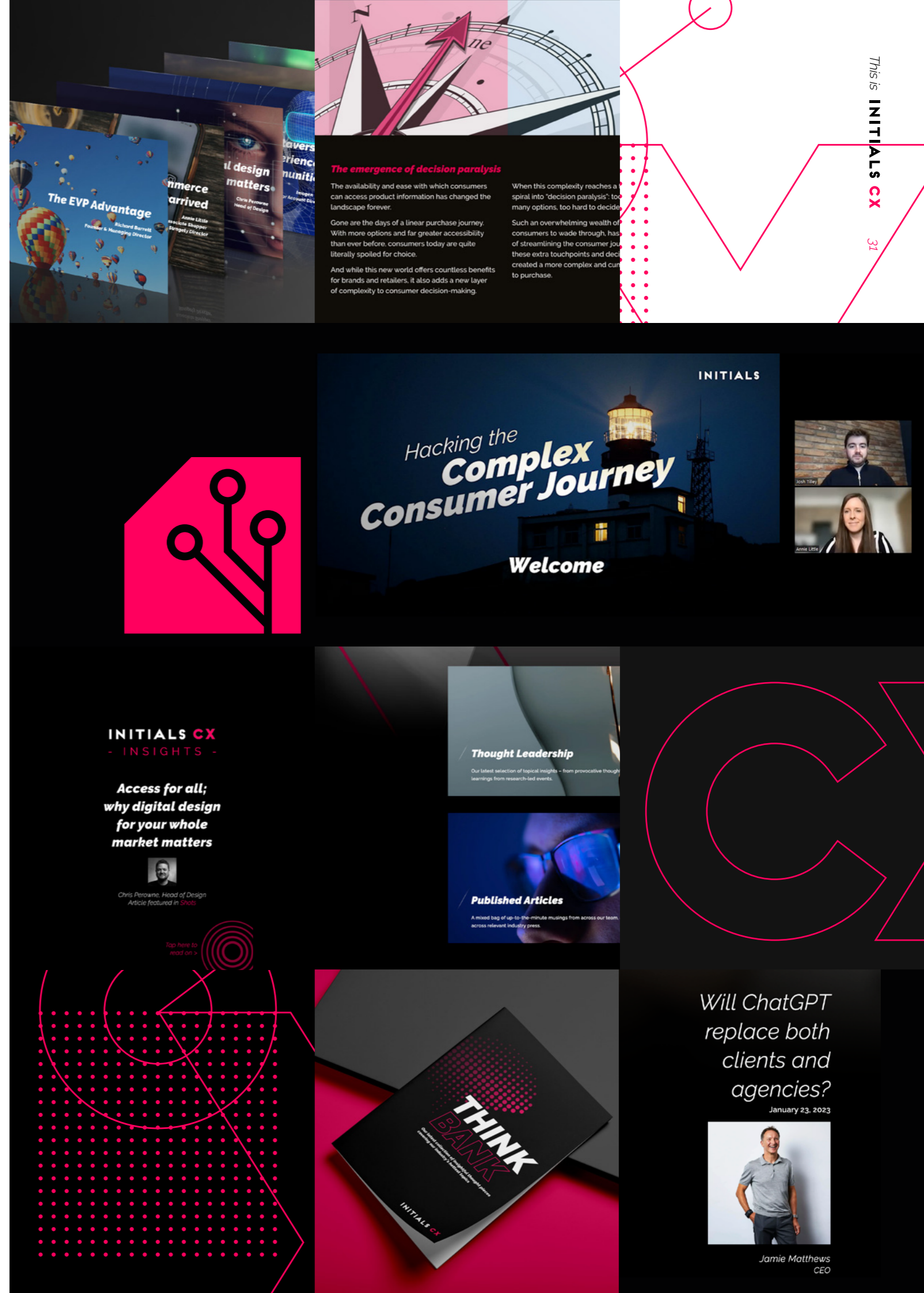


Our **thinking**

Our series of white papers and webinars explore subjects we believe will resonate with the industry.

