Creativity / Commerce / Culture / CollaborationSpring 2011





May 6th / 11am - 12:30pm / VCU Student Commons Theater / 907 Floyd Avenue



Co-Founder & Chairman / Trumpet



Robbie Vitrano works at the center of the entrepreneurial laboratory of post-Katrina New Orleans. He has expanded his branding practice to help launch several new ventures in this energized, chaotic environment. One startup is Naked Pizza, a company demonstrating by example that fast food can be part of the solution for the global epidemic of obesity and chronic disease related to diet (ranked in 2011 as the 4th most influential QSR brand). In the 18 months since its launch, Naked Pizza has more than 500 stores in development around the world and is recognized as one of the leading brands in the use of social media.

He is also co-founder of entrepreneurial hub Idea Village, which has helped to launch more than 200 ventures in post-Katrina New Orleans, and co-founder

and Chairman of branding and venture firm Trumpet, named Top 10 Most Innovative Advertising Agency by Fast Company magazine. He continues to advise, invest in and mentor startups in New Orleans and lectures and writes extensively on branding, entrepreneurship and corporate social responsibility in the post-recession, post-mass media business environment.

Topic / I was Alex before Alex was cool.

Descriptor / The experience of Hurricane Katrina resulted in a chaotic lurch to find more meaning in my advertising work. We returned to the flooded city, burned the boats, made a mess, and then found a little traction toward applying the things I learned in advertising toward work I think more innovative, possibly significant, entirely relevant. I believe it's part of the great transition in the business - and business at large (welcome to the post-recession, post-mass media party) that's unleashing the real power of the industry.