Often these are inspired by specific commercial challenges that our clients face as they look to remain relevant in the increasingly competitive landscape.

If there's a hot topic you want to talk about, we want to hear about it. We actively encourage ideas and contributions from all departments.



Hacking the Complex Consumer Journey

Welcome

INITIALS CX - INSIGHTS -

Access for all; why digital design for your whole market matters



Chris Perovnik, Head of Design
Article featured in Shots

Thought Leadership

Our latest selection of topical insights – from provocative thought leadership to research-led events.

Published Articles

A mixed bag of up-to-the-minute musings from across our team, across relevant industry press.

Will ChatGPT replace both clients and agencies?

January 23, 2023



Jamie Matthews
CEO

THINK BANK

INITIALS CX

Our **central belief**

We believe situational understanding is the key to effectiveness

Every challenge is framed by its own unique context.

No two brands, businesses or cultures are the same. All have different levels of ambition, permission and supporting resource.

To ensure effectiveness, we work with our clients as consultants to understand the wider business, brand and cultural realities. These in turn shape our work to each individual challenge, resulting in more creative, coherent and accountable solutions.

How we do it

By taking a contextual consultative approach to each individual challenge we deliver strategies and creative solutions that make real world business impact.



LS CX

Our values

Our values are more than just words on a page. They are standards we measure ourselves by. And they reflect the people who work here.

Intelligence

We know emotional intelligence is more important than IQ. We nurture brilliance no matter what form it takes.

Commitment

We are committed to quality, not qualifications. And building an agency of ambitious and tenacious individuals.

Openness

We are open to having conversations, sharing opinions and, more importantly, listening to yours.

Imagination

We are imaginative in the office and out of it. We are an eclectic mix of creatives, collectors, actors, bakers, music makers, and more.

Entrepreneurialism

We are all committed to the same growth ambitions and believe that new business is everyone's business.



Our **EVP**

Employee Value Proposition is simply our agency promise to you

Empowering you to unleash your potential

Initials CX is the agency for entrepreneurial team players who (with our support) will use their intelligence and imagination to advance their careers and grow their influence within the industry.

Work: *Thinking beyond to create insight led campaigns for world class brands.*

Experience: *An inspiring, creative and curious agency with a start up mentality.*

You: *Seeking out and nurturing the magic in you, empowering you to make an impact.*

Our *behaviours*

Rigorous

We want to create a culture of inclusivity, collaboration and respect. So, we take the responsibility to do our very best in every task, for our clients and each other.

Insightful

We always need to keep our ambition and tenacity alive - it would be easy to just go through the motions, to take the path of least resistance but we owe it to our clients, this industry and each other to find the unique angle that makes a real difference.

Kind

Whilst we pledge to push each other to perform at our very best we do this with kindness and respect in mind, we have empathy for everyone's individual circumstances and are here to support and nurture each other.

Imaginative

We've got where we are today by combining creativity with a relentless desire to succeed. And now, as we move into a new era, let's do all we can to not just think about something weird and wonderful, but make it happen.



Talk it out to sort it out

Feeling respected, understood and heard are key to us being our best selves at work.

So if a colleague's behaviour ever upsets, undermines or offends you, we actively encourage an open discussion – whatever your level or department – with both sides willing to listen and respond graciously to resolve the situation.



Perks & **benefits**

ALWAYS DOING THE RIGHT THING

DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND WELLBEING ACADEMY

In-house teams keeping their finger on the pulse

ANNUAL CALENDER OF TRAINING AND INITIATIVES

Meetings, talks and workshops galore

STUDENT INTERNSHIPS

Offering young minds real-world experience

INITIALS CARES

Paid volunteer and charity partnerships

WORK HARD, PLAY HARD

RECOGNITION REWARDS

Every month we celebrate those going the extra mile with a bespoke £20 voucher for something they love

EXTRA HOLIDAY

Extra holiday days if you stick around. (After 2 years, we give you 1 day for every year – up to 29 days)

BIRTHDAYS

Everyone enjoys their birthday off

PARTIES

Christmas parties, summer parties, any excuse for a party really

THIRSTY THURSDAYS

We can't wait for the weekend, so we crack open the drinks on Thursday

SUMMER HOURS

When the sun's out, we're out. (Work done? Then we finish at 4pm on Fridays during the summer months)

ANNIVERSARIES

Work anniversaries are celebrated with an hour lie-in

OFFERING FINANCIAL SUPPORT

LIFE ASSURANCE

Cover that matters

TRAVEL LOANS

Taking the edge off the commute

NEW BUSINESS BONUS STRUCTURE

Bring in a new client and take a cut

NEW TALENT

There are finder's fees if you help us find fresh blood

WORKING LATE?

After 8pm grab a bite to eat (£15 limit), after 9.30pm grab a taxi home (up to £20*)

*Rules apply, see HR

ENCOURAGE FLEXIBLE WORKING

HYBRID MODEL

Tuesdays and Thursdays in the office to maintain our face-to-face culture

SABBATICALS

Take time out to do something different (available after 3 years)

PARENTAL LEAVE AND RETURN-TO-WORK PROGRAMMES

Tailored support before, during, and after parental leave

WATCHING OUT FOR YOUR WELLBEING

OPENBLEND

Next generation performance management tool that powers personalised 1:1s

CYCLE TO WORK SCHEME

Helping you put pedal to the metal

WEEKLY WELLBEING CHECK-INS

With MHFA support

EYE CARE TEST

Annual eye tests are on us

VITALITY HEALTH

Free access to GP, physio, mental health support, plus heaps of discounts on wellbeing partners, from spa to gym

WIDE EYED AND INSPIRED

CULTURE VULTURE

We encourage you to take half day out every month to be inspired

LINKED IN LEARNING

We provide access to over 8,000 online courses to unleash your potential

SHARING SESSIONS

We invite partners to host regular innovative sharing sessions



*Nurturing and supporting talent are key at Initials CX. We run an active management approach that encourages regular check-ins vs annual performance reviews. To support this approach we use a platform called **OpenBlend**.*

OpenBlend facilitates coaching-led conversations that support all aspects of your development journey.

You'll have your first OpenBlend session with your line manager one month after you've joined.



Pushing our **sustainability** **agenda**

Growing by doing good is fundamental at Initials CX. We actively try to build a more inclusive, diverse and sustainable culture every day. As part of this we try and apply sustainable thinking to all the work we carry out for our clients making sure that the work we create has a positive impact on the planet and the people it touches.

Our own footprint is also important to us and our office environment is set up to be as sustainable as it can be, with central recycling stations as well as motion-sensitive lighting and supplies that are all sourced from sustainable sources.

Flexible **working**

We work where we work best – it's our refreshed approach to life at the agency that supports our key values.

We commit to coming into the office on Tuesdays and Thursdays to help our collaborative culture to thrive and to ensure everyone really feels a sense of belonging to something bigger than just an employer.

It is a shared belief that...

Trust is the most important aspect of any relationship so being present no longer means just in person.

We are judged not only on the quality of our output, but also the contribution we make to the wider ambition of the company. And whilst we don't always need to be in the office to be in the business, collaboration, connectedness and being part of a culture is important to us all.

No two weeks are the same and this collaboration may be best achieved in person, wherever that may be.

Human connection is vital to creating a culture of warmth and belonging so no matter how we communicate, we should treat each other with dignity and respect.

The better the whole person can be in themselves, the better they will be for us and we see home-life and work-life as a matter of synchronicity.

Our clients are what get us out of bed in the morning but the wellbeing of our colleagues should be of the highest priority.

Going to work is not just a matter of geography but also one of attitude and motivation, so a flexible ethos enables us to attract a more diverse pool of talent.

We all have the right to feel comfortable being our authentic selves at work every day and can help achieve this by offering one another personal and professional support when needed.

**What
staff
think**
*about
our
Way
of Life*



"The working culture at Initials is great – giving me freedom to work in a way that best suits me. I organise my week around days when I know collaboration in the office will lead to the best work for clients and the times I can just crack on with deeper strategic work at home – all the time feeling connected to colleagues and clients when we need each other. It's refreshing to be employed somewhere that understands that it's possible to combine your working life with the relentless 'life admin' that real life throws everyone's way!"

Josh Tilley
Planning



"It's fun coming to work with happy people who love where they work, and I see smiles everywhere I turn (most days anyway!). You feel that you've become a part of a family. We're all here to support one another to grow professionally, as well as personally."

Amelia Boyce
Client Services



"Working at Initials is truly fantastic. The wide range of clients and projects we handle provides an excellent platform for honing various design skills simultaneously - Whether it's tackling diverse branding challenges or engaging with clients across different industries, every project brings a unique learning opportunity. We also have a supportive and collaborative working environment - our teamwork and encouragement contributes significantly to our collective growth. This positive atmosphere not only fosters creativity but also enhances our ability to deliver high-quality output. I'm genuinely proud to be a part of a workplace that values skill development, teamwork, and producing outstanding work. It's this combination that makes Initials such a rewarding place to work!"

Georgie Sullivan
Creative

Thanks

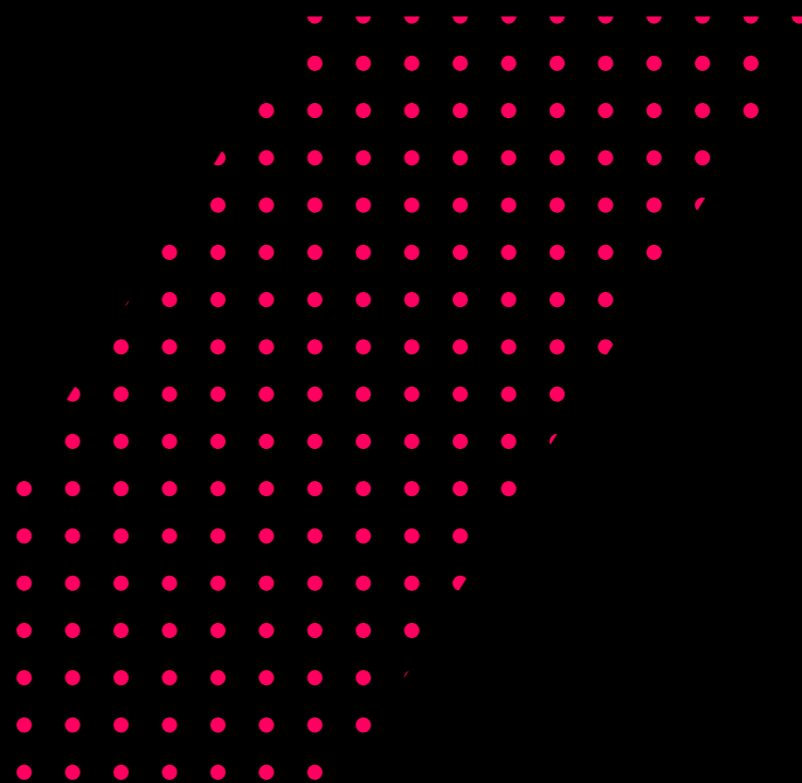


Thanks for spending the time to understand Initials CX in a little more depth. It is said often about agencies that their product is only as good as the people who work there. And we are no exception. We are constantly looking for ways to improve the agency to make it better than it was yesterday, and we can only do this if we have an open dialogue about what is working, and what needs to change.

And so, if upon reading this book, you feel the need to boo, hiss, or clap, please feel free to come and talk to either myself or Richard and let us know what you think. We'd love to hear your views.

We look forward to working with you here, now and in the future in whatever capacity.

So, whatever you do, we hope you enjoy doing it here.



 *Initials CX*

 *@initialsagency